

RUSHDEN PERMANENT ALLOTMENT AND SMALL HOLDING SOCIETY LIMITED
Registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.
Register no. 3126R
E-mail rushdenallotments@hotmail.co.uk
Minutes of the Special General Meeting Held on Wednesday 25 August 2021
Goods Store, Rushden Historical Transport Society, John Clark Way, Rushden

Chairman David Flook (Vice Chairman) DF
Pam Clarke (Committee member) PC
Alan Martin (Society member) AVM
Russell Jarvis (Chairman) RJ
Anita Medlock (Committee member) AM

All attendees signed in at the door – 75 members attended
Society Members have not been identified by name

Meeting started at 1932.

Purpose of the meeting

Letter to be read out by Mrs Pam Clarke with Question/statements to be answered by Russell Jarvis, Chairman.

The letter written on Monday 19 October 2020 was read out by PC until the microphone started to malfunction. Alan Martin took over from PC. (This letter was sent to all members with an up to date email address on 28/07/21).

Member – suggested that as everyone had seen the letter that only the allegations be read out.

Member – suggested that the whole letter should be read out.

RJ- didn't feel he would be given a fair hearing by the committee when the letter was read out and given the seriousness of the allegations he decided that an SGM needed to be called.

Member-wanted to know why RJ did not go to Washbrook Rd to canvas the members there. RJ –stated that he didn't need to go to Washbrook Rd to talk to the members, as he already had more than the 30 need to call an SGM. He went to Bedford Rd and Highfield Rd.

Member- wanted to know if the letter had been read out to the people on the field in full RJ – replied that they saw enough of the letter to make their decision to call the meeting

Member -the letter was put on the gate for people to read at Bedford Rd

Member – who did you speak to on the committee?

Member – interrupted and said that Russell should just answer and defend himself for the allegations

Member –I don't see why there is a problem with him correcting the minutes

Member – thank you to Russell for keeping the allotments

PC-stated that she had proof that the minutes are being changed by RJ
Member – agreed and said that yes he changes the minutes and we have proof of this
RJ-stated that some items weren't discussed at a meeting because she (referring to PC) didn't attend, and the next meeting she walked out.
PC- explained she left the meeting to have a cigarette because of the bickering
RJ-stated that PC had not returned to the meeting after this
DF- halted the discussion and reminded the meeting that Russell needed to answer the Question/statements

Question/statement in letter –

RJ delaying discussing agenda items

I am putting my complaints and objections in writing so as not to be misconstrued when minutes are made and I suspect corrected by Russell Jarvis. I also feel that as the meeting are being filibustered by Russell, serious matters are NOT being discussed as by the time the agenda is approached the meetings are closed due to time.

RJ Response

Minutes –

- What's the problem with correcting minutes?
- All members of the committee have the opportunity to request amendments to the minutes when the secretary sends out the minutes.
- I do at time request changes as any member of the committee can.
- A series of meetings where lengthy correspondence from 2 members had been received which took the committee time to discuss.
- PC absent from July meeting and as items that were being carried over were from PC the Committee felt they were unable to discuss them.
- PC and DF walked out of the September 2020 meeting disrupting the meeting preventing discussion on items carried over from previous meetings.

Question/statement in letter –

Firstly I expect my letter to be published with the next set of minutes and am very happy for my Name to be published alongside so ALL members are aware of what is actually occurring within the committee...Its about time they were made aware of a few truths...

RJ Response

- This was complied with.

Question/statement in letter –

Length of time as Chair

I feel Russell has now been Chairman for 8 some years and feel he is hiding things from committee members and members alike for what gain I am unsure of.

