

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 20 NOVEMBER 2014 AT 7.30 pm

Present: Michael Freeman, (Chairman), Dorothy Kerry (Vice-Chair), Jadwiga Baillie
John Bell, Wendy Berriman, Ian Getley, Karen Hurford,
Bill Pryce, Nicholas Tyndale and Eileen Whittaker.
In attendance: Two Members of the public and
Mr R Hazelhurst, Community Services Officer, St Albans District Council
Officers in attendance: Mrs J Pienaar (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were accepted from Cllrs David Brannen and Oonah Jones.

2. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS

Cllr Freeman declared a personal interest in item 8.13 concerning the application from the 1st Park Street Rainbows and Brownies.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2014

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Getley* **Motion Carried**
That the minutes be approved as a true record.
Votes in favour: 8 *Against: 0* *Abstentions: 2*

4. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Having notified the Clerk and the Chairman prior to the meeting the item requested by Cllr Pryce on the location of the defibrillator was accepted.

Cllr Bell took the opportunity to mention that he was attending an appeal hearing on behalf of the Parish Council at 10am on Monday 24 November at the District Council offices. The appeal would review the decision to register both Park Wood and Scrubbs Wood as Assets of Community Value which had been registered as a result of an application by the Parish Council. He asked if any Members would be able to offer support by providing evidence.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were none.

6. DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

There were none.

7. Item 7 was deferred pending the arrival of the District Council's Officer.

8. REPORTS: FINANCE, POLICY AND RESOURCES

8.1 To approve the payments schedules

Members referred to the schedules for October/November.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Pryce* **Motion Carried**
That the payments schedule be approved.
Votes in favour: 9 *Against: 0* *Abstentions: 1*

Cllrs Berriman and Whittaker agreed to sign the cheques.

8.2 It was agreed that discussion of item 8.2 be held in the confidential part of the meeting and follow item 11.3 on the agenda.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Pryce* **Motion Carried**
In view of the confidential nature of item 8.2, which relates to the business matters of other individuals and organisations, 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

8.3 To consider the Councillor Allowance Scheme for 2015/16

Members referred to the notes. The basic allowance of £250 per annum had been adopted to defray costs associated with the position and to ensure that there were no financial disincentives or disadvantages to becoming a Parish Councillor.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That the Council recommends to the Independent Remuneration Panel the basic allowance remains unchanged and that allowances for travel, subsistence outside of the Parish, child care and dependent relatives remains in line with that adopted by the District Council.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.4 To consider the annual insurance renewal

Whilst considering the insurance renewal it was suggested that the buildings be re-valued since it appeared that a valuation had been carried out some time ago. (Note: It is confirmed that the buildings were valued for insurance purposes in 2012.)

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Getley* **Motion Carried**
That the annual insurance be approved and the properties re-valued.
Votes in favour: unanimous

The Chairman returned to item 7.

7. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON A NEW LEISURE FACILITY FOR THE SOUTH OF ST ALBANS — COTLANDSWICK LEISURE CENTRE

The Chairman welcomed Mr Hazelhurst from the District Council. Mr Hazelhurst circulated plans of the design/layout and explained that Cotlandswick Centre would be predominantly an outdoor centre with an emphasis on football. There would be 8 x 5-a-side pitches and 1 x 7-a-side pitch. The centre would include a fitness area, dance studio and sports hall with around 100 car parking spaces and was expected to open early July 2015. The pitches would be laid with 4g artificial turf and floodlit. When questioned by Members, Mr Hazelhurst thought the pitches could be used for informal netball and basketball. The hire charges would be agreed with the service provider '1Life' (previously known as Leisure Connection). The old Recreation Centre in London Colney would close and the property returned to the County Council.

Members expressed their disappointment that St Stephen parish had not been consulted sooner, particularly as the facility had been put forward, together with Westminster, as replacement for the loss of local facilities caused by the closure of the Bricket Wood Sports Centre. A Member pointed out there was a shortage of netball facilities within the District and suggested that half the outside area be laid with tarmac surfacing to accommodate netball.

