

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 16 NOVEMBER 2017 AT 7.30 pm

Present: Cllrs. Dorothy Kerry (Chairman), John Bell, David Brannen, Martin Doyle,
Michael Freeman, Ian Getley, John Parker, & Bill Pryce.

In attendance: Mrs C Hardy (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllrs. Wendy Berriman, Karen Hurford, Nicholas Tyndale & Eileen Whittaker.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Cllrs. Michael Freeman and John Parker declared an interest in Item 7.16 ii (c) - Waverley Driving for the Disabled group.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 OCTOBER 2017

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

4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Bell expressed disappointment that waste bin advertising was not on the agenda. The Chair explained that the item would be discussed once the remaining budget was known.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Barbara Gerwein from Chiswell Green U3A explained that the parish owned sound system at Greenwood Park was faulty. The CD player did not work and was much needed for the forthcoming Christmas party on 7 December. She went on to say that there were also problems with the audio equipment and some of the leads required replacement. Another member of the U3A was capable of carrying out repairs to the system. A replacement CD would cost £93 + vat > £400 but that £170 would purchase a suitable replacement.

The speaker also stated that the U3A wished to purchase and erect a permanently fixed projector screen on the back wall of the sports hall, the current mobile screen being unsuitable and difficult for everyone to see.

Barbara Gerwein asked that the Council agree in principle to the erection of a permanent screen subject to finalisation of the detail. She asked for one or two Members to attend a U3A meeting to witness the problems for themselves.

With support from Members the Chair moved to Item 8.1 to allow discussion to continue.

8.1 To consider a request from the U3A regarding Greenwood Park audio equipment and a permanent projector screen in the sports hall

Cllr Pryce stated that his view was that the audio equipment should have lasted longer than it had and that the U3A were the only group to make use of it. He went on to say that in view of the unknown budget the Council were required to be cautious with expenditure. It was agreed that both he and Cllr Freeman would examine the equipment and report to Council.

Cllr Freeman commented that the back wall of the sports hall was not strong enough to fit a permanent projector screen to but at minimal cost it may be possible to paint the wall white. Cllr Doyle stated that the wall was painted in the colour it was to aid badminton players see a shuttlecock. A Member stated that the area was a sports hall and that enquiries should be made with

the badminton players to establish whether painting the back wall white would affect their use.

At this point the speaker left the meeting.

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

None.

7. REPORTS: FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES

7.1 To approve the payments schedule

Members referred to the payment schedule for November 2017.

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

Cllr Getley and Cllr Pryce agreed to sign the cheques.

7.2 To receive and consider a progress report for Greenwood Park Pavilion extension and landscaping

The Clerk reported that the snagging would be completed during 20/21 November. A date to fit the security shutters had not yet been put forward by the builder.

Members noted the landscaping quotation and agreed to budget for this work.

The Clerk reported that additional expenditure may be incurred to install a ramp as part of the landscaping to allow access for all.

7.3 To receive a report on the progress with the flooring issues in Orton Hall, Greenwood Park Community Centre and the Pavilion club room at Park Street Recreation Ground Orton Hall

Members considered the Clerks report. A Member expressed concern that the investigative work had been scheduled close to the date of the Carol Concert. The Clerk reported that the work was scheduled to last one day and the following day the area would be cleaned and the floor covering refitted as best it could be. She went on to say that if the refitted floor covering proved to be hazardous then it would be taken up leaving the original floor covering underneath.

Park Street Pavilion

Members considered the Clerks report.

A Member did not come forward to assist with forming a reply to Cllr Jock Wrights request for information. The Clerk stated that the office would take on this task and in the meantime a quotation for the remedial work would be sought by the Maintenance Man.

7.4 To receive the Internal Auditor's report

Members considered the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Parker* *Seconded: Cllr Brannen* **Motion Carried**
That the Internal Auditor's report is accepted.

7.5 To receive the quarterly budget report

The Clerk reported that the accounts had been completed April - June but that additional work was required to bring the budget report up to date.

7.6 To approve additional costs to DCK Accounting Solutions

Members considered the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the accounts for July - September and October are outsourced to DCK Accounting Solutions at a cost of £1310
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.7 To consider outsourcing the recruitment process for the Centre Manager

Members considered the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Kerry* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That the recruitment process for the Centre Manager is outsourced to CP Associates.
Votes in favour: 7 *1 Abstention*

7.8 To consider additional costs associated with utilising some of the PSRA Christmas lights and consider a donation to PRSA

Members considered the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Kerry* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the donated Christmas lights are unsuitable for use in the parish and that they should be disposed of. That a financial donation under Section 136 of the LGA 1972 as amended by the LG&HA 1989 s36 should not be made to PSRA.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.9 To appoint another Member to the Events Working Party

Members noted the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That Cllr Parker is appointed as a Member of the Events Working Party.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.10 To approve the annual insurance renewal

Members noted the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Kerry* *Seconded: Cllr Brannen* **Motion Carried**
That the annual insurance renewal is agreed and that the Fidelity Guarantee Insurance level for the remainder of the 17/18 financial year is reduced from £884k to 565k.
Votes in favour: 7 *1 abstention*

7.11 To approve the annual salary increments for 2017

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Pryce* **Motion Carried**
That the annual salary increments are approved and backdated to April 2017
Votes in favour: unanimous

Members wished to extend their appreciation to the staff for their patience and understanding.

