

**Wheathampstead Parish Council
Rights of Way & Commons Committee
27 July 2010, 20.00h**

Present	Councillors	N Page I Begg D Hills T Reason	Chairman
		D Johnston Julia Warren	Station WG Clerk to the Council
		Press	0
		Public	0

1219-10 Apologies & Substitutions

Apologies were received from Councillors Brewster, Waterfield and Walford (personal reasons).

1220-10 Questions from the Public

None

1221-10 Specific Declarations of Interest

None.

1222-10 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2010 were approved.

Resolved To confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2010 as a true and accurate account of the meeting and for these to be signed by the Chairman.

1223-10 Station Platform Working Group

It was reported that the tree officer from St Albans District Council had met members of the group on site to consider a number of dead or partially dead trees. In some instances regeneration was occurring and it was agreed that these be monitored. The Chairman confirmed that dead wood could be removed but permission had to be obtained for other work in the conservation area. Consideration was given to submitting an in principle application for felling 4 trees, 1 dead crown, 1 partially dead crown and removal of a damaged and dying forked trunk: of which photographs were circulated. No work would be undertaken prior to consultation with local residents, but because of the time frame to obtain permission plus the relatively short time scale prior to the 150th celebration in September, Councillors Reason put forward a

motion, seconded by Councillor Begg that the paperwork be submitted forthwith subject to this not being a commitment to fell. There was some uncertainty amongst councillors regarding the specific trees identified and a site visit suggested. The motion was not carried.

A residents' on-site consultation meeting had been discussed, by the working group, the aim being to inform them on plans and progress and consult on future developments. It would be an opportunity to share ideas and allay fears, subject to Council approval the recommended date was Monday 16 August 7.30pm.

Mr Johnston updated the committee on the working group's recommendations for the 150th Celebration of the Station opening (12 September 2010). This would coincide with the Heritage Open Days both locally and nationally which had previously been discussed. The recommendation was to invite key individuals including councillors, team members and spouses, sponsors and supporters and local residents. The local schools had been invited to participate in a poster competition. He spoke of progress in obtaining commemorative gifts and the search for memorabilia from the Luton and Dunstable line. Council was asked to approve the plans including inviting the HMS St Albans crew who assisted in the early stages of the project and in acquiring railway features such as buffers and sleepers if this proved a possibility.

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| Recommendation
to Council | 1 | To note the report. |
| | 2 | Councillors to visit the site to familiarise themselves with dead/damaged trees as identified. |
| | 3 | To conduct a residents' on-site consultation meeting 16 August 7.30pm |
| | 4 | To approve plans for 150th Celebration to coincide with Heritage Open Days |
| | 5 | To approve the acquisition of artefacts such as buffers and sleepers |

Mr Johnston left the meeting

1224-10 The Meads – benches & accessible pathway

The Chairman advised that the company monitoring the groundwater contamination at North Meads had changed and spruced up the fencing and drain covers and near the riverside footpath. He suggested that a bench be purchased to screen the covers and two further benches be purchased and located further along the Meads.

Councillor Reason reported that she had met with Mr Carter of the CMS to look at provision of an all weather accessible path on the North Meads. Consideration was given to a crushed concrete path from the bridge by the Forge to the Ayot Greenway. Grant funding may be available and it was agreed this be pursued, for, for example, a wheelchair accessible fishing platform. Members agreed that Cllr Reason continue exploring the possibilities for this project (for which £3,000 had been allocated in the 2010-11 budget) including contacting the local angling group. Any benches would be considered as part of this project, preferably donated as there was no specific bench budget provision. A recorded vote was taken

Recommendation to Council **That the Parish Council would not purchase a bench to be situated in the East Meads this financial year. (This would not preclude any offers to donate a bench for the area)**

	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Cllr Begg	√		
Cllr Hills			√
Cllr Page		√	
Cllr Reason	√		

Recommendation to Council **That Councillor Reason further explore options to develop an accessible pathway and improve the Meads area**

1225-10 The Meads -BBQ

It had been reported that a number of BBQs had been taking place on the Meads. The Chairman reported that there was little damage to the ground, more damage effected by rabbits, and rubbish/disposable BBQs had been removed. Consideration was given to the options of banning BBQs or providing a more permanent site such as a set in concrete slab. After due discussion members agreed to leave the status quo whilst public behaviour remained acceptable – no recommendation to Council.