RJ Response

Length of time as Chairman

- At the time of the letter the statement that I have been Chairman for 8 years is not true. I have been Chairman since the AGM of 2015 (5.5 years at the time of the letter

- The previous Chairman resigned in Sept 2014. As Vice-Chairman I became acting Chairman until next AGM with committee approval.
- 2015 AGM Elected unopposed
- 2016 AGM Elected unopposed
- At the AGM of 2017 another member stood against RJ. Members voted for RJ, 80 to 10
- At the AGM of 2018 another member stood against RJ. Members voted for RJ, 72 to 29
- 2019 AGM Elected unopposed
- 2020 AGM Elected unopposed

I am unsure what I am supposed to be “hiding”. We are just an allotment Society. We are not a multinational company involved in takeovers, mergers or multi-million pound contracts.

I try my best to carry out the duties of Chairman to look after the interests of the Society and its members. I feel I have the responsibility to ensure the Society has a secure future and allotments are available for the local community for years to come.

Question/statement in letter-
Road repairs

A fair few of the committee members were concerned that the requested plainings for 'repairs' at Bedford Road Site would not be adequate enough to make the repairs long lasting. I find it incredulous that even though I requested for three separate quotations for the works to be carried out by trusted companies who are trained and skilled in this area of works, however, Russell took it upon himself to assume he knew best. I have since been told that Russell has allegedly been saying we(the committee) would not agree to invest in the road and wouldn't allow him to have the road done properly.... another example of the lies Russell will not admit making. Please confirm how much it has cost the society for the works undertaken. Russell made the case that the contact Mark Cox raised for the £17 a tonne price was not available when called, when in actual fact there was still a high amount available just not quite 100 tonnes. why didn't we order as much as we could from Marks contact and then the rest from the other?

Road Plainings

- I contacted 9 separate companies for quotes. Only 3 would be able to supply plainings. These 3 supplied costs.
- The committee would not agree initially to proceeding with the purchase of road plainings and I felt that there was an attempt to delay the work being carried out.
- The committee felt the need to visit Bedford Road to see if the work was required.
- The quantity calculated and ordered fulfilled the areas of Bedford Road that was planned to do.
- Highfield Road was done 2 weeks after Bedford Road using the same supplier and the amount calculated fulfilled the areas that had to be done.
- While doing Highfield Road, Grafton Road Car Park extension was also completed.

Mark Cox Contact

- MC stated that a supplier could supply at £17 per tonne.

- This supplier was one of the suppliers I contacted. I contacted them again after MC supplied the cost at a meeting. As they did not have stock they would not supply a cost.
- As for PC stating they had "some" stock when I contacted them I just asked for a price per tonne if bought by the lorry load. As they did not have stock they would not give a price.
- I had to wait for the next committee meeting to get approval to purchase from a supplier who had stock. This caused a further delay to carry out the work.
- Even if they had a partial amount it does not make sense to have some from one supplier and the balance (most) from a second supplier. And we would probably have to hire equipment on separate occasions.
- Dave Flook went to MC's supplier this year to do Washbrook Roads roadways. They were not able to supply so DF had to use the same supplier as used for Highfield Road and Bedford Road.

Question/statement in letter-

Road plannings

I would also like to take this opportunity in reminding everyone that on the rare occasion we did receive email responses from Russell, this was to object to the original agreed amount of one tonne (proposed and voted) and an additional £80 for for further crushed tarmac to fill in the craters that Washbrook road so desperately needed filling.

RJ Response

- The original amount (2 tonne for £90) for Washbrook Road had been agreed at the January meeting.
- My concern at doing the work at Washbrook Road was the timing. It had been agreed in January but committee members from WR wanted to do it in April, at the height of the first lock down which we all know was very restrictive in what we could do. Emails available if any member wishes to see them.
- It should be noted I had to wait 2 to 3 meetings to get a receipt for the second load. MC had handed over cash without obtaining a receipt.

Question/statement in letter-

Minutes & Positions

When the minutes for the meetings are raised, are they perused by Russell First so he can correct them to his advantage?

RJ Response

- No they are not seen by me in advance or altered before being issued to the committee.
- When the minutes are issued to the committee every committee member has the opportunity to have amendments made before a final version is issued.

