

ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL

Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green and Park Street



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF
THE TREES & WOODLAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (1)
HELD AT THE
PARISH CENTRE, STATION ROAD, BRICKET WOOD, ST. ALBANS, HERTS
ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 10.30 am**

Present: Cllr Bell (Chair), Cllr Hurford & Cllr Getley
In attendance: Carol Hardy (Deputy Clerk) Mike Carter (Friends of Hanstead Wood)
Dave Williams (Senior Grounds man)

At 10.30am the meeting was inquorate. It commenced at 10.55am on the arrival of Cllr Getley.

1. ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Hurford Seconded: Cllr Getley **Motion Carried**
That Cllr Bell be re-elected as Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Parker and Cllr Whittaker.

3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were none.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 MARCH 2016

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

5. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

None.

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

7. MANAGEMENT: REPORTS & PLANNING

7.1 Blackgreen Wood

a) Work Schedule for Autumn/Winter 2016/2017

The work over the Autumn/Winter period will involve the clearance of Holly over a 0.25ha. Some gardening of the brambles over the Hornbeam coppice will also be required.

b) Friends of Hanstead Wood in Blackgreen Wood

Mr Carter stated that the Friends would be working in Blackgreen Wood during December at the volunteer day.

c) Open Day Event 2017

Members agreed to move the event from Blackgreen Wood to Greenwood Park to have a steam event on part of St Julian's Meadow during late August 2017. It was agreed to investigate a steam tractor and baling machine and a scything demonstration. The usual woodland crafts could also be incorporated along with some vintage tractors. The Chairman said he would make contact with the scything group and Cllr Hurford the steam group.

7.2 Greenwood Park

a) Work Schedule for Autumn/Winter 2016/2017

Some years ago, five Hawthorns were donated by Chiswell Green Residents Association to

represent 50 years of the Association. One of the trees is dead and it was agreed to remove the dead tree and replace with a red flowering Hawthorn, the cost of which was not known. Mr Williams stated that at the front of the park at the location of the new houses, the Conifers had been removed and it had always been the intention to replace this with a feature hedge. He went on to say that the remaining hawthorn hedge would also be removed and replaced. Cllr Hurford agreed as this was a Green Flag park.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Hurford Seconded: Cllr Getley **Motion Carried**
That £1700 is reallocated from the 2015/16 Urgent Tree Safety budget and £300 from the 2015/16 Blackgreen Woodland Management budget towards the removal of the remaining hedge at the front of Greenwood Park and to the replacement with a Beech hedge from the new house onwards.

b) Poplar, Ash and Birch trees to front boundary

Members noted that although there were other verbal quotations, the only written quotation to remove the trees amounted to £11040. It was agreed that some trees were beyond life and others had grown large branches over the pavement and road. Members were concerned that with only £5000 in the urgent tree work budget and the inevitability that this would be required over the winter months, that insufficient funds were available for the quoted work. It was agreed to ask Main Council to fund the full cost of the tree removal.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Hurford **Motion Carried**
That the dangerous trees on the front boundary fence with Tippendell Lane be removed at a cost of £11040.00. That Main Council is asked to fund this project from reserves.

c) Other trees

The Buildings Inspection had reported that the Maple tree situated in the raised brick bed by the Community Centre had cracked the brick work bed and was overhanging the roof of the Community Centre. The recommendation was that it should be felled. Mr Williams reported that the adjacent Maple that overhang the driveway had been damaged by cars and was in a poor condition. This tree had also been noted in the Buildings Inspection. Mr Williams recommended that both trees be removed and replaced with one Maple in a different location.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Getley Seconded: Cllr Bell **Motion Carried**
That the recommendation of the Buildings Inspection be accepted and that both Maple trees are removed and replaced with a Maple in a new location by the Community Centre. That the Buildings Committee fund this work from their budget.