Members agreed that Mr Hazelhurst feed back to District that the Parish Council was very disappointed with the proposed arrangements as they did not meet the needs of St Stephen parish residents and that consultation at an early stage would have been desirable. Mr Hazelhurst agreed to advise the parish of any opportunities to influence the programming. The Chairman thanked Mr Hazelhurst for meeting with the Council.

8.5 To consider recommendations of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party

Cllr Pryce reported, on behalf of the Working Party, that it recommended the Council apply to designate the parish boundary as the appropriate area for a Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that in some parts of the parish, such as in Ragged Hall Lane, the boundary did not always include all residential properties along a road but these households would be included in consultations. The Working Party also proposed that a letter be sent out to all parish residents and businesses to involve everyone in a community led plan. The cost of this would be around £1168. Members

suggested that flyers be made available at the Carol Concert, on parish notice boards, in local press etc. and include a map showing the parish boundary. It was agreed that the draft letter be circulated to all Members.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Freeman* **Motion Carried**
That an application be made to designate the parish boundary for a Neighbourhood Plan.
That the Working Party proceeds with the letter.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.6 To progress the 2015/16 Grounds Maintenance Rolling Programme

Members referred to the quotations and the recommendation that an order be placed for the mowers from the supplier offering best value for delivery prior to commencement of the new cutting season. It was noted that this would also save around £300. A Member asked whether yellow lights could be fitted either side of the roller mower to indicate its width when being transported between sites.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That an order be placed for the three mowers with the supplier offering best overall value.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.7 To consider recommendations of the Licensed Refreshment Working Party

Members referred to the recommendations of the Working Party that the bar agreement with the current licensee continue and that the sale of tea/coffee be permitted for a three month trial. The details of the proposed trial period were set out in the recommendations. A Member pointed out that the Lounge was often in use. A Member of the Working Party explained that the availability of the Lounge had been taken on board and short trial periods were to be discussed with Ms Farmer. There was concern that the sale of teas would not be viable from the hatch and that it may generate noise which would interfere with hirers. It was also felt that a nominal fee should be charged during the trial period. Members were asked whether a van might serve better for trial purposes as it would require no input from the building.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Getley* **Motion Carried**
That the bar agreement be renewed as recommended.
Votes in favour: unanimous

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That the trial arrangements for the sale of tea and coffee be referred back to the Working Party for review and to consider a nominal charge.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.8 To consider recommendations of the Car Park Working Party

The Chairman had written to Killigrew School and Cllr Hurford had provided a list of school events for the remainder of 2014. The Working Party proposed that the car park be closed to everyone for essential maintenance with assistance from the Council's security contractor. Advance notices would be displayed in the car park and the school informed. The aim was to create minimal disruption. Cllr Whittaker, a school governor for Killigrew, reported that the Head was very supportive and understood the difficulties the Council faced. The initial proposal had been to carry out the closure when the school and centre were open although it was suggested that maintenance work would be best carried out during school holidays to avoid disruption.. It was also suggested that consideration be given to closing the car park on busy days when it reached capacity.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell* *Seconded: Cllr Berriman* **Motion Carried**
That essential maintenance on the car park be carried out during school holidays with assistance from the security contractors.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.9 To consider funding toward new CCTV at Greenwood Park

Members considered the recommendation from the Buildings Committee that new infrared cameras and lighting be funded with the income due from the British Pipeline Agency.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman* *Seconded: Cllr Getley* **Motion Carried**
That income due in from BPA be allocated toward new CCTV and lights as recommended.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.10 To consider Office 365

Members considered the report and the benefits of moving to Office 365, a cloud based software and email solution that enabled access to shared calendars and documents from a number of devices from any location. One Member raised concern regarding data security.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That the Council move to an annual Office 365 Business Premium package.
Votes in favour: 9 *Votes against: 0* *Abstentions: 1*

8.11 To adopt a volunteer policy

Members considered the draft policy which outlined the relationship between the council and volunteers who give their time to help tend to the parish woodlands and flowerbeds to ensure they are valued and supported.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Whittaker* *Seconded: Cllr Tyndale* **Motion Carried**
That the policy be adopted with the amendment to item 2.1 to read, 'Volunteers will be welcomed and introduced to a nominated group leader, *as approved by the Parish Council, who will ...*'
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.12 To review the Greenwood Park Lawn Tennis Club rent