7.12 To consider replacement of the office franking machine

Members noted the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Getley* **Motion Carried**
That a replacement franking machine is leased on a 6 year agreement through DPS Solutions
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.13 To consider interim office arrangements during period of limited resources

Members noted the Clerks report.

Considerable discussion took place; some Members supporting the employment of a temporary member of staff to allow the office to remain open 9am - 5pm whilst other Members agreed that measures should be put in place that did not put additional training and supervision pressure on the remaining staff members. A Member suggested that the Council should take the lead from SADC and reduce the opening hours to the public.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That with effect from 20 November 2017 and for a three month period the office opening hours will be Monday - Friday 9am - 12pm. After three months, the impact the reduced opening hours have on the public service is reviewed
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.14 To consider procedure in the event of unplanned long-term absence of the Clerk
Members noted the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Brannen* **Motion Carried**
That the emergency procedure is agreed.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.15 To consider and ratify S106 funding
None.

7.16 To consider awards of annual discretionary amounts

(a) Discretionary Discounts

i. Approved Organisations

(b) Other Organisations

Members noted the Clerks report. There are none to approve.

ii. Fundraising Events

At this point both Cllrs. Freeman and Parker left the meeting room.

(c) Applications from a registered charity

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Doyle* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That a 100% discount is applied to the value of £177 as sports hall hire for the Waverley RDA Carriage Driving Club fund raising event.
Votes in favour: unanimous

Cllrs. Freeman and Parker returned to the meeting room.

7.17 To approve award of annual grants

i. Senior Citizens Christmas meal grants
St Luke's Lunch Club

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Getley* **Motion Carried**
That under Section 137 of the LGA 1972, as amended by the LG&HA 1989 s36 a grant of £400 is awarded to St Luke's Lunch Club for their Christmas meal.
Votes in favour: unanimous

Holy Trinity 'In Touch' Club

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Parker* **Motion Carried**
That under Section 137 of the LGA 1972, as amended by the LG&HA 1989 s36 a grant of £600 is awarded to Holy Trinity 'In Touch' Club for their Christmas meal.
Votes in favour: unanimous

ii. Staff Christmas Meal Grant

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That under Section 137 of the LGA 1972, as amended by the LG&HA 1989 s36 a grant of £25 per head for eleven members of staff is awarded.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8. REPORTS: GENERAL

8.1 To consider a request from the U3A regarding Greenwood Park audio equipment and a permanent projector screen in the sports hall

This item was discussed after item 5.

A Member stated that he did not agree that a contribution to repair or replace should be made when the equipment was used by one hirer.

8.2 To consider a request to register an area of woodland as an Asset of Community Value Council considered that in view of the confidential nature of Item 8.2, which could involve a legal

matter that the public and accredited representatives of the press be excluded whilst the matter was discussed. (In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1982.)

The Chair deferred this item until the end of the meeting.

8.3 To receive brief progress reports and recommendations from:

(a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Pryce stated that a meeting had been arranged for 23 November at Park Street Village hall to engage with planning officers, district councillors and developers/landowners who had put forward sites under the call for sites exercise. A steering group meeting was scheduled for 14 December 2017.

(b) Events Working Party

The Chair stated that the Remembrance Day Service had been well supported and extended thanks to both Cllr Freeman and Cllr Getley for their input. There were problems with the sound system but this would be discussed at the debrief meeting in the new year.

With regard to the Carol Concert, a note would be issued to all Members asking for their assistance setting up, clearing up and on the day.

(c) Festival Working Party

Cllr Pryce informed Members that the festival organisation was on track.

8.4 To note recent and planned media communications

None reported.

9. DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

9.1 To receive consultations, invitations, training opportunities and notifications

(a) Consultations

None.

(b) Invitations/training

Noted.

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

10.1 To receive and approve the minutes of the Council's Committees

Planning Committee 12 October 2017

Noted.

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

Festival Working Party 21 September 2017

Noted.

10.3 To note the minutes of Joint Committees and Associations

None.

8.2 To consider a request to register an area of woodland as an Asset of Community Value

RESOLVED: ***Motion Carried Unanimously***

In view of the confidential nature of Item 8.2, which could involve a legal matter, the public and accredited representatives of the press shall be excluded whilst the matter is discussed, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1982.

The member of public left the meeting room.

RESOLVED: *Counter proposal: Cllr Bell* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That an area of woodland is not put forward to SADC as an Asset of Community Value
and that residents are advised of the process whereby residents can apply for an ACV
Votes in favour:5 *Votes against: 3* *Abstentions: 1*
The Chair used her casting vote.

Proposed: Cllr Pryce *Seconded: Cllr Brannen* **Motion Unsuccessful**
That an area of woodland is put forward to SADC as an Asset of Community Value.

11. OTHER URGENT IMPORTANT BUSINESS

None.

12. MEETING CLOSED

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.45pm

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