**Minutes of Friends of Spencer Park and Recreation Ground Management Committee** **Wednesday Jan. 7th. 2015**

**Present:** Paul Smith (Chair), Karen Berry (Secretary), Helen Elias (Treasurer), Tim Brooke, Zilpha Reid (committee members)

1. **Apologies**: Trevor Robinson (ranger)
2. **Minutes** of the meeting on Dec. 3rd. 2014 – These were accepted as a true record after two changes. The date of the next meeting is Feb 4th. 7 iii **Zilpha** felt that the park is not too small for circuits as people with young children or those with physical difficulties might well want the challenge of short circuits. A sign stating the distance should be installed.
3. **Budget cut backs**: The Council has put a consultation video and survey on their web site, which we will urge people to view and complete. **Tim** had just been to a consultation meeting about the cuts with community groups organized by the Council. About twenty people were there including council officers but no councillors or M.P.s were present. The councillors said that austerity was here to stay even with a change of government. There will be another meeting on Friday Jan. 23rd. 10-12. We need to let Carol Dear know if we are going.

The council would like to see community groups taking on a management role in the provision of services such as parks and libraries. Tim felt this would not be possible without cash support. It might be possible in areas like Earlsdon but would not be feasible in areas of most need. Groups in Gosford Park and Stoke have already been approached. Spencer Park management would be more complex as in addition to grass and hedge cutting and maintenance of play equipment there are the tennis courts and bowling greens. The committee felt disappointed that we had not been approached directly given the amount of involvement we already have with council officers. At the meeting Tim spoke to Andrew Walster who is interested in discussions with the Friends Group. The group were concerned about the implications of taking on a management role, for example who would be responsible for Health and Safety? An Earlsdon Parish Council would help, but that could be two years in the offing. Tim felt we need to meet with Voluntary Action Coventry to clarify the situation. V.A.C. felt they could not take on a management support role as Coventry already has a Community Development team. **Paul** will contact Corinne Spencer of V.A.C.

**Paul** has written a paper which the group adopted when it includes the council’s budget plans. He will submit it tomorrow. The consultation finishes on Jan 27th. so we will urge our members and friends to complete the survey form and **Helen** will put it on Facebook and the web site.

1. **Centenary of Spencer Park:** We should celebrate it this year probably at the opening of the playground. Paul will look again into the listing of the pavilion as a significant building ,which was rejected two years ago.
2. **Play area**: Ces has signed the WREN contract.  **Karen** has raised an order through Andy of Durasport for the roundabout, which is funded from donations. She assumed that Ces will have raised an order for the remainder of the equipment.
3. **Gardening in the park** will be on the first Saturday each month 10 to 12.30
4. **Funding options**: Paul will continue with looking for funding for bowling. He will approach Awards for All. He will also claim the tax back on donations. **Helen** will check that the application to the Community Wellbeing Seed Fund for the tennis ladder has been received.
5. Pat Ryan would like to join the committee – her park interests are gardening and dog walking. This was agreed. She will be invited to the next meeting and **Paul** will prepare a pack of information for her.
6. **Next meeting** Wednesday Feb. 4th.