

KNEBWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Knebworth Parish Council held on Wednesday 13th November 2024 at Knebworth Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Roger Willcocks (Chairman), Steve Hemingway, Charlotte Cosson, Adrienne Charter, Colin Stringer, James Cameron.

In attendance: Jodee White (Clerk), Nicolette Amette, Tom Platter (Senior Parliamentary Assistant)

| No | Item | Action |
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| 1. | <p>Apologies</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllrs Nash, Hurwitz, Ward, and Jobling. It was noted that Cllr Nash had sent her apologies to all meetings until the end of 2024 due to personal circumstances.</p> <p>Nicolette Amette was in attendance as an observer and potential candidate for the Councillor role. Tom Platter was in attendance to observe and represent the Member of Parliament as his Senior Parliamentary Assistant.</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 Godfrey and seconded by Cllr Cosson and</p> <p>Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council on 09 October 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 09 October 2024.</p> | |
| 6. | <p>To discuss co-option onto the Parish Council</p> <p>Cllr Willcocks advised that Cllr Nash has been unable to attend meetings recently and most likely for the foreseeable as well. Cllr Willcocks will speak with Cllr Nash to ascertain her wishes regarding her role as Parish Councillor. The Parish Council has 1 vacancy at present. The Clerk is to contact NHC elections team to advertise the current vacancy so that the Parish Council may co-opt after advertising for the required amount of time.</p> | |
| 7. | <p>To review the moving of a Speed Indicator Device (SID)</p> <p>A local resident had contacted the Clerk to ask for a Speed Indicator to be installed on Park Lane near to Manor Farm. The Clerk contacted Richard Thake as Knebworth's County Councillor about this issue, who in turn contacted his Highways liaison contact who contacted the Clerk. Appendix 3 shows a map of the current SID's within Knebworth Parish. Some discussion was had about a SID that did not appear on the map that was believed to be by the new Odyssey development near Stevenage but still in the Knebworth Parish and Councillors requested the Clerk to contact Herts Highways to ask where this SID had moved to and if it was likely to move back closer to the Village.</p> | |

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| | It was proposed by Cllr Godfrey and seconded by Cllr Hemmingway and Resolved: to move SID NH49 (Outside No. 15 Stevenage Road) to NH61 (Park Lane outside Manor House Farm). | Clerk |
| 8. | Christmas lights switch on event The Clerk advised that all actions required for the event have been completed or are in hand. Appendix 4 showed a list of who was required and when for the event and the Clerk requested volunteers for the evening. Further working party meetings will take place prior to the event. | |
| 9. | Settle Group Update The Clerk has chased up with Settle but there is no further update to that what has currently been advised. The Clerk will continue to chase on this matter. | |
| 10. | Recreation Ground and Pavilion Redecoration works on the mould on the ceiling in one of the changing rooms has been completed. Work on the fence around the pond is due to commence w/c 18 th November. Work has been completed to rectify an intermittent fault on the boilers and appear to be working fine now. Work on a fault on the alarm system has also been fixed. There is an ongoing issue with the timer and lock on the public toilet on the main recreation ground that is being investigated. A key safe has now been fitted at the Pavilion for workers to be able to gain access without the need for the Clerk or anyone else to attend. Benches were also discussed and that the bench on Westland Road requires replacement, as well consider replacing those near the memorial and to talk to the Vicar of St Martins Church regarding the benches by the church and noticeboard. | |
| 11. | Village Hall Works on redecoration of the corridor, committee room and small kitchenette have commenced. There have been some small leaks from water heaters in the main entrance area. This has led to the replacement of all the water heaters in the toilets in this area. Space heating have also been requested to quote for replacement of the taps in the ladies and men's toilet in the annex to show the correct hot and cold and to be push button and to remove the fixed plugs as we have again had issues with the plugs being left in and taps being left on and causing a flood, so this .would be a better system. Work on the intruder and fire alarm and access systems are due to start on 21 st of November and to take circa 2 weeks to complete. The grant application to replace and renew the kitchen and kitchenette was not successful. There were 49 applications and 20 were successful. The kitchens still need refitting, and this will be included in discussion in the finance agenda item to review and approve quotes. A fire door that was not closing securely has also been sorted. | |
| 12. | Station Pub Works on the ceiling repair is due to start on the 4 th of November 2024. The need to discuss internal redecoration with the tenant prior to end of the current lease in February 2025 was also discussed. Clerk to arrange meeting. | Clerk |

