

KNEBWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Knebworth Parish Council held on Wednesday 8th January 2025 at Knebworth Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Roger Willcocks, Alexander Hurwitz, Steve Hemingway, Charlotte Cosson, Jeremy Godfrey, Paul Ward, James Cameron.

In attendance: Jodee White (Clerk).

No	Item	Action
1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllr Nash until April 2024 for personal matters. Apologies were also received and approved from Cllrs Charter, Stringer and Jobling.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Cllr Willcocks declared that he was a Trustee of the Knebworth House Preservation Trust.</p>	
3.	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>Graham Dormer was present as a member of the public to listen and comment on the Planning and Neighbourhood agenda items.</p>	
4.	<p>To approve the minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting</p> <p>Proposed by Cllr Hurwitz and seconded by Cllr Cosson and: Resolved: to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council on 11 December 2024 as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
5.	<p>To note the minutes of Committee meetings</p> <p>The Council noted the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 11 December 2024.</p>	
6.	<p>To discuss co-option onto the Parish Council</p> <p>Nicolette Amette was unable to attend this meeting, hence co-option discussion was deferred to the next Parish Council meeting in February 2025.</p>	
7.	<p>To discuss the Neighbourhood Plan Review</p> <p>A meeting took place on Monday 6th of January with the Clerk, Cllrs Hurwitz, Ward and the Neighbourhood plan working group to discuss relief roads and options around scope of review of the neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>The Parish Council requested that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee should work on providing evidence and scope of review of the plan and it was proposed by Cllr Ward and seconded by Cllr Cameron and Resolved: that the Parish Council should re-form the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee and confirmed its support of a review of the Neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>There are two forms of expenditure for this review, locality grant funding and locality technical support packages. Jacqueline Veater, the Parish Council's planning consultant confirmed that she could assist with the application for locality funding via the Clerk to the Council. The Clerk confirmed that there was £20000 of professional fees in the Administration budget.</p>	

	<p>Any S106 money received from future developments would need to be fully costed with plans.</p> <p>All agreed to this course of action.</p>	
8.	<p>To discuss support on a relief road East of Knebworth</p> <p>To discuss and approve Parish Council support on relief road East of Knebworth.</p> <p>All agreed that evidence was required to support or otherwise, but that the principle of support to investigate options was answered in existing policy.</p> <p>The Parish Council's planning consultant had sent in a document further to the meeting of the Neighbourhood plan steering committee on the 6th of January 2025, detailing resolutions that will need to be considered for any review and/or inclusion of any transport or relief road discussion to be added into the reviewed plan. A meeting of the Neighbourhood plan steering committee to take place and discuss. Clerk to arrange.</p> <p>It was also suggested that the local community should be encouraged to engage in the framework and process of the developments and any relief road discussions. A post on social media encouraging residents to attend the developer's consultation meeting on the 13th of January 2025 and engage in the whole process was suggested. The Clerk will arrange.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
9.	<p>To discuss support on a relief road West of Knebworth</p> <p>To discuss and approve Parish Council support on relief road East of Knebworth.</p> <p>The same comment as per agenda item 8 applies to the item.</p>	
10.	<p>To discuss support for road widening in the High Street in Knebworth</p> <p>To discuss and approve support for road widening in Knebworth high street. Cllrs Ward and Nash met in May 2024 with Senior strategy and programme managers within Hertfordshire Highways at the County Council to look at a better design for the high street. A traffic Regulation Order looking at parking bays and pinch points along the high street had been pushed through, but nothing had been heard since. Cllr Ward said that he would follow up on this.</p>	Cllr Ward
11.	<p>To discuss the proposed NHDC Off Street parking place TRO</p> <p>To discuss and approve support for proposals in the NHDC Off Street parking place TRO.</p> <p>The Parish Council agreed that there was no requirement for any alterations to previous resolutions that the Parish Council would support funding for 30 minutes of free parking.</p> <p>The TRO and new equipment are due to be put in place early in 2025 and the Parish Council will monitor spend on the free parking once in place.</p>	
12.	<p>To receive the Schedule of meetings for 2025/26</p> <p>To approve the schedule of meeting for 2025/26</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Ward and seconded by Cllr Cosson and Resolved: to approve the schedule of meetings for 2025/26 as detailed.</p> <p>Clerk to enter the dates of meetings onto the Parish Council website.</p>	Clerk
13.	<p>Village Hall</p> <p>To receive an update on the Village Hall and schedule of works and approve any quotes and works schedule.</p>	