7.3 St Julian's Wood

a) Work schedule for Autumn/Winter 2016/2017

Mr Williams stated that for the last two years only safety work had been carried out and he suggested that the woodland management at this location was falling off the agenda. The Chairman stated that he was against clearing large areas of the woodland and asked to be present if trees were identified for felling. Mr Williams said that the Hornbeam adjacent to the clearing required coppicing or pollarding

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Getley Seconded: Cllr Hurford **Motion Carried**
That £1585 from the Blackgreen Wood Management Plan 2015/16 budget be reallocated to the St Julian's Wood Management budget.

b) Friends of St Julian's Wood Report

The Chairman reported that the Friends were working to keep the weeds down around the trees and carrying out brush work. It was noted that the hedge laying around the allotment site required continuation.

Cllr Hurford suggested that more volunteers were required and that advertising the Friends work dates would be advantageous to forward planning.

7.4 Greenwood Park Meadow

a) Ragwort control/report

The Chairman reported that the volunteer group had not managed to pull any Ragwort this year. Mr Williams stated that the Ground Staff had mowed the worst area in order to prevent it seeding but that the rest had been baled and carted away.

b) Meadow Cut 2016

The meadow cut was carried out in August, turned to allow the wild flower seeds to settle , baled and carted within the budget of £1500.

c) Hedge cutting

Mr Williams stated that the old M10 hedge had not taken place but was urgently required now to bring it down to a manageable level.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Hurford Seconded: Cllr Getley **Motion Carried**
That £1000 remaining in the Blackgreen Woodland Management budget 2015/16 should be reallocated to the St Julian's hedge cutting budget to allow this work to progress

7.5 Park Street Woodland Embankment

a) Work Schedule for Autumn/Winter 2016/2017

Mr Williams reported that all work will be carried out in house and will consist of tidying and general maintenance.

b) Lime Tree Pollarding

The adult play equipment is situated under the heavy canopy of the Lime trees. It was suggested and agreed that the trees should be pollarded for both future safety and light reasons.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Getley Seconded: Cllr Hurford **Motion Carried**
That £800 is reallocated from the Blackgreen Wood stump grinding budget to the pollarding of the Lime trees in Park Street Recreation Ground.

8. TREE SAFETY SURVEYS

Mr Williams suggested carrying out the surveys on a staggered basis; thus Woodlands would be carried out during 2017 and parks in 2018 and so on. The usual in house safety checks would remain unchanged.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Hurford Seconded: Cllr Getley **Motion Carried**
That the external Tree Safety Surveys be carried out as follows:
Woodlands during 2017 and Parks during 2018. That the programme should follow on in successive years.

9. BUTTERFLY WORLD

a) Update on feature items of architectural interest

The Chairman stated that he had not progressed this idea. Cllr Hurford said that a charity had now been set up to work to reopen the site. In view of this Members agreed to abandon the idea for the foreseeable future.

10. INCLUSION OF THE PARISH ENVIRONMENTAL LIAISON GROUP (PELG) INTO THE TREES AND WOODLANDS COMMITTEE MEETING

There was some concern regarding this suggestion that it would impact considerably on a meeting with an already heavy agenda. A Member stated that the meeting was always rushed. Cllr Hurford suggested the addition of a third, possibly a fourth meeting each year that could fit in the Grounds Staff diary. Members agreed that there should be a third meeting in December that was set aside to discuss the budget for the forthcoming financial year. A meeting should also be held in July 2017 to finalise the open day event.

There was some discussion about the PELG meeting but it was agreed to trial the inclusion of PELG for one year for two meetings. The PELG reports to be at the beginning of the agenda to allow those members to leave the meeting.

RESOLVED: Proposed: Cllr Bell Seconded: Cllr Hurford ***Motion Carried***
That for a trial period of one year, the PELG meeting shall be included within the Trees & Woodlands Committee meeting.
That a third budget only meeting in December should be included in the meetings diary.

11. 2017/2018 BUDGET REQUIREMENTS

This item is held over, to be agreed at a dedicated budget meeting in December 2016.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

None.

Meeting closed at 12.30pm

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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.

NOTE: These minutes are to be considered as 'draft' until the Committee has approved them.