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| 13. | <p>To receive an update from the Clerk</p> <p>The groundsman has completed his Basic DBS check, and the certificate has been placed on his staff file.</p> <p>Feedback was given regarding the removal of some NHC owned bins in the Parish and these were noted and the agreed bin removals were adjusted in line with the request.</p> <p>A 50% refund was received from ICE Cleaning services re the aborted visit to clean oil from the pond on the Recreation Ground.</p> <p>The Clerk reported some issues with Norton Green and the Common not being cut.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the Parish Council now has an Instagram account.</p> | |
| 14. | <p>Finance</p> | |
| 14.1 | <p><i>To approve the list of payments 1 to 31 October 2024</i></p> <p>The list of payments 1 to 31 October was distributed prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Cosson and seconded by Cllr Godfrey and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the list of payments 1 to 31 October 2024.</p> | |
| 14.2 | <p><i>To approve the bank reconciliation for 1 to 31 October 2024</i></p> <p>The bank reconciliation for October 2024 was distributed prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Cosson and seconded by Cllr Hemmingway and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the bank reconciliation 1 to 31 October 2024.</p> | |
| 14.3 | <p><i>To review and approve quotes</i></p> <p>Quotes from Playdale have been received to supply a gravity bowl at the main recreation area and a new rota bounce at the Lytton Fields recreation ground. Quotes from RJ Warren Ltd for the installation of the above equipment as well as to repair an entrance way to the Lytton Fields recreation ground by installing some matting to make the entrance way more accessible and to pressure wash all 3 of the Council's recreation areas have also been received. The total of all the above quotes came to circa £7500 with only £4250 left in the budget for play area repairs. The Clerk suggested that the balance be taken via a virement from the Professional fees budget line item for 2024/25 that is currently underspent.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Hemmingway and seconded by Cllr Stringer and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the supply and installation of the above items as well as the pressure wash to all recreation areas and repair to the Lytton Fields entrance way.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Stringer and seconded by Cllr Cosson and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve a virement of £1500 from professional fees to the play equipment repair budget line items.</p> <p>A quote had been received for pollarding of a double row of lime trees at the main recreation ground and for cutting of the hedge at the KGV recreation ground.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Stringer and seconded by Cllr Hemmingway and</p> <p>Resolved: to approve the quote for £3,120 (inclusive of VAT) from Scotts Ground maintenance to pollard a double row of lime tree and cut the hedge at KGV recreation area.</p> <p>Quotes were received for the refitting of the main kitchen and kitchenette areas.</p> | |

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| | The Council resolved that they could not approve either quotes due to lack of comparison between the quotes and requested further information on installation and H & S details. The Clerk will request this information. | Clerk |
| 14.4 | <p><i>To receive the forecast EOY 2024/25 budget and draft budget for 2025/26</i></p> <p>Appendix 14 shows the forecast EOY figures for the 2024/25 budget as well as the draft proposed budget figures for 2025/26. Appendices 15 & 16 are the budget notes used to assist in setting the budget and some more general notes and items to highlight. All appendices were and was distributed prior to this meeting.</p> <p>The budget was discussed and agreed that this needed to be revisited as part of a wider discussion on priorities and reserves.</p> | |
| 14.5 | <p><i>To receive the suggested earmarked reserves report for 2025/26 budget year.</i></p> <p>The Clerk distributed reserves balance report and reserves notes (Appendices 18 & 19). Items on the report were discussed. This was also deferred to a further wider discussion on priorities and reserves.</p> | |
| 15. | <p>Exclusion of Members of Public and Press</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Hemingway and seconded by Cllr Cosson 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> | |
| 16. | <p>Staff Update</p> <p>The NJC Salary increase backdated to April 2024 has been agreed and all staff will be paid the back dated pay in their November 2024 pay, including those staff that have worked from April 2024 but have since left and have written in to request their backdated pay.</p> <p>The Clerk has done her second session of her CiLCA, and further sessions are booked. She is booked onto and paid for the system to submit her work which is available from December 2024 and is slowly working on the modules in preparation for submission.</p> <p>The Clerk will be on leave for 3 days at the end of November. The Deputy Clerk will be around to cover.</p> <p>The Deputy Clerk took some leave during the October half term and will be working extra hours on the Christmas lights switch on event but taking her time back the following week after the event.</p> | |
| 17. | <p>Inclusion of Members of Public and Press</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Cosson and seconded by Cllr Stringer and Resolved: to readmit members of the Public.</p> | |
| 18. | <p>To consider notification of any other matters not noted elsewhere in the agenda for information only.</p> <p>The Council considered a request from the previous admin assistant to the Parish Council and declined her request.</p> | |

The meeting closed at 10.00p.m.

Chairman: _____

Date: _____