

ST STEPHEN PARISH COUNCIL

Bricket Wood, Chiswell Green and Park Street

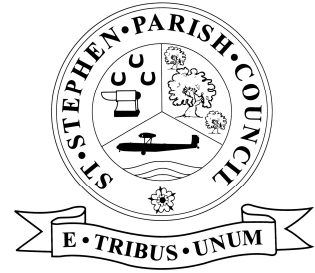
THE PARISH CENTRE STATION ROAD BRICKET WOOD

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Minutes of the Full Council Meeting

held on **Thursday 20th June 2024** at **7.30pm**

at **The Parish Centre, Station Road, Bricket Wood, St Albans, AL2 3PJ**

Present: Councillors

Ajanta Hilton

Adrian Ruffhead

David Yates

Bill Pryce

Nicholas Tyndale

Also present:

Susan Hake, Clerk

4 members of public

2425/021 Public Participation – to receive petitions, comments and questions

To welcome public participation in accordance with the Public Speaking Policy

An update on the progress for the Armed Forces Day event was given to Councillors

Two questions were submitted by a member of public as an allotment holder

1. Have Place Services been paid for work they have not undertaken?
2. What is the present situation regarding the future of Tippendell Lane Allotments?

The Chair explained he was unable to provide answers in full due to the commercial and contractual relationship between the Parish Council and Place Services who are part of Essex County Council being commercially restricted

In terms of notice period etc, Yes, every intention is that should there be any changes required, at least a year's notice would be supplied as a minimum and that everyone appreciates, they are a long term investment

The Chair confirmed nothing has yet been decided

Further information given by the Chair was to inform meeting attendees, recent discussions have been held in relation to potential funding that may arise from future development in Chiswell Green if they go ahead and how that influx of money may affect what we are able to do at Greenwood Park.

Place Services were contracted to provide documentation by Jul 23 and have undergone personnel changes. They have supplied a document to the Parish Council with which the Parish Council were not happy and have requested this is revisited and a revised first stage report provided that will lead into the consultation. The Parish Council aims that there will be display boards showing the options that are being considered available on the 1 September when the Parish event is held at Greenwood Park in addition to the formal consultation.

The Chair suggested It would be much easier if there is an allotment association at Tippendell Lane to seek a collective view which is a question to be raised going forward

The allotment holders at the meeting requested that allotment holders continue to be contacted individually by email to seek responses as there is not expected to be a consensus of opinion

2425/022 To receive reports from representatives of St Albans District Council and Hertfordshire County Council

No reports received, Apologies rcvd from County Cllr Nash

2425/023 To receive and accept apologies for absence

Apologies received from Councillors Berriman, Brannen, Curthoys, Jacob, Kerry, Skelton and Whittaker and reasons accepted from Councillors Berriman, Brannen, Curthoys, Kerry, Skelton and Whittaker

2425/024 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2024

Resolved to confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 24 for the Chair to sign

2425/025 To receive declarations of interest and dispensations

- a) To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda
 - b) To receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests
 - c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate
- None received