1226-10 The Meads - bins

Consideration was given to the number and types of rubbish bins on the East Meads including removal of all bins, offering a recycling option, or making the temporary third bin by the Forge permanent (Min 1176-10). Members considered that removal of the facility may cause local anger and lead to littering and that the recycling option was not viable. It was agreed that the temporary portable bin be returned to the Forge as the additional capacity was only needed on the sunniest days.

Recommendation to Council **To return the temporary third bin to the Forge**

1227-10 The Meads - barrier

Consideration was given to painting the access barrier to the Meads. This was currently painted in red oxide so needed a top coat (Minute 1008-10). The Chairman had obtained a quotation to gloss paint it red oxide. Other options considered were black or green. No consensus was reached and no recommendation made

1228-10 Wedding Request for BBQ & use of marquee and bouncy castle & dodgems at Cricket Club - 26 August 2011

A request had been received to use the Nomansland Common adjacent to the Cricket club for a wedding reception – with marquee, BBQ, bouncy castle and dodgems. This was also being considered by the Safety Advisory Group at SADC.

Subject to the Clerk having prior sight of insurance and risk assessment documentation councillors recommended agreement to this request to include an additional hire premium. It was also recommended that Council, at its Fees and Charges committee, looks at revenue generation utilising its open spaces.

- Recommendation to Council**
- 1 That approval of the request be given subject to risk assessment and insurance and that an additional charge/contribution be made**
 - 2 Fees & Charges Committee look at revenue generation for its open spaces**

1229-10 Request for additional dog bins

Requests had been received from members of the public for additional dog bins at Gustard Wood and the 'river end' of Sheepcote Lane. A weekly emptying charge per bin, currently £2.10, would apply. All bins currently installed were used regularly. It was agreed not to install further bins at this point.

The request for an additional litter bin at Gustard Wood Old 16th Green would be forwarded to SADC

- Recommendation to Council**
- 1 Not to install further dog bins at present**
 - 2 To forward the request for an additional litter bin at Old 16th Green to SADC**

1230-10 Maintenance of trees & open spaces – log list

The log list 'trial' - a database of interested parties to notify when trees were felled and logs available was discussed. In practice a number of issues had arisen over equity of obtaining logs, access to them and resources expended in making logs and chippings available. It was recommended the log list be discontinued.

Recommendation To discontinue the log list to Council

1231-10 Maintenance of trees & open spaces – tree work

Councillor Page reported that the volunteers Friends of Marshalls Heath were unable to assist this year with raking around the ant hills. It was agreed that this be undertaken solely by the contractor but that a discount be sought for continuing business in current economic climate.

The chairman produced a list of treework including removal of a sycamore at Heath Park, Bower Heath and a tree with damaged branches, potentially dangerous, close by to this. The budget for general treework was set at £2,500. It was agreed that Cllr Page identify 2 days treework for the contractor as prioritised at £410 per day.

The Chairman at this point resigned his post as chairman and left the meeting

Recommendation to Council

- 1 To note the report**
- 2 To approve strimming work around ant hills at Bower Heath, Clerk to seek a discount**
- 3 To approve 2 days tree work at £410 per day**
- 4 In the absence of the vice chairman and following the chairman's resignation as chairman to elect a chairman of the remainder of this meeting and to recommend that a 'permanent' chairman be elected at next meeting**

1232-10 Election of Chairman

Councillor Begg was elected chairman for the remainder of the meeting

1233-10 Additional Time

As the clock approached 10.30pm extra time was approved

