

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 15 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 7.30 pm

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chairman presented a cheque for £227.32, raised through a bucket collection at the Armed Forces Day event, to Major Grenfell from the Royal Anglian Benevolent Fund.

Present: Mick Freeman (Chairman), John Bell, Wendy Berriman, David Brannen, Ian Getley, Karen Hurford, John Parker, Bill Pryce (part) and Nicholas Tyndale
In attendance: No Members of public
Officers in attendance: Mrs J Pienaar (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Martin Doyle and Eileen Whittaker. It was noted that Cllr Pryce would arrive late as he was speaking about the Neighbourhood Plan at the Bricket Wood Residents' Association Open meeting.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS

None received.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 JULY 2016

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the minutes be approved as a true record.
Votes in favour: 7 *Votes against: 0* *Abstentions: 2*

4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

None received.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No requests received.

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Cllr Featherstone offered her apologies for the meeting but reported that following contact with Network Rail regarding the dangerous state of the fencing along Station Road, and calls about the overgrown vegetation alongside the footpath on Station Road leading to and from the station which had been forcing pedestrians to step into the road, the fence had been adequately mended and the vegetation cut back.

REPORTS: FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES

7.1 To approve the payments schedules

Members referred to the schedule for July/August and August/September. Any queries raised had been satisfactorily answered before the meeting.

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

Cllrs Kerry and Pryce agreed to sign the cheques.

7.2 To consider information on the 2016/17 CCTV Review—Greenwood Park

The CCTV cameras at Greenwood Park were managed by the District Council and owned 50/50 with the Parish Council. Following a recent review in line with government surveillance camera guidelines, the District Council was recommending the removal of the cameras. It was agreed that the Clerk

obtain information on what alternatives there were and report back to Council.

7.3 To receive a report on the Network Rail compound licence

The lower car park at the Parish Centre showed signs of wear following the expiry of the licence agreement with Murphy's. Negotiations had commenced for re-surfacing the lower car park. A discounted quotation had been requested to resurface the upper car park which would reflect the inconvenience caused by their use outside of the agreement.

7.4 To ratify the decisions of the HR Committee

Members referred to the confidential report previously circulated. The Clerk reported that the 2016/17 recommendation from the National Joint Council salary award was for a 1% increment for spinal points 18 to 49 effective from April 2016. Spinal increments were within the bands agreed by Council.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Freeman Motion Carried*
That the decision of the HR Committee to approve the salary awards and spinal movements from April 2016 be ratified.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.5 To review the Council's priority actions and projects

Reduced staff due to annual and long term sick leave had meant that it had not been possible to update the monthly review document.

7.6 To consider awards of grants and discretionary discounts

a) Application for a Discretionary Discount from Hearing Dogs for Deaf People 'Doggy Fun Day' event

Members considered the additional discount required resulting from a difference between the sum awarded and the actual cost.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Berriman Motion Carried*
That an additional Discretionary Discount of £16.50 be awarded.
Votes in favour: unanimous

b) Donation to St Francis Hospice—speaker's fee

The speaker at the Parish in Bloom asked for a donation to the charity instead of a fee.

PROPOSED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley Seconded: Cllr Tyndale Motion Unsuccessful*
That a grant of £50 be made to St Francis Hospice.

COUNTER-PROPOSED & RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman Seconded: Cllr Kerry 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:
That a grant of £100 be made to St Francis Hospice.
Votes in favour: 6 Votes against: 2 Abstentions: 1

c) Annual spring plants—grant toward purchase of bulbs/wildflowers

It was agreed that the Residents' Associations be asked whether they wanted bulbs and that a decision be deferred to the October meeting.

d) Remembrance wreath—grant toward wreath

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Parker 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:
That a grant of £75 be made to the Royal British Legion for three wreaths: One from the Parish Council, one to commemorate the centenary of the Battle of the Somme and one for the Mayor of St Albans to lay if needed.
Votes in favour: unanimous

REPORTS: GENERAL

8.1 To receive an update on the Greenwood Park 'super net' project

The Clerk reported that the Grounds team had started work. The contractors had been delayed for a few days because the delivery of the play equipment had gone astray but this had since arrived.

8.2 To receive an update on the Greenwood Pavilion extension project

The Clerk reported that whilst the Invitation to Tender had opened on 1st September as planned, the drawings had not been available until 12 September. The architect had been delayed as he had required assistance from a structural engineer. The timeline would be revisited following recent approval from Sport England to extend the deadline. It was noted that the extraordinary meeting scheduled for 29 September would no longer be required.

8.3 To consider the future of the Cavalier Hall timbers

Cllr Pryce had arranged a meeting for 21 September at 11am which would be attended by Cllrs Freeman, Getley, Pryce and Bell, accompanied by the Head Groundsman and a carpenter. Cllr Brannen suggested that an approach be made to Holiday Inn as they were using similar timbers to refurbish their bar areas.

8.4 To receive an update on the ex-Police room, Park Street Pavilion

Although the Council had agreed to bear the cost of refurbishing the room, the Council had wanted to pursue some financial return as the room had never been used as intended by the Police. On behalf of the Council, Cllr Pryce had approached Herts Constabulary and the Police Commissioner without success. It was noted that the refurbished room had been returned to community use as part of the Pavilion.

8.5 To receive an update on the Park Street mural

The consultation was complete and feedback taken into account with the final sketch. A start date had yet to be arranged.

8.6 To note the forestry work at Frogmore Lakes

Cllr Getley reported that the next phase of the tree removal had commenced. Logs from the previous felling exercise, which had been stored on site, were in the process of being removed. Work was due to finish by 21 October.

