

Minutes of Friends of Spencer Park Management Committee
Monday Dec 4th.2017

Present: Paul Smith (Chair), Karen Berry (Secretary), Tim Brooke, Zilpha Reed, Helen Elias, Helen Spence, Carol Bayliss, Liz Bayton, (committee members) John Plunkett (Albany Bowls) Trevor Robinson (Ranger)

1. **Apologies:** Anthony Godber, Ken Taylor, Jane Donovan
2. **Minutes** of the meeting on Nov 6th. 2017 accepted as a true record.
3. **Pavilion subcommittee:** The committee did not meet as a reminder was not sent out so there is no report. Paul reported on meeting Ian Harrabin at the Coventry Heritage meeting that he, Tim and Paul attended. Ian is trying to get Coventry City Council to hand over their historic properties to a trust he has set up. Loans are available but at a high interest rate – 16%. The next sub-committee meeting will be at Paul's on Monday Jan 15th at 8pm. Paul will continue the structural survey. Paul has had a pro bono offer from an Earlsdon resident but it was felt politic to continue with Richard's contact as he is half way through and has reduced his fee. Paul will contact Richard. The issue of giving one pavilion room a face lift in order to equip it for spring/summer children's parties was raised as this had been abeyance subject to the appointment of a new park manager. Tim Fox has been appointed. This will be on next month's agenda.
4. **Progress on Charitable Status:** Everyone except Richard has given Tim their details. Tim will follow up on this. He anticipates that we should get Charitable status in February.
5. **Business Plan for the Park:** Paul presented an outline of our vision including our aspirations and goals. We need to show evidence of need, measuring footfall in the park and what would be the demand for a café with figures and tangible plans. The vision is to open the café for the summer but it is debatable what the demand would be. To be discussed in January.
6. **Flat Green:** John reported on Albany Bowling Club's AGM. In principle, they support taking over the Flat Green and converting it to a second Crown Green, and have set up a working party to look at the practicalities. They would need £15-20,000 for the conversion – this would involve peeling back and retaining the existing grass and inserting soil to make a crown before restoring the grass. They will also look at maintenance costs. They will call an EGM in March to present the costs etc. If the plan is approved they would then start applying for funding. The committee reiterated the decision made at previous meetings that we would support the plan for Albany Bowls to convert the flat green to a crown green. Whatever is decided there would be no work on the conversion till 2019 so we will have to restart green maintenance next March and pay about £1000 for the rest of the year. Paul is approaching more bowling clubs to use the Green which could offset the maintenance costs. This complies with the committee's decision to fund the maintenance costs for two years ending in December 2018. The bid to One Stop for fencing, hedging and maintenance of the Flat Green was not successful. Paul will look into the Co-op bags scheme and is applying to the Freeman's Scheme for the hedges and slips. We could proceed now with the fencing installation as it is crucial to maintain the condition of the flat green. We could supplement the £600 from the Recycling Club with our own funds. No decision was made to instigate this work.
7. **Funding:** Paul has not followed up on the information about AVIVA funding, but will do so. Karen is willing to apply to the Green Space Forum Grow Wild scheme for wild flower seeds.
8. **Report from meeting with Parks team this morning:** Zilpha and Karen met with Michael, but Dave Lewis did not attend. After the removal of bushes between our garden area and the compost area, the stumps have been left. These should be removed

by the Council so that the area can be used, possibly by Earlsdon School. (Nothing has been heard from the school since the last meeting) If the school is not interested in gardening it would be a good site for another picnic table.

9. **Tennis:** The courts can continue to be used. Paul is looking into welding the padlock to the fence next year so that it doesn't get lost again.
10. **Santa event:** Helen and Carol presented a document with the preliminary plans for the Santa in the Park event. This was approved with some minor alterations (See attached) Those present will be: Paul, Helen E. Karen, Zilpha, Jane, Liz, Tim and Pat so there will be enough people to cover the gaps. The raffle prizes will be on display and whole strips will be sold for £1 so that we can record phone numbers in case people leave before the end. Helen to contact Ken.
11. **History leaflet:** Helen Spence said she would like to put more current photos in. She has the aerial drone pictures of the road track. Helen will send her the photo of the committee and the play area.
12. **Andrew Walster:** The phone call was concerning the Bengali community wanting to erect a big sculpture to celebrate the importance of their language and culture. The committee felt that it would be too big for the enclosed park and perhaps more suitable for the "recreation ground area". It was also felt that there might be historical political connotations relating to the Pakistani community. Paul to pursue.
13. **AOB:** Someone needs to go to the Voluntary Action Coventry AGM and funding event on Thursday Dec. 14th at 11 am. Helen Spence and Paul thought they might be able to go.
14. **Next meetings:** Jan. 8th., Feb. 5th. March 5th 7.30pm

Helen Elias 5.12.17