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**BHAF COMMITTEE MEETING**

**24 October 2018**

1. **Welcome and apologies** – Apologies were received from Hannes Froelich.
Mark Carroll chaired the meeting.
Maureen Winder was taking the minutes.
Minutes completed by Committee.
Other Committee members attending were: Simon Powell, Josephina Salamone, Jane Griffin, and Richard Howard.
Allotment Association Representatives : Hillary Standing (Keston)
2. **Site Rep Elections**Richard Howard updated the Committee about the Site Rep Election Process. Especially in regards to two sites where the process had attracted nominations. In the first round of elections 2 years ago, all existing site reps had been re-elected. However, in the first group of sites to go through the election process for a second time, there were two sites where other candidates had come forward. This means a site rep election needs to take place. This will be the first time a site rep election process, overseen by the BHAF has ever taken place. It was stipulated the process needs to be open and transparent.

Candidates for the role of Site Rep would need to write a short statement about why they wanted to take on the role, so that anyone voting for their preferred candidate could make a judgement based on additional information provided.

It was reported that the acting Allotment Officer had offered to RH and MW that he would handle the administrative side of the process, using email and post communications, and that emails calling for nominations had already been sent by the Council. The Committee expressed concern about this. The position of Site Rep is to represent plot holders, having the Council administer the process rather than BHAF was considered confusing for plot holders. It was felt that communications regarding the election process would be better to come from BHAF (also being the plot holders’ representatives.) It was agreed that the BHAF Committee should have close oversight of the voting process, and that the email communication to plot-holders should be sent from the BHAF email account.

Email is now the most effective way to reach the most tenants and to encourage the widest participation. It was also felt by the majority of the committee that voting by email was also the best way to maximise participation.

According to the figures given at the meeting over 85% of tenants have an email address registered with the Council. There was a majority support for email to be the main means of promoting and administering the election process.

Email responses could be collected and subsequently counted by the Committee. Mark would obtain the email addresses and plot numbers of tenants for the relevant sites as needed and email all the plot holders. Posters would be placed on Allotment gates informing anyone without a registered email address of the election, and how to vote by post. An address to which postal votes could be sent would be advertised. This should also be a BHAF address.
3. It was agreed that if BHAF was organising the Site Rep election process, BHAF should be seen to be responsible for making sure the process was handled fairly and impartially, and that the process should be open and transparent. The agreed process was published on the BHAF website.

JG asked that members should look in more detail at the role of Site Associations in electing site reps. It was agreed that the issue could not be given the time required in this meeting, and would be added to the agenda for the next Committee meeting.
4. **Site Rep training and ‘volunteer agreement’**
It was agreed that following elections, all Site Reps would need appropriate training. For new reps, this would be a longer session, and would include detail of all the administrative processes and standards established in the Strategy. For experienced site reps, the training would take a workshop approach involving further updates on the Allotment Strategy, equalities, health and safety issues, conflict resolution, and data protection. Site Reps would need to agree the standards to which they would be committed, including acceptance of the principles and duties expressed within the role description. Future work would involve agreeing with the Council a means by which Site Reps could be formally asked to step down under certain circumstances.
5. **Proposal to ban the use of glyphosate and other synthetic herbicides for allotment sites**Simon Powell proposed that BHAF should request the Council to move to a ban on the use of glyphosate on allotments and for sale in site shops. Simon had already discussed the proposal with the Allotment Officer, and had received advice that the Council would need to look into whether it was legally allowed to ban the use of any chemical. Simon pointed out the inconsistency in this position as the Council had in recent years imposed bans on a variety of hazardous items from being used on sites, such as carpets, glass bottles and car tyres.
6. **Waiting list fee - impact and any change needed**The meeting agreed that this would need to be monitored carefully, and adaptations considered, based on the impact for specific sites. Site Reps should be asked to report on any negative consequences. It was stated that St Louis Home had reported a reduced demand for plots since the fee has been in place.
7. **Rules revision (re ordered)**Giuseppina and Jane would be meeting in the next days to continue their work on the re-ordering of the rules.
8. **Comments on the draft actions included in the food strategy**The draft actions for BHAF to support or participate in were accepted.
9. **City Plan part 2**2 allotment sites were under threat from proposed urban fringe housing developments ("H2") identified in City Plan part 1:

**Craven Vale
Mile Oak**

Craven Vale does not seem to be included in the list of possible development sites in CPP2, which presumably means house-building has been ruled out here for the foreseeable future.

There is a proposed housing development (potentially 125 dwellings) located immediately adjacent to the Mile Oak allotment site.

Whilst the map shows it adjacent to, rather than on allotment land, we should remain vigilant to possible future expansion and encroachment onto the allotment site years down the line.

This was the case on Craven Vale where the initial number of dwellings was estimated at 50, but when the consultants reviewed their plans they upped the number to make the development "financially viable"

1. **The voluntary payment scheme**
It was too early to assess the success of this scheme, but the Committee would review the situation at the next meeting