Members referred to the notes regarding the rent review. A Member enquired as to the rental income generated by the public court which, under the terms of the agreement with the Council, was retained by the Tennis Club. The booking arrangements through Ramish's prompted concerns that people may find booking inconvenient and may also feel intimidated from using the public court. Members noted that the Tennis Club was responsible for maintaining the public court and managing the booking arrangements. It was concluded that the booking arrangements with the local shop offered the best solution in terms of all-hours access and that the hire rates remain unchanged to encourage use of the public court.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley* *Seconded: Cllr Bell* **Motion Carried**
That the annual rent be increased by an additional £255 from January 2015.
Votes in favour: unanimous

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Bell* *Seconded: Cllr Berriman* **Motion Carried**
That the hire rates remain unchanged.
That the Tennis Club be asked to provide a breakdown of hire for the public court over the past year.
Votes in favour: unanimous

8.13 To consider applications for grants and discretionary discounts

8.13.1 Discretionary Discounts

i) Approved Organisations

a) Pre-approved organisations

In line with agreed policy, the discounts which granted free use to the Chiswell Green Residents Association, Community Rail Partnership, Park Street Neighbourhood Watch and St Stephen Gardening Club for their meetings, as well as the Park Street Residents' Association event, were noted.

b) Other organisations

Members considered the applications received.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Baillie* **Motion Carried**
That a 100% discount be approved, up to the value of £40, for the Hearing Dogs for Deaf People AGM.
Votes in favour: unanimous

The Chairman, who had previously declared an interest, left the meeting room whilst the application from 1st Park Street Rainbows & Brownies was discussed. The Vice-Chair took the chair.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Baillie* *Seconded: Cllr Pryce* **Motion Carried**
That a 100% discount be approved, up to the value of £871.42, for the 1st Park Street Rainbows & Brownies meetings.
Votes in favour: unanimous

The Chairman returned to the meeting.

ii) Fundraising events

c) Applications from a registered charity

Members considered the applications received.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman* *Seconded: Cllr Pryce* **Motion Carried**
That a 100% discount be approved for the Hearing Dogs for Deaf People Doggy Fun Day/Tea of £196 and a 25% discount be agreed for the Strawberry Tea event of £41.50.
Votes in favour: unanimous

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That a 100% discount be approved for the Macmillan Coffee Morning of £280 and a 25% discount be agreed for the Cream Tea of £49.
Votes in favour: unanimous

iii) Commercial activities

It was agreed that this item follow item 8.2 at the end of the meeting.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Freeman* *Seconded: Cllr Pryce* **Motion Carried**
In view of the confidential nature of item 8.13.1 a) iii), which relates to the business matters of other individuals and organisations, 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

8.13.2 Grants

i) Senior Citizen—Christmas meal grants

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *Seconded: Cllr Baillie* **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:
A grant of £400 to St Luke's Lunch Club.
Votes in favour: unanimous

ii) Staff—Christmas meal grant

In addition to the annual staff/Members 'Xmas Soiree' get-together, two Members felt that it was a shame that staff did not have their Christmas meal with Members and asked that the Clerk relay this to the staff. The Clerk said that staff valued the opportunity to meet as a team outside the work environment.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce* *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:

A sum of £25 per head be approved toward the staff Christmas meal.

Votes in favour: 8 Votes against: 1 Abstentions: 1

iii) Application for a grant - STRiFE

Members referred to the application. The Council's representative on STRiFE, Cllr Pryce, reported that the cost of preparing legal evidence was £10k.

PROPOSED: *Proposed: Cllr Getley Seconded: Cllr Bell*
That a sum of £2.5k be granted to STRiFE from Planning Reserves.

COUNTER-
PROPOSED &
RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman Seconded: Cllr Tyndale **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 sum of £4k be granted to STRiFE from Planning Reserves and the reserves be topped up next year as necessary.
Votes in favour: 8 Votes against: 2 Abstentions: 0

9. REPORTS: GENERAL

9.1 To receive an update on the Park Street Pavilion police room

There was concern that, the Council's investment to improve a small room within the Park Street Pavilion to provide the local Community Police Officers and PCSO's with a 'drop-in' office for the benefit of parish residents, was being under-utilised. Cllr Pryce reported that he had written to the Crime Commissioner who had forwarded his enquiry to the local Inspector. He read out the response from Inspector Adam Such. The Inspector acknowledged that the office space provided a local facility, close to the community, which would allow Officers to spend more time in their area. Members were disappointed that the room had not been used as envisaged. It was pointed out that the Police Surgeries used to rotate around the parish to allow local people to attend. Several Members were of the opinion that the room could be put to better use.

