

KNEBWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Virtual Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Colin Stringer (Chairman) Rosemary Conybeare, Charlotte Cosson, Philip Farr, Jenny Harrison and Steve Hemingway

In Attendance: The Clerk

1. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes

Proposed by Mrs Conybeare, seconded by Mrs Harrison and

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities Committee Meeting held on 21 October 2020 be approved and signed.

4. Hire Charges

The government has introduced stricter guidelines to try to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Senior football was stopped on 18 December and junior football in January. Knebworth Football Club has asked for additional discounts.

Proposed by Mrs Conybeare, seconded by Mrs Cosson and

Resolved: not to invoice the clubs in January and February.

Stepping Stone Preschool returned in January with reduced number of staff and children, so it has taken the decision to only open four mornings a week.

Proposed by Mrs Cosson, seconded by Mr Farr and

Resolved: to reduce fees by 20% for the Spring term to reflect reduced usage.

5. Play Equipment

5.1 Annual Play Equipment Inspection

The Committee reviewed the annual inspection of the play areas. The report assessed that the Recreation grounds had one piece of equipment which was moderate risk, the remaining low risk. Lytton Fields and King George V Recreation Grounds are low risk. It identified general maintenance work, which the clerk is arranging to be completed.

5.2 Gym Equipment

The committee considered a request for outside gym equipment to be installed in Knebworth Recreation Grounds.

Mr Farr reported that a play equipment survey was undertaken by the Council a few years ago and there was no demand for gym equipment. The committee agreed that this would not be pursued and the resident is to be informed.

6. Allotments

All the plots have been rented for 2021. The waiting list was reduced by reducing the size of the available plots and there are seven new plot holders.

The Committee considered a request to plant trees on a plot. Due to the size of the plots the Committee agreed that no further trees should be permitted on the site.

Mr Hemingway suggested that a few other villages have community orchards, which might be possible if development goes ahead.

7. PAT Testing

Proposed by Mrs Conybeare, seconded by Mrs Cosson and

Resolved: to purchase PAT testing equipment and appropriate training.

8. Norton Green Common

The Council has a Stewardship Agreement to manage and improve Norton Green Common, which is a SSSI. Although the meadow has a TRO to prevent vehicles driving over it, there has been significant damage resulting from off road vehicles driving over the common.

The clerk has been engaging Stevenage Borough Council, as owner of the site, Knebworth Estate, as adjacent landowner, Herts CC Rights of Way Officer, Natural England and the police to try to resolve the ongoing problem. Stevenage Borough Council has agreed to lay large logs alongside the track to try to deter off road vehicles.

9. Maintenance

9.1 Pavilion

The CCTV and alarm have been recently serviced. A new boiler fan has been installed.

9.2 Village Hall

The kitchen extraction fan requires servicing. Gratte Brothers has stated that it does not undertake this work and the clerk has yet to find a suitable contractor.

9.3 Pond

Two pond maintenance days were cancelled due to government restrictions under lockdown. Work in the pond cannot now be undertaken until September.

10. Bowls Club Wall

The Tennis Club has reported that it has concerns about the Bowls Club wall, within the Club compound. The Clerk is to contact the Bowls Club.

11. Financial Review

The quarterly accounts to 31 December 2020 were reviewed and approved.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Mr Farr is to publicise news about the Council's facilities on its Facebook page.

12.2 The Tennis Club is proposing to start work on the lower courts this summer and has asked if the Council still plans to install the posts to provide power to the cameras. Work on CCTV has been put in abeyance; however the clerk is to contact the Club to clarify the extent of the work.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.22pm.

Chairman _____

Date _____