

# KNEBWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 12 June 2019 in Knebworth Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

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Present: Councillors Adrienne Charter, Rosemary Conybeare, Philip Farr, Jeremy Godfrey, Jenny Harrison, Stephen Hemingway, Paul Jobling, Lisa Nash, Colin Stringer, Paul Ward and Roger Willcocks

In attendance: The Clerk and three members of the public

**1. Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence. Absent Mr Trowbridge.

**2. To Receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensation**

Mrs Nash declared that she had an interest in the Station Pub.

**3. Minutes**

Proposed by Mr Ward, seconded by Mrs Charter and

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 8 May 2019 and be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**4. To Note the minutes of Committee Meetings**

The Council noted the minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 8 May 2019 Annual Parish Meeting held on 1 May 2019

**5. Neighbourhood Plan Policies and Objectives**

Mr Bull, Neighbourhood Plan Steering group chairman, outlined the work undertaken over the last two and a half years, and the numerous surveys undertaken which have been instrumental in the formation of the objectives and policies. The plan is fundamentally trying to preserve the village as a good place to live. The target date for adoption is May 2020.

A number of issues have been raised which cannot be included in the Neighbourhood Plan but will be put into an Action Plan which might benefit from s106 gain. An example of improvement was given. Greenspace designation was explained, many sites were considered but only those complying with the certain criteria have been included. Some greenspace may be protected under another criteria. It was highlighted that there was no reference to cemetery provision and it was unclear if this was adequate.

Cllr Hemingway asked how an adopted plan could have prevented the McCarthy and Stone Development in the centre of the village.

Mr Bull thought that a policy restricting height of development within the centre of the village to two storeys may have made the development uneconomic. Conversion of retail to residential would also have to be taken into account.

Proposed by Mr Ward, seconded by Mr Farr and

**Resolved:** to approve the Neighbourhood Plan Policies and objectives subject to consideration of cemetery provision.

Mr Farr proposed a vote of thanks to Messrs Bull and Dormer and all the members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

## 6. S106/ Community Infrastructure Levy

NHDC requires a specific detailed projects list which is relevant to development within the parish. Codicote Parish Council has already engaged with NHDC and has been frustrated by the view taken on some of its proposed projects. It is proposing a meeting with other parish councils to discuss planning gain and lobbying NHDC to move towards the Community Infrastructure Levy, which automatically provides funds to Parish Councils for community infrastructure improvements.

It was agreed that Messrs Ward and Willcocks would attend a meeting with other councils.

Mrs Nash confirmed that NHDC is to review CIL.

The new application for 86 dwellings on the Odyssey site will be subject to a s106 agreement and the Parish Council will need to include planning gain in its response.

Proposed by Mr Farr, seconded by Mrs Charter and

**Resolved:** to set a working party (Messrs Ward, Willcocks and Farr and Mrs Charter) to prepare a list of planning gain.

## 7. Village Hall Sound and Light

Proposed by Mr Willcocks, seconded by Mr Stringer and

**Resolved** to accept the quote of £585 for Peter Wright Electrical to replace the RCD board on the stage.

The Chairman had reviewed the quote from Clarity and he considered the equipment proposed and costs were appropriate, a large part of the quote being labour. An exchange with Whitespace had suggested that its quote could be forty percent more. Clarity had also undertaken work on a number of other village halls.

Proposed by Mrs Charter second by Mrs Nash and

**Resolved:** that Clarity would be the preferred contractor with regard to improvements to sound and lighting improvements.

The clerk is to look at grant funding to support the improvements. The NHDC Community Fund Capital Grant, Knebworth Village Trust and Awards for All were suggested.

The clerk is to obtain a quote for soundproof curtains for the stage doors.

## 8. Clerk's Report

8.1 The clerk has received a number of complaints about an aggressive dog walked in the park. The police has been contacted, however as it is on a lead nothing can be done.

8.2 The clerk has received a number of complaints regarding the length of the grass in the parks. The delivery of the new machinery has been delayed and a contractor has been engaged to cut the grass.

8.3 Stevenage Borough Council has adopted its Local Plan.

8.4 The clerk confirmed the dates for the period of the exercise of the public rights to inspect the accounts will start on 17 June 2019 and end 26 July 2019.

## 9. Finance

Proposed by Mr Willcocks seconded by Mrs Nash and

**Resolved:** that the list of accounts paid during Accounts Period 2 2019/20 be approved.

Mrs Nash left the meeting.

## 10. Exclusion of the Press and Public

**Resolved:** That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, 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 as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

## 11. Station Pub

Mrs Charter gave a report on the work undertaken by the working party:

- A valuation report has been received from Fleurets.
- A business plan, prepared by experts at no cost to the Council, based on wet trade and food demonstrates the viability of the pub.
- The plan ensures that any loan repayments are covered by rental income so there is no increase in the precept.
- A survey of residents was issued in May 2019 with a closing date of 7 June 2019. A paper survey was delivered to every household. An online survey was also used, the link being promoted via Facebook and the Council website. There were 560 responses, 79% supported the Parish Council borrowing funds to try to buy the Station Pub, 21% did not.

Mr Godfrey presented at part 2 a business case on options to bid for the Station Hotel Public House.

**Resolved:** that the contents of the report be noted.

**Reason for decision:** To consider commercially sensitive information to inform its decision making on the proposals to bid for the Station Hotel Public House.

Proposed by Mrs Charter, seconded by Mr Farr and

**Resolved:** to seek approval of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to apply for a PWLB loan of £500,000 over the borrowing term of 35 years for the acquisition of the Station Hotel, Public House, Park Lane, Knebworth. The annual local repayments bill will come to around £21,700. It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

## 12. Any Other Business

12.1 Mrs Conybeare requested that the Council write to Knebworth tenants Association to request the hedges are cut back in Stockens Green as the footpaths

have become quite narrow. Other overgrown hedges flagged were Park Lane, near Deards End Lane, London Road, near the school.

12.2 Mr Farr stated that his wife had printed and distributed information to the village on the WHBC call for sites and asked that the Council consider reimbursement of costs of £80. The Council will consider this at its next meeting.

12.3 Mr Jobling requested speed awareness bin stickers. The clerk is to provide him with copies.

12.4 The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for 10 July.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.10p.m.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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