PROPOSED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce Seconded: Cllr Baillie*
That the room be taken back and better utilised by the Parish Council.

COUNTER-
PROPOSED AND
RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Tyndale Seconded: Cllr Getley **Motion Carried***
That the Police be allowed six months to improve their use of the room and that they report back after that time on actual use, at which time the Council will review the agreement.
That it be noted surgeries held at Starbucks do not service Park Street area of the parish.
Votes in favour: 9 Votes against: 0 Abstentions: 1

It was agreed that the Clerk respond to St Albans CSP Neighbourhood Inspector Adam Such.

The Chairman drew Members attention to the guillotine procedure. It was unanimously agreed to continue to 10.30pm.

9.2 To consider ways to encourage residents to become parish councillors

Due to the lack of available time this item was deferred.

9.3 To receive a verbal report on the Clerk's roundtable meeting

Due to the lack of available time this item was deferred.

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

a) Annual Events Working Party

Cllr Berriman asked that the nominated School Representatives visit schools to confirm how their

school was participating at the Carol Concert.

b) Parish in Bloom Working Party

It was agreed that this item be deferred.

c) Income Generating Working Party

It was agreed that this item be deferred.

10. DOCUMENTS RECEIVED

10.1 To receive invitations, training opportunities, notifications and consultations

a) Consultations

Consultations received were noted and Members were encouraged to respond to the Strategic Local Plan as individuals. Cllr Pryce agreed to respond on behalf of the Council.

b) Invitations, training opportunities and notifications

Noted.

10.2 To receive a verbal report on delegated consultations

a) Delivering HCC 'Inspiring Libraries' strategy

Members noted the draft comments prepared by Cllr Pryce.

11. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

10.1 To receive & approve minutes of the following committees

The following minutes were received as approved:

| | |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Planning Committee (4) | 9 Oct 2014 |
| Buildings Committee (2) | 30 Oct 2014 |
| Leisure Committee (2) | 6 Nov 2014 |

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

The following notes were received as approved:

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Neighbourhood Plan Working Party | 22 Oct 2014 |
| Annual Events Working Party | 23 Oct 2014 |
| Income Generating Working Party | 23 Oct 2014 |
| Licensed Refreshment Working Party | 13 Nov 2014 |

10.3 To note the minutes of the Joint Committees & Associations

The following minutes were received:

| | |
|--|------------|
| Bricket Wood Common Management Committee | 6 Oct 2014 |
|--|------------|

The Chairman moved to the confidential part of the meeting as previously resolved.

8.2 To consider the ice-cream concession

Members referred to the report on the ice-cream concession tender.

PROPOSED: *Proposed: Cllr Pryce*
That the Council go out to re-tender for a higher amount.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Hurford* *Seconded: Cllr Tyndale* **Motion Carried**
That the tender from Mr Noviello be accepted.
Votes in favour: 9 *Votes against: 1* *Abstentions: 0*

8.13.1 Discretionary Discounts

iii) Commercial activities

Members considered the application from Club Kidz Ltd in line with current policy. Members agreed that the new business would provide a service to the community.

RESOLVED: *Proposed: Cllr Berriman* *Seconded: Cllr Kerry* **Motion Carried**
That a discount of 48.9% be applied to the standard hire rates for the first 12 weeks.
Votes in favour: unanimous

The Chairman then moved to the item of urgent and important business.

12. Location of the defibrillator

Following a site meeting with the Buildings Maintenance man, Cllr Pryce asked Members to review the proposed location of the defibrillator, suggesting that it should still be installed outside but placed behind the Centre's shutters. He put forward the concerns. Members were asked to demonstrate their preferred position as a guide for the Clerk, to which a clear majority of Members showed their support for the defibrillator being fitted outside the shutters.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.30 pm.

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

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