

## KNEBORTH PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of Knebworth Parish Council held on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025 at Knebworth Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors Roger Willcocks, Alexander Hurwitz, Steve Hemingway, Charlotte Cosson, Jeremy Godfrey, Paul Ward, Paul Jobling, Adrienne Charter.

**In attendance:** Jodee White (Clerk), Jacqueline Veater (JV)

No	Item	Action
1.	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and noted from Cllr Lisa Nash until April 2025 for personal matters. Apologies were also received and approved from Cllr James Cameron.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>Cllr Ward declared an interest in agenda item 6 having been involved in the setting up of the Deards End Lane Conservation Area Residents Association (DELCARA).</p> <p>Cllr Charter declared an interest in agenda item 13 regarding the quote for a survey report from Kirkby and Diamond.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Public Participation</b></p> <p>Members of the Deards End Lane Conservation Area Residents Association (DELCARA) were in attendance. Representatives from HCC and NHS were also in attendance from 8.30p.m.</p>	
4.	<p><b>To approve the minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting</b></p> <p>Proposed by Cllr Hemmingway and seconded by Cllr Hurwitz and:  <b>Resolved:</b> to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council on 8 January 2025 as a true and accurate record and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
5.	<p><b>To note the minutes of Committee meetings</b></p> <p>The Council noted the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 8 January 2025.</p>	
6.	<p><b>To consider and form policies regarding the impact of the KB1 and KB2 developments on the road and pedestrian infrastructure of Knebworth</b></p> <p>To discuss and approve Parish Council support for the creation of a policy document and appoint a working group to draft a policy for review at a future Parish Council meeting.</p> <p>Consideration was given to requirements in the local plan re active travel as well as feedback given to developers.</p> <p>This will be discussed further at future PC meetings.</p>	
7.	<p><b>To receive an update on the Knebworth High Street issues and petition</b></p> <p>Dermot Dooher plus colleagues from HCC gave a presentation to the PC on options for traffic flow in Knebworth High Street.</p> <p>Dermot and colleagues stressed that they were looking for feedback &amp; opinions as to designs and variations.</p>	

	<p>The PC said they welcomed options, and this was noted in the Neighbourhood Plan and that they would look at options and recommend on balance.</p> <p>HCC colleagues said they would need a majority of the community to support in order to pursue money from developers for any changes.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Charter and seconded by Cllr Cosson and <b>Resolved:</b> to agree a draft response with an indicative position of the Parish Council.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<p><b>To receive an update from the Knebworth Neighbourhood Plan review working Party</b></p> <p>Jacqueline Veater, the PC Planning Consultant was in attendance and gave an update on progress so far of the Knebworth Neighbourhood Plan Review Working Party.</p> <p>The working party could engage with resident associations around transport issues.</p> <p>Neighbourhood plans do not provide indicative housing figures, and they are not as strong without these. Jacqueline advised that she had spoken to a senior planning officer at North Herts Council and that these are being updated and will be published and those with Neighbourhood plans will be informed when they are available.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Stringer and seconded by Cllr Charter and <b>Resolved:</b> for the Knebworth Neighbourhood Review Working Party to be reinstated and do the work to update council and review the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>To receive and approve Parish Council Standing Orders and Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference</b></p> <p>To receive amendments to PC Standing orders and Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference in line with creation of new working parties as per updated documents supporting this meeting.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Hemmingway and seconded by Cllr Godfrey and <b>Resolved:</b> to approve the amended PC Standing order and Scheme of Delegation.</p>	
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>To receive and discuss arrangements for Village Halls week</b></p> <p>The Clerk advised that the Deputy Clerk was busy planning for an event between 2-4p.m. on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> of March to promote the Hall and discuss any areas of interest with Staff and Councillors.</p> <p>The Clerk asked Councillors if there were any topics that they wanted highlighted and if Councillors would be able to attend on the day.</p>	
<b>11.</b>	<p><b>Village Hall Update</b></p> <p>The Clerk reported that several new hirers have joined as well as one or two have decided to leave. Demand for regular hirers during the weekdays remains high and miscellaneous hires despite a quiet February remain busy from March onwards.</p> <p>The updated schedule of works at the VH was distributed to all Councillors.</p> <p>Refurbishment of both kitchenette and main kitchen is complete bar some snagging. New flooring is due to be laid on 15<sup>th</sup> of February and will take around 5 days.</p>	

	<p>A quote was received for painting the main kitchen for £750, but the Clerk did not feel it was necessary for this to be done at this time.</p> <p>However skirting boards in the lobby areas will be taken off when the flooring is installed and new ones fitted that will require decorating.</p> <p>There has also been some very minor additional works (replacement of a plug socket, repair to an outlet pipe at the front of the VH and trimming of toilet doors to close) that the kitchen fitter has been requested to complete.</p> <p>The Clerk requested to use this sum of money in the quote towards repainting the skirting boards and other minor jobs although it was anticipated that it will be cheaper than the kitchen quote.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Stringer and seconded by Cllr Jobling and <b>Resolved:</b> to approve up to £750 to repaint new skirting and other minor additional works.</p> <p>The Velux windows in the small hall are due to be done on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February. Redecoration of the committee room can then be completed once these are in place.</p> <p>Installation of new sanitary bins is complete, and regular disposal organised.</p> <p>The access control, fire and alarm work has been completed and came in at £3k excl. VAT under budget with the surplus money transferred from the EMR's to general reserves. Having had the access system live for a few weeks, it has highlighted the need for further access control to keep areas safe and separated. To make the access control system more secure further access-controlled entry is required on the door between inner lobby and main hall as well as the rear lobby and stage door. It was also requested for the alarm system to be separated out to two zones.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Hurwitz and seconded by Cllr Charter and <b>Resolved:</b> To accept quote from Resistance Fire and Security for installation of additional access control equipment on internal doors and separation of zones for the alarm system at a cost of £1925 total.</p> <p>According to the Village Hall five-year maintenance schedule the floors in both main hall and committee rooms have not been sanded and sealed since 2004 and are well overdue. Quotes from 2 companies were received and distributed. No decision was made on this as the Clerk advised that she was still to receive another quote and will bring to the next PC meeting.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
12.	<p><b>Recreation Ground Update</b></p> <p>2 rows of trees in the main recreation ground have been pollard.</p> <p>Work on replacing the gravity Bowl at the main rec and the Rota bounce at Lytton Fields has all been completed as well as a piece of matting at one of the entrances to Lytton Fields.</p> <p>A quote has been requested for completion of the fencing at Lytton Fields. Further quotes are being sought. These will be taken to the next Amenities Committee meeting.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
13.	<p><b>Station Pub Update</b></p> <p>A quote has been received for a schedule of condition and property preventative maintenance survey report. This is from another company as the one that the Clerk met with prior to Christmas had not replied.</p> <p>This report is ideally required pre a new lease commencing but if not then as soon as possible to determine the current condition of the building and highlight any issues going forward to the new lease.</p>	

	<p>This would also identify whose responsibility any repair and maintenance works would be.</p> <p>The property preventative maintenance survey sets out a schedule of maintenance over a period, highlighting any urgent works required then set out a timetable for other works up to 10 years, which is useful for budgeting for the ongoing upkeep of the building.</p> <p>There is budget of £2k for professional fees for the Station pub that is unspent and the overall spend for the Station pub is also under budget, so the Clerk recommended for the report to be done.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Ward and seconded by Cllr Stringer and</p> <p><b>Resolved:</b> To approve a quote from Kirkby Diamond for a full Written &amp; Photographic Schedule of Condition &amp; Planned Maintenance Schedule for £3000 + VAT.</p> <p>Quotes have been received from Mark Howes Plumbing and Space Heating for the replacement of two toilets in the ladies' toilets and re-fixing of the toilet to the floor in the gent's toilet. This is work that is potentially dangerous and needs to be done. It was discussed and in conjunction with the above report that this would identify whose responsibility this would be and requested the Clerk to inform the pub tenant that they would need to carry out this work and the PC will review any reimbursement subject to conclusion and findings in the survey report.</p>	Clerk
14.	<p><b>To receive an update on Settle owned areas in the Parish</b></p> <p>Scotts ground maintenance have completed work on some areas on Gun Lane and Stockens Dell and Cllr Charter has confirmed that the work is of a good standard. Further work is still to be done, and the Clerk will follow up. They will also be able to maintain the areas once work is completed.</p>	Clerk
15.	<p><b>To receive an update from the Clerk.</b></p> <p>A refund of £118.56 was offered from Zurich the PC's insurance provider due to informing them about the new security access and alarm system.</p> <p>Invitations for the Royal Garden Party have been received, and nominations are due to be submitted by midday on the 13<sup>th</sup> of February and are open for all Councillors to be nominated, in previous years it has only been open to the Chairman to be nominated. As the current Chairman has been nominated in previous years but not selected to attend, he expressed his desire to be nominated again this year. Cllr Ward was also put forward to be nominated. A decision was taken for Cllr Ward to be nominated. The Clerk to complete forms and send to Hertfordshire Association of Town and Parish Councils (HAPTC).</p> <p>The Clerk informed Councillors that she received a call from the Community Engagement team at NHC saying that they had had some additional funding released and wondered if we had started our kitchen project that was applied for as they were contacting the top of the unsuccessful applications. The Clerk informed them that the project was almost complete and tried to ask for funding for the flooring that was still to be done, but as some of the area had not formed part of the original application and timelines did not allow, we were not successful with any grant award, but wanted Councillors to know that we had come very close to getting funding.</p>	Clerk
16.	<b>Finance</b>	
16.1	<p><i>To approve the list of payments 1 to 30 January 2025</i></p> <p>The list of payments 1 to 31 January was distributed prior to the meeting.</p>	

