Humber Avenue Community Allotments Community Interest Company

Committee Meeting

Monday 30th June 2025 6.30pm – 8pm

HACA Social Hub

Present:

Terry Smith (TS) Chair

Peter Davey (PD)

Christine Busfield (CB)

Malcolm Hedger (MH)

Linda Head (LH)

Andrew Scoon (AS)

Anne Garbutt (AG)

Lynne Rosthorn (LR)

Ian Hamilton (IH)

Ros Knight (RK)

Apologies:

Emma Wood (EW)

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Apologies

TS welcomed the committee to the meeting and extended a warm welcome to newly co-opted committee members, AG and LR. Apologies noted as above.

2. Minutes from the last meeting

The minutes from the AGM on 22nd May were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting, proposed by CB and seconded by MH.

3. Matters arising from the last meeting not covered by the agenda

There were no matters arising.

4. Reports

4.1 Chair's Report

TS informed the committee that there had been a Directors meeting on 23rd June which focused on roles and responsibilities. The Directors also discussed improving communication including looking at producing a flowchart for processes and online sharing of information. EW will look into the options of using Dropbox or SharePoint for document sharing on her return from leave. **ACTION – EW.**

TS handed out copies of the current committee role definitions and asked the group to look through these and let him know if they had any comments or changes. **ACTION -All.**

TS reported that the HACA constitution had been updated.

He informed the committee that councillor Vicki Wells had met with AS and TS.

He updated the group that EW had taken over managing the website and Facebook and had freshened up the website. He asked LR if she could provide a photo to be uploaded onto the website. **ACTION – LR.**

TS updated the committee on funding applications, explaining that funding for Worthing Community Chest had been submitted.

He explained that CB was now able to exchange names and postcodes with WAM to help with waiting list management.

TS informed the committee that HACA had welcomed a fourth charity on site (Homestart).

He added that there would be approximately 90 scouts attending the site over a three evenings and asked the committee if they could help on any of the evenings.

TS informed the committee that the Terms and Conditions, as agreed at the AGM, had not yet been updated.

4.2 Treasurer's Report

PD handed out the current financial statement. He informed the committee that the social hub was broadly self-funding. He added that there was still £1200-£1400 to come from Worthing Community Chest.

PD informed the committee that the water bill from April to the end of June was £800-£900. IH asked whether the water should be turned off during the winter, as previously discussed, and PD felt the committee should consider this, along with considering a surcharge for plot holders if the water bill was much higher than expected. LR asked whether the council will provide water buts and TS explained that they do not but Southern Water do and it was up to individual plot holders to apply directly to Southern Water for one.

PD highlighted the current bank balance of £742.46. He added that Party on the Plot was anticipated to be largely self-funding.

4.3 Membership Secretary's Report

CB reported there had been one new application since the last meeting, making a total of 86 people on the waiting list.

4.4 Company Secretary's Report

RK informed the committee that there had been two further plot inspections since the last meeting, with one non cultivation notice issued in April and one in May. One notice to quit was issued on 5th June.

RK reported there had been a breach of health and safety with some sharp tools left out on a plot; the plot holder was reminded of the potential dangers of this in a meeting in June.

5. Projects

MH informed the committee that the generator was up and running and the electrics were connected, kitchen fitted and door ramp installed in the social hub. The old social hub had been converted to a storeroom. He thanked Graham North, Stephen Head and James Haigh for their help with these projects.

MH thanked the SAND Project Manager and work experience student Kirby for their work on weeding and clearing plots. He offered thanks to Men In Sheds for their work on site.

MH handed out a copy of the plans for the new plots and explained that work had now started.

MH updated the committee on the other projects on site including the accessibility ramp, which HACA were awaiting a quote from the council, lighting needed for the hub still and a side gate to keep people away from the generator. He added that the manure bay will be repaired once the manure stock had reduced allowing access to the back of the bay.

AS added thanks to Katie and Kirby for building the pallet beehive.

