

KINGS WALDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Kings Walden Parish Council held in the Village Hall, Breachwood Green on Tuesday 21st November at 7.45 pm

Present: Councillors: Amanda King (Chair), Jon Chamberlin, Martin Rosser, David Bennett, Liz Thurlby, the clerk, Tom Brindley, and two members of the public.

6.1 (Agenda 1) Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Ross Macleod, Tom Harrison, Amanda Thompson

6.2 (Agenda 2) Chairman's Remarks

6.2.1 The chairman reminded members that declarations of interest should be made immediately before the item under discussion.

6.3 (Agenda 3) Public participation

6.3.1 (Agenda 3a) Anastasia and Nigel Mckeown addressed the meeting regarding application (17/01793/1) for a cat hotel at their home, White Cottage, Pasture Lane, Breachwood Green. Mrs Mckeown advised that she had held meetings with her neighbours and made concessions on both planning and licensing terms:

- a. Planting around buildings A and B to be agreed and in place before any building works take place.
- b. Hours of operation strictly 08:00-18:00 Mon-Sat and 10:00-16:00 Sundays and bank holidays.
- c. No drop offs or collections between 8:45-9:15 and 15:15-15:45 Mon-Fri during school terms, to avoid adding to the school run congestion.
- d. No dogs to be boarded at any time.
- e. License to be permanently capped at 26 cats.
- f. No cattery buildings to be added in the future.
- g. Permission tied to the occupiers only (Mr and Mrs Mckeown), and not to the property (White Cottage).
- h. Any cat hotel related parking to be done on the driveway of White Cottage only - no parking on Pasture Lane at any time.
- i. No floodlights (or any bright lights) to be used in or around the cattery buildings.
- j. No lights in the cattery buildings between 21:00 and 07:30.

6.3.2 The clerk advised that some of these would not be acceptable as planning conditions, as they were neither necessary or enforceable in planning terms.

6.3.3 (Agenda 3b / 3c) No district or county councillors were present.

6.4 The chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that Agenda item 7.a (planning application 17/01793/1, Cat Hotel) be brought forward.

6.4.1 The chairman noted that the applicants had made further concessions and had done much to address the council's and neighbours' concerns.

6.4.2 After debate, members noted the positive amendments made by the applicant, and RESOLVED to withdraw its objection and change its stance to neutral, but to still ask for the decision to be called-in, in the wider public interest.

6.5 (Agenda 4) Minutes of Meeting 17th October 2017

The minutes were accepted as a true record and signed by the chairman.

6.6 (Agenda 5) Matters Arising from meeting of 17th October 2017

6.6.1 Drive safe: No further correspondence had been received.

6.6.2 Tree roots and overhanging branches: The clerk had met with R Dawes and authorised the removal of one sycamore tree and one ash tree which were growing over and under the neighbouring property.

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6.6.3 Ley Green Play Area: Cllr Bennett was still to contact Mr Mather to arrange the removal of bark boards at Ley Green play area.

6.7 (Agenda 6) Finance

6.7.1 The clerk tabled the draft budget proposal which included an assumption that £4,500 would be spent this year on urgent repairs to play equipment.

6.7.2 Payments totalling £955.43 were approved. (See list annexed to these minutes).

6.7.3 Members RESOLVED to renew HAPTC membership for 2018/19.

6.7.4 Member RESOLVED to renew membership of Chilterns Society.

6.7.5 The council tax base had increased from 412 to 416 meaning the same precept would raise more money, but the council tax support grant had been reduced.

6.7.6 The clerk had prepared a zero-based budget whereby the anticipated receipts and payments were based on future requirements, not historic figures. (See Draft Budget Report annexed to these minutes)

6.7.7 The clerk explained that no decision was to be made until January.

6.7.8 6.7.9 (Agenda 6c) Grant application Breachwood Green Baptist Church.

- i. An application for a grant of £500 had been received from the Breachwood Green Baptist Church for hedge cutting in 2016.
- ii. The clerk explained that council policy excluded retrospective grants and so he could not recommend the grant.
- iii. The clerk further explained that members could, in exceptional circumstances, waive policy and award the grant.
- iv. The church had previously applied for a grant but that too had been retrospective (and had been rejected).
- v. The clerk had contacted the church to see if there was any future expenditure that the grant could be applied to but had not received a reply.
- vi. Members RESOLVED to waive the grants policy in this instance but to make it clear that this was a one-off waiver and that council policy would apply in future.
- vii. Members RESOLVED to use powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 to award the sum of £500 to Breachwood Green Baptist Church.

6.7.10 The clerk advised that the council's external auditors for the coming year, appointed by Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) would be PKF Littlejohn LLP and the fee would be £200+VAT.

