

MINUTES of a meeting of the OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE held at 7.45pm on Wednesday 10 July 2019 in the Council Offices, 72 Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

PRESENT: Cllr A Barnes (Chairman), Cllrs D Brett, M Caton, J Harding, J Hudson, J Kavanagh, F Richards, T van de Bilt and D Wallace-Jarvis

ATTENDING: Mrs R Clifford (Clerk)
Mr T Lloyd (Assistant to the Clerk)
3 members of the public
1 member of the press

112 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Richards for lateness

113 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - none

114 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2019

The minutes had been approved at the Full Council meeting on 26 June

RESOLVED to accept the minutes as a full and accurate record.

115 MATTERS ARISING - none

116 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Signage is now in place at Mountfitchet Green warning that dogs are required to be kept on a lead. The Clerk explained the details of the Uttlesford Dog Control Orders and the areas that these covered. Hopefully the same signage should be in place on all other restricted areas in due course. Cllr Richards suggested that Councils were required to have an area designated for dogs to be exercised off their leads. The Clerk will clarify the position on this with UDC.
- Entries for Stansted in Bloom are disappointing. Valerie Trundle (organiser) has health issues and won't be able to be present at the judging day. A volunteer is needed to take over from Valerie and reinvigorate the competition for next year.
- There are issues with the new footbridge that was scheduled to be built over Stansted Brook at Elms Farm This will need to be resolved before all the S.106 requirements can be signed off by UDC.
- The play equipment removed from Reeve Road play area has been found in storage in Sussex. We need to move forward with getting selected items reinstalled. The Clerk will ask UDC to arrange for the equipment to be returned to them for inspection.
- There are a couple of small pockets of land where no known owner can be established and which have become an eyesore. The Chairman would like to find some way of adopting these areas so they can be properly maintained. The Clerk will produce maps showing all the areas we are currently responsible for. Two areas of land at Foresthall Park have inadvertently been omitted by the developers from the documents for transfer

to the Parish Council. It was agreed that, subject to further funds being made available for on-going maintenance, the Council would adopt these.

117 LITTER

It was agreed that next year's litter pick should be registered with the national spring clean Keep Britain Tidy and we should feature this in our promotion of the event.

Cllr Hudson reported a litter issue on footpath 23. Cllr Brett commented on previous efforts to get Network Rail to keep the path which is on their land in good order. They proved to be less than helpful and should be reminded that they have a duty to maintain their land and keep the paths walkable. It was suggested that the issue might be something our local newspaper might want to feature.

118 FOOTPATHS

TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM MR STILES

Action was requested on FP23. See 117 above.

CONFIRMATION OF PARISH PATHS PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP

It was agreed that we should try to re-establish this group. Cllrs Brett and Hudson offered to join the group which will be supported by the Assistant to the Clerk.

119 CEMETERY

The Clerk reported the interment of Imogene Brickel and approval of a memorial for Phyllis Rose Hill.

120 TREES

REPORT ON CURRENT ISSUES

A resident requested action on a tree on the bank of Ugly Brook which could cause an issue for the flood warning system if this is converted to a solar energy supply.

The Lime trees at Coopers Alley have been inspected and are generally in good order. There is some epicormic growth which the Clerk will get our gardening contractor to look at. Lee will be asked to remove ivy from the base of one particular tree so that the trunk can be inspected.

A quote has been received to remove the fallen branch on the willow at Bentfield Green. Once the branch has been removed the tree will need to be assessed to ascertain if any further work is needed.

CONFIRMATION OF NEWMAN'S PLANTATION WORKING GROUP

Cllr Brett highlighted concerns about a tree which is in close proximity to a residential property. This needs to be assessed by a qualified tree surgeon as a matter of urgency but it is highly likely it will require felling.

The area has a number of ash trees which are threatened by Ash Dieback disease. This could prove quite costly to deal with and might require the use of some of the Foresthall S.106 maintenance funds. Cllr Harding offered to join Cllrs Brett and Kavanagh on the working group and they will aim to produce a management plan for the site. Once a phased plan is drafted and costed, the funding side must be discussed with Cllrs O'Brien and Jessup.

121 GARDENING AND GRASS CUTTING

Cllr Richards requested action to cut back the stinging nettles in The Rec Play Area. Lee will be requested to take action.

122 ALLOTMENTS

TO CONSIDER A POLICY RELATING TO BEE-KEEPING AND PONDS

It was agreed that an area at the far end of the site be set aside for a maximum of three hives. They will be housed behind a 6ft fence. Any tenants wishing to keep bees must attend the British Bee Keeping course and be able to prove their competency.

Members had safety concerns about ponds on the site and there was an overwhelming consensus that these should not be allowed.

Tenants will be notified of these decisions and the tenancy agreement will be amended accordingly.

TO CONSIDER A GRANT APPLICATION FOR TOILET FACILITIES

The Assistant to the Clerk reported that tenants were in the process of establishing an allotment association. They will then be able to apply for a lottery grant to fund a compostable toilet with disabled access. The committee were happy to support this process subject to any planning requirements and agreement of the new allotment association to take on all associated costs.

123 STANSTED IN BLOOM

See Chairman's report. Cllr Caton will contact Sam Dunn to secure the return of the trophies for the presentation day.

124 PUBLIC OPEN SPACES

TO CONFIRM THE WORKING GROUP FOR ELMS FARM AND TO ESTABLISH A GROUP FOR WALPOLE MEADOWS

Cllrs Barnes, Brett and Kavanagh agreed to be part of the Elms Farm Group. They will hopefully be joined by the two residents who were on the original group, and a new resident of Elms Farm. District Cllrs Caton and Khan also to be invited.

Cllr Khan will be approached to lead the Walpole Farm Group. Cllrs Hudson and Wallace-Jarvis agreed to be part of the group. The Assistant to the Clerk will try to recruit residents to join the group. Dist Cllrs Dean and Sell to be approached to join the group.

Meeting closed 9.20pm

ACTION POINTS

- 116** Clerk to seek clarification from UDC on dog exercising area.
The Clerk will produce maps showing all the areas we are currently responsible for.
The Clerk to contact Uttlesford DC about return and installation of play equipment.
The Clerk and her assistant to consider appropriate action to deal with the enclosed seating areas on Foresthall Park where the fences are in a very poor state of repair and bring a plan to the committee for consideration.
- 117** Assistant to Clerk to establish dates for National Spring Clean 2020.
- 118** Assistant to the Clerk to research funding possibilities for the PPP group and contact neighbouring Parish Councils to see if a partnership can be established.
- 120** Cllrs Brett, Kavanagh and Harding to liaise over setting up working group
- 121** Lee to cut back stinging nettles.
- 122** Assistant to the Clerk to notify tenants of the decision.
- 123** New organiser for Stansted in Bloom to emerge!
- 12** Cllr Barnes to approach Cllr Khan and district councillors re the working groups.