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**STANSTED MOUNTFITCHET PARISH COUNCIL OPEN SPACES**

MINUTES of a meeting of the OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE held on Wednesday 6th September 2023 at 7.30pm in The Mountfitchet Exchange, Crafton Green, 72 Chapel Hill, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex

**PRESENT** Cllr J Kavanagh (Chair), Cllrs A Barnes, G Braeckman, A Guney, A Khan,

 A Love and T van de Bilt

**ATTENDING** Mrs Ruth Clifford – Parish Clerk

 Mrs Emma Philbrick – Deputy Clerk

 1 members of the press (via Zoom)

**151 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Prior – work.

 This was unanimously approved

**152 TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -** None

**153 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12TH JULY 2023**

 **RESOLVED** To approve the minutes of the meeting held on12th July 2023 as a true and accurate account

**154 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ACTION POINTS FROM THE LAST MEETING**

120 - Take a recommendation to Full Council regarding any new play areas installed by developers. This has been proposed to Uttlesford and they will discuss it at a liaison meeting.

121/122/123 - Biodiversity Working Group to meet to start discussions on the items listed. The working group has met and any recommendations from them will go on a future agenda.

123 - Clerk to contact the resident and confirm the Parish Council’s stance on the weeds by their property. The Clerk is on contact with the resident and is in discussion the biodiversity working group to move forward on the issue.

**155 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE CHAIR, CLLR JO KAVANAGH**

 Report attached

Cllr Barnes asked if Essex Forest Initiative was responsible for watering the new trees on the Rec as 3 trees seemed dead. The Project officer informed that EFI water their stock 7 times a year. The dead/dying trees are planted by the Parish Council, and due to a miscommunication with the gardening team, watering of the tree has not been done all Summer.

It was confirmed that all the sick or dying trees recently looked at by the Tree Warde will be included in the arboricultural survey taking place in 2024. Any urgent tree work will be under taken as soon as possible – this applies to two trees by Coopers Alley and one on Windmill Fields.

Cllr Khan raised that the allotment on Walpole meadows in overgrown again. Ruth will inform the s106 officer.

Cllr Guney enquired about the thefts and lock situation on Elms Farm Allotments. The office met with the Chair of the Allotment Association and have dealt with the issue.

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**156 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE PROJECTS OFFICER**

 No report was supplied as there was nothing of note to report.

Cllr Barnes inquired about the Coronation Shelter. The Clerk reported that she is in contact with stone masons on updated quotes for the plaque. It was discussed to have the shelter cleaned as it is already looking dirty. The office will discuss with Lucy.

**157 TO RECEIVE CEMETERY REPORT FROM THE CLERK**

A report was circulated to members ahead of the meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that there are a low number of vacant plots left in the Cemetery, but they will try to fit more in if possible.

**158 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM SUSTAINABLE STANSTED**

No report was submitted by the group. Cllr Barnes enquired about the biodiversity audit the group is planning, as this is something the Parish Council should participate in. The project officer informed that the group had been looking into quotes. Sustainable Stansted have been invited to be part of the biodiversity working group.

**159 TO RECEIVE QUATERLY REVIEW ON GARDENING AND GRASS CUTTING CONTRACTS**

 The report was circulated to members ahead of the meeting.

A short-term adjustment for maintenance of St Marys have been discussed with GWB. The working group (Cllrs Braeckman, Prior, Jones and Lynda Dale from St. Marys) are working on recommendations for a long-term solution to include in the contract.

**160 TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FROM A PARISHIONER TO ADD MORE BENCHES TO THE RECREATION GROUND**

A resident who frequents the Recreation Ground has requested more benches, as some seats have been removed due to derelict. There is no budget for benches and no one have expressed interest in donation one. The Clerk asks the Committee to consider of they want to propose for the Council to set aside a budget for a few benches in next years budget or decide to wait for benches to be donated. It is agreed to rationalise what benches the Council got where, and to produce an inventory all existing benches and their condition for each area.

**161 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE REPORT ON FOOTPATHS**

Mr Stiles did not supply a report this time, as he had no issues to report. The Committee members is encouraged to walk the local footpaths and report and issues directly to the office.

Hogweed is still an issue by the Brook. This have been reported to Uttlesford multiple time every year, the last 3 years. Unfortunately, the issue is persistent. The metal pipe sticking up on the pavement on Chapel Hill has been reported to Essex multiple times. Cllr Ray Gooding and Lee scoot is on the case.

Meeting closed at 8.03pm

**ACTION POINTS**

155 The Clerk will inform s106 officer of the condition the allotments on Walpole Meadows

156 The office to discuss cleaning the Coronation Shelter with Lucy

160 The office to do an inventory of existing benches and their condition