The Clerk reported that, despite several enquiries, it was not known whether the footpath there had been dedicated and whether the initial proposal from Lafarge Tarmac (now Tarmac) to hold a competition to name the path would go ahead. The Council had previously supported a proposal from the Park Street & Frogmore Society to name it 'Kingfisher Walk/Way'. Cllr Getley suggested that the path be named after Mr Honour.

8.7 To note the latest position on the land at the former Radlett airfield

The local press had reported that the Segro, which owned Helioslough, would soon be making a formal financial offer to the County Council for the 1000-acre Green Belt site and would be seeking approval from the District Council to turn 600 acres of that site into a country park to mitigate against the loss of Green Belt.

8.8 To note comment regarding the fairground generators

The concerns raised by a local resident regarding the proximity of the fairground's generators to the children's play area at Greenwood Park had prompted guidance to be sought from the H&S Advisor. The location of the generators had been discussed with the Fairground operator; a generator check-list had been completed and the siting of the generators checked by the Events Officer, Head Groundsman and Cllr Getley. The risk factor had been considered as 'low'. It was agreed that the Council would continue to monitor the situation.

8.9 To note views on grass cutting and weed maintenance of Highway's land

Members expressed dissatisfaction at the current service. Local drains and gutters were blocked and Members were concerned that this would cause flooding over winter. The Clerk was asked to enquire whether the St Albans Highways Liaison meeting could be re-arranged to a date that didn't clash with the Main Council meeting, particularly as this was the only Highways Liaison meeting parish members currently had access to.

8.10 To receive brief progress reports from the:

a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

The Community Survey had been delivered to all residents within the Autumn Parish newsletter and was available online. Members were asked to encourage friends/neighbours to complete the survey.

b) Income Generating Working Party

Cllr Kerry reported that all ideas put forward had been considered. Quite a few of the initiatives had been from the staff. One of the more adventurous proposals, an all-purpose pitch for Greenwood Park, was being investigated further by Cllr Freeman as to feasibility and cost. An artificial wicket was also being looked into as a way of saving time and money. Advertising and the promotion of the Centres was being looked at to maximise the use of the Council's facilities. It had been established that for a moderate outlay magnetic adverts could be fixed to the parish vehicles. One of the initiatives being progressed was the sale of excess timber from Blackgreen Wood—expected to generate between £500 to £600. The Working Party requested that this sum be earmarked for promoting the Centres. A few Members felt that it was a lot of money to allocate toward advertising when the Centres were fully booked at popular times.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Berriman* **Motion Carried**
That £300 from income generated from the sale of timber be allocated toward promoting the Centres.
Votes in favour: unanimous

c) Annual Events Working Party

Cllr Berriman reported that Crafts in the Park had been well-attended and that the Maintenance Man had been very helpful. It was noted that there had been no coverage in the Autumn newsletter and the Clerk confirmed that it would be included in the Winter issue. Although it had been previously recommended by the Income Generating Working Party that the event be moved each year to each of the Parish Council's venues to attract more visitors, the Members responsible for organising the event felt that it would be easier to manage and better attended if it remained at Greenwood Park. All plans were in hand for the Parish in Bloom evening.

d) Parish in Bloom Working Party

Cllr Getley reported that the Working Party had reviewed the event for 2017 and considered that the it could not continue without the support of the Council to encourage engagement from within the community. One of the future aims was to place planters around the village. It had been noted recently that the flower beds were in need of attention. The Clerk pointed out that the Grounds team had been working hard to complete the play area projects, whilst maintaining current grounds maintenance tasks and assisting with events. It had therefore not been possible to give them their usual level of attention. The Chairman asked Members to report any maintenance concerns about the flower beds, as soon as they become aware, to the Clerk. The results of the various competitions had been decided.

8.11 To note recent and planned media communications

An updated report was not available. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had produced the most recent press release.

9. DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

9.1 To receive invitations, training opportunities, notifications and consultations

a) Consultations

BR85 Burydell Lane: consultation by the County Countryside Access Officer regarding a request from neighbouring residents that a horse hop and motorbike inhibitor be installed to stop potential vehicular use of the bridleway whilst still allowing access to horses, cyclists and walkers. The policy of the St Albans Access Forum was to have the 'fewest possible structures on a path consistent with safety and any agricultural need'. Members were not aware of any safety issues concerning the Bridleway.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That the Council would prefer to keep the Bridle path as it is.
Votes in favour: unanimous

Local Flood Risk Management Strategy: consultation workshop for Parish Councils. A Member was not appointed to attend.

West Midlands Rail Franchise: stakeholder briefing document .

Cllr Tyndale explained that in March he had responded to the West Midlands Rail Franchise consultation on behalf of the Council. The Council's response had been modelled on that from Abfly. The briefing document had come about as a result of the consultation. Suggestions as to how the service could be improved were taken on board and there would be more funding in future for the CRP. However, it did not endorse the 'clock face' half hourly timetable nor was there mention of a direct connection to the main line. The tender would begin 2017 and two bidders remained.

b) Invitations, training opportunities and notifications

Noted. Cllrs Freeman, Pryce, Parker and Bell would be attending the Parish Conference.

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

10.1 To receive & approve minutes of the following committees

The following minutes were received and approved:

Buildings Committee	7 July 2016
Leisure Committee	14 July 2016
Planning Committee	28 July 2016
Planning Committee	1 Sept 2016

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

The following notes were received:

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	30 June 2016
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	14 July 2016
Parish in Bloom Working Party	19 July 2016
Annual Events Working Party	19 July 2016
Generating Income Working Party	29 July 2016

10.3 To note the minutes of the Joint Committees & Associations

The following minutes were noted:

Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership SG	13 July 2016
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11. OTHER URGENT AND IMPORTANT BUSINESS

There was none.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.10pm.

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.