

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 17 SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 7.30 pm

Present: Mick Freeman (Chairman), Dorothy Kerry (Vice Chairman),
John Bell, Wendy Berriman, David Brannen, Martin Doyle, Ian Getley,
Karen Hurford, Bill Pryce and Nicholas Tyndale.
In attendance: Two Members of public
Officers in attendance: Mrs J Pienaar (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from Cllr Eileen Whittaker.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS

There were no interests declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 JULY 2015

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *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

There were none.

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

There were none.

7. REPORTS: FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES

7.1 To approve the payments schedules

Members referred to the schedules for July, August/September.

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

Cllrs Getley and Pryce agreed to sign the cheques.

7.2 To receive a progress update on co-opting a Bricket Wood Councillor

Cllrs Freeman, Kerry and Berriman had informally interviewed three candidates. Another candidate had come forward and their application was being processed. It was anticipated that a decision could be taken at the October meeting.

7.3 To receive a progress report on the Greenwood Pavilion improvement plan

The Clerk reported that whilst sufficient evidence of land ownership had been provided to support the application process, Sport England had advised that if the application was successful, registration with Land Registry would be a condition of the award. To register the land could cost over £900 taking into account legal costs.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Getley* **Motion Carried**
That registration be progressed.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.4 To consider the allocation of funds to the Greenwood Pavilion project

Members considered the recommendation of the Buildings Committee. Future savings had been identified as a result of the improvements which would address the problems with the pavilion terracing. The recommendation proposed that the equivalent funding be drawn down from the Working Balance toward bridging the gap between grant and project costs.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Berriman* **Motion Carried**
That £15k be drawn from the Working Balance in one payment toward the Pavilion improvement project.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.5 To receive a progress report on the Greenwood play area improvement plan

The Clerk reported that the District Council Officers planned to meet with the District Councillors to consider the Parish application. A request to attend the meeting had been politely declined.

7.6 To receive a progress report on the BPA legal agreement

Advice had been sought from the District Solicitor and it was hoped that a meeting could be arranged shortly. In the interim the Clerk had written to the Chief Operations Manager, the Lands Manager and Customer Services at BPA pointing out that the 'upfront consideration' had not been contingent on the legal agreement being in place as the BPA had installed the valve without prior legal access in place for maintenance and that the Council had issued instruction to take legal action.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Brannen* **Motion Carried**
That the BPA be advised of the Council's decision to deny access across its land for maintenance of the valve pending settlement and to advise them that the Council would be investigating the legal process for removal of the valve.
Pending advice from the District Solicitor compensation be sought through the small claims court.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.7 To receive the H&S Audit Report and Fire Risk Assessment Report

Members referred to the reports where most items were noted as low risk.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That the reports are received and accepted.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.8 To receive the Internal and External Auditor's Reports

Members considered both the Internal and External Auditor's reports. The External Auditor reported that the information in the Annual Return was in accordance with proper practices. No matters had come to their attention which gave cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the reports are received and accepted.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.9 To consider replacement of the mobile library

The mobile library servicing the parish was due to end on 30 October 2015. Cllr Bell explained his suggestion that the Council investigate the future of the ex-mobile library vehicles with a view to installing them as static community book swaps in one or two of the Council's car parks. Enquiries had been made through the County Council regarding the vehicles and about access to the S106 funding allocated to libraries from developments within the parish. The proposal was well-received. A number of suggestions were put forward as to how it could be managed with a little help from volunteers as well as suggested alternative venues, such as the ex-police room at Park Street Recreation Ground. Members agreed that an application be made for a one-off collection of books.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman* *Seconded: Cllr Hurford* **Motion Carried**
That an application be submitted for the one-off collection of books.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.10 To consider a request from Network Rail for a temporary compound

Network Rail had advised that the project was on hold.

