

ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL

Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green and Park Street



MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE *LEISURE COMMITTEE (2)* HELD AT THE PARISH CENTRE, STATION ROAD BRICKET WOOD, ST.ALBANS, HERTS ON 6 NOVEMBER 2014 at 7.30 pm

Members Present: Cllrs Bill Pryce (Chair), John Bell, Wendy Berriman, Oonah Jones and Eileen Whittaker (part)

In attendance:

Officers in attendance: Juliet Pienaar (Clerk), Gill Rix (Centre Manager)
Gary Field (Head Groundsman)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Mick Freeman and Dorothy Kerry. Cllr Whittaker advised that she would be arriving late.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None declared.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 31 JULY 2014

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Berriman Seconded: Cllr Bell **Motion Carried**
That the minutes be accepted as a true record.
Votes in favour: unanimous

4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

None notified.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

6. PARISH AND GREENWOOD CENTRES

6.1 To progress the identified priorities for 2014/15:

Members referred to the updated Earmarked Reserves.

a) Defibrillator

The defibrillator would soon be installed outside Greenwood Park Community Centre with a yellow notice beside it with instructions on how to open the cabinet. To date the user groups had generously donated £1300 and a further £250 had been pledged. The shortfall would be met by earmarked reserves. A plaque would be erected alongside the defibrillator acknowledging the sponsors. It was agreed that the Clerk circulate a simple instruction card to Members, user groups and staff on how to operate the equipment.

b) Table Tennis table

It was noted that the table had been purchased.

c) Water boiler

Members favoured an under-counter water boiler and noted that this would require additional funding of £1300. It was agreed that, once funding was approved, the project be passed on to the Building Committee to complete as part of its project to extend the kitchen.

d) Tennyson Hall blinds

It was noted that that black-out blinds to replace the curtains would be installed once the hall decoration was complete.

6.2 To receive the Open Forum notes and feedback

Members referred to the Open Forum notes. Feedback had been positive and the meeting worthwhile.

Cllr Whittaker joined the meeting.

6.3 To approve the hire rates for 2015

Members referred to the recommendations of the Hire Rates Working Party. It was clear from the recommended function hire rates that the increment was higher than had been anticipated. Members referred back to the draft 2015 rates considered by the Working Party. The draft rates were for an inflationary increment rounded up/down to the nearest whole number.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Berriman Seconded: Cllr Bell **Motion Carried**
That the function hire rates be agreed as set out in the draft document.
That the 16-21 year old function rates and special rates be agreed as set out in the working party recommendations.
Votes in favour: 4 Votes against: 0 Abstentions: 1

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Berriman Seconded: Cllr Bell **Motion Carried**
That the regular user rates for 2015 be agreed as set out in the working party recommendations.
Votes in favour: 4 Votes against: 0 Abstentions: 1

6.4 To consider a ceiling-mounted projector in St Stephen Suite

Members agreed that in order to remain competitive the Council should install a ceiling-mounted projector. It was noted that the existing tables limited the functionality of the room. It was agreed that a decision be held in abeyance whilst the Clerk seek clarification on the quotation.

6.5 To consider a proposal for 'hirer's packs'

Members considered the proposal to hire out a box of useful catering items not currently provided in the kitchens. Whilst Members were in agreement that the idea was good, there were reservations as to how it would be managed in practice with regard to the hire, return and check process. Alternatives were suggested for the provision of a handy checklist of useful items and that the packs be offered for sale. It was agreed that a complimentary pack would support hirers, whilst providing an opportunity for the Council to promote its services. It was agreed that a complimentary pack be developed to include a checklist, disposable tea towels, bin bags and other useful items.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Pryce **Motion Carried**
That Cllrs Berriman and Whittaker develop, cost and trial a complimentary welcome pack.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7. PARKS & AMENITIES

8.1 To progress the identified projects for 2014/15:

Members referred to the updated Earmarked Reserves summary.

a) Concrete slab (alternative staff entrance into Greenwood Park)

Members referred to the quotations, however, it was queried whether the concrete pad quoted for would bear the weight of the heavy articulated vehicles used by the fair operator. To save costs the Grounds team would be able to purchase off-the-peg gates and install them.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Pryce Seconded: Cllr Berriman **Motion Carried**
That information be obtained from the fair operator as to the weight of their heaviest lorry and that the contractors be asked to confirm and provide evidence that their concrete pad will bear that weight.
That in principle, the quotation from Centrewire for gates, be accepted.
Votes in favour: unanimous

