

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 21 SEPTEMBER 2017 AT 7.30 pm**

Present: Cllrs. Dorothy Kerry (Chairman), Nicholas Tyndale (Vice Chairman), John Bell, Wendy Berriman, David Brannen, Martin Doyle, Mick Freeman, John Parker, Bill Pryce & Cllr Whittaker.
In attendance: Mrs C Hardy (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr Getley & Cllr Hurford.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None received.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JULY 2017

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

4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman accepted an item from Cllr Bell regarding the Chiswell Green Co-Op.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Two members of Greenwood Park Tennis Club were present

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

Members noted the content of Cllr Featherstone's report.

7. REPORTS: FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES

7.1 To approve the payments schedule

Members referred to the payment schedule for August and September 2017

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

Cllr Kerry and Cllr Whittaker agreed to sign the cheques.

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

Cllr Freeman was waiting for a meeting to be arranged between himself, the Architect, a representative of GPLTC, Mr Williams (Groundsman) and Mr Uddin (Maintenance Man). The Clerk agreed to organise the meeting as soon as possible.

Cllr Freeman commented that the Council was not entirely happy with the extension which was as yet unfinished and not handed over. A complaint from the cricket clubs had also been received regarding an inadequate useable space.

The Clerk commented that three quotations had been requested relating to the external landscaping with gabions and stones and one for a retaining wall as a comparison. It was noted that the ground staff were experiencing difficulty cutting the grassed bank due to how steep it was.

7.3 To consider and ratify the decision to install manual key pad security locks and replacement key barrels to external doors at Greenwood Park Pavilion

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Brannen* *Seconded: Cllr Berriman* **Motion Carried**

That manual key pad security locks and replacement barrels for all external doors to Greenwood Park Pavilion are purchased
Votes in favour: unanimous

At this point a representative of the tennis club asked to speak and was allowed by the Chairman. Mr Thompson from GPLTC asked if the opening and closing of the new tennis club security door by the Council's security guard was on the agenda.

The Clerk said it was not, that she had not placed the request on the agenda at this time.

Mr Thompson explained that the tennis club were experiencing difficulty opening and closing the new door and would do so even with the new combination lock. The club had requested that the opening and closing of the door was included on the Council's security contract, with the door opened around 8am and closed at 11pm or after, 7 days per week, 365 days of the year. The Clerk explained that there would be a cost implication to this arrangement as the security company did not always unlock or lock every day and company charged in excess of £15 per visit.

Some discussion took place and it was clear that the tennis club could not contribute financially to the opening and closing of the door. At this point the Chairman interceded and stated that the item was not on the agenda and that the discussion could not continue.

Two members of the tennis club left the meeting midway during item 7.4.

7.4 To receive a report on the current issues with the flooring in Orton Hall, Greenwood Park Community Centre and the Pavilion at Park Street Recreation Ground

The Clerk reported on the findings of the structural engineer with regard to the floor at Park Street Pavilion. She went on to say that the floor would require digging up and relaying due to screed not bonding to the bitumen. Cllr Pryce asked that the situation was reported to St Albans District Council as the owners of the building and in the meantime that a claim was submitted to the Council's insurers.

The Clerk referred to the cost of an invasive investigation into the problems with the Orton Hall floor at Greenwood Park and the need to set an interim budget for the work, potentially to both the Orton Hall floor and Park Street Pavilion.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce Seconded: Cllr Kerry Motion Carried*
That £5000 is drawn from the Reserve Account as an interim budget to investigate and carry out work to the Orton Hall floor
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.5 To consider the donation of the Greenwood Park cricket sight screens to GPCC and SAWICC

Members considered the Clerk's report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce Seconded: Cllr Berriman Motion Carried*
That the cricket screens are donated to GPCC and SAWICC
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.6 To review the allotment tenancy conditions and rental charges for 2017/18

Members considered the Clerk's report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Freeman Motion Carried*
That the 2017/2018 rental charges remain at the 2016/2017 rates
Votes in favour: unanimous

The Clerk referred to recommendations put forward by the Parish In Bloom Working Party that related to accepting tenants from outside of the parish and charging a £50 returnable deposit. The Clerk went on to explain that the Council already had in place a policy that accepted tenants who lived no more than one mile as the crow flies from the parish boundary. With regard to the £50 deposit, she went on to say that when added to the cost of a large allotment and administrative charge, the addition of this fee could make an allotment unaffordable to some residents, especially those on a low income. No further discussion took place on the recommendations of the PIB Working Party.

7.7 To review the refundable key deposit

Members considered the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Whittaker Secoded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the refundable key deposit is increased to £20 per key with immediate effect
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.8 To review the fairground hire fee charges for 2017/18

Members considered the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Secoded: Cllr Brannen* **Motion Carried**
That the 2017/2018 fairground hire fee charges are increased to:
Per operational day £185.00 Per set up day: £95.00
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.9 To note the 5 yearly gate licence review due in 2018

Members noted the Clerks report.