2425/026 Chairs report

Nothing further to report

2425/027 Update on previous meeting actions not mentioned later in the agenda

None

2425/028 Reports: Finance, Policy and Resources

- a) Recommendation to approve the Chair, Vice Chair, Committee Chairs and Finance members as bank signatories
Resolved to approve the Chair, Vice Chair, Committee Chairs and Finance members as bank signatories
- b) To note list of May payments authorised by Finance Committee Members and signatories
Noted
- c) To consider and agree any grant/discretionary discount applications
 - i. Bounce discretionary discount request for fund raising event of 100% £49.50
Resolved: to agree the Bounce discretionary discount request of £49.50
- d) Recommendation to review and agree the Financial Regulations
Agreed to defer
- e) Recommendation to agree and approve the Fixed Assets as at 31 March 24
Resolved to agree and approve the Fixed Assets as at 31 March 2024
- f) To receive and note the Annual Accounts as at 31 March 2024
Noted, The Clerk confirmed the breakdown of the Section 106 funds and confirmation of ringfenced reserves are to be agreed in July
The Chair confirmed the solar panels are working well at Greenwood and had reduced our electricity usage
- g) Recommendation to agree increase to Fidelity insurance cover
Resolved to agree and increase to 1.5 million pounds for Fidelity insurance cover to ensure all cash at the end of the year and future receipts are covered
- h) Recommendation to review and agree the combined Terms of Reference
Agreed to defer to enable Community & Leisure and Fixed Asset committees to reconfirm their Terms of Reference and subsequent Strategic plan sections .
- i) To discuss the response of the Internal control Section B from the Internal auditor and Assertion 2 of the Annual Governance Statement and agree an explanatory letter to be submitted with the AGAR to the external audit
Resolved to agree the explanatory letter to be submitted with the AGAR to external audit
- j) To receive guidance circulated for the requirements for the declaration of interests
The Clerk will recirculate the guidance for the requirements for the declaration of interests

2425/029 Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2023/24 Part 3 (AGAR)

- a) To receive and note the Internal Audit Report 2023-24 and agree any management actions and recommendations to be reviewed by the Finance Committee
Resolved to receive and note the Internal Audit Report for 23-24 and confirm the actions
- b) To Agree and Approve individually Items 1-9 of Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement for 2023-24 (to record the date of approval, minute reference and arrange to be signed by the Chair and Clerk of the meeting where approval was given
 - 1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.
 - 2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.

3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this Parish Meeting and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this Parish Meeting and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements

Resolved: To confirm agreement and approval of each of the Accounting Statement 1 through to 8 2023-24 with the agreed exclusion of statement 2 as per the internal audit and that item 9 is not applicable and to record the date of approval, minute reference to be signed by the Chair and Clerk

- c) To approve Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023-24 (signed by the RFO prior to being presented to the authority for approval) and to record the date of approval, minute reference and arrange to be signed by the Chair of the meeting where the Accounting Statements were approved

Resolved: Approved

- d) To note the completed Notice and dates of the period for exercise of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return 1 July to 9 August 2024 and note the notes to accompany the Notice (Local authority accounts: a summary of your rights).

Resolved to note the Notice for the dates of the period for exercise of Public Rights and publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return 1 July to 9 August 2024

2425/031 To note minutes and agree recommendations from the Council's Committees & Working Groups

To receive brief progress reports and recommendations from the:

- a) Planning & Environment
 - Cllr Pryce attended the public enquiry for the Lye Lane planning application with no decision being made at the time
 - Cllr Yates gave an update on the Freight Terminal judicial review
- b) Finance Committee
 - Investment with CCLA is planned to progress
- c) Fixed Asset Committee
 - No update
- d) HR Committee
 - Two new part time employees have commenced work for the summer to assist with grounds and maintenance support
- e) Community & Leisure Committee-
 - i. To discuss Parish Council identification badges
 - It was agreed for Cllr Yates to produce interim badges as a matter of priority for councillors attending the Armed Forces Day event on 30 June 24. Office to pursue purchase of printed lanyards for Councillors and Staff
 - ii. To discuss Christmas trees

Cllr Pryce advised the Parish Council will need to put in place a plan to plant in the region of 30 Christmas trees for future use going forward as the ones planted and supplied by Burstons will come to an end

To agree the plan for Christmas tree planting at the next Community and Leisure Meeting

- iii. Recommendation from community and Leisure to agree the allotment condition 16 change

It was agreed for this Item to be deferred for a list of excluded structures such as bean poles to be circulated to Councillors by the Senior Groundsman and Assistant Clerk and bring back to the July Full Council meeting

- f) Events Working Party-Cllr Pryce confirmed Armed Forces Day to be held on 30 June 24, Summer Event 1 September 24 and Remembrance Service to be held 10 November 24 and requested Councillors assistance with these events

2425/032 Clerks Report - Information updates

Following some concerns raised about the slide at GWP the staff are liaising with Kompan about these following the post installation report confirming the safety of the slide

A complaint has been received about noise from owners and dogs during unsocial hours

Agenda items for next meeting required by 8 July

Meeting closed at 21:12

DRAFT