

Romford Smallholders Society

Minutes of **Annual General Meeting** held at Ashby Hall, Abbots Close, Romford on 15 November 2011 at 20.00

Meeting chaired and minuted by Bob Roper

1. Minutes of previous AGM were read and agreed.
2. Reports were given by the Society's Treasurer (Jane Alborough) and the Allotment Secretary (Daniel Smart) copies of both are attached. Jane was pleased to be able to announce the winning of grant money to defray the cost of the proposed disabled toilets.

3. Proposed rule changes

3.1 The proposed rule changes by the management committee i.e. changes to rules 3.5, 4.3, 5.2, 6.9,6.9.17.1, were all debated individually and voted on individually without modification and were **all agreed**

3.2 Proposed changes to the rules proposed by Mr Balgobin were all introduced by him at the invitation of the Chair and in two cases were amended by motions submitted by members which were agreed by a majority vote.

3.2.1 The first proposed rule change by Mr Balgobin was 3.13 which had read as follows:

"The monthly meetings of the Committee are restricted to Committee members only or to any persons making special representations (such as appealing against expulsion or over rents) or to any persons specially invited by a principal officer of the Committee (e.g. to give evidence or to act as an observer). Such persons may not vote or support or propose motions."

Mr Balgobin's motion was that the rule would read as follows (proposed changes in bold)

"The monthly meetings of the Committee **will be open to all paid up members of the Society as observers** and any persons making special representations (such as appealing against expulsion or over rents, water rates etc.) **Non Committee members may participate in discussions but are not eligible to vote or propose motions at the monthly meetings.**"

The motion was put before the meeting and debated. It was proposed and agreed to amend the motion so that it read:

“The monthly meetings of the Committee will be open to all paid up members of the Society by request and invitation and any persons making special representations (such as appealing against expulsion or over rents, water rates etc.) Non Committee members may participate in discussions but are not eligible to vote or propose motions at the monthly meetings.”

The amended motion was then voted on and **agreed in its amended form.**

3.2.2. The second of Mr Balgobin’s motions was that Rule 3.14 would be changed from

“3.14 The Committee has the right to call extraordinary general meetings.”

to

“3.14 The General Secretary will call an extraordinary general meeting at any time if requested to do so by the Committee. In addition the Secretary must call an extraordinary general meeting within 14 days of receiving a written request signed by any ten paid up members of the Society”

The motion was put before the meeting and debated. It was proposed and agreed to amend the motion so that it then read:

“3.14 The Secretary will call an extraordinary general meeting at any time if requested to do so by the Committee. In addition the Secretary must call an extraordinary general meeting within 28 days of receiving a written request signed by 25% of the members of the Society.”

The amended motion was then voted on and agreed in its amended form.

3.2.3 Mr Balgobin’s final proposed rule change was in respect of rule 6.8 which reads:

“6.8 Charges for tap water are included in the rent for each plot and the committee has the right to levy additional charges. Charges for the use of hosepipes and sprinklers are the subject of an additional charge to be set each year and agreed by the Committee. The charges will be publicised to members as soon as possible after they are determined.”

The proposal was to change the rule so that in future it would state that:

“6.8 Charges for tap water are included in the rent for each plot and the committee has the right to levy additional charges. Charges for the use of hosepipes and sprinklers are the subject of an additional charge **based per rod** to be set each year and agreed by the Committee. The charges will be publicised to members as soon as possible after they are determined.”

This proposal was debated and voted on without amendment. It was **rejected** and so the original rule stands without any modification

3.3 The final proposed rule change was made by Daniel Smart who proposed that additional text be inserted at the end of the existing rule 3.3 which would state:

“ All members who are standing for election to the management committee will do so on an individual basis and will need to be nominated at the AGM as will all existing members standing for re-election. All existing committee members are required to give a detailed account in person of the activities they have carried out in support of the Society at every AGM prior to any motion for re-election on the agenda. This is so that ordinary members of the Society can assess the value of the committee member’s contribution to the Society as a whole on an annual basis and before any re-elections are decided. Members of the Society will also gain a valuable insight into the work which has been done on their behalf throughout the year.”

The motion was put before the meeting and debated. It was proposed and agreed to amend the motion so that it read:

“All members who are standing for election to the management committee will do so on an individual basis and will need to be nominated at the AGM as will all existing members standing for re-election. All existing committee members are required to give a detailed account in writing 28 days before the AGM of the activities they have carried out in support of the Society. This is so that ordinary members of the Society can assess the value of the committee member’s contribution to the Society as a whole on an annual basis and before any re-elections are decided. Members of the Society will also gain a valuable insight into the work which has been done on their behalf throughout the year.”

The amended motion was then voted on and **agreed in its amended form.**

4. Site Regeneration

4.1 Bill Smart gave the meeting an update on the technical aspects of the new break tank / pump system which would be installed on site. He described the size and cost of the unit. He assured members that the unit would be unlikely to disturb neighbouring residential properties because it would be located within an insulated shipping container.

4.2 Bill also gave an update on the plot for people with disabilities (located just within the Jubilee Avenue gates) and explained that our first priority would be to install the disabled toilets as the money had to be spent very quickly.

4.3 Toilet upgrade. Bill made it clear that this would be a key objective of this year's working parties. Security of the new facilities for site users was flagged up as an important issue by Justine Smith.

5. Election of new officers

5.1 The existing members of the committee due for re-election were all voted on individually and appointed for two years, they were: Olly Wyatt, Nigel and Jane Alborough, Mr Balgobin, Mr Sharma and Kevin Smart.

5.2 In addition a nomination was received from the meeting for the following candidates: April and Eric Mullen; James Bunting, Justine Smith and Kevin Gillard. All 5 were unanimously voted in to stand for two years also.

The meeting closed at approximately 23:00

Note – as outcome of the AGM – intention that draft agenda and papers for the AGM to be circulated before meeting ideally 28 days with the notice of the meeting but no less than 14 days. Also that all minutes of all meetings would be put on website and notice boards to aid transparency and accountability.