Question/statement in letter –

Providing contradictory information

I would like to draw everyone's attention to the minutes of the meeting held on 4th July 2019, Secretary's Report and correspondence, No.2

Email - Julie Josling - Request to keep Chickens and Ducks.

RJ Said there were no Plots available to keep Chickens at BR. He expressed concerns that during the winter months Ms Josling rarely came to the Allotment, she will be reminded of the need to attend livestock daily.

This totally contradicts RJ saying he NEVER said Julie Josling couldn't have chickens and that he doesn't pressurise people to only have chickens to the 'designated area'.

RJ Response

- At this time (July 2019) Bedford Road was full with no spare plots.
- The committee have a responsibility when giving permission for members to keep livestock.
- PC herself had raised concerns about a member on Washbrook Road keeping livestock and had proposed they were refused permission due to their lack of visits.
- On the 29th July 2020 (reported in August Committee Meeting) J Josling requested a small plot to keep hens and ducks on (member for 3 years) J Josling was been given permission to keep livestock. J Josling wanted the plot at the side, towards the bottom of the field.
- The plot she asked for become available at rent Day March 2020.

Extract from 19th August 2020 Minutes

- Plot holders at Bedford Road are not "pressured" to have poultry in one part of the field. Two members have poultry on their veg plots.
- There is a part of the field that has had poultry plots that are "fenced" and these have been there for many years (long before even RJ was a member). When these come available other members have asked for them as they are "ready to go" for poultry ie fenced.
- There is a part of the field that historically has proved difficult for members to cultivate. These are offered as "extra" land for members who wish to have extra land for poultry.
- Julie Josling was not given permission to keep poultry prior to the meeting, she was just shown a plot at her request to consider if she wanted it or not.

Question/statement in letter-
Emails

I would also Like to clarify that at NO point did Russell comment that some of the emails were of a "nasty" nature when in fact it was myself that said that some of the emails were Rude towards people! I am happy for all my emails to be published to the members so they could clearly see how many Question/statements were ignored by Russell and the rudeness of Anita Jarvis was to the point where I had to remind her to be professional.

RJ Response

- Not clear on what is being claimed.
- For the period of the first lockdown when we were unable to meet, emails were used to keep the Committee up to date. During this period there should have been little going on due the lockdown, it should have been the case of the Society just "ticking over".
- However, the number of emails ran into the hundreds.
- Due to the volume of emails that are generated some months, and that some of the replies are to emails of a different subject can make it difficult to keep up with them. I am not the only Committee member to feel this way.
- Eg there was in excess of 350 emails from Committee members between November and December's meetings on various subjects, this was at a time when the Committee was back to holding meetings.
- I have tried to explain to members of the Committee that, when we are having meetings, decisions cannot be made between meetings on email as they may not get recorded correctly in the minutes. If this was to happen there could be decisions made that would become "hidden" to the members.

Question/statement in letter-
Accounts

I would like to go further to add to RJ's additional quote on the minutes "that as he was the only signatory on the account no one else could do anything" was not said in the

meeting at all and absolutely has no bearing to what I was saying with regards to the amount of control he has over the running of the society.

RJ Response

- I was the only signatory on the accounts left on the Committee. The banks would not discuss anything with anybody else.

Question/statement in letter

RJ behaving like a 'boss'

Russell needs to stop behaving like a boss and realise the Committee are there to bare the responsibilities of the running of the society as it says of the website:-

'We are an Independent Society, run by the members for the members....'

It doesn't state run by the chairman for the chairman.

RJ Response

- This is how I understand and act on behalf of the Society.
- There may be times when there are disagreements on the way forward and the Chairman and Committee members have a responsibility to resolve these. This may not always be a unanimous decision.
- The Chairman of the Society is there to ensure that the Society continues to operate within regulations and government guidelines. During the pandemic the way the Society has had to operate has been particularly challenging. This at times has been unpopular with some Committee members.

Question/statement in letter -

I propose that Anita Medlock, Dave Flook and myself (Pam Clark) take on the responsibility of the stores and any potato and seed orders from now on.