7.10 To consider and ratify Section 106 funding suggestions

Members considered the Clerks report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Tyndale Secoded: Cllr Pryce* **Motion Carried**
That the Section 106 request to SADC includes the following:
Lye Lane Icen development - Blackgreen Wood
Wheelchair friendly path to a picnic area with tables and seating. A natural play area to include a log trail, tree house, climbing trunks and balance beams.
Burstons - Mayflower Road Play Area
Adult fitness equipment
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.11 To receive a progress report on the Councils projects/activities

This item was deferred until the next meeting.

7.12 To consider awards of grants and discretionary discounts

Members considered two requests.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman Secoded: Cllr Parker* **Motion Carried**
That under Section 137 the Council donate a bench to the Hanstead Wood volunteers to the value of £300 in memory of Mike Carter. That the bench is relocated to Blackgreen Wood if Hanstead Wood is permanently closed to public access.
Votes in favour: unanimous

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell Secoded: Cllr Whittaker* **Motion Carried**
That under Section 137 the Council donate the sum of £50 to the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust as a thank you to Rob Hopkins who provided his equipment and scything skills free of charge at the St Julian's Meadow Open Day.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8. REPORTS: GENERAL

8.1 To consider the recommendation of the Annual Events Working Party in relation to the Annual Parish meeting format

Members considered the Clerks report/Agenda notes.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Brannen Secoded: Cllr Pryce* **Motion Carried**
That the Annual Parish Meeting format will follow the recommendations made by the Annual Events Working Party
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.2 To note the HSE Improvement Notice and response to the HSE

Members noted the letters. The Chairman expressed her thanks to the Deputy Clerk, Mrs Hardy for

the hours of work she had put into the investigation.

8.3 To note the 2017 Green Flag award for Greenwood Park

The Chairman expressed her thanks to Cllr Pryce for his work.

8.4 To consider the recommendations of the Human Resources Committee regarding the Clerks phased return to work

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Kerry* *Seconded: Cllr Tyndale* **Motion Carried**
That the recommendations of the Human Resources Committee are accepted
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.5 To consider the recommendations of the Human Resources Committee regarding the application of the Absence Leave Policy

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Tyndale* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That in the application of the Clerks phased return to work, delegated authority for decision making is given to Cllr Kerry and Cllr Pryce.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.6 To note and consider a request to use Greenwood Park Pavilion as office space

Members referred to the agenda notes. The Chairman asked Members to consider whether, conceptually it was a good idea. Cllr Pryce stated that the council should become more commercial and with that in mind the options should be explored. Cllr Whittaker considered it to be a good idea and Cllr Freeman stated that any occupant should pay a fair market rate for the space. Cllr Freeman offered to make further enquiries with SADC. The Chairman suggested that the item should be moved to Leisure Committee and this was agreed. She explained that the original applicant had since found alternative premises.

8.7 To receive brief progress reports and recommendations from:

(a) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Cllr Pryce stated that AECOM had produced a revised sites report and that he hoped that the draft plan would be ready by late spring/early summer 2018. Cllr Brannen reported that Alok Sharma the Planning & Housing Minister had announced another 22m to assist with neighbourhood plans from 2018.

Cllr Bell expressed concern that the Government had informed SADC that they would have to deliver 913 new homes per year.

(b) Parish in Bloom Working Party

This years presentation evening would be held in the sports hall at Greenwood Park on 28 September at 7pm. The Pearson family were the guest speakers. Cllr Tyndale would be the photographer.

(c) Events Working Party

Cllr Berriman stated that the event planning was in hand for the Remembrance Day Service and the Carol Concert.

(d) Festival Working Party

Cllr Pryce informed Members that the working party had met earlier today and agreed that a budget should be set.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Berriman* **Motion Carried**
That a budget of £5000 is set for the 2018 Festival.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.8 To note recent and planned media communications

Members referred to the agenda notes.

9. DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

9.1 To receive consultations, invitations, training opportunities and notifications

Noted as previously issued.

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

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

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

10.3 To note the minutes of Joint Committees and Associations

Members noted but did not vote on Items 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3 .

11. OTHER URGENT IMPORTANT BUSINESS

Chiswell Green Co-Op waste bin advertising

Cllr Bell was of the view that the Council should not accept advertising from the Chiswell Green Co-Op when it had opposed the development of the site and that they should be refunded their money. This was a view shared by Cllr Freeman. Cllr Pryce commented that the Co-Op put a lot of money back into the community and asked whether the signs indicated 'Chiswell Green ' Co-Op. As this item was not on the agenda for a decision, it was agreed to discuss advertising as a whole at the next meeting and to give consideration to what type of advertising was appropriate.

DCK Accounting Solutions

The Chair explained that in the Clerks absence accounting information had not been updated and the Council therefore had no information as to how it was performing against budget. This was especially concerning given the number of exceptional expenditure items required recently. The Chair went on to say that DCK could update invoice data in three days, produce a set of accounts and that Mrs Pienaar had been consulted. As it was essential that the accounts were brought up to date she recommended that DCK were employed which received Member support.

12. MEETING CLOSED

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.25pm

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