6.8 (Agenda 7) Planning

6.8.1 No new applications had been received.

6.8.2 The clerk advised that the Examination in Public of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan had been extended and would now run into January 2018.

6.9 (Agenda 8) Youth Club

6.9.1 Members noted the youth club would close for winter during December, January and February.

6.10 (Agenda 9) Play area repairs

6.10.1 Breachwood Green Play Area. The clerk had now received an additional quotation from Setters.

6.10.2 The zip wire timber supports were covered by a warranty claim but this does not extend to the labour required to remove old posts or install the new posts.

6.10.3 The quote to repair the zip wire was favourable compared to a total replacement. Members RESOLVED to authorise repairs to the zip wire.

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- 6.10.4 The Setters' quote for repairs to two other items of play equipment, to replace the two "springers", and to replace the bench were also accepted.
- 6.10.5 Repairs to the remaining equipment and to the play area fence would be considered in January when additional quotations had been received.
- 6.11 (Agenda 10) Recreation Ground Restoration
- 6.11.1 The clerk had met with R Dawes to discuss the restoration of various areas which were left uncut and become a mass of brambles, nettles and self-seeded blackthorn trees. Also, the hedge to the north of the recreation ground (estimated to be over 300 years old) had been neglected for many years and was overgrown with self-seeded ash and sycamore.
- 6.11.2 Members agreed to start a restoration project to bring these areas back into use over the next few years.
- 6.11.3 In the immediate future, R Dawes would mow the affected areas to establish the condition of the underlying ground.
- 6.11.4 Cllr Chamberlin suggested that, once restored, the areas could be allowed to grow longer than the main field and that a cut of three times per year would keep them under control.
- 6.11.5 The clerk advised that £1,500 was included in the 2018/19 budget submission to fund this work.
- 6.11.6 **Floodlights**
- i. The clerk reported he had been approached by Someries Youth Football Club regarding use of the flood lights and advised the the supply had been disconnected several years previously, and in any event the lights would have been wired into the village hall and that Someries should contact the Village Hall committee.
 - ii. The clerk had planned to seek council permission to dismantle the flood lights, but was advised at the meeting that Someries Someries Youth Football Club has rewired them.
 - iii. The clerk raised concern at the safety of the lights, as he had recently inspected them and noted severe corrosion and risk of collapse such that he had asked R Dawes Ltd for a quote to remove them.
 - iv. The clerk advised that the original ownership of the lights was unknown, but as they were located on council land not leased to the village hall it was the council that would be accountable in the event of an incident.
 - v. The clerk was asked to contact Someries Youth Football and the Village Hall to ensure that a full electrical safety certificate was in place and to arrange for a physical survey and necessary repair of the lights.

6.12 (Agenda 11) Matters concerning Play Areas, MUGA, Highways and Village Hall

6.12.1 Someries Youth Football

- i. It was reported that Someries Youth Football had wired in the flood lights and was using the recreation ground for training on Wednesday and Thursday evenings.
- ii. The clerk advised he had not given approval for the use of the flood lights and the club's licence did not extend to mid-week use.
- iii. Further, the extensive use of the recreation ground could lead to excessive wear and that the fee for use might need to increase to cover this liability.
- iv. The clerk was authorised to contact Someries Youth Football with regards to regularising the mid-week use.
- v. Cllr Chamberlin asked when the grass cutting would cease as it had been cut two days after the pitches had been marked thus losing the markings. The clerk advised that R Dawes continued cutting while the grass was growing but agreed to pass JC Agriculture's contact details to R Dawes so that they could be advised as to when the grass was to be cut.

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6.13 (Agenda 12) Correspondence

6.13.1 Nothing to report.

6.14 (Agenda 13) Matters for Future Consideration

6.14.1 Recreation ground fees

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.40 p.m.

Signed Chairman _____ Date _____

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Budget report 2018/19

I am still waiting for the quote from Setters to reinstate the zip wire (it is promised for Monday). I have assumed it can be done for under £4500 and that members would want it done this year. To pay for this I have assumed we draw from the play area reserve £1850 and from the community fund £2650.

If we did that, the forecast for the year end March 2018 is cash of £16,960, earmarked reserves of £8,240 and free reserve of £8,720.

Any other work could be funded from the community reserve.

The budget predicts a spend next year (2018/19/ of £31,595, which includes adding £4,650 to earmarked reserves.

The council tax base has risen by 4 and so, for the same precept, the council would raise an additional £292.

This would leave a free reserve of £9,064 which is 3.3 month's spend. We also have some potential liabilities for tree maintenance on the recreation ground, which could easily mount to over £5000.

Members may therefore wish to increase the precept by inflation (3% or £2.23 per band D house) which would generate an additional £849.