RJ Response

- Why is there a need to change something that is working successfully.

Question/statement in letter-

Tractor incident

I propose that The Tractor incident is raised as a separate meeting as Russell did not receive any discipline through his dangerous use of the tractor to Mark Cox - a full investigation should be made regarding this....Again Russell does as Russell likes without being accountable for his actions! I feel this has been brushed under the carpet and NO OTHER COMPANY WOULD PUT UP WITH THIS BEHAVIOUR!

RJ Response

- Report Written by Russell Jarvis at the time and Filed at the time with the Secretary and held in Accident Folder

INCIDENT 25th JUNE AT GRAFTON ROAD

Notified Committee that a delivery of compost was due on the 25th June.

Delivery in fact came on the Wednesday 24th June.

Contacted Dave Flook that the compost had come early and arranged to meet at Grafton Road at 8:30 Thursday 25th June to load up the tractor trailer to deliver stock to Washbrook Road.

I arrived before Dave Flook in order to get the Tractor and Trailer out of the garage. Gate to Grafton Road allotment shut and locked after I had let myself in.

Parked the Tractor in front of the stores building ready to load the trailer.

I let Dave Flook in when he arrived at approx 8:30, gates were shut and locked behind him.

Trailer was loaded with 54 bags of Mother Earth Compost.

While Dave Flook was securing the load on the Trailer with rope I loaded 13 bags of Growell on to the two barrows for loading into his vehicle. The pallet of Growell was located at back of the building. While loading these barrows Dave Flook told me that Mark Cox had arrived at the Gate. I initially assumed that Dave Flook would let Mark Cox in with his keys. As I started to move the barrows to the front of the building he asked me for my keys to let him in. I gave them to him, and went back for the second barrow of growell.

Dave Flook had finished tying and securing the load on the Trailer so I moved the Tractor out of the way so Dave Flook could back his vehicle up to load the Growell on.

Mark Cox had gone in to the building. I followed him after moving the Tractor. He appeared to be counting the stock of Mother Earth compost left.

Dave Flook had loaded the 13 bags on to his vehicle while I was in the building with Mark Cox. We all left the building and I locked it up. Opened the Gates, put on my high viz jacket ready to leave Grafton Road to go to Washbrook Road.

I had a conversation with Dave Flook while he was in his vehicle along the lines that he would go first and go and open the gates at Washbrook Road and I would lock the gates behind us.

I got on the tractor and Mark Cox sat on the front wheel of the tractor and said "he would not move until I moved the date and time of the meeting". I asked him several times politely to get off the tractor. He aggressively refused. I started to use stronger language as I felt intimidated. Mark Cox still refused to get off the tractor until I moved the meeting. I refused under such aggression. I started the tractor engine hoping this would make him move but all he kept saying was "I can't hear you". So I switched the tractor off. It is possible that the weight of Mark Cox being sat on the front wheel and leaning towards me may have made the tractor roll back.

In my opinion he should not have been sat on the wheel in the first place. I feel he only came for an argument with me. He should also take the responsibility as to not purposefully put himself in that position on the tractor tyre. It is not a seat.

I have had a conversation with the Police and they have instructed me on the action I should now take in the future should there be a reoccurrence of such actions towards me.

- Incident was reported to HSE, on the 29th June 2020, report number was supplied, as I was "prevented and obstructed from carrying out lawful business on behalf of the Society in a manner that endangered myself and others"

Member – do you have a number for this report?

RJ –yes

Member- so why didn't you tell the committee? (there was no response from RJ to this Question)

Question/statement in letter-
Field Maintenance

I Propose that all Field maintenance outside the normal General maintenance is to be organised by Mark Cox.

RJ Response

- Traditionally, Field Stewards for each field organise ALL maintenance and projects on their own fields. If they need assistance from any other Committee members they would ask.
- I do not see the need to change.
- We do very few “tasks” outside of what would be considered normal maintenance.

