

# KNEBWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Wednesday 24 July 2019 in Knebworth Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

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Present: Councillors Colin Stringer (Chairman) Rosemary Conybeare, Jenny Harrison, Steve Hemingway and Roger Willocks

In Attendance: The Clerk and one member of the public

## 1 Public Participation

A resident informed the committee that on several occasions the noise level from the hall was excessive, especially when a live band was playing. A meeting earlier this year suggested practical steps would be taken to limit the noise. Recent events have meant that the neighbour is unable to hear his television or go to bed. He requested that some practical measures are taken which could be addressed in this forum.

He was amazed that the Council permits live bands to play in a hall located in the centre of a village. Other village halls known to him do not allow them.

He considered a noise limiter essential, suggested a punitive level of deposit and air conditioning. He did not want to ban music but asked that noise from the hall be at a liveable level. He believes it is the Council's responsibility to agree how it is policed and managed. He is aware that he is living next to a village hall, he wanted to live in a village and is very supportive of the hall, but not when hired for excessive discos and live bands.

As he has no formal authority, he asked if he could represent the Parish Council when speaking to hirers. This was not permitted.

The Chairman thanked him for his input.

## 2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Farr. Apologies for lateness from Mrs Conybeare

## 3. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

## 4. Minutes

Proposed by Mr Willcocks, seconded by Mr Hemingway and

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities Committee Meeting held on 27 March 2019 be approved and signed.

## 5. Village Hall Hire

The chairman apprised the committee of neighbour's noise complaints received in February, March and July. The regular Zumba class was also thought to be noisy,

although because it finished earlier in the evening was not an issue. It was noted that the neighbour had no noise issues with regular hirers.

Mr Willcocks mentioned that the Village Hall had been built before a lot of the surrounding housing. Mr Stringer stressed that all reasonable efforts are being taken to ensure that noise is kept to within acceptable levels but it is not always possible to anticipate which hirers present the highest level of 'risk' in this regard. It had not been anticipated, for instance, that a recent church service would create such a volume of noise. In this instance the hirer will not be allowed to hire the Hall again.

Acoustic curtains have been purchased for the stage doors to reduce the level of noise leaking from them and will be installed in the next month. Notices have been placed on all doors stating that they should not be opened during occupation. New infrastructure has been approved, however this may take a while to implement due to availability of the hall and funding, which could take several months before new equipment is installed.

The chairman stated that there is a point where it is not possible to mitigate a risk further.

A suggestion was made to link the main hall side doors to floodlights when opened. Proposed by Mr Willcocks, seconded by Mr Hemingway and  
**Resolved:** to obtain quotes to link the opening of the side door to two floodlights.

An increase in the deposit was considered but this did not necessarily resolve any noise issues.

Air conditioning could also be looked at, but compressor noise may replace one noise for another. Installation costs could be excessive.

The contact details for noise complaints was also considered. An email may not result in the issue being dealt with as rapidly as a telephone call. The clerk is to provide the neighbour with contact numbers and a copy of the hall agreement.

## **6. Financial Review**

The committee reviewed and approved the management accounts for the recreation grounds and village hall for the quarter to 30 June 2019.

## **7. Maintenance**

### 7.1 Pavilion

The clerk reported that the showers and taps have been replaced and flooring work is to start on 29 July.

### 7.2 Grounds

The groundsman has been unable to top dress the A2 pitch due to the delay in the delivery of the new machine. He has undertaken minor repair work on the football pitches.

There have been a number of complaints about the length of grass in Lytton Fields and King George V Playing Fields. The tractor is still unable to be driven on the roads, and it was agreed that the contractor should be booked for another cut of the outside amenity areas.

Proposed by Mrs Conybeare, seconded by Mr Willcocks and

**Resolved:** to accept the Village Trees quote to undertake work in the recreation grounds.

Mr Hemingway sought clarification on whether the Council has an environmental plan in place for the pond. There is no formal environmental plan, however the Council has worked with CMS over the last twenty years to maintain and improve the pond and its surroundings.

It was agreed that the surplus silt removed last year and left on the bank should be taken away. It was agreed to accept the quote from Maydencroft to remove the silt.

### 7.3 Village Hall

The work on the damp proof course is to start in August.

Mr Hemingway requested that the committee look at improving the ramp at the front of the hall. The committee agreed that it would look at refurbishment of the ramp and entrance to the hall.

### 7.4 Equipment

Proposed by Mrs Conybeare, seconded by Mr Stringer and

**Resolved:** to dispose of the Ransome 213 triple mower.

## 8. Youth Football

Knebworth Youth Football Club is looking for additional training space and has asked to use Lytton Fields Play space and King George V Playing Fields on Saturday mornings. It has also requested a revised pitch layout to include an additional pitch within a pitch.

Proposed by Mr Willcocks, seconded by Mrs Conybeare and

**Resolved:** not to give permission for KYFC to use Lytton Fields for Saturday football training

Proposed by Mr Willcocks, seconded by Mrs Conybeare and

**Resolved:** to permit KYFC to undertake football training on Saturday morning from 09.30-13.00 at King George V Playing Fields for the 2019/20 season.

Proposed by Mrs Harrison, seconded by Mrs Conybeare and

**Resolved:** To approve the pitch layout revision subject to a £1000 increase in the 2019/20 season charge.

## 9. Community Events

### 9.1 Cinema in the Park

The committee agreed to a cinema in the park but asked for clarification on proposed numbers and parking arrangements.

### 9.2 Fireworks in King George V Playing Fields

The committee requested further information on the proposal to hold a fireworks display King George V Playing Fields to ensure the safety of those attending such an event.

9.3 Two day event in May 2020

A request has been received for a large two day event to be held in the recreation grounds with two stages, anticipated numbers are significant. The committee agreed that the proposal was too large and inappropriate for the recreation grounds.

9.4 Dog Show

A request has been made to run a Fun Dog show next year. There were no issues arising from the event this year and the committee approved the event.

**10. Outdoor Fitness**

There has been an increase in the number of personal trainers operating exercise classes in the recreation grounds.

Proposed by Mrs Harrison, seconded by Mr Hemingway and

**Resolved:** to permit outdoor fitness classes to operate from the park, subject to submitting a requested and providing copies of public liability insurance and risk assessment.

**11. Any Other Business**

11.1 Play area signs and a replacement zip wire seat have been ordered.

11.2 There being no other business the meeting closed at 10.30pm.

Chairman \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_