

ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL

In the District of St. Albans, County of Hertfordshire



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
HELD AT THE PARISH CENTRE, STATION ROAD
BRICKET WOOD, ST ALBANS, HERTS
ON 28 APRIL 2016 AT 7.30 pm**

Present: Mick Freeman (Chairman), John Bell, David Brannen, Martin Doyle,
Dorothy Kerry, Karen Hurford, John Parker, Nicholas Tyndale
and Eileen Whittaker
In attendance: Three Members of public
Officers in attendance: Mrs J Pienaar (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Wendy Berriman, Ian Getley and Bill Pryce.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS

Cllr Bell declared a personal interest in item 7.11 owing to his involvement with the volunteer group.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 MARCH 2016

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Kerry* *Seconded: Cllr Brannen* **Motion Carried**
That the minutes be approved as a true record.
Votes in favour: unanimous

4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There were none.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman accepted a request from Dianah Ellis to speak on the grant application by the Friends of Hanstead Wood.

Dianah gave a potted history of the site which had been managed by volunteers since 2003. Real changes had been made over the years to transform it into an attractive woodland heavily used by residents. The removal of a dead and dangerous tree adjacent to the public path was important to ensure continued safe public access. There was no money in the coffers to fund the removal of the tree. The annual £1k grant had been lost when HSBC sold the land. The Bricket Wood Residents' Association had already donated funds to cover running expenses. All other avenues to raise funds had been tried.

The Chairman's proposal that item 7.11 be brought forward on the agenda was supported by Members.

7.11 To consider awards of grants and discretionary discounts

Members considered the application from Friends of Hanstead Wood.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Whittaker* **Motion Carried**
That the Council in accordance with its powers under section 137 & 139 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur the following expenditure which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure:
A grant of £780 to remove the dangerous tree in Hanstead Wood.
Votes in favour: unanimous

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

There were none received.

7. REPORTS: FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES

7.1 To approve the payments schedules

Members referred to the schedule for March and part April. Cllrs Hurford and Freeman had signed the cheques.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Doyle* **Motion Carried**
That the payments schedule be approved.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.2 To consider detailed information for the 2016/17 Special Expenses

No response had been received to the request for detailed information on the budget and the past two years actual expenditure.

7.3 To accept the award offer from Sport England

Members referred to the notes. Sport England invited the Council to formally accept the grant offer of £74k and in doing so, enter into a binding contract. An urgent meeting of the Buildings Committee had been called to consider matters relating to the plans. It was confirmed that the Parish Council would receive the grant funding from Sport England and that it would be responsible for the management of monies received.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell* *Seconded: Cllr Whittaker* **Motion Carried**
That the offer be accepted pending support from the Buildings Committee at its meeting 3 May 2016.
That Cllrs Freeman and Kerry sign the acceptance contract.
Votes in favour: unanimous

In accordance with requirements, two contacts from the Council were appointed. It was noted that a person would need to be appointed to manage the project on site at a future date.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Hurford* *Seconded: Cllr Tyndale* **Motion Carried**
That the Clerk be named as the main project contact and person who will receive the remittance advice and Cllr Freeman named as the responsible person for Measurement & Evaluation.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.4 To ratify the decision to defer the increased Councillor Allowance to 17/18

Members referred to the report previously circulated.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Brannen* *Seconded: Cllr Parker* **Motion Carried**
That the proposal to increase the Councillor Allowance be deferred to 17/18.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.5 To consider a refund on the temporary access licence, North Close

Members considered the request. It was noted that the refund would be relevant to the licence in question and that no precedent would be set.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Kerry* *Seconded: Cllr Hurford* **Motion Carried**
That a refund of £472 be approved.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.6 To approve continued participation in the Pension Fund pooling arrangement

Members referred to the notes. The Council was a current member of the pooling arrangement which protected employers from large fluctuations in contribution rates by sharing pension risks.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That St Stephen continue to remain in the Pension pooling agreement.
That the draft Pooling Policy for the 2016 Valuation be received.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.7 To amend standing orders and financial regulations to observe the Public Contracts Regulations 2015/102

Members referred to the report which outlined the new statutory obligations imposed on parish councils when procuring and awarding contracts. The aim of the new regulations was to make it easier for small business and voluntary/charitable organisations to transact business with the public sector.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Tyndale* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That the amendments proposed for Standing Order 76 and Financial Regulation 11.1 be approved.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.8 To approve the Annual Report 2015/16

Members referred to the draft Annual Report, prepared by the Chairs of the Council and its Committees. The report would be published within the summer edition of the parish newsletter. Cllr Tyndale was thanked for his assistance in this regard.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Brannen* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the Annual Report be approved.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.9 To review the Council's priorities

Members referred to the updated schedule but noted that the School Book awards had still to be included.

7.10 To consider S106 priority projects

Members referred to the draft list. It was noted that the District Council would be actively consulting with the parish with regard to proposed planning developments.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Brannen* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the Chairs of the Council, its Committees and Working Parties review the draft list and feed back their considered priorities to the Clerk.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8. REPORTS: GENERAL

8.1 To receive a progress report from the Greenwood Park Pavilion Working Party

Cllr Kerry reported that when initially proposed the expectation was that the project would benefit all hirers and it was made clear that the Council was not prepared to put forward additional funds over and above the £15k committed. An urgent meeting of the Buildings Committee had been called to ensure that there was sufficient funding set aside for the project and that at the end of works the Pavilion would be in a fit state for all hirers.