Question/statement in Letter-

RJ goes against committee decisions

I would also like Russell to tell the Committee WHY he continues to go against decisions that have been correctly proposed and voted for.....

RJ Response

- The only time I go against decisions, which is reported to the Committee with my reasons, is if it would result in the Society potentially operating outside of the rules and laws.
- I do check the legalities of any changes and decisions. I have a responsibility to the members and the Society to ensure we operate within the law and government regulations.
- On occasions certain members of the Committee “push” through a vote regardless of what I have to say on the matter.

Question/statement in Letter-

Discrepancies in accounts

There should also be an enquiry as to how it was possible to make an error of £1000.00 to the figures and how it has been missed in the bank balances? surely this would be £1000.00 less and why when Russell Jarvis has been doing the accounts alone hadn't noticed this - Russell meddling the accounts from John Bowerman's departure has left himself wide open to accusation - i did forewarn this in several emails when I said Russell shouldn't touch the accounts without supervision from the vice chairman. This is a serious matter that needs addressing urgently. I also do not recall a proper voting taking place to temporarily appoint Russell to this role...But then as he was spectacularly ignoring all emails relating to this I feel the committee were and still are swiped aside without proper protocols taking place.

RJ Response

£1000 error in accounts

- This is an accounting error in connection with the valuation of the stock (compost etc) held by the Society.
- This is not a loss of money in the bank balance as insinuated.

- At the end of John Bowerman's first year as Treasurer, he, in error, valued the stock at sell and not at cost for the year end accounts. This over exaggerated the profit by approximately £1000. The following year still using sell value would have given a true profit.
- After JB stood down RJ started to get the figures and paperwork ready for the year end accounting (2020) when RJ noticed the error. This was reported to the rest of the Committee as soon as it was spotted, recorded in September 2020 minutes.
- This has been corrected in the accounts for year ending 2020.
- The profit over the three years is correct a total, it is just not recorded correctly by year. (I have rounded the numbers for ease of explanation)
- JB Year ending 2018 £1900, Year ending 2019 £1000, year after JB stood down, 2020 £1100 Total £4000
Should have been
- JB Year ending 2018 £900, Year ending 2019 £1000, year after JB stood down, 2020, £2100 Total £4000
- I have not meddled in JB's account as accused, I started a fresh set of accounts.
- As stated before I was the only signatory left for the banks to communicate with.
- The accounts are audited independently.

Question/statement in letter-

Missing money from donation pot

I would also like to know where and how much money went missing from the donation pot? not having access to count it I don't know, Russell should know this if he officially gave it to John to bank....It was noted that when Russell moved around the store to accommodate a large order of compost, this is when the till area was sorted and the pot was emptied..... I have spoken to John Bowerman regarding this and at NO point has Russell ever given him any funds from said pot. As the members are gracious enough to give us money, it would be nice for them to know it hasn't been taken for personal gain.

RJ Response

- When did PC notice it was missing?
- Why was it not reported at the time?
- Money from the donation pot was passed to JB for banking – see entry in accounts 18th April 2018, Grafton Road Coffee Income £5"
- The member who use to insist on leaving money did not come up much in 2018/9 due to personal reasons and has now left the Society
- This "pot" is just located in a draw of the serving bench at Grafton Road
- I object to the accusation that I have taken the money.

Question/statement in letter-

Meetings in lockdown

There should also be a contingency plan put in place in case of a further lock down. that Zoom is used to continue meetings in case we are unable to have a physical meeting in the future - This is to stop the Chairman taking it upon himself to do what ever he likes as he did in the first lock down.

RJ response

- We were not able to have committee meetings during the first lockdown. All committee members were in agreement.
- Using Zoom would have excluded some members of the committee. This is completely wrong to exclude anyone from taking part.
- Only decision taken by the Chairman was to cover the vacated Treasurer by doing the accounts.
 - I was the only Committee member left that was a signatory with the Bank. They will only discuss or help signatories.
 - Due to lockdown I felt I would not be able to easily or safely meet with anyone else to show them how to keep our accounts up to date and the Treasurers tasks generally.
 - I have a responsibility that the society continues to operate.

