

## Nomansland Joint Management Committee

### Minutes of the Meeting on Thursday 19 July 2018, 19:30, No 1

Held at the Wheathampstead Cricket Club, Nomansland

Present:	Councillors	David Johnston	Chairman
		Janet Churchard	
		Gill Clark	
		Graham Leonard	
		John Newton-Davies	
		Sandra Woods	
Officers		Nick Sherriff	Green Spaces and Cemeteries Team Leader, St Albans District Council
		Faye Tuffnell	Countryside Ranger
		Ellie Beach	Projects Officer, Countryside Management Service
		J Warren	Clerk to Wheathampstead Parish Council
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	Public	5	

#### **161-18 Welcome and Introductions**

Councillor Newton-Davies as Chairman thanked the Wheathampstead Cricket Club for their hospitality and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made. He stated that he did not wish to stand for election as chairman and invited nominations.

#### **162-18 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Jonathan Booth.

#### **163-18 Election of Chairman**

Councillor Newton- Davies, seconded by Councillor Wood nominated **Councillor Johnston as Chairman**. There being no other nominations **he was duly elected and took the chair**.

#### **164-18 Election of Vice Chairman**

Councillor Churchard, seconded by Councillor Clark, nominated **Councillor Newton-Davies as Vice Chairman**. **He was duly elected**

#### **165-18 Replacement Members**

None.

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### **166-18 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

Councillors agreed that declarations of interest, such as organisation membership was pertinent when the subject of an agenda item. No one declared an interest or had sought a dispensation.

### **141-17 Minutes of the meeting of 5 April 2018**

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2018 be approved.

#### **Resolved:**

**To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2018 to be a true and fair account and for these to be signed by the Chairman.**

### **167-18 Points emerging from the Annual Inspection**

A number of points emerged during the annual inspection immediately preceding the meeting. This had followed a circular path past Dyke Lane towards the southern boundary.

- It was noted that a surprising variety of wild flowers including knapweed and harebells abounded. The recent hot spell had meant grass had not flourished allowing flowers to bloom.
- A demonstration of model aircraft flying was given by an electric plane over the mown strip
- Concern was raised that one flyer was apparently unaware of the flight restriction zone.
- The scheduled winter works was identified. A balance between maintaining biodiversity, and refuge for animals was sought. Invasion of growth onto the heathland was to be managed.
- Some concern was raised regarding dry heathland and the potential fire hazard. It was acknowledged that pockets of secondary woodland may be at risk but that there were 'fire breaks' in the form of, for example, Ferrers Lane

### **168-18 Committee Terms of Reference**

Noted that these were set by St Albans District Council.

### **169-18 Green Spaces and Cemeteries Team Leader report and Green Space Action Plan**

The report noted that the new Management Plan had been signed off and funding was being identified towards projects.

New benches had been ordered, both the commemorative one for Martin Weston and replacement benches.

Quotations following the tender process were awaited for work on West End Car Park, Ferrers Lane Car park, and Dyke Lane access. The tender process gave a timetabled start date of September 2018.

It had been noticed that the small informal car park opposite West End Farm had become increasingly popular since Heartwood Forest opened. Improvements to the car park were necessary following the increasing numbers of people visiting Nomansland Common and nearby Heartwood

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Forest. Works to the car park were expected to reduce pressures/congestion on local roads, improve accessibility and safety of visitors and horse riders.

Work was required to improve the looks and functionality of the main Ferrers Lane Car Park.

A route linking Bridleway 7 to Dyke Lane (near the Wicked lady Public House) would provide both better access to the Common, improve sight lines from Dyke lane, and address localised flooding.

The broken dog bin at Ferrers Lane had been replaced by a dual purpose bin. Officers were undertaking site visits to specify winter works. These may include cutting back more scrub on the southern boundary and extending the removal of scrub on the Bridleway near the Heartwood Forest boundary.

### 170-18 CMS Officer's report

It was reported that 18 volunteers spent 90 hours on site on 10 April removing and replacing old RoW posts and installing new wooden waymarker signage, checking and replacing damaged disks and refurbishing the interpretation panel. The boardwalk weldmesh had been reinstalled.

Six people had attended the 30 May 'Walk on the Wild side' on a cool, cloudy day. Many ants and mini beasts were recorded but no reptiles nor amphibians on this occasion.

An ant recorder had observed two locally rare ant species, locally rare *Myrmica schencki* and nationally scarce *Myrmica lobicornis*. Three species of gorse were recorded on the Common Gorse (*Ulex europaeus*), Dwarf Gorse (*Ulex minor*) (locally scarce in Herts) and western Gorse (*Ulex gallii*) (recorded in 2007 and locally rare in Herts, and on one site only).

One contractor to date had responded to the car park tender document.

The Bats, Moths and More walk to follow the meeting at 21:00 was oversubscribed with 27 people attended and 6 people on the reserve list. The walk would include visiting the Herts Moth Group who would be trapping on site, and a walk to listen for and observe bats.

### 171-18 Country side Rangers' report

The Countryside Ranger reported on fly tipping in Ferrers Lane Car Park, path clearance of the main rides and weeding of the heather; and habitat monitoring. Ragwort was in less abundance, possibly because of the dry conditions. It was agreed that the cut and clear of the Common be postponed as the grass too was barely growing. The hot summer had led to a more diverse selection of flora this year.

The Herts Moth Group had attended on three previous occasions and identified rare species as well as an abundance of the Green Oak tortrix (*Tortrix viridana*)

### 172-18 Cricket Club Report

Wheathampstead Cricket Club reported that the continuing rabbit culling was having some effect.

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### **173-18 Litterpick and ragwort**

The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that **a litterpick be organised for March prior to leaf growth. The details to be discussed at the January NJC meeting.**

### **174-18 Nomansland Nature Quest**

Councillor Newton Davies reported on six successful Nomansland Nature Quest events, where five groups of school children, from Beech Hyde School (Wheathampstead) and one from St John Fisher (Sandridge) had taken part in Nature Quest events. Here they learnt a little of the history and natural history of the Common, and had fun den building, exploring and making bows and arrows.

### **175-18 Items Raised by Committee Members**

None.

### **176-18 Pre- advised user group comments**

None.

### **177-18 Date of next meeting**

18 October 2018, 19:30 at the Memorial Hall.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 20:15**

**Dated this                      day of                      2018**  
**Chairman**