8.2 To receive a progress report on the Greenwood Park 'super net' project

Cllrs Pryce and Kerry presented the Council's application for s106 funding to four of the six District Councillors. Cllr Kerry reported that the Council remained hopeful given the positive response from some of the Councillors. It was noted that there might be a delay in the decision due to purdah. The presence and input from Gary Field, Head Groundsman and Matt Huddleston, Groundsman had been worthwhile and very good. The District Officer had been impressed by the way the Council currently ran its parks and its innovative future plans.

8.3 To consider the future of the Cavalier Hall timbers

With Member's approval this item was deferred to the next meeting.

8.4 To receive a brief report on the SADALC meeting

Cllr Bell reported that the solar operated mobile Vehicle Activated Sign speed control measure had been well received in Marshallswick. He proposed that a similar initiative be pursued at the next Police Priority Setting forum for Tippendell and Park Street Lanes. Freedom of the Town had been awarded to an army regiment by Harpenden Town Council. Under the Highways Together programme a parish-led volunteer group was working on small roundabouts in 30mph zones.

8.5 To receive brief progress reports and recommendations from the:

a) Annual Events Working Party

The Working Party recommended that the Fairground dates be altered. It was noted that this was an income-generating activity. There was some concern about the proposal to move the August date back to September.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Hurford* **Motion Carried**
That the change of dates be agreed with the proviso that the Head Groundsman has the final say to veto arrangements if the ground is too wet.
Votes in favour: unanimous

b) Festival Working Party

Cllr Whittaker reported that the event was coming together but still a huge amount of work to be done. Cllr Freeman asked Members to assist with putting up advertisement boards in all the parish-owned bus shelters over the forthcoming weekend. The Working Party recommended that a special rate be applied for the funfair as it would be reduced to a few small children's rides. Permission was being sought to use Smug Oak Green for parking. All costs were as recorded in the notes.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Tyndale Motion Carried*
That a special rate be approved of £150 for the small fair at the Festival 2016.
Votes in favour: unanimous

c) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Kerry reported that four of the five Working Parties had prepared questions for the survey based on research and evidence. The Business group was currently formulating its ideas following meetings with small and large business' in the parish. The Community Survey would be included in the Autumn issue of the parish newsletter. Thanks were conveyed to all Members, volunteers and staff involved in the project for their time.

d) Generating Income Working Party

The Working Party had been active following the precept meeting. It had drawn together all income-generating ideas from committees and working parties into a list and had prioritised new ideas. Advertising the Centres further afield had commenced in the Garston News targeted at parties and would appear in future Residents' magazines and the festival programme.

e) Parish in Bloom Working Party

Cllr Kerry reported that the St Stephens Gardening Club had been very helpful with the School's competition. The closing date for entries was 24 June. Judging would take place in the second week of July. Parish in Bloom posters would go up soon.

f) Licensed Refreshment Working Party

Cllr Freeman reported that the existing agreement terminated on 14 May. An experienced and long-standing member of the St Albans West Indies Cricket Club was very keen to run the bar to raise money for the club. Functions would be catered for with the same monetary arrangements but when there were no functions, the bar would be opened to coincide with cricket matches. Use of the lounge at these times would be at a discounted rate of £5 p/h. All profits from cricket events would go to the SAWICC. The bar would be cleared by Greene King and the Maintenance Man would be carrying out minor refurbishment in readiness for the commencement of the new agreement on 15 May. T.E.N's would be applied for to serve from the hatch as a trial prior to consideration of an amendment to the Premises Licence.

g) Car Parking Working Party

The Chairman reported that Killigrew School and its PTA persisted, despite requests from the Council, to arrange events on days when the park and centre were busy. A meeting was to be arranged with the Head and leaders of the PTA and school governing body to discuss solutions. Cllr Bell reported that he had received a complaint from a resident of Carisbrooke Road at the Chiswell Green Residents' Association AGM. He had personally checked the parking at 11.45pm on a Friday evening and found that the new arrangements to use overflow parking at Midway Surgery appeared to be working.

h) Mobile shelter Working Party

Following an idea put forward by the scouts the Working Party was considering a six month trial of a mobile youth shelter at Woodbury Field. A number of shelters had already been installed in the District. It was noted that the proposed trial, although still in its early stages, might not be greeted with universal enthusiasm.

8.9 To note recent and planned media communications

Cllr Tyndale referred to the summary and noted that the Council continued to enjoy a steady flow of coverage.

9. DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

9.1 To receive invitations, training opportunities, notifications and consultations

a) Consultations

There were no recent consultations.

Cllr Tyndale responded to the West Midlands Franchise consultation on the next rail franchise in support of the Abbey Line for its valuable service to residents and business. It had been sorely neglected by the current service provider. A request had been made for 30 minute frequency, later running, through running from Euston to St Albans and improved connectivity from the Abbey station to St Albans.

b) Invitations, training opportunities and notifications

Noted. Cllr Bell reported that the Bluebell walk had been well attended. Leaflets for Blackgreen Wood and St Julians Wood were now available for residents and visitors.

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

10.1 To receive & approve minutes of the following committees

Buildings Committee	25 February 2016
Leisure Committee	3 March 2016
Planning Committee	10 March 2016
Trees & Woodlands Committee	24 March 2016

10.2 To receive notes taken at the Council's Working Parties and Forums

Festival Working Party	1 March 2016
Generating Income Working Party	1 March 2016
Festival Working Party	1 April 2016
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	7 April 2016

RESOLVED: That the minutes and notes are received.

Motion Carried

10.3 To note the minutes of the Joint Committees & Associations

The following minutes were noted:

Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership	12 April 2016
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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9pm.

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact the Parish Office to discuss your requirements.

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Note: These minutes are to be considered as 'draft' until the Council has resolved to approve them.