



North Hinksey Parish Council



Mrs Sharon Henley, Clerk to the Parish Council

Tel: 07494 054581

E-mail: clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk

North Hinksey Parish Council Office, First Floor, 5 Church Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 9TH

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Allotments Committee held on Thursday 12th November 2020 at 7.00pm

The meeting started at 7.05pm.

Those Present: Cllr A MacKeith (part of meeting), Cllrs Bolder, Fairclough and Dowie

In attendance: Sharon Henley, Clerk

Members of Public: 0

Cllr MacKeith initially joined the meeting by video conference but left prior to item 1 due to poor internet connection. Cllr Fairclough Proposed to act as Chairman in her absence and this was unanimously agreed.

1. Apologies for Absence: There were none.
2. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda: Cllr Dowie declared an interest as an Allotment plotholder.
3. Consider request for dispensation on a pecuniary interest in the Allotments: The Clerk received an application from Cllr Dowie for a dispensation to discuss and vote on allotment rents. This was Approved by Councillors Fairclough and Bolder on the basis that the dispensation would be in the interests of persons living in the parish. In addition, the transaction of business would be impeded if a dispensation was not granted for this meeting owing to low numbers of Committee members present, which would therefore make the meeting inquorate.
4. Questions from Members of the Public: There were none.
5. Review of proposals to increase Allotment Rents from 1st April 2021 (Paper 1) and agree final option

Councillors reviewed the paper produced by Cllr MacKeith and the options to increase the rent against anticipated budgetary expenses of around £2052 for 2021-22 as follows:

1st option: Following the system outlined above, we would expect to put the rents up by 20p per pole to £2.20. On the basis of having 635 poles this would bring an income of £1397 per annum (against £2052 needed).

The biggest increase for tenants would be from £20 per annum to £22 for a 10-pole plot (most plots are smaller than this).

2nd option: We could put it up to £2.50 per pole, in the light of income loss this year. This would bring an income of £1587 against a budget of £2052.

3rd option: We could put it up to £3 per pole, in the light of income loss this year. This would bring an income of £1905 against a budget of £2052.
The largest increase for tenants would be from £20 to £30.

Cllr MacKeith's paper highlighted that the aim was to cover the cost of the allotments from the rents but that might not be possible.

Councillors discussed the reasons for the proposed increase which included the fact that the charge had been waived this financial year due to Covid. The last increase had been in 2018 to £2.00 per pole so it was considered reasonable to increase the rents by a moderate amount next year. In addition, feedback had been sought from ploholders at the meeting earlier in the week and there had been no objections. Ploholders accepted that the current rents were very reasonable.

However, Councillors acknowledged that a large rise would not be acceptable due to the lack of available infrastructure, including a water supply.

Cllr Fairclough Proposed Option 2 to increase the rents to £2.50 per pole on the basis that ploholders should be given an explanation of the reasons when being advised of the increase. This was Seconded by Cllr Bolder and unanimously Approved.

The Clerk read out a text message from Cllr MacKeith that a new contractor had been sourced to supply gardening services and the Clerk was asked that Cllr MacKeith circulate a quote to the Committee.

Cllr MacKeith joined the meeting by video conference again at this point.

6. Date of next meeting: Thursday 14th January 2021 at 7pm

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19.33 hours.