

**Minutes of the Ernest Stevens Trusts Management Committee  
Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 6.00pm  
in Committee Room 3, Council House, Dudley**

**Present:**

Councillor J Griffin (Chair)  
Councillor J Cowell (Vice-Chair)  
Councillors E Cobb, T Creed, I Kettle and R Priest

**Co-opted Members:**

J Jones – Friends of Wollescote Park and H Rogers – Friends of Mary Stevens Park

**Officers:**

M Bieganski (Estates Manager), D Fildes (Parks Development Manager), D McNaney (Senior Principal Accountant), T Senior (Associate Director Law and Governance), M Wilcox (Principal Lawyer) and H Mills (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

**Also in attendance:**

We Love Carers – R Gardiner and D Gramann  
Crafting for Communities – T Bradley  
Mary Stevens Hospice – N Schwartz and Dr S Mann

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**24 Apology for Absence**

An apology for absence from the meeting was received on behalf of C Barnett, Co-opted Member.

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25 **Appointment of Substitute Member**

No substitute members were appointed for this meeting of the Committee.

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26 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor T Creed declared a non-pecuniary interest in items associated with Mary Stevens Hospice as a former representative that served on the Management Committee and items associated with the Crafting for the Community as a volunteer driver.

H Rogers declared a non-pecuniary interest in items associated with Mary Stevens Park as a Member of the Friends of Mary Stevens Park.

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27 **Minutes**

In referring to Minute No. 19, the Co-opted Member of the Friends of Mary Stevens Park requested that the final sentence of the second paragraph be amended to read *'In response, the Co-opted Member of the Friends of Mary Stevens Park, clarified that the reference might be in relation to the Stevens Foundation Trust, which was established specifically to support charities located within Stourbridge.'* as the word parks did not correctly reflect the terms of the Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation Trust. The Principal Lawyer would review the Trust deeds to confirm its remit, and which parks were included.

With reference to Minute No. 18, and specifically the request for clarification regarding the conditions relating to standalone funfairs at Mary Stevens Park, the Parks Development Manager advised that he had liaised with the Events Team, who confirmed that they were not aware of the comments previously referred to and assured that this would be clarified for future events.

The Co-opted Member representing the Friends of Mary Stevens Park, in commenting on Minute No 21, advised that a Community Asset Transfer would not be permitted, but acknowledged that the minutes did accurately reflect the comments made at the time.

The Co-opted Member representing the Friends of Mary Stevens Park further commented on the title of Minute No. 22 - *Stanley Road Sports Facility and Old Swinford Hospital*, stating that the correct name was Swinford Common, which should be used in all future reports.

Members discussed the ongoing issues experienced by the Sons of Rest, who had expressed their disappointment and concerns regarding the way they were being treated. The Chair advised that he had previously spoken with members of the Sons of Rest and emphasised his willingness to attend any future meetings to facilitate cooperation between them and the Council. He further noted that, while the reported accusations were considered unacceptable, evidence would be required before the matter could be pursued.

### **Resolved**

- (1) That subject to the comments referred to above, the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed.
- (2) That the Principal Lawyer review the Stevens Park and Recreation Ground Foundation Trust deeds to confirm its remit and which parks were included.

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### 28 **Questions Under Council Procedure Rule 11**

There were no questions to the Chair pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 11.4.

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### 29 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

#### **Resolved**

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding the that information), as defined under Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

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### 30. **Mary Stevens Centre Proposals**

The Committee considered a report of the Group Director - Housing and Assets and received presentations from the three charities that occupied the premises, namely, We Love Carers, Crafting for the Community and Mary Stevens Hospice, outlining their respective proposals for the future use of the property known as Mary Stevens Centre.

Following each presentation, Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarification on the information that was presented. The presentation slides and supporting information would be circulated to Members of the Committee following the meeting.

Once all parties had made their representations, the Committee deliberated on each proposal in detail, taking account of the Deed of Gifts relating to Studley Court, Mary Stevens Park and Mary Stevens Maternity Home and Public Park, as well as the potential impact each proposal would have on beneficiaries and the wider Stourbridge area.

Having identified the preferred option, the Committee

### **Resolved**

- (1) That the report on the Mary Stevens Centre Proposals, together with the detailed presentations provided at the meeting, be noted.
- (2) That, based on the Committee's preferred option, Officers be requested to undertake the necessary actions in accordance with the Council's and Charity Commission's processes and protocols, and report back to a future meeting of the Ernest Stevens Trusts Management Committee for a final decision.

The meeting ended at 8.51pm.

CHAIR