Member – had offered for her husband to assist with the accounts but he was told that it would have to go to the committee

AM- this was never discussed by RJ with the committee

Question/statement in Letter

Inaccuracies in mintes

I would aslo like to clarify as the minutes are still incorrect to Russells accusations towards me ordering in loose compost:-

Both Dave Flook and myself ordered in some loose compost as there was none available to the society and Russell could not confirm if there was likely to be anymore for a while. we did not do this for personal gain, nor did we refuse any field purchasing of said compost. It was advertised to all fields on the Facebook group. I was not going to inform Russell personally of this as whenever I have attempted to call him he NEVER answers his calls from me. As I had placed the information on Facebook Russell would have been welcome to purchase some for himself like every other member on all fields

RJ Response

- PC has never called me (There is no record of missed calls from PC to me.)
- Advertising on Facebook excludes 75% membership
- Why did PC not suggest that this was purchased through the Society and any profit going into the Society funds.

As PC has said earlier, claimed that RJ had left himself open, this behaviour by her leaves herself open to accusations of selling for herself. Minutes for August 2020 meeting.

Question/statement in Letter

Access to email account

Then there is the matter of the emails:- as a Committee it was voted and passed that Dave Flook should receive login details for the email account - simply update the GDPR document to include Vice Chairman to the statement where applicable. I don't understand WHY it so difficult?? Many other companies manage it when our little member society cannot because Russell is either hiding something or the need for control is that over powering its is effecting the running of the society.

RJ Response

- It is the Chairman's responsibility to ensure that the member's personal information is protected.
- The Society has a published GDPR statement that states who has access to the members personal data that the Society holds, including email addresses.
- PC states that it was only the vice-chairman needed access when in fact it was a number of committee members who wanted access to members email addresses to use for themselves.
- Members of the committee did not want the members to know that their data was to be shared with other committee members.
- I am uncomfortable what some of the Committee members want to use the members email address for. This is why I have not allowed access WITHOUT permission from the members.

AVM-this was only to the committee members
AM-we only wanted access to the email inbox

Question/statement in letter-
Payment for water tap

I would also like clarification as to when the Committee decided that a payment of £35 should be made to a member for adding a tap to the trough on Bedford road at the request of Alan Martin? in his written communications, he states that he would be happy to have the tap installed at his own expense?

RJ Response

- The first point is that "infrastructure" on the allotment fields belongs to the Society for all members to use. Therefore should be funded by the Society. Otherwise a member could claim that it belongs to them and no one else can use it.
- There was a payment of £30 for materials paid to the member who fitted for the standpipe.
-

Question/statement in letter-
Cost of RJ's field hours

Then there are the field hours...

WHY out of all the fields is Russell the only one who is claiming the most??? £995.15 Russell has claimed just in field hours alone! when other fields do not? then there is additional payments for Secretarial works and a further £100 bonus... Washbrook Road hours a mere £238 for the financial year.

RJ Response

- £995.15 is the amount I have claimed for fields hours I have claimed for work carried out on ALL fields not just Bedford Road. Bedford Road Field hours is £615.95.
- The £100 "bonus" is paid to all field stewards. This is not a bonus. This is a "payment" for holding keys and being generally available for the members.
- Secretarial payment came to £46.18 for the year 19-20 !

Last year a total of £1,461.17 was claimed in field hours for Bedford road plus all the hidden extras that we dont know about

RJ Response

- Bedford Road Field hours for 18-19 came to £1230.41 NOT £1461.17
- What "hidden" extras are you insinuating?

Highfield road in 2018-2019 £1310.10 and again in the rear washbrook road £869.18

RJ Response

- The field hours are what the field hours are. Do you expect our field stewards to work for nothing.

Russell is always boasting of all the help he receives from members for things being carried out yet the figures do not lie.... its 10% plus of the rents taken in

RJ Response

- Members at Bedford Road volunteering all the time. They do not have to be asked they just pick up a job as it happens.
- Field hours are budgeted for.

