

KNEBWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on the 11 September 2019 in Knebworth Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

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

In attendance: The Clerk and one member of the public

In the absence of the chairman Mrs Harrison, the vice chairman, took the chair.

1. Public Participation

There was no public participation

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Charter and Mrs Nash. Apologies for lateness Mr Jobling. Absent Mr Trowbridge.

3. Presentations

Mr Hawkins from Save Our Green Belt Group gave a presentation on its continued fight on the use of the Green Belt in the NHDC Local Plan. It plans to have legal representation at the additional hearings called for by the Planning Inspector on the openness and use of the green belt, the housing numbers and the introduction of the new policy on growth villages.

He urged the Parish Council to undertake air quality (£3000) and traffic studies to present to the inspector at the hearings.

The group is looking for funding to engage legal representation at the next hearings. If the plan is adopted then it will seek a judicial review which will require significant funds.

For the first EIP it raised about £34,000 and spent £32,000. None of the money was used to undertake specific studies for villages. Codicote Parish Council has pledged £5,000 with a further £7,000 from its residents.

Codicote has had hostile planning applications on all the site allocations in the Local Plan, all plans have been for more dwellings than contained in the plan.

4. Planning

4.1 To consider request for funding from Save Our Green Belt Group
The group does not require funds until the next financial year so this item was deferred until the budget meeting.

4.2 To receive an update on the Local Plan
Mr Ward confirmed that the Inspector has requested additional hearings to consider the openness of the Green Belt sites, the number of dwellings and the growth villages.

The Neighbourhood Plan group has agreed to continue with the plan as an emerging plan has more weight with planning applications.

5. To Receive Declarations of Interest and Dispensation

There were no declarations of interest.

6. Minutes

Proposed by Mrs Harrison, seconded by Mr Godfrey and

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 10 July 2019 and be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

7.1 Sound and Light update

The acoustic curtains have been installed. A sound check has been undertaken and there is evidence that there is some noise reduction.

The clerk has submitted a grant application to Awards for All.

7.2 CCTV update

Planning permission has been granted for the CCTV poles around the tennis courts. A revised quote for the CCTV scheme requires another site visit.

7.3 S106/Community Infrastructure Levy

Codicote Parish Council has engaged with NHDC regarding s106 gains from development, as all of its Local Plan sites have been the subject of planning applications. It believes more money would be accessible if the Community Infrastructure Levy was adopted by NHDC. It is to draft a letter which it will circulate to the five growth villages for comment and support.

The Council agreed to support a move to CIL. No comment has been received from NHDC on the requests made for the proposed development at Odyssey.

8. To Note the minutes of Committee Meetings

The Council noted the minutes of the

Planning and Environment Committee meeting held on 10 July 2019

Amenities Committee meeting held on 24 July 2019

9. Traffic and Transport

9.1 Road Safety

It was agreed that the SID, currently located outside the village hall, should be moved to northbound Stevenage Road site.

The speed sign near 50 Stevenage Road has not worked for several months. The clerk has reported it to CC Thake and requested that it is replaced with a SID.

The council agreed that a second SID would be beneficial and will consider inclusion in next year's budget.

9.2 North Herts Transport Forum

NHDC is to form a Transport Forum to improve and promote sustainable travel solutions, such as cycle ways.

9.3 Parking

The surgery held a parking meeting with NHDC and village representatives to try to resolve the problem of inadequate parking provision for the new surgery. The application was approved by NHDC on the basis that St Martins Road car park, which is within 100 metres of the site, would meet the lack of provision.

NHDC officer agreed to look into permitting businesses to have more than one permit for the public car park and to one hour free parking.

The Council agreed that it would engage with NHDC to try to deliver one hour free parking. An option to increase the two hour fee to offset the loss of income was discussed.

10. Clerk's Report

10.1 Mr Ward has reported that there was a fire at the golf club over the bank holiday

10.2 The outdoor cinema is planned for Sunday 22 September, however this may be cancelled due to lack of support.

10.3 NHDC has written to WHBC regarding call for sites consultation, correspondence was circulated

10.4 NHDC has supported HCC response to Luton Airport consultation

10.5 A Knebworth FC footballer, playing in the recreation grounds, was taken to hospital with a suspected broken leg, as a result of a tackle.

11. Finance

11.1 Audit 2018/19

Proposed Mr Hemingway and seconded by Mr Godfrey

Resolved: To approve the Annual Governance and Accounts Return for 2019, including the external auditor's report.

11.2 Financial Review

Proposed by Mr Farr, seconded by Mrs Conybeare and

Resolved: to approve the management accounts to 30 June 2019.

11.3 Insurance review

Proposed by Mr Willcocks and

Resolved: to accept the insurance quote.

11.4 Accounts Paid

Proposed by Mr Stringer, seconded by Mr Farr and

Resolved: that the list of accounts paid during Accounts Period 5 2019/20 be approved.

11.5 Quotes

The Council approved the Village tres quotes to cut the hedges at the Village Hall and King George V Playing Fields.
It also approved the quote from Frank Cooper & sons to cut Norton Green Common.

12. Exclusion of Press and Public

Proposed by Mr Farr, seconded by Mr Ward and

Resolved: that Under Section 100A (2) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Public and Press be excluded from the meeting in view of the commercial nature of the business being transacted.

13. Station Pub

Mr Godfrey informed the Council that negotiations with the agent has resulted in acceptance of a bid, which is within the forecast boundaries contained in the business plan.

Proposed by Mr Godfrey, seconded by Mr Ward and

Resolved: to purchase the Station Hotel, 1 Station Approach, at the agreed price subject to survey.

Proposed by Mr Godfrey, seconded by Mr Farr and

Resolved: to appoint Gosschalks, solicitors, to act on behalf of the Council in the acquisition of the Station Hotel.

Proposed by Mr Willcocks, seconded by Mrs Conybeare and

Resolved: to appoint Mr Greenhouse, to undertake a building survey of the Station Hotel.

Proposed by Mr Farr, seconded by Mrs Conybeare and

Resolved: that the Acquisitions Working Party continues to take the project forward within the financial constraints of the business plan.

Mr Farr congratulated the members of the Acquisitions Working Party for securing the future of the pub.

A number of prospective tenants have come forward and initial meetings are being set up.

The SOS PUB group was not able to raise sufficient funds to make a bid financially viable. The Clerk is to write to the group thanking them for their support.

A letter from a developer, circulated to the Council, states that he has a good prospective tenant that could invest in the pub subject to the developer buying the whole site.

14. Any Other Business

The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for 9 October 2019.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 09.55p.m.

Chairman _____

Date _____