7.11 To consider awards of grants and discretionary discounts

a) Annual spring plants

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Bell **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 £150 be allocated toward the purchase of spring bulbs for division between the three Residents' Associations.
Votes in favour: unanimous

Cllrs Berriman, Hurford and Kerry offered to purchase the bulbs.

b) Remembrance wreath

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Pryce **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 donation of £40 be agreed for a wreath.
Votes in favour: unanimous

c) Salmon Club for disabled swimmers in aid of the Daylight Club

The application could not be considered without additional information.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Pryce **Motion Carried***
That a decision be taken retrospectively at the next meeting.
Votes in favour: unanimous

d) Salsa Mish in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support

The retrospective application was considered. It was acknowledged that Salsa Mish had made a brilliant effort in fundraising having raised a donation of £1324. It was noted that any deduction in the hire rates would be passed on directly to Macmillan Cancer and therefore considered that a direct grant would be more appropriate. It was further noted that the Council had already agreed free use of its facilities, to the value of £329, for Macmillan Cancer events at Greenwood Park in 2015. Some Members felt that charitable donations should be linked directly to Council events.

PROPOSED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce Seconded: Cllr Brannen **Motion Carried***
That £200 be donated to Macmillan Cancer and that Salsa Mish be asked to present it to the charity.

COUNTER
PROPOSED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Berriman **Motion Unsuccessful***
That no donation be made to Macmillan Cancer.
Votes in favour: 3 Votes against: 7 Abstentions: 0

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce Seconded: Cllr Brannen **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 £200 be donated to Macmillan Cancer and that Salsa Mish be asked to present it to the charity.
Votes in favour: 7 Votes against: 3 Abstentions: 0

8. REPORTS: GENERAL

8.1 To receive an update on the retention of a How Wood Post Office facility

Cllrs Kerry provided a brief update to date adding that, as a result of badgering from Council representatives, the outreach service at How Wood was being re-considered. There was still a possibility to push it forward.

It was rumoured that other local post offices may face closure in future.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Bell Motion Carried*
That Cllr Freeman contact the Chiswell Green Post Mistress to obtain details and that he draft a letter to Anne Main, including reference to How Wood Post Office.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.2 To note the decision on Assets of Community Value (ACV) - Scrubbs & Park Woods

Cllr Bell had attended the appeal hearing and put forward a good case on behalf of the Council which the resulting decision supported. Both woodlands remained on the ACV register. The land owner was free to appeal the decision through the First Tier Tribunal.

8.3 To note the current status of the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange application

Cllr Pryce reported that there were now sufficient signatures on the petition to ensure the matter was debated by full council. The County's Cabinet would take the final decision. STRiFE were encouraging commuters to have their say.

Cllr Pryce would be representing the Council at the meeting on 10 November.

8.4 To consider the proposed diversion of footpath 54

Cllr Bell reported that route A-B-C had been sealed off for years and that the proposed diversion of route A-D-E was such a well-established path it could be claimed as the official route. Effectively the right of way A-B-C would be stopped up. It was noted that the path north of point A was very overgrown and that the Ramblers Association had requested that this be widened as a concession together with widening the route A-D.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Getley Motion Carried*
That the route A-D-E is acceptable and that the recommendations of the Ramblers Association are adopted.
That the overgrown path north of point A be cleared.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.5 To consider concerns regarding the public telephone kiosk, junction of Stanley Avenue/ Ragged Hall Lane

Cllr Bell reported that a resident had complained about the state of the telephone kiosk where only a vandalised empty shell remained.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Hurford Motion Carried*
That Cllr Bell draft a letter to BT requesting that the telephone and kiosk be restored to working order.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.6 To receive a brief report on the Bricket Wood Management Committee meeting

Councillors in attendance at that meeting reported concerns regarding the implementation of the woodland management plan and the future role of the Committee.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Bell Motion Carried*
That an enquiry be made of the District Trees & Woodlands Officer regarding the Tree Preservation Order's on the Common.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.7 To receive a brief report on the Lafarge Liaison meeting

Cllrs Bell and Getley attended the Liaison meeting and Cllrs Freeman and Getley attended the open day. Members received a tour of the plant and were informed of future proposals. The planning permission granted for the infilled land off Smug Oak Lane had been shelved and would not be

progressed. Permission was still being pursued for the temporary bridge across the river to enable the tree work at Frogmore Lakes to progress.

8.8 To receive brief updates and recommendations from the:

a) Neighbourhood Plan Working Party

Cllr Pryce reported that the five Working Groups were up and running. A £4k grant had been obtained to cover the consultant's fees. The Steering Group would meet again on 29 October.

b) Annual Events Working Party

Cllr Berriman reported that plans were underway for the annual Carol Concert. Volunteers were needed to help set up, clear away and serve teas. The Working Party proposed to book the brass band and hire in chairs again. Permission to effect a road closure for the Remembrance Day service had been requested.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman* *Seconded: Cllr Tyndale* **Motion Carried**
That the proposals be approved.
Votes in favour: unanimous

c) Parish in Bloom Working Party

Cllr Getley reported that the Parish in Bloom event had been well attended and that he had received positive feedback. Bulbs were to be purchased and planted by Working Party Members in the Greenwood Park entrance bed.

d) Licensed Refreshment Working Party

The Working Party had previously agreed that the bar area should not be considered for a tea room and had asked the Buildings Committee to seriously consider a wooden-clad portable cabin sited near the children's play area. A meeting had been held with the Premises Licence holder who had confirmed that she was still keen to provide the bar service. The Working Party would be meeting to consider the outcome of that meeting.

e) Festival Working Party

Cllr Pryce reported that the Working Party proposed the 2016 Festival be held over the weekend of 11/12 June to coincide with the Queen's 90th birthday at the Parish Centre. There would be a variety of activities, arts on Saturday, a fete on Sunday and a small fair. The Working Party asked that £5k additional funds be allocated to it, on a temporary basis, to facilitate planning. In response to a Member's disappointment that the Fete had been moved from its former site at Park Street, the Working Party explained that since it took on the event, it was its intention to alternate the event around the three wards.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That the 2016 Festival event be approved at the Parish Centre on 11 & 12 June.
That a loan of £5k be drawn from the Council's Working Balance and allocated to the 2016 Festival. The loan would be repaid after the event.
Votes in favour: 9 *Votes against: 1* *Abstentions: 0*

8.9 To note recent and planned media communications

Members noted recent and planned media communications.

9. DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

9.1 To receive invitations, training opportunities, notifications and consultations

a) Consultations

Recent consultations were noted. Cllr Tyndale had responded to the Herts Rail Strategy Consultation on behalf of Council.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Brannen* **Motion Carried**
That Cllr Pryce respond on behalf of Council to the Gambling Principles consultation.
Votes in favour: unanimous

b) Invitations, training opportunities and notifications

Cllr Pryce would be attending the Code of Conduct training on 7 October.

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

10.1 To receive & approve minutes of the following committees

Buildings Committee	9 July 2015
Leisure Committee	23 July 2015
Planning Committee	30 July 2015
Planning Committee	3 Sept 2015

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Brannen* *Seconded: Cllr Getley* **Motion Carried**
That the minutes are received.
Votes in favour: unanimous

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

Parish in Bloom Working Party	3 June 2015
Licensed Refreshment Working Party	9 July 2015
Annual Events Working Party	20 July 2015
Festival Working Party	20 July 2015
Parish in Bloom Working Party	30 July 2015
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	10 July 2015
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group	13 August 2015

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Tyndale* **Motion Carried**
That the notes are received.
Votes in favour: unanimous

10.3 To note the minutes of the Joint Committees & Associations

The following minutes were noted:

Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership	21 July 2015
Bricket Wood Common Management Committee	29 July 2015

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10pm.

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

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