

Raglan Community Council
Minutes of the Allotment committee held on Wednesday
14 October 2015 at the Raglan Baptist chapel at
7.00pm

Present

Cllr Richard Moorby
Cllr Sylvia Price (Chairman)
Cllr Noel Porter

The chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for any apologies

3941 In attendance:

Adrian Edwards clerk to Raglan Community Council

14 allotment tenants

3942 Agenda item 1. Apologies for absence

Cllr's Ewen Brierley, Dennis Brown, Ray Parry, Peter Williams and Trevor Phillips. Mr & Mrs Musto.

3943 Agenda item 2. Overview of the previous year

The chairman gave those present an overview of the previous year. It was explained that it has been very interesting in relation to the allotments. Over the last 18 months the council, as most of you are aware, have been in discussions with the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales in relation to a complaint and for reasons that cannot be discussed, that has now come to a close. In 2014/15 the council has received an estimated ~~£540~~ £340 in income from the allotments and the council have spent an estimated £1,590.00 on different types of improvements to both sites. The council have replaced the timber fencing on the western site and all allotments have new numbers. It has been noted that some of the numbers have come loose and will be made safe in the next couple of weeks. The chairman stated that if anyone would like to do this work it would be most helpful.

It was explained during the year the subcommittee have been concerned over the width on the paths between some allotments. If any tenant has encroached on to the paths was asked that the paths are reinstated to a width of a minimum of 600 mm or in old money '2 FEET'. The council ask that this is done by the end of December this year.

3945 Agenda item 3. Allotment management and cultivation.

The chairman explained since the start of the year the allotments have been well maintained and tenants have grown a lot of produce, but on the down side it has been noted that some allotments have not been cultivated to their full potential.

3946 Agenda item 4. Subletting or dividing allotments between subtenants

The chairman explained that it's come to the attention of the council that it would seem that some tenants may have been subletting or dividing allotments between other individuals. In the existing agreement it sets out in 2.6, the tenant should not underlet without consent. The chairman asked if there are any tenants who have any views on this section of the agreement.

One tenant explained that some of the allotments are large and some tenants cannot manage them.

3947 Agenda item 5. Consider the management of the allotment sites

The chairman asked if current tenants would consider setting up a management group or setting up a management committee to run the allotments on a sub-tenancy basis with a formal lease.

One tenant explained that this has been considered before when he sat on the subcommittee. He explained that there are number of issues that needed to be addressed, and the cost of the running of the allotments by a committee. He explained about the cost of the insurance, utility bills and other unexpected costs.

Another tenant explained the both sites are too small to provide sufficient income for any committee. It was:

Resolved: *not to set an independent committee.*

3948 Agenda item 6. Consider appointments onto a working group with the Community Council subcommittee.

The chairmen asked the tenants for their thoughts and consider the appointments onto a working group with the Community Council subcommittee. It was:

Resolved: *not to set a working group.*

3949 Agenda item 7. Amendment to the statutory tenancy agreement.

The chairman explained the council will need to make amendments to the statutory tenancy agreement. The council will need to comply with the 1922 Allotments Act where section 1 subsection 1 (a) states "a six months' or longer notice to quit expiring on or before the sixth day of April or on or after the twenty-ninth day of September in any year". So the council can comply with this it will be necessary to extend the tenancy agreement by three months to April next year, but the renewal will need to be made by the 1st day in January. This will give tenants a three month grace period.

There was some discussion over this matter and the clerk gave members a verbal report on the reasons for the changes.

Resolved: *the new agreements will be sent to all tenants.*

3950 Agenda item 8. Set up an Improvement Management Plan.

The chairman asked if tenants would like to set up an Improvement Management Plan. This plan would give a clear direction on the improvement programme and give the council an opportunity to set the additional budget for maintenance each year.

One tenant asked about the questionnaire that was returned. It was asked if that document could be used to set an improvement plan.

There was some discussion over the skip that was provided this year. One tenant believed it was a waste of money and other tenant believed the skip was too small. The chairman asked would tenants like the council to provide a further skip. There was no agreement between the tenants so the council will monitor the situation.

Resolved: *the council will provide a skip if the subcommittee believes the allotments need attention.*

One tenant asked about the large gate on the allotment site west of Usk Road. The gate has become difficult to open and close. There was some discussion over all the gates and after some debate it was agreed the council will investigate this issue and replace or repair as necessary.

One tenant raised concern over the water stop tap box as the cover has moved. One tenant explained that he will look at the problem and make it safe.

3951 Agenda item 9. Consider the tenancy rent

The chairman explained about the current financial climate we all find ourselves in and would it be prudent to consider an increase in the tenancy rent. If no increase is considered the current income will not cover the cost of further improvements. The council have received a number of concerns relating to the access up the grass bank from the high street. It is hoped that this work will be undertaken this financial year. It is also expected the council may be able to renew the fence between the allotments and the field on the smaller site. There was some discussion over this matter and it was:

Resolved: *the council would construct steps from the allotment gate to the kerb edging with a small ramp included so tenant can wheel a wheel barrow up and down the steps.*

Resolved: *to report back to the next council meeting for consideration.*

3952 Agenda item 10. Agree date of next meeting

There was some discussion over the date and the notice given. The chairman asked those present if they would like a further meeting in the coming year. Tenants felt that one meeting would be sufficient. The chairman confirmed the next allotment meeting will be convened on the 12 October 2016. The venue will be confirmed closer to the date.

3953 The Chairman thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 8.00 pm. The date of the next meeting 12 October 2016

Signed by _____

Chairman Cllr Richard Moorby
Date 28 October 2015