6. Website and Facebook

EW was not present at the meeting but had prepared a report, which RK read out. EW highlighted that she had made a few changes on the website including changing the events page to an events and bookings page, where she will update the website with any social hub bookings. She had looked into online bookings but this would incur a cost of £29 a month as the website would need upgrading. EW reported that she had updated the cover photo on Facebook and would change this to echo the seasons. EW reported that, following discussions with several plot holders, the gardening blog had been removed as this was dated 2023. She was hoping to replace this with a "what our plot holders say" piece and is planning to approach plot holders to see if they would write a piece for the website on themes such as accessibility and biodiversity.

7. Newsletter

RK explained she had just produced a newsletter and would plan a further one for the end of July/August.

8. Health and Safety

LH informed the committee that she did a health and safety check on site in June and highlighted the repair required to the manure bay. She requested help in checking the smoke alarm as this was out of her reach. TS will find someone to check this. **ACTION – TS.** LH explained that the First Aid Box will be relocated to the social hub. AS asked whether a spare site key had been put with the defibrillator for emergency use and TS asked CB to do this. **ACTION – CB.**

9. Environment and Biodiversity

AS reported that he had met with Vicki Wells and from their conversations it was clear that biodiversity was quite daunting for people. He asked the committee about their understanding of biodiversity and the committee shared their thoughts, including encouraging insects and wildlife, growing flowers, having a wild area on their plot, creating bug hotels, and a "dead" hedge on plot, discouraging the use of products such as weedkillers on plots, although it was noted that the WAGA shop stocked these products but HACA has no control over this. TS commented that he had learnt a lot about biodiversity and felt this may be HACA's next big project, with opportunities for education. AS explained that companion planting, creating mini wild meadows around the water troughs, creating ponds on site were all areas HACA could consider. TS commented that a grant may be available for HACA to apply for to assist with this project. IH felt that talks on biodiversity for plot holders would be useful and these can take place in the social hub. TS suggested the head gardener from Highdown could give a talk and AS added there were several local nature groups and charities HACA could link in with.

10. Party on the Plot

TS informed the committee that the plaque had been organised and Vicki Wells was attending to officially open the social hub. A former HACA plot holder would be doing the burgers and IH volunteered to assist him. TS asked committee members if they could donate any items for the Tombola and raffle. **ACTION – All.**

TS added there would be another Tai Chi demonstration, which had been very well received last year, and a quiz. The committee decided there would not be alcohol available this year. Teas and coffees will be provided by Graham North. CB volunteered to take photographs on the day and TS commented that the council will want some of these. TS asked the committee if they could arrive earlier to help set up the two gazebos and also if they could provide salads, quiches and cakes to supplement the hot food. **ACTION – All.**

IH asked whether the residents on Humber Avenue would be invited to Party on the Plot and TS replied that they would be.

11. Process of Co-opting committee members

AS informed the committee had had asked for this to be raised as he was unclear of the process. TS explained that the committee used to meet monthly but decided bi-monthly would be more appropriate but, between meeting, new committee members could be co-opted via email conversations between committee members. He explained this was covered in HACA's constitution.

12. Future direction of HACA

PD suggested the committee have an informal get together later in the year to discuss the future direction of HACA. TS added that there are changes planned for SAND Project next year, which will affect how HACA work with them. The committee set a date of 11th October for this.

18. Any Other Business

TS circulated copies of the National Allotment Society magazine which featured an article on HACA.

AS commented that his former plot requires a heavy cut. The committee also discussed encouraging plot holders to collect seeds and will also look at purchasing seed sources if funding is available.

PD updated the committee on very recent correspondence regarding the new plots. He explained these were due to be finished at the end of October and handed over to HACA around 14-27 November. TS asked PD if he could find out where the water supply was coming from for the new plots. **ACTION – PD.**

AS asked if he could attend the planned meeting and he, PD and CB will liaise outside of the committee meeting to fix a date.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 20.05

19. Date of next meeting

Monday 1st September 2025.