	<p>The schedule of works for the Village Hall was reviewed and all agreed to the schedule as detailed. Clerk to monitor and update.</p> <p>A quote was received for replacement of the Velux windows in the Committee room.</p> <p>The Clerk had been requested at the last Parish Council meeting to investigate other options for these windows such as permanent fittings. The Clerk advised that the second quote and others she had spoken to had advised that the best option was to retain and replace the current fittings with windows that can open.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Hemingway and seconded by Cllr Cosson and Resolved: to approve the quote from AJ Hooper for £1640 + VAT to replace the two Velux windows in the Committee room.</p> <p>A quote had been received to replace the flooring in the annex lobby and hallway outside the kitchen as part of the kitchen refurbishment work that was not previously considered. It was proposed by Cllr Hemingway and seconded by Cllr Cosson and Resolved: to approve the quote from Knebworth Kitchens for replacement flooring to the area between the annex entrance and the main kitchen at a cost of £2954.00 + VAT.</p> <p>A quote had been received from Initial Hygiene services for the supply and collection of sanitary bins on an annual basis. It was proposed by Cllr Hurwitz and seconded by Cllr Cosson and Resolved: to approve the quote from Initial at a cost of £474 annually for both ladies' toilets.</p>	Clerk
14.	<p>Station Pub</p> <p>To receive an update on schedule of works on the premises and any issues arising and approve any quotes and works schedule.</p> <p>The Clerk gave an update on works at the Station Pub as per the notes supporting this meeting. The Clerk advised that a meeting took place with the tenants, the Clerk, and Cllrs Charter and Willocks following which a schedule of works was done with what was outstanding work from the previous schedule due to have been done under the existing lease. With the commencement of the new lease in February 2025 the PC will need to decide how it goes about these works and whose responsibility it is or if any leeway to negotiate on works.</p> <p>Works on the ceiling repair have been done except for painting of the new plaster board which the landlord has rescheduled to early new year.</p> <p>Works on the ceiling repair have been done except for painting of the new plaster board which the landlord has rescheduled to early new year. Clerk to chase up on completion of this works.</p> <p>The landlord has also got a quote for a wood burner as per last PC meeting and the Clerk requested an updated quote with scaffolding and survey etc... and this is awaited.</p> <p>There was a leak into the pub from the loft space above the entrance to the pub. A roofing company visited on the 6th of January and a quote for repair was distributed to all Councillors prior to this meeting.</p> <p>Decision: To accept the quote for £650 incl VAT from Atlas roofing to repair as detailed.</p>	Clerk

15.	<p>To receive an update on Settle owner areas in the Parish</p> <p>Cllrs Charter and Hurwitz along with the Council's groundsman and Clerk did a walk around the areas concerned.</p> <p>The groundsman agreed to look at chopping back vegetation of the affected areas to make safer and allow for the highway to be clearer.</p> <p>The Clerk met with Village Trees on the 3rd of January and a quote has been received. The Clerk advised that he would be a useful contact to assist in maintaining these areas.</p> <p>Decision: To accept the quote from Scotts ground maintenance for £880 incl VAT to tidy and maintain areas in the village as detailed.</p>	
16.	<p>To receive an update from the Clerk</p> <p>Work is still to be done on planning application for a mast for the CCTV in the Recreation Ground and a date for commencement of this work still to be arranged.</p> <p>Work on Pollarding of 2 rows of trees on the main rec is due to be done at the end of January.</p> <p>Work on the remote system of control on the boiler at the Pavilion is due to be done on the 13th of January.</p> <p>The replacement play equipment is due to be delivered and installed on the 13th of January also.</p> <p>The grant from the Village Trust for the Christmas lights event was paid, along with a small grant from County Councillor Richard Thake, and the whole event ended up costing the PC £236.74.</p>	
17.	<p>Finance</p>	
17.1	<p><i>To approve the list of payments 1 to 30 December 2024</i></p> <p>The list of payments 1 to 30 December was distributed prior to the meeting. The list of payments was reviewed and Councillors. Cllr Willcocks has committed to review of the payment to google.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Ward and seconded by Cllr Hemingway and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the list of payments 1 to 30 December 2024.</p>	<p>Cllr Willcocks</p>
17.2	<p><i>To approve the bank reconciliation for 1 to 30 December 2024</i></p> <p>The bank reconciliation for December 2024 was distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Hemingway and seconded by Cllr Cosson and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the bank reconciliation 1 to 30 December 2024.</p>	
17.3	<p><i>To review and approve quotes</i></p> <p>There were no further quotes to receive than those already dealt with elsewhere in the agenda.</p>	
17.4	<p>17.4 <i>To receive the draft budget for 25/26</i></p> <p>A report of the proposed budget for 2025/26 plus current year and 2023/24 spend was distributed prior to this meeting.</p> <p>The proposed budget for 2025/26 sheet shows 3 years' worth of budget, which being the actuals for 2023/24, actuals plus forecast for 2024/25 to give predicted EOY figures, and then a draft budget for 2025/26.</p>	

	<p>The only changes that have been made to the draft budget that was presented and discussed in the December 2024 meeting is to update the amount of CTRS grant to £3462.61 that will be received as per the precept demand document if the amount of £192,359.00 precept is to be requested. The updated budget also shows the EMR's that were agreed at the last PC meeting and an excel spreadsheet with the explanation and comparison for year on year was also distributed prior to this meeting.</p> <p>Budget notes to show considerations used to set the 2025/26 budget were circulated at the last PC meeting and have not changed.</p> <p>Decision: To approve the budget and the precept demand of £192,359.00 for 2025/26.</p>	
18.	<p>Exclusion of Members of Public and Press</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Ward and seconded by Cllr Willcocks and</p> <p>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 nature of the business being transacted.</p>	
19.	<p>Staff Update</p> <p>The Clerk has been asked to investigate the possibility of employing an Operations type person who can assist with dealing with contractors, risk assessments, H & S, Policies, daily tasks such as emergency light testing, testing of the fire alarms and numerous other tasks could be included. The Clerk will collate and bring this to a staffing committee meeting in due course.</p> <p>There were no other reported staffing matters.</p>	
20.	<p>Inclusion of Members of Public and Press</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Cosson and seconded by Cllr Hemingway and</p> <p>Resolved: to readmit members of the Public.</p>	
21.	<p>To consider notification of any other matters not noted elsewhere in the agenda for information only.</p> <p>Cllr Ward reported he had received an email Hertfordshire Police Constabulary with feedback from police Community Support Officer following the Priority Setting Forum, of issues and priorities for areas in the Hitchin Rural and Urban area in which Knebworth falls. The issues identified were a) Speeding along Park Lane and Stevenage Road and a spate of residential burglaries. There will be a further meeting early in the new year to discuss and address these issues.</p>	

The meeting closed at 10.29p.m.

Chairman: _____

Date:
