

KNEBWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Knebworth Parish Council held on Wednesday 11th September 2024 at Knebworth Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Roger Willcocks (Chairman), Steve Hemingway, Paul Ward, Charlotte Cosson, Adrienne Charter, Alexander Hurwitz, Colin Stringer.

In attendance: Jodee White (Clerk)

No	Item	Action
1.	<p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllrs Nash, Jobling, Cameron, and Godfrey.</p>	
2.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3.	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>None present.</p>	
4.	<p>To approve the minutes of the previous Parish Council meeting</p> <p>Proposed by Cllr Hemingway and seconded by Cllr Ward and</p> <p>Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council on 10 July 2024 be approved 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 10th July 2024.</p>	
6.	<p>Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference has been updated to include "The Parish Council Chairman shall be a voting ex-officio member of all committee" and a member can propose a substitute Councillor if he is unable to attend. The Planning committee terms of reference was updated to read "Consider and make recommendations to the Council with respect to planning issues that may affect the character of the village and its environment and other environmental issues"</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Charter and seconded by Cllr Hurwitz and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the updated Scheme of Delegation and Terms of Reference.</p>	
7.	<p>Safeguarding Policy</p> <p>The Clerk gave a brief explanation why this policy had been required due to the completing of a grant application to North Herts Council that required the PC to have this policy.</p> <p>The policy was reviewed by the policies sub-committee for full PC approval. The policy stated that basic DBS checks for staff were required, and it was requested that all staff complete this check, and an update provided at the next meeting.</p> <p>There have been a few small tweaks to the hall hire agreement to ensure that appropriate checks are made by groups using the hall.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Stringer and seconded by Cllr Hemingway and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the Safeguarding policy.</p>	Clerk

8.	<p>Grant application</p> <p>A grant application was received from the Community First Responder and Gatekeeper for Welwyn & Hatfield Community First Aid Responders for £500 toward the purchase of new kit.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Cosson and seconded by Cllr Hemingway and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the grant application as per above.</p>	
9.	<p>To discuss the Parish Council insurance arrangements.</p> <p>The Council's annual insurance has renewal has been received and has come in within the budget set for the year. All documents were distributed to Councillors as appendices to the meeting. The policy has been updated to include the insured column for KGV Recreation Ground.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked to check that the insurance had been based on the re-evaluations that were done in November 2023 and the latest asset register.</p> <p>There was also a request to check for compliance against the proposal on Page 2 of the schedule for written Risk Assessments and written records of staff and volunteers training.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Charter and seconded by Cllr Ward and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the renewal of the Parish Council's annual insurance.</p>	
10.	<p>To consider the registering of Community ACV's with NHC.</p> <p>Appendices 9 & 10 were distributed as papers to this meeting and showed the Community Asset from Knebworth that were registered with North Herts Council (NHC) and the other an extract from the Knebworth Neighbourhood plan stating the Parish's community assets that could be registered.</p> <p>The only asset list on the NHC list is the main Recreation Ground that is listed till 11 April 2026. Other items have been previously listed but have fallen off the list after the statutory 5 years if not re-listed.</p> <p>Various assets within the village such as the Royal British Legion, Scout Hut, Station Pub, Lytton Arms, Library and Assura Pharmacy and GP surgery area, and in addition Lytton Fields and KGV recreation grounds, plus the Allotments.</p> <p>Green spaces within the village were also discussed to investigate registering such as the green on Gun Lane and the land at Odyssey and potentially the big green on Stockens Green.</p> <p>Cllr Ward committed to check with the NHC Officer responsible for AoCV's whether it was appropriate for the PC to list assets it owns and that this and the registering of open spaces be added to the agenda for the next PC meeting in October.</p>	<p>Cllr Ward</p> <p>Clerk</p>
11.	<p>Christmas Lights</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the Christmas lights were already over the £5000 budget for the year at a cost of £6522 and advised that there were also some electrical works to be done to sockets. It was proposed by Cllr Willcocks and seconded by Cllr Hurwitz and</p> <p>Resolved: to carry out the required electrical work with the additional cost vired from the St Martin's Lane parking budget line of £4k and any additional taken from contingency.</p>	

	<p>Further conversation was had about a date for the Christmas lights switch on and that there was no event currently planned for the switch on. Cllr Charter said that she would ask the Station Pub landlords about doing a mobile bar.</p> <p>The Clerk was requested to arrange a date for the switch on of the Christmas lights with the contractor and advise.</p>	<p>Cllr Charter</p> <p>Clerk</p>
12.	<p>War Memorial</p> <p>The Clerk advised that current quoted for works on the war memorial have been completed. There is still work that can be done to replace a broken lantern or finial and appendix 13 showed a picture of the missing part and the Clerk showed the physical broken part of the memorial. Other appendices showed quotes of two options for this work to be done. The quotes and funding were not approved. Cllr Willcocks advised that he approach some potential people who may be able to provide funding with regards to the replacement lantern.</p> <p>It was also suggested that a note should go in the Parish magazine to ask residents views on the replacement.</p>	<p>Cllr Willcocks</p> <p>Cllr Stringer</p>
13.	<p>CCTV</p> <p>This item was deferred to the next PC meeting as Cllr Jobling who had been involved in the CCTV tender was not present.</p>	
14	Finance	
14.1	<p><i>To approve the list of payments 1 to 30 June 2024</i></p> <p>The list of payments 1 to 31 July and the 1 to 31 August 2024 was distributed prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Cosson and seconded by Cllr Stringer and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the list of payments 1 to 31 July and August 2024.</p>	
14.2	<p><i>To approve the bank reconciliation for 1 to 31 July and 1 to 31 August 2024</i></p> <p>The bank reconciliation for July and August 2024 was distributed prior to the meeting.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Hemingway and seconded by Cllr Stringer and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the bank reconciliation 1 to 31 July and August 2024.</p>	
14.3	<p><i>To receive the flexed budget report.</i></p> <p>The flexed budget report was distributed prior to this meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk advised that the relevant committees had reviewed individual cost centre reports. Overall reports showed an on-target budget for receipts income and a slight underspend on payments giving an overall underspend of circa £17,000. Budget spend for the year is where it is expected to be and all earmarked reserves for the year have been spent. Councillors reviewed the report and approved.</p>	
14.4	<p><i>To review and approve quotes</i></p> <p>A quote was received and approved previously by the Clerk and Chairman for the Road closure for the Remembrance Day Parade as this needed to be organised prior to this meeting. The quote for £1022 was within the budget set for this at £1100.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Charter and seconded by Cllr Cosson and</p>	