Perhaps I am wrong but Bedford Road is not that big by comparison to Washbrook and Highfield Road - so would be interesting to know why there is so much money bleeding out on field hours?

RJ Response

- No comment to be made

Question/statement in letter

Field rents

Perhaps a discussion should be made as to capping the amount of hours in a budget to avoid hikes in the rents.... since Russell assumed the position of Chairman from Vice Chairman we have had a 150% rent rise.....is this coincidental??

RJ Response

- The rent to be charged are proposed by the treasurer or any member can also propose a rent. This is done at an AGM and voted on by the membership.

Question/statement in letter-

Missing stock from store

I conclude that since I have been on the committee Russell has informed us of large stock quantities going missing, Figures being incorrect and money going missing, yet he has full Control over every aspect of the running of the society, so I can only assume that either he is very incapable of holding that responsibility or he is using the society for personal gain.

RJ Response

- Stock going missing has now stopped since I reported at the October 2019 Committee meeting.
 - 28/01/19 to 27/3/19 – 1 Mother Earth (£4.50)
 - 17/4/19 to 7/5/19 – 1 Mother Earth, 1 6x and 1 Lime (£19.00)
 - 27/8/19 to 13/9/19 – 1 pack cable ties (£1.50)
 - 21/9/19 8:00 to 10:30 – 1 pack cable ties (£1.50)
 - 26/9/19 to 7/10/19 – 4 packets Broad Beans from seed rack and 1 pack of plant labels (£5.39)
 - Total = £31.89 We would have to sell 59 bags of mother earth to cover this loss.
- I have now put systems in place that check the stock more often since 1st November 2019.
- No money has ever gone missing from the takings of store sales.
- The account error has already been explained, no money missing
- I object to the accusation of personal gain.

Member - There were always 3 signatories for the cheque book when I was on the committee– there should always be 3 signatures.

RJ- explained that the society now has internet banking for the treasurer and that this has since been amended. There still has to be 2 out of 3 signatures on the cheques. The treasurer, vice and chair all have access.

Member - weren't we under investigation at some time

RJ - We were going through a "Safeguard Review". I had to have an hour's conversation on the phone with the Bank. Normally this is on behalf of HMRC. They (the Bank) wanted to know all about our cash flow and where our money comes from. I had to make a statement on the people who are paying us large amounts of cash, rent compost purchases, etc, etc, are truly members. It is not unusual for companies like us to be investigated. We have a high cash turnover.

Member-I have wasted my time this evening

Member- only one person to speak at a time

Member – can we have the vote

DF- Pam has the right to ask Question/statements. The letter was read out in a meeting and RJ said he wanted to look at it for a month then come back at the next meeting with his responses. But he came back to say there was going to be an SGM so it wasn't ever discussed at the committee meeting.

RJ proposed that he should be exonerated from all wrong doings.

Member- stated that you are not getting on, so if you want to get off the committee and we will vote people on who will get on.

Member – the committee is rubbish

Member – you haven't got a clue about what it is like

Member – my husband has resigned because of the committee and back biting, I want you all to sort yourselves out to run a society that we are all happy to be a member of. I don't need it.

DF stated that Pam has held back on her Question/statements while Russell was speaking and she is a member and has the right to ask her Question/statements.

Member wanted to ask a Question/statement about herself in relation to a point that Pam had mentioned. The member asked who goes to the field everyday in the winter if they don't have livestock. It was said in an email by Russell that she didn't go down during the winter when she asked permission to keep chickens.

There were a few comments made by other members that were not audible.

Member wanted to know why no-one had put themselves forward for the chair if RJ was doing such a bad job and felt that the members were sitting in the meeting wasting their time.

PC-explained she would have applied to be Chairperson but her current health conditions meant she was unable to do so.

PC – stated that the members only get to see what they are given (in relation to the financial figures), there is not an actual breakdown. PC explained she was asking the Question/statements in her letter because they were continually being ignored by RJ in meetings.

Member –stated that PC had started this by writing this letter, accused RJ of stealing and other things. The member also stated that another member has had her data protection affected by PC using her name in the letter,

This was followed by a heated discussion about data protection. Some members felt it was correct that only the Chairman had access to their personal contact details, others considered that the Vice Chairman should also have access. References were made to GDPR and that only one person should have access, references were made about the committee not knowing what information was being sent to the society email box.

PC-explained that the letter should have been redacted before being put out as all documents going out to the members should be.

Several Members – stated that 'we need to have our vote. We should vote now'

Member – it should be one vote per plot.

RJ- yes its one vote per member

Member- there are members over there that should not vote"

RJ – they (referring to the ladies that the member had pointed to) have plots in their own right.

Some members left the building at this point (2048)

Member – what is the proposal?

DF- I don't know myself

RJ – the first vote is to exonerate me and depending on the response there may be a proposal.

Member – what is that all about?

Voting then took place

56 to clear

14 not to clear

RJ- thanked the meeting and stated that he I didn't feel that he would get a fair hearing from the committee

Member- no one has ever wanted you out of the position

RJ - I feel that in order for the society's committee to do the best for the society, I am going to propose that the following are removed permanently from the committee. Anita Medlock, Mark Cox, Pamela Clarke and Alan Martin

Member asked why RJ had not sent out details of the proposal before the meeting

RJ explained that he didn't know what the vote would be and that the proposal depended on the outcome of the vote.

AVM stated that it would be difficult as he had already resigned

RJ stated that he had written this statement before AVM had resigned

Member stated that if RJ had been a decent chairman, and listened to the committee member's votes that the members wouldn't be in the current position. He went on to explain that he had sat on many committees and seen what happens if there is not a decent chairman.

RJ replied to the member that he (the member) had not been in the society committee room

Member – this is a load of rubbish

Member-said we (the committee) are not allowed to have opinions, and we are just asking for transparency and honesty as we have over the past 4 years. She went onto state that she knew how everyone would vote as they had been coerced to do so

Member shouted ' you are nasty person, you are really nasty' (referring to AM committee member)

Member- agreed and said 'yes she's really nasty'

AM responded that she was not a nasty person, and that the member only thought that because of what they had been told. AM stated that anyone that knew her knows that she was not nasty and that she got on with everyone.

There followed a series of inappropriate personal comments made about AM accusing her of being 'nasty'.

DF-asked for the meeting to hush.

Member stated Anita is a nice person, she always helps me when I need it and that she is definitely not nasty.

Member commented that Anita has said that she knows how we are going to vote but she shouldn't assume the way I am going to vote.

Member stated (to DF) first all you have tried to be impartial thank you– the member went onto say that he felt there was not enough people present at the meeting to make this vote, that emotions were too high. And that he I thought that ' tonight is not the night to make this decision'.

DF stated that 'my take on this is that we have 6 committee members that are unopposed for their positions. There are 5 places for committee members that can be co-opted and this

can be done at the AGM. There were people that were 12 hours late with their application and it could have been extended’.

Member commented that ‘this is not the place for this proposal. It’s not fair, there are 360 members and only 60 members here’.

Member wanted to ensure that all members were offered a vote

Member commented to RJ ‘you haven’t told all of the members about this second vote. I didn’t know about this vote before this evening. It shouldn’t be at the SGM’.

Member stated ‘we have read the letter, we have listened to Russell’s side. Any personal issues you have already raised, you shouldn’t keep talking about them they should be closed’.

Member stated that ‘ Russell is talking about getting some people off the committee, should it be worth extending the option to apply for the committee for another 2 weeks to get fresh blood’.

DF- agreed

PC stated that she just want to say that we have an AGM and you have the opportunity to vote for people you like and you don’t have to vote for those you don’t like.

At this point the meeting broke up. RJ’s proposal was not voted upon

The meeting closed at approximately 2130.