

Pretoria Road Allotment Society

Minutes of the committee meeting held at the allotment site 4th September 2016

Apologies for absence: Mike Stinchcomb, Derek Howell, Mike Checkley.

The chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. The minutes from our last meeting (3rd July 2016) were adopted and signed off by the chairman.

Item one. From Mike Stinchcomb. Mike is concerned that some members are failing to keep us informed of changes of address, telephone number or email address. He has had a case recently, where a member wanted to order some manure, but when Mike tried contacting her the details we had were no longer relevant.

A discussion took place about this, but the consensus was that we cannot legislate to force people to keep us informed. It was felt that the best thing would be for a notice about this matter be put on our notice board and also on the website.

Item two. From Larry. Larry wanted to take matters forward on the subject of collection of domestic refuse from the site. An open ended contract had been proposed with SITA, whereby they would collect during periods of the year when we needed the service only. However, without Derek present, it was not possible to progress this subject.

Item three. From Larry. On the subject of the purchase of a Gazebo. We have discussed this previously and it has been met with unanimous support. Larry reported that the council have promised us £500 toward the cost of this, but that we will need some additional funding to not only buy the gazebo, but to get it properly erected and to sort out rainwater harvesting etc. The costs which Larry has come up with were for a suggested 3.5 meter structure and amounted to £1,300 plus delivery and alterations costs.

Norman is to approach his committee, to see if any more funding can be applied for. If so, Roger will make the application as soon as possible.

Item four. From Roger. At our last meeting, it was agreed that PTC were to be approached again about giving support and assistance to us in order to allow use of some of the land which lays beyond the raised beds. This could be utilised to ease our parking problems. Les was able to report that PTC had indeed been spoken to again on this subject and that Lucy has suggested that this project may be possible but that they need some basic plans from us, to allow their committee to discuss this fully and give a decision.

During discussions, Lucy seemed to be indicating that we should allow more people from Charlton Hayes to become plot holders. Roger reported that we do already accept people from Charlton Hayes and that indeed, we already have some as plot holders. It was stated that we can only allocate plots when they

become available and that we operate a waiting list. We presently exclude no one from applying, but we do only have a finite number of plots. If PTC are serious about this, then they need to do something with the vacant land beyond the raised beds, over and above allowing some of it to be used for parking. They need to put the land in a condition, whereby it can be turned into additional plots.

Suggestions are to be made to PTC, as to how we and they, can address the situation. Les is to arrange a meeting with Lucy on site, so that the overall situation can be seen. The timing of this meeting to be advised. Les and Derek are to press for this when they next meet with PTC.

Any other business. The date and time of the AGM have been arranged and Les has kindly booked the Casson Centre, Rodway Road, for 7.30 pm on Wednesday 28th September 2016. We settled on this date partly because most others were already booked and partly because the Treasurer will not be available on the 1st October.

We have had a few comments from members about the main gate padlock. It is causing some people difficulty, in that their keys are getting temporarily stuck in the lock and that it is sometimes very hard to snap the lock closed. Since our meeting, the lock has been examined by the supplier, who has offered the opinion that it is showing signs of wear and tear and this could be due in part, to members who have had copies made of their original key. It is thought that some of these copies could be poor ones. The supplier of the lock has done what he can and the lock seems a little better for now.

Terry Walls' Wife has commented that access via the lane leading to the site, is sometimes difficult due to large vehicles being parked tight up to the edges of the entrance. The council have been spoken to about this, but have stated that there is nothing they can do as long as the vehicles are legally parked. They say that they have painted double yellow lines in all of the areas where they have been permitted to do so.

Sadly, Larry has announced that he will not stand for re-election as Vice chairman at this year's AGM. We were all very sorry to hear this, as Larry has been a brilliant Vice Chair and has done and continues to do much to improve things on the site.

On that note the meeting was wound up.