

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 6 FEBRUARY 2014 AT 7.30 pm

Present: Mick Freeman (Vice Chairman)
Jadwiga Baillie, John Bell, Wendy Berriman, David Brannen, Ian Getley,
Dorothy Kerry, Bill Pryce (part), Nicholas Tyndale and Eileen Whittaker.
In attendance: One Member of public.
Officers in attendance: Mrs J Pienaar (Clerk)

Prior to the meeting commencing the Vice-Chairman presented the donations collected at the Annual Carol Concert. Mr Trevor Gurd and Mr Peter Challis collected the cheque on behalf of the 220 St Albans Squadron Air Training Corp and Mr John Featherstone collected a cheque on behalf of The British Horse Society.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs Jones and Hurford. Cllr Pryce had advised that he might be late due to a prior commitment.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS

There were none.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2014

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

4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were none.

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

The Clerk reported that Cllr Featherstone had tendered her apologies.

The Chairman asked Members to consider items 7.7 and 8.4.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
In view of the confidential nature of item 7.7, which may prejudice a legal matter and item 8.4, which relates to employees, the public and accredited representatives of the press shall be excluded while they are discussed, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1982.
Votes in favour: unanimous

With the Council's approval the Chairman moved items 7.7 and 8.4 to follow after item 10 on the agenda.

7. REPORTS: FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES

7.1 To approve the payments schedules

Members referred to the schedules for November/December and December/January.

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

Cllrs Kerry and Freeman agreed to sign the cheques.

7.2 To allocate funds from reserves to support the 2014/15 Precept

The Clerk advised that a sum should be drawn from the General Reserves to cover the shortfall in the budget as a result of the precept being frozen.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Brannen* *Seconded: Cllr Tyndale* **Motion Carried**
That the sum of £11743 be drawn down from General Reserves to support the 2014/15 budget and that the amount be repaid when the income is received from the variation of covenant (35 Tippendell Lane).
Votes in favour: Unanimous

7.3 To appoint a Working Party to focus and co-ordinate income-generating projects

The Clerk pointed out that, depending on the Terms of Reference, the new working party could potentially cross over with other projects and initiatives already being actively pursued by other appointed Working Parties, Committees and the Council.

Cllr Pryce joined the meeting.

A Member felt that the new working party could provide a more co-ordinated approach whilst another questioned the need for another working party. A member suggested that a fixed term working group might be the best solution and another that the membership consist of a representative from each ward.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman* *Seconded: Cllr Baillie* **Motion Carried**
That the Generating Income Group (working party) be formed.
That Cllrs Kerry, Berriman, Baillie, Tyndale and Freeman, joined by the Clerk and Centre Manager, be appointed members.
That the purpose of the Working Party is to look at improving/generating income for the parish and report back to the April Main Council.
Votes in favour: 8 *Votes against: 2* *Abstentions: 0*

7.4 To authorise the seal of the covenant variation documents

The Clerk advised that in accordance with Standing Orders the Council was required to authorise two members to seal the Deed of Variation documents.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That the Deed of Variation documents be signed by the Chairman, Cllr Oonah Jones and Vice-Chairman, Cllr Michael Freeman.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.5 To nominate signatories to the Natwest bank account

The Clerk thanked the Members who had offered their assistance. Members concluded that it would be appropriate to nominate one member from each ward as a signatory on the account.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Berriman* **Motion Carried**
That Cllr Getley (Park Street), Cllr Kerry (Bricket Wood) and Cllr Bell (Chiswell Green) be nominated signatories.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.6 To consider proposals for the new Bricket Wood village sign

The Clerk passed on Mr Laurie Hart's apologies. The Council had earmarked a sum of £3260 toward a new village sign and had asked the Bricket Wood Members to work with the Bricket Wood Residents' Association (BWRA) to consider the design and location. The final design, including installation costs, was estimated at £4074. The BWRA had offered to cover the shortfall of £814.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That the project go ahead with the additional funding from the BWRA.
Votes in favour: unanimous

As agreed earlier, item 7.7 was deferred to follow item 10 on the agenda.

7.8 To consider the BPA legal documents

The Clerk reported that the District Council Officer assisting with the legal document had been called away to deal with an urgent matter and as a consequence the advice was not yet available.

7.9 To rename the PEAP Working Party

Cllr Bell explained that the Parish Environmental Action Plan had been initiated and led by the Countryside Management Service (CMS) and its remit covered How Wood, St Julian's Wood, Blackgreen Wood, Bricket Wood Common and Hanstead Wood. CMS had since withdrawn and the group wished to continue to discuss plans and activities. It was therefore suggested that the group be renamed and led by the Parish with the aim, '*to integrate and co-ordinate environmental activity within St Stephen Parish*'. Members were in agreement with this proposal.

PROPOSED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell* *Seconded: Cllr Baillie*
That the group be re-named the Parish Environmental Liaison Group.

COUNTER

PROPOSED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* **Motion unsuccessful**
That the group be renamed L.E.A.P (the Liaison Environmental Action Party).

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell* *Seconded: Cllr Baillie* **Motion Carried**
That the group be re-named the Parish Environmental Liaison Group.
Votes in favour: unanimous

7.10 To review the publication of the council's agendas

A Member proposed that the council's agendas be put on all the parish notice boards to reach as many people as possible and to cater for residents without access to the internet or able to drop in at the Parish Centre. It was noted that there would be a cost implication to putting every committee agenda on the notice boards.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Baillie* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the Main Council agenda be put on the parish notice boards.
Votes in favour: 9 *Votes against: 1* *Abstentions: 0*

8. REPORTS: GENERAL

8.1 To receive an update on the A405 (Blackboy PH) bus shelters

The Clerk reported that following the very positive meeting with the Passenger Transport Unit (PTU), the Highways Agency (HA) and Cllr Bell, the PTU had launched a survey of bus users. The evidence collected would be used to prioritise the bus stop improvement work. Posters had gone up on the parish notice boards and in the bus shelters and leaflets had been made available in the shelters. Members were asked to assist with the circulation of the flyers and posters locally.

8.2 To receive a brief update and the recommendations of the:

a) Parish in Bloom Working Party

Cllr Getley reported that the Working Party was looking at providing hanging baskets outside the local shops. A simple and informative poster and application form had been developed. The event had not been advertised in the local magazines or parish newsletter. The Working Party recommended that the Council writes to both the District and County Councils objecting to their current roundabout policy which precluded the sponsorship of the roundabouts within the parish. A Member pointed out that the County Council was having to make substantial budgetary cuts.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Berriman* **Motion Carried**
That a letter be written to the Chamber of Commerce, District Councillors, County Councillors, Tourist Board, Anne Main MP and Robert Gordon regarding improvements needed to the local roundabouts.
Votes in favour: unanimous

It was further agreed that Cllrs Berriman and Getley draft the letter and forward it to the Clerk together with photographs.

b) Festival Working Party

Cllr Whittaker reported that on Friday there would be music, whilst Saturday would focus on the Arts and Sunday, the Fete. The only funding available to the Working Party was that raised by the previous Fete of £4k. There was concern that the success of the Festival was weather dependent. The Working Party proposed to purchase banners at £435, hire appropriate sound equipment for £450 (the Council's system did not have a great enough output) and hire a cover for the stage at a cost of £220. The entertainment on Friday evening came at a cost of £300. Whilst Saturday was aimed at encouraging arts and crafts within the community, it was hoped that the Fete on Sunday would raise sufficient income to cover the event costs. However, the Working Party asked Council to allocate an additional £2k toward this event to cover essential additional expenditure on items such as security and cleaning.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman Seconded: Cllr Bell Motion Carried*
That £2k be drawn from General Reserves and allocated to the Festival.
Votes in favour: unanimous

c) Annual Events Working Party

The Working Party recommended that the brass band be booked for the Community Carol Concert on 7 December 2014 at a cost of £200 and that £200 be approved for the Books for Schools initiative. It was also suggested that the closing date for Community Awards be extended to 30 June and included into, what was previously, the September garden awards event, along with the Books for Schools presentation. Several Members expressed concern regarding this proposal, explaining that it would have a detrimental affect on the attendance for the Annual Parish meeting. The Clerk said that the Annual Parish meeting was the Council's opportunity to let residents know about its activities and work for the community. The meeting was rotated around the three wards to attract residents from the different areas by being held within walking distance. Members agreed that the Annual Parish meeting should continue to be rotated around the parish.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Getley Motion Carried*
That the Annual Parish meeting be held at Greenwood Park in 2014 and will include the Community Award and School Book presentations.
That the Community Awards deadline be extended to 14 March 2014.
That the Gardening Awards evening be held in September 2014.
Votes in favour: unanimous

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Berriman 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:
£200 toward the school book donations.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.3 To receive an update on an improved website

Cllr Tyndale reported that following a meeting in December a vision, 'to be useful and engaged with the community', had been agreed for the website. It would serve the Council's aims and priorities, namely, 'to develop community involvement' and 'to build capacity to deliver quality services'. The website audience and information required had been considered and would be brought into a useful structure at the next meeting. The next stage to be progressed was the preparation of a development brief. The aim was to have the website up and running by May.

Item 8.4 was moved to follow after item 10.

9. DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

9.1 To receive invitations, training opportunities and notifications

This was noted.

10. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

10.1 To receive & approve minutes of the following committees

The following minutes were formally received by Council:

Planning Committee (5)	28 November 2013
Buildings Committee (2)	28 November 2013
Planning Committee (6)	19 December 2013
Planning Committee (7)	16 January 2014

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

Parish in Bloom Working Party	19 November 2013
PEAP	5 December 2013
Annual Events Working Party	12 December 2013
Festival Working Party	12 December 2013

10.3 To note the minutes of the Joint Committees & Associations

There were none.

As previously resolved the Council moved into Part II and the public in attendance left the meeting.

7.7 To review the parking arrangement with the QEQM autistic centre

Members referred to the Clerk's report.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman Seconded: Cllr Brannen **Motion Carried***
That a very simple low cost temporary 12 month licence be agreed to permit use of the parking in the council's lower car park.
Votes in favour: unanimous

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman Seconded: Cllr Freeman **Motion Carried***
That a licence be issued at £100 p/a for use of seven designated parking bays within the lower car park.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.4 To receive a verbal report from the HR Working Party

The Clerk gave a short verbal summary of a recent matter dealt with by the HR Working Party, the details of which remained confidential to ensure the impartiality of the remaining members.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.50pm.

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

The Parish Office may be contacted by telephone, email, fax or post.

Telephone: 01923 681443

Fax: 01923 681338

Email: clerk@ststephenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Post: St Stephen Parish Council, The Parish Centre, Station Road, Bricket Wood, St Albans, Herts, AL2 3JP.