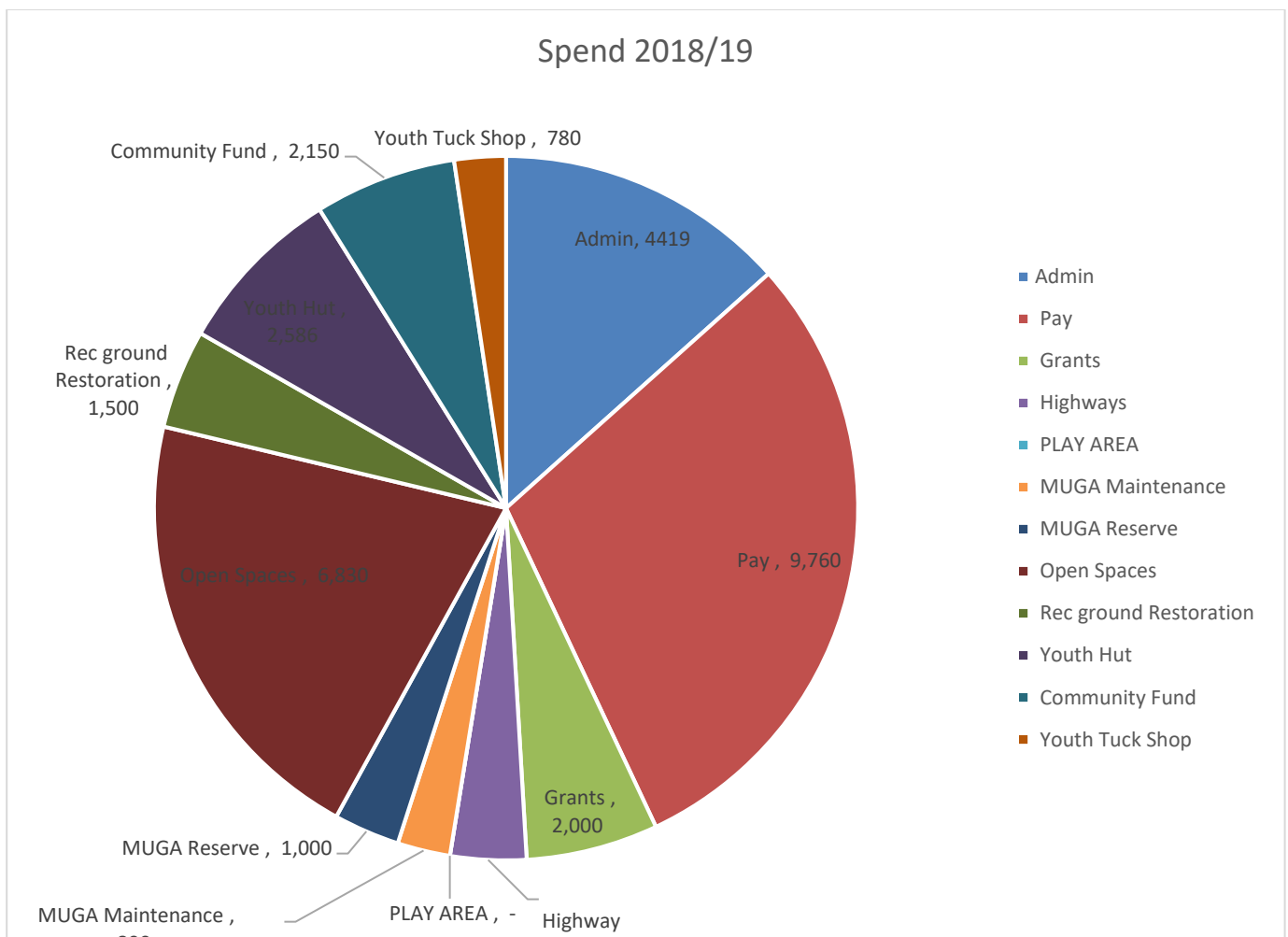
Cash and Reserves		2018-19		2019-20	
Bank	Opening	16960		16514	
	Closing	21164			
Reserves		Open	Close	Open	Close
Earmarked	MUGA	3000	4000	4000	
	Community Fund	3800	5600	5600	
	Environment Grants	440	0	0	
	Assigned	0	0	0	
	Play Area	0	1000	1000	
	Youth Hut				
	NNDR	1000	1500	1500	
Total Earmarked		8240	12100	12100	0
Free		8720	9064	9064	0

Summary

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OBAL	£16,960	Forecast cash assuming £4500 spent this year on Play Area
Receipts	£32,529	Budgeted income for 2018/19
Payments	£31,595	Budgeted payments for 2018/19
CBAL	£16,514	Forecast closing balance before earmarked reserves
Reserves		
Ear marked	£12,100	See above for breakdown
General	£9,064	Free reserve – 3.3 month's spend

Council Tax	RAISE SAME MONEY		FLAT PRECEPