

**Wheathampstead Parish Council
Maintenance Committee
2 March 2015, 20.00h**

Present	Councillors	T Reason G Clark L Halford S Haynes D Johnston P Woodhams	Chairman
		Julia Warren	Clerk
		Press	0
		Public	0

3996-15 Apologies & Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillors A Brewster and N Clements (personal reasons).

3997-15 Public Speaking

None. The meeting had been rescheduled to allow members and interested parties to attend an interesting and informative presentation on the national scheme by St Albans District Council's Tree Warden co-ordinator which preceded the meeting at 7pm.

3998-15 Specific Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None.

3999-15 Minutes of Maintenance Committee meeting of 17 November 2014

Councillor Johnston proposed, seconded by Councillor Haynes, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2014 be approved.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2014 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

4000-15 Facilities Management Working Group 19 February Recommendations

The recommendations of the working group of 19 February were noted and agreed. Councillor Haynes advised that he had spoken to a Saracens coach who was exploring possible summer training sessions on the ATP.

Resolved To note and approve the

recommendations of the Facilities Management Working Group of 19 February:

- 1. Youth club to be offered 8-9pm Session Tuesdays.**
- 2. To note Watford FC ran just a single session Wednesdays 5-6pm for younger children 8-11 years.**
- 3. Moved T&B Wednesday to Thursday 5-6pm.**
- 4. Explore training sessions with Saracens rugby.**
- 5. WWFC to explore summer camps with Stevenage or Watford FC.**
- 6. Kimpton adults to be offered an evening session if available.**

4001-15 Terms of Reference- Facilities Management Working Group

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the Terms of Reference as circulated be approved and adopted.

Resolved To approve and adopt the Terms of Reference.

4002-15 Report of Maintenance Contractor

The breakdown of work undertaken by the maintenance contractor had been distributed and was considered. He had met with Council and Committee chairmen and clerks. The proportion of litter picking and supervision of other contractors was to be reduced. Priorities were agreed and itemised on the whiteboard in the office. He would supply a quotation for 2015-16 for 'routine' type tasks, ad hoc maintenance items to be separately quoted.

Resolved To note the report and methodology to prioritise tasks.

4003-15 Work of rangers

Further to Minute 3864-14 it was reported that the Rectory Copse ranger had cleared overgrowth to expose aconites and bluebells. Holly has been cleared on the Meads by the WOSV - Wheathampstead Open Spaces Volunteers. The river warden has reported two mink caught near Leasey Bridge.

A dead hedge had been built beyond the beech whip hedge on the Station Sidings site, this would provide a valuable wildlife habitat and additional screening whilst the beech plants grew to size (Minute 4007-15).

Rangers were to be asked for input of information about their

'patch' for the new website.

Resolved To note the reports.

4004-15 Purchase of hand tools

The Maintenance Contractor has recommended the purchase and maintenance of a selection of hand tools for use by volunteers at a cost of £255. Councillor Clark proposed, seconded by Councillor Halford, and it was agreed, that these be purchased and stored in the Forge.

Resolved To purchase hand tools as recommended maintained by the Maintenance Contractor and stored in the Forge for use by volunteers.

4005-15 Tree work and Vegetation management including tree survey recommendations

Further to Minute 3863-14 it was reported that work had been undertaken by volunteers to the damaged oak at Bower Heath and dead-wooding of the Cherry tree on Marford Field (Minute 4007-15). Coppicing had begun on the multi-stemmed ash at the Meads. Tree work applications for crown lifting to the yew at Bury Green Garden and felling of a sycamore adjacent to the Station Platform had been submitted to SADC. The tree survey recommended that badly split willow near the river on Melissa be pollarded, a dead and dying sycamore at Bower Heath be reduced to allow safe parking.

Councillor Woodhams proposed, seconded by Councillor Halford, and it was agreed, that tree work within budget be delegated to the Clerk and Committee Chairman. Following consultation with neighbours to the yew and sycamore and subject to planning approval, the yew be crown lifted and sycamore removed. A suitable replacement, perhaps mountain ash/rowan being planted adjacent to Station Road.

Resolved

- 1 Tree work within budget provision to be delegated to Clerk and Committee Chairman.**
- 2 Following consultation with neighbours to the yew and sycamore and subject to planning approval, the yew be crown lifted and sycamore removed. A suitable replacement, perhaps mountain ash/rowan being planted adjacent to Station Road.**

4006-16 Tree strategy including policy on tree work

The tree strategy, incorporating policy on tree work, had been circulated and was discussed. It was noted that this was based

upon and was consistent with the District Council's policies. Minor amendments were agreed. Councillor Johnston proposed, seconded by Councillor Woodhams, and it was agreed, that the tree strategy be approved and adopted

Resolved **To approve and adopt the Tree Strategy.**

4007-15 **Tree complaints**

Complaints had been received regarding

1. An overhanging light obstructing cherry tree on Marford Field.
2. Request for more security privacy with a new fence at Station Sidings embankment, concern being for access onto private land.

The complaints had both been responded to through the office and all correspondence had been circulated along with draft responses from Council. They were individually considered, mindful of the Tree Strategy (Minute 4006-15). The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the responses as discussed be sent.

Resolved **To respond as agreed to the complainants and include a copy of the Tree Strategy for reference.**

4008-15 **Bench maintenance policy and process**

It was reported that many benches in the parish had been varnished with 'sadolin' which required regular reapplication. It was agreed that the Maintenance Contractor undertake a regular review of benches renewing preservative coat as required. All benches would be brushed and cleaned at least annually.

The bench maintenance policy was agreed and approved. This included that existing treated benches be treated prior to cracking or peeling. New benches would be treated according to manufacturer's recommendation and would not be sadolined.

Resolved **1 To approve and adopt the bench maintenance policy**
2 Maintenance Contractor to regularly review (at least annually) all benches.
3 All benches to be brushed and cleaned at least annually.
4 Preservative to be applied as necessary.
5 New/previously untreated benches to be treated according to manufacturer's recommendation.

4009-15 ATP

Further to Minute 4000-15 Councillor Clark proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston, and it was agreed that the regular hirers programme be approved and replacement boot brushes be obtained (£135) for the Artificial Turf Pitch.

- Resolved**
- 1 To approve the regular hirers programme.**
 - 2 To purchase 10 replacement boot brushes at a cost of £135.**

4010-15 Butterfield Road Play Area

Further to Minutes 3702-14 and 3756-14, 3819-14 and 3866-14, it was reported that progress on the s106 variation and agreement on the new lease had been chased, a meeting was scheduled with HCC for 19 March.

- Resolved** **To note the report.**

4011-15 HLF grant application – Conserving Wheathampstead’s Commons

It was reported that the HLF grant application ‘Breathing life into Bower Heath’ had failed; feedback suggested this was because of lack of community engagement. The Chairman proposed and it was agreed that the tree work on Bower Heath be undertaken as planned per that application and consultation documents, it was hoped this would be largely self-financing. A new grant application would be submitted with Bower Heath linked to adjacent commons – Marshalls Heath and Gustard wood with an interpretation and community focus.

- Resolved**
- 1 To note the report.**
 - 2 To undertake tree work as agreed and consulted on as part of the management plan and application ‘Breathing Life into Bower Heath’.**
 - 3 To submit a new, more community focused HLF application linking the three commons – Bower Heath, Marshalls Heath and Gustard Wood.**

4012-15 Memorial Hall – Maintenance and refurbishment

It was reported that two boilers had been serviced with the third imminent. The Maintenance Contractor was replacing the broken hallway light and internal post box. Quotations had been sought for resurfacing the stage and main hall floors; and replacement stage, hall and Hewitt Room curtains. Feedback from the architect regarding refurbishment plans was expected and would be circulated.

Resolved To note the reports.

4013-15 Event Signage

Councillor Haynes proposed, seconded by Councillor Johnston, and it was agreed that event signage be purchased at a cost of £732

Resolved To purchase event signage

4014-15 Budget review

The income and expenditure report had been circulated and was noted.

Resolved To note the report.

The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 22.20h.

Dated this day of 2015

Chairman