b) Mayflower Road fencing

The Head Groundsman reported that the fencing was being replaced one section per year. The next fence-line to be replaced would be that alongside the rough ground and the last along the back where the conifers were growing. A Member said that she had noticed small dogs were getting underneath the gate into the play area and that she had received complaints that the gap beneath the entrance gate allowed dogs to escape from the park. It was noted that although the park was used by dog walkers to exercise their pets, it was primarily a park for children to play in and that the fence and gate were not intended to keep dogs in.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Pryce Seconded: Cllr Whittaker **Motion Carried**
That the Head Groundsman decide on how the fence should be replaced.
That planings be placed beneath both gates.
That, provided the Repairs & Maintenance budget allows, the gate into the play area be replaced with a self-closing bespoke play area gate.
Votes in favour: unanimous

c) Woodbury Field picnic tables

Members considered the offer from the Bricket Wood Residents' Association to sponsor a picnic bench. The in-house picnic benches cost around £400 to manufacture in-house.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Berriman **Motion Carried**
That the offer of a contribution toward the cost of a picnic bench be accepted from the BWRA.
That Cllr Berriman, the Head Groundsman and a representative of the BWRA agree the location of the picnic bench.
Votes in favour: unanimous

d) Picnic bench repairs

The picnic benches were being methodically re-boarded by the Grounds team.

e) Park signs

The additional signs were on hold until the timber extracted from Blackgreen Wood had matured.

f) Parallel bars for Greenwood Park

This item was noted and deferred for consideration under item 7.3

g) New/replacement equipment for Park Street

This item was noted and deferred for consideration under item 7.3 and 7.4.

7.2 To approve the Grounds Hire rates for 2.15

Members referred to the proposed rates.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Whittaker **Motion Carried**
The rates as proposed be adopted.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.3 To receive a report from the play area inspection

Cllrs Freeman and Berriman visited Greenwood Park and Park Street with the Grounds men. Cllr Freeman had also visited Woodbury Field and North Close with the Grounds men. It was agreed that the Council needed a structured approach in the form of a forward plan to focus direction. The Annual Play Area Inspection would, in future, include a report on the life expectancy of equipment to assist with planning ahead. It was agreed that the Rolling Replacement Programme be re-instated with a realistic figure. The Head Groundsman felt that Greenwood Park lent itself to bespoke adventurous equipment that could cater for large numbers. It was acknowledged that Greenwood Park catered for visitors from Watford, St Albans and further afield. There was concern that the smaller parish play areas might be neglected. The Clerk had raised a request with the District Council for S106 funding toward improvements to the parish play areas and buildings and had placed an item on the next Planning Committee agenda. The Clerk reported that a summary of available grant funding streams was being prepared by the Administration Officer. Members asked that this be presented at the next meeting.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the guillotine procedure. Members agreed to continue until 10.15pm.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Berriman Seconded: Cllr Pryce **Motion Carried**
That Cllrs Berriman and Freeman meet with the Head Groundsman and prepare a draft plan of priorities for Greenwood Park and the parish play areas, for consideration at the next meeting.
That the Rolling Replacement Programme be retained for Greenwood Park and

the parish play areas.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.4 To consider repair of the Park Street play area surfacing.

Members referred to the quotations and agenda notes. It was noted that the rubber shrinkage created a low risk trip hazard and its repair would be an on-going problem due to the poor standard of the original base material.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Berriman **Motion Carried**
That the quotation for the repair of the rubber surfacing be accepted at £2527.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.5 To consider recommendations for cricket fencing at Park Street Recreation Ground

Members referred to the supporting documents. Advice and guidance had been sought from the ECB Regional Adviser and a risk assessment had been drawn up. The ECB recommended the provision of an 8m ball-stop fence where a pitch was 50m from any potential risk to person/property.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Berriman **Motion Carried**
That a Working Party be formed, consisting of Cllrs Pryce and Freeman, a Groundsman and a representative from Frogmore CC, to carefully consider the risk assessment/advice and make a recommendation to Council before the end of December.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.6 To consider a request to use the pavilion loft space

Members considered the request from the Tennis Club. It was agreed that permitting hirers access to the loft space would set a dangerous precedent.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Pryce **Motion Carried**
That hirers shall not be permitted to store items in the loft space. Items already stored therein shall be removed by staff and the club be asked to seek alternative storage.
That the club provide detail of the proposed location for two external green storage boxes.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.7 To consider a portable play area inspection system

As this item was considered non-essential it was deferred to the next meeting.

8. TO AGREE THE 2015/16 PRIORITIES AND BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

It was agreed that the suggested replacement of the St Stephen Suite tables be considered at the next meeting and that a report on the alarm be presented when more information was available.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Pryce Seconded: Cllr Berriman **Motion Carried**
That the 2015/16 priorities and budget requirement be:
Play equipment—Rolling Replacement Programme £20k pa
Under-counter water boiler £1.3k
Votes in favour: unanimous

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.15 pm.

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NOTE: These minutes are to be considered as 'draft' until the Committee has approved them.