	<p>Resolved: to approve the quote from Fentons for £1022 for the road closure for the Remembrance Day Parade.</p> <p>A quote from was received from TL Handyman Services for work to be done to the ceiling of the Station Pub. The Clerk advised that the quote was for £775 and that there was budget remaining in the Station Pub repairs and maintenance budget for this work to be done.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Charter and seconded by Cllr Cosson and</p> <p>Resolved: for the quote for £775 from TL Handyman Services to be approved.</p> <p>A quote was received to redecorate the committee room, kitchen next and main hallway outside the main kitchen area totalling £2,725 split into the three different areas. The Clerk advised that there was only just over £500 left in the Village Hall repairs and maintenance budget so would require a virement from another area of the budget to fulfil this quotation. The amenities committee reviewed this quote at their last meeting but requested for it to be deferred to the full PC meeting due to its implication on other parts of the budget potentially outside of the amenities committee's remit. It was discussed that the quote could be approved subject to a virement from the professional fees budget line item and the rest from contingency. It was discussed and requested that the PC's Standing Orders be reviewed to look at rules on budgeting and that this is an agenda item on the next PC meeting. Subject to the above being noted it was proposed by Cllr CC and seconded by Cllr Hurwitz and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the quote for £2725 from TL Handyman Services to redecorate as per above.</p>	
14.5	<p><i>To approve a new bank account</i></p> <p>It was approved at the last Finance Committee meeting to open a Barclays Treasury Account with £85k to fund it. On further investigation the Clerk sent out an email on the 6th of September 2024 detailing that the minimum investment for the Barclays Treasury account was £100,000 and the interest rates were not overly favourable. The current Accounting and Investment policy only allows for accounts to hold £85,000 but this is already not adhered to be the Unity account which has over this amount and that the Accounting and Investment policy should be updated. The Clerk was requested to add this as an agenda item to the next PC meeting. The decision to ratify the decision of the Finance Committee was not approved and no action re opening of bank accounts was approved.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Cosson and seconded by Cllr Charter and</p> <p>Resolved: to close the Barclays Current account.</p>	Clerk
15.	<p>To receive an update from the Clerk</p> <p>The Clerk advised that some shelter coating that was used for the War Memorial works remained with the conservation company and that they had advised that this could be sent to the PC. The Clerk advised that she had queried the use and validity of it being sent and Cllr's agreed that it was not worth being sent.</p> <p>Works on the village hall lights project are all complete and were done within budget and an excellent improvement to the lighting provision. Additional stage lighting can be considered in the future subject to budget and requirement.</p> <p>A refund on the water rates from the previous supplier has been received and transition to the new supplier has happened.</p>	

	<p>The Clerk is still pursuing the moving of the water meter at the Village Hall and has arranged a site visit that will happen on the 13th of September. There will be a cost to this visit and potential moving of the meter, but this is to be determined by the visit.</p> <p>The windows at the Station Pub first floor have all been replaced and the light above the sign was also fixed whilst the scaffolding was in place. The landlord has done some making good of the outside of the pub where required. These works were also done within budget.</p> <p>The Clerk has arranged to meet with several Play equipment companies to review requirements for our play areas and to put a plan in place.</p> <p>The Clerk distributed quotes for upgrade to the alarm system at the Pavilion to enable remote access to the alarm. The Clerk advised that she is also enquiring about putting an alarm system in place at the village hall. The quotes were discussed, and it was decided to wait and review these further subject to discussion in conjunction with the village hall alarms and any CCTV discussion.</p> <p>Cllr Charter met with a representative from Settle Housing Association in July, and this was followed up with an email stating that the areas of concern in the village requiring attention were not the responsibility of Settle. The Clerk followed up on this and met with another representative from the Settle Group to do a tour of the village on the 4th of September. Some progress was made on this visit with regards adding to their programme of works land behind the village hall in Deanscroft and an area around the Scout Hut on Gun Lane. There are, however, still various areas that were visited that still need attention and the Clerk has followed this up with Cllr Thake who has highlighted the areas of concern to his highways officer. Request to keep this as an agenda item for the next PC meeting.</p>	Clerk
16.	<p>Exclusion of Members of Public and Press</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Ward and seconded by Cllr Hemingway and 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>	
17.	<p>To review progress on the lease for the Station Pub</p> <p>The draft lease due to commence in February 2025 has been received from the PC's solicitors and sent to the tenants' solicitors for review and comment. The final lease and any comments from the tenants' solicitors have not yet been received. The Clerk will continue to chase this and add as an agenda item for the next PC Meeting if received.</p> <p>The Clerk was requested to arrange a meeting with the tenants once the new lease has been approved and regarding redecoration plans as per requirements in their current lease.</p>	Clerk
18.	<p>Staff Update</p> <p>A written staffing update report was distributed prior to the meeting. There were no questions taken or recorded.</p>	
19.	<p>Inclusion of Members of Public and Press</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Charter and seconded by Cllr Ward and Resolved: to readmit members of the Public.</p>	

20.	Any other business It was discussed if the PC wished to mark the departure of Cllr Phil Farr.	
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The meeting closed at 10.30p.m.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____