	<p>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 Godfrey and seconded by Cllr Cosson and <b>Resolved:</b> to approve the list of payments 1 to 30 January 2025.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked about the payment to the Parish Noticeboard Company and advised that this needs to be chased up on.</p>	<p><b>Cllr Willcocks</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>
16.2	<p><i>To approve the bank reconciliation for 1 to 30 January 2025</i></p> <p>The bank reconciliation for January 2025 was distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Cosson and seconded by Cllr Hurwitz and <b>Resolved:</b> to approve the bank reconciliation 1 to 30 January 2025.</p>	
16.3	<p><i>To review and approve quotes</i></p> <p>The Clerk pointed out that sample Chairs had been provided for the meeting to assist Councillors in deciding on chairs and storage solutions for the Village Hall. The PowerPoint on the Chairs had been shared previously but distributed again for this meeting. An EMR for the 2025 financial year is set for £10k for the purchase of Chairs.</p> <p>Councillors discussed option and referred this matter back to the Amenities Committee with a further report on number of chairs, preferred option, costing and how these will be stored. Clerk to add to next Amenities Committee meeting agenda.</p>	<b>Clerk</b>
16.4	<p><i>To receive a budget update for 24/25</i></p> <p>Appendix 19 shows the income and expenditure for 2024/25 financial year. As end the end of January we were on a near 75% budget spend and expected to get to near 85/90% budget spend by the end of the financial year.</p> <p>The village hall is coming in over budget (a lot of work has been done on the hall this year) whilst other areas and overall are under budget. We are still on target to end the year with a balance of more than £250k.</p>	
17.	<p><b>Exclusion of Members of Public and Press</b></p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Stringer and seconded by Cllr Cosson and <b>Resolved:</b> 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>	
18.	<p><b>Staff Update</b></p> <p>The Clerk attended the SLCC Conference on the 29<sup>th</sup> &amp; 30<sup>th</sup> of January and found the event extremely useful in terms of networking, talking with exhibitors and the workshops and talks attended and felt very welcomed as a first-time delegate. Workshops on Martyn's Law, Getting Positive outcomes from Procurement, AI in Local Government, A year to Save a Council, The Evolution of Devolution, Accuracy matters: Right First Time every time, Dealing with a New Housing Development in your Parish, How to Work with Councillors, Communication Skills with Councillors, and How to Support Councillors and Problem Solving, White Ribbon, Unleashing Resilience from Within, and How to Dream Big and Inspire others were attended.</p>	

	<p>The Clerk signed up to a free 3-month trial with Breakthrough Communications who offer a Hive Hub of training and library of resources for staff and Councillors that will be disseminated in due course.</p> <p>The Clerk and Deputy Clerk are booked to attend an exhibition at Tewinbury Farm, Welwyn on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2025 between 10.30 and 3.30 p.m. This event is for connecting local council officers with local council suppliers and is free to attend.</p> <p>The Clerk continues work on her CiLCA units and attend planned sessions.</p>	
<b>19.</b>	<p><b>Inclusion of Members of Public and Press</b></p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Stringer and seconded by Cllr Hurwitz and <b>Resolved:</b> to readmit members of the Public.</p>	
<b>20.</b>	<p><b>To consider notification of any other matters not noted elsewhere in the agenda for information only.</b></p> <p>The Clerk requested Councillor attendance at a meeting with NHC regarding the new parking proposal at the St Martins Road Car Park. Cllrs String and Hurwitz said that they could attend. Clerk to organise a date.</p> <p>Cllr Nash has been absent and not attended a PC meeting for longer than 6 months now. The Clerk to contact the Monitoring Officer to see if any exemptions can be applied.</p>	<p><b>Clerk</b></p> <p><b>Clerk</b></p>

*The meeting closed at 10.22p.m.*

**Chairman:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_