

EGM Meeting minutes

Location: St Martins Church Hall

Date: 25th March 2023

Attendees: 59 [South Parks 28 Quinta 31]

Time: 11:30am

Apologies: Ranjan Mistry, Dan Stevens, Tony Deeks, Emma Wightman, Kenny Gormley, Lindi Ching, Barbara Mears, Simon Durstan, Dave Barrington & Diane Thompson

Agenda items

Dissolution of Quinta Allotments

Special Guests Allan Cavil from National Allotments.

The meeting was opened by the chair at 11.33 a.m.

Apologies are read by the secretary as above.

The chair asked Allan Cavil to say a few words.

Alan Cavil spoke about how impressed he was with the number of people who attended the EGM today. TAHCAL now has a new set of rules in place, FCA registered governance rules. Questions were asked about a viable committee for Quinta. Questions about the lease at Quinta and whether the NAS would support Quinta allotments. Allan Cavill confirmed that NAS will do so 100%. Allan added that we are all volunteers and goodwill is needed by all.

John Davey Quinta, we voted against devolution in early 2022. He questioned why we were voting again. Why and how has this happened and who. It was said by the secretary that because of the 1918 rules, five members or more could call an EGM. There was one signature from South Parks and 11 from Quinta. 12 in total. Hazel Roberts explained that some members thought the last meeting was toxic. Some members came to HR asking if we could get out of TAHCAL. This is how the motion for devolution started. Shouting and screaming were alleged by HR. Another member pointed out that the shouting and screaming were exaggerations. It came down to clashing personalities and what was right and wrong. The member stated that the last AGM was a bit disjointed. Another member pointed out that it was a better AGM than some others in the past.

It was argued that all members from Quinta should have received a letter and been told what was going on. It was pointed out by HR that some members could not be contacted as they worked away. It was said again: members of Quinta should have received a letter. HR tried to gain a proxy or postal vote, but that is not in our rules. It was then said that 60% voted against devolution last year. HR said the majority of Quinta were informed; one member replied, "rubbish," "absolute rubbish." HR insistent that she has been around. A member replied that he hadn't heard of anything. A member asked if HR was signatory that triggered the EGM; "no" was the reply. It was again asked why this came about. HR replied that it was mainly the last AGM. Another member stood up and said that most of what HR is saying, rings true. Beechfield & Stantaway [Riviera Allotments] had already undergone devolution, and there seem to be a lot of advantages to being on your own.

Another member was worried that the council may move Quinta to another site away from its current location. Allan Cavil [NAS] confirmed that Quinta is a statutory site. The 1908/1950 allotment act gives security and can't take it away.

A member said there had been a lack of communication, there should have been a vision, let's discuss, etc. All that has been said today was regarding the conflict at the last AGM and the fact that Quinta can raise its own money. It seems like a weak way of presenting something.

The secretary asked Allan Cavil that if Quinta voted for devolution today, Quinta would need to form a committee and call an AGM as soon as possible. Yes, was the reply. We can still be friends, replied the secretary.

A member asked if there is a "body" in which we, [Quinta], can ask if there happened to be any disputes. NAT was the body that TAHCAL used for guidance. There was concern that members would be "kicked off" for ambiguous reasons and that they could appeal. Allan Cavill confirmed that if devolution was voted in favour, Quinta Allotments would have complete control.

Riviera Allotments confirmed the direction they were going after they voted in favour of devolution early in 2023. They formed a committee, called an AGM, and put rules in place. Eleanor from Riviera Allotments explained that they don't get a say in how TAHCAL is run, and TAHCAL don't get a say in how Riviera Allotments are run. They are still, however, keeping ties with TAHCAL for the time being and joining in on cross-site events to build an allotment community. It was confirmed that every member at Beechfield & Stantaway [Riviera Allotments] was asked about devolution and how they made sure they were all on board, and this was documented.

A member was again concerned that not all Quinta members were aware of the situation and the devolution. A member said that this was put up against our will. Another member called out that it was not against his will, as all were voting today. A member made reference to the fact that Quinta voted against devolution a year ago.

Call to vote from the chair—more discussion took place.

A member asked if it was legal for the vote to take place. The rules state that it is a show of hands, as in the FCA rules. A member still questioned the benefits of devolution. The secretary pointed out the need to find a committee for Quinta quite quickly if devolution was in favour. It was said again by the secretary that it was only the requirement of five members to call an EGM and that this meeting was the devolution of the Quinta Allotments vote. It was asked if there was any member in the hall who signed for the call of the EGM. Around 6 members of 12 that signed the motion were in the room.

The chair again called for the vote to take place. More discussion took place.

A member questioned whether it seemed possible that there was some sort of hidden agenda. He stated that anyone is welcome to be on the Quinta committee.

Another call to vote from the Chair.

One side of the room is "in favour" of devolution, the other is "against." Quinta members were left for them to decide destiny. Only Quinta members voted in the hall.

THE RESULT

22 in favour of devolution.

8 against devolution.

Devolution was agreed upon. Quinta would now form a committee and call an AGM. Meeting closed for Quinta Devolution vote.

EGM: Election of Treasurer for South Parks Allotment [South Parks members only]

We required election of the treasurer for South Parks now that Quinta had voted for devolution. South Parks require a treasurer, as the treasurer for TAHCAL was a member of Quinta.

After some discussion, it was agreed that George Green would be treasurer but would be shadowed by Lynn Lathwell and at a later date, would take over as South Parks treasurer. All agreed.

Meeting closed.

Thanks were given to everyone was given by the Chair.