

KNEBWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 13 February 2019 in the Knebworth Village Hall at 8.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors Roger Willcocks (Chairman), Adrienne Charter, Rosemary Conybeare, Jeremy Godfrey, Jenny Harrison, , Steve Hemingway, Lisa Nash, Colin Stringer, Chris Trowbridge and Paul Ward

In attendance: District Councillor David Levett, the Clerk, and five members of the public.

1. Local Plan

Cllr Levett gave a presentation on the background to the Local Plan, its examination in public and the main modifications. He highlighted that the Inspector released the sites from Green Belt and approved the redesignation of land as Green Belt around Offley and Whitwell. New development should make provision for 40% affordable housing. Five villages have been identified for growth and are no longer category A villages. A growth bid has been made for the town centres. HCC published the Local Transport Plan 4, the key point is a modal shift to get people to use public transport. Every site in the plan is now a policy site and the criteria must be met. There is developer money via s106 agreements and infrastructure funding which goes to Herts County Council. This applies to developments of eleven dwellings and above. Every single site is a policy site and it must be shown how the development meets the criteria, if it does not NHDC have the power to refuse. The comments on the main modifications are sent directly to the inspector and he has stated that he will not consider unrelated or new representations.

Mr Ward referred to the development included in the plan for growth villages to 2031 and asked how NHDC envisaged growth beyond this period.

Cllr Levett did not believe that all development would come through together as in a good year there were only 535 new builds, to meet the 2031 target requires over 1000 new dwellings per annum. This is a significant rate of build, with finance and planning permission and infrastructure.

NHDC is looking at a new settlement beyond 2031. It has applied for funding from the CLG and has obtained £30,000 growth bid funding with East Herts, Broxborne and Stevenage. The funds will assist in identifying the size of the required site and how economically viable it is. At each stage the government will be kept informed of where we would like a settlement but first we must have a Local plan.

Mr Godfrey asked if that plan did not work, as a growth village would Knebworth be expected to take more housing.

Cllr Levett stated that NHDC would have to start again if Knebworth and Codicote are large and could not take any more development, NHDC would look elsewhere.

Mr Stringer asked if Cllr Levett saw any issues with Codicote and Knebworth being identified as growth villages which share a parish boundary.

Cllr Levett thought it was not an issue now, but may be in the future.

Mr Hemingway asked about the reserved site West of Stevenage beyond the plan period.

Cllr Levett informed the Council that NHDC cannot use it and it may be taken out of the plan because there is no set allocation. Previously there was a consortium to develop West of Stevenage however there has been no interest shown this site, no developer has come forward.

Mr Ward raised concerns about the provision of adequate transport and social infrastructure.

Cllr Levett stated that if people can accept growth more can be obtained for the Highways Agency. There can be little things to help the modal shift. A transport user forum is to be set up to combine station and bus users and cyclists. We can lobby to have buses at the station when the trains come in.

Mr Titmarsh flagged that the Planning Inspector for the Orchard Way development said that Gypsy Lane would create a western boundary of the village, which is ignored in the current plan. He asked why the location for the primary school has changed and if existing school would be closed in the longer term?

Cllr Levett said that the last adopted Local Plan was in 1996, legislation changes and the National Planning Policy Framework is the current legislation.

The chairman thanked Cllr Levett for the presentation, there being no other questions he left the meeting

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Farr and Mr Jobling. Apologies for lateness were received from Mrs Nash.

3. Chairman's announcements

Members are reminded that any declarations of interest in respect of any business set out in the agenda, should be declared as either a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Declarable Interest and are required to notify the Chairman of the nature of any interest declared at the commencement of the relevant item on the agenda. Members declaring a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest must withdraw from the meeting for the duration of the item. Members declaring a Declarable Interest which requires they leave the room under the Code of Conduct, can speak on the item, but must leave the room before the debate and vote.

4. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

5. Local Plan

5.1 Response to Main modifications

The draft response to the main modifications was previously circulated, subject to comments on the railway bridge pinch points on Station Approach and Gun Road and pedestrian safety, the Council agreed the response.

5.2 Joint response to main modifications

All five villages have agreed to submit a joint response to the NHDC Main Modifications.

Proposed by Mr Godfrey, seconded by Mrs Charter and

Resolved: to appoint Mr Griffiths to prepare a draft joint response to NHDC Main Modifications on behalf of the five 'growth villages' at a cost of £500.

5.3 Planning Gain

It was agreed that a quote should be obtained to provide advice on planning gain. A list of potential gains is to be drafted.

6. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council Local Plan

WHBC has launched a call for sites to meet the shortfall in its Local Plan.

7. Minutes

Proposed by Mrs Harrison, seconded by Mr Stringer and

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 9 January 2019 approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

8. To Note the Minutes of the Committee Meetings

The Council noted the minutes of the committee meetings:

Planning Committee Meeting held on 9 January 2019

Amenities Committee Meeting 23 January 2019

9. Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council reviewed the draft objectives and policies for the Neighbourhood Plan, previously circulated. Revisions were proposed for employment to retain class A retail units on the ground floor of the neighbourhood centre, potential extension of the retail area and encouraging new business. The council also wanted clarification on the density of development with reference to Deards End Lane and would prefer parking courts were not use for housing, only for flats.

Proposed by Mr Ward, seconded by Mr Hemingway and

Resolved: to approve the draft objectives and policies subject to minor revisions.

The Council agreed to buy display stands for the open day at a cost of £200.

Mrs Conybeare wished to convey the Parish Council's thanks for the work of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering group.

10. Station Pub

The planning appeal for the Station Pub has been allowed. The Rule 6 parties have a six week period to appeal the decision on points of law. The Parish Council agreed that it would not appeal the decision. Market Homes must notify NHDC when it decides to sell the site and community groups will then be given the opportunity submit a bid.

11. Website Update

Proposed by Mr Hemingway, seconded by Mrs Harrison and

Resolved: to accept the quote of £100 to update the website.

12. Stepping School Preschool Licence

Proposed by Mr Willocks and

Resolved: to approve a Licence to Operate for Stepping Stone Preschool for the school year 2019/20 at an annual rent of £3900.

Proposed by Mr Willcocks and

Resolved: that subject to receipt of a letter from Stepping Stone Preschool acknowledging that no security of tenure is obtained, equipment may be left in the pavilion over the summer holidays.

13. Office

Proposed by Mr Ward, Seconded by Mrs Charter and

Resolved: to accept the planning officer's planning conditions to install an electric charging point and a four bay covered bicycle store in the village hall car park.

14. Clerk's Report

14.1 Planning training to provide an update on the Local Plan, National Policy and s106 obligations is planned by NHDC at 6pm on Wednesday 27th February for two members, Mr Ward and Mr Willcocks to attend.

14.2 Urbaser has changed the village hall bin collection day from Tuesday to Thursday due to technical difficulties. It is also undertaking a review of collection days across the district.

14.3 There have been issues with Unity Trust Bank setting up standing orders and direct debits which do not belong to the Parish Council. These have been resolved.

14.4 Name of redevelopment at Hamilton's, the developer has recommended Park Lane Court. The Parish Council suggested Picton Place. Mr Picton built many of the early homes in Knebworth and the site was his yard.

14.5 Hertfordshire County Council (waste & minerals) – Consultation on the proposed submission Minerals Local Plan will be held between 14 January and 22 March 2019.

14.6 Mr Stringer and the clerk had a meeting with a sound and lighting company, and a quote is to be produced. There was a noise complaint to EHO last week which will require monitoring hirer's who have discos and live bands.

14.7 County Councillor Thake has asked for PC comment on the request by a resident for double yellow lines on Gun Road, between Pondcroft and London Roads.

14.8 A solution for the power to CCTV has been suggested but it requires another quote and possibly a planning application.

15. Internal Audit

Proposed by Mr Willcocks and

Resolved: to appoint Mr Vine to undertake the internal audit for the year ended 31 March 2019.

16. Accounts

16.1 Proposed by Mrs Nash, seconded by Mrs Conybeare and

Resolved: to approve the list of payments from 1 January 2019 to 31 January 2019.

16.2 The clerk reported that the Church had agreed to a single seat on St Martins Green and provided a quote. The Council suggested that a two seater bench would be better. The clerk is to revert.

17. Any Other Business

17.1 Mrs Conybeare reported that she had delivered the flowers to the resident who had produced the drawing for the Knebworth Walks Leaflet.

7.2 The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for 13 March 2019.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.29 p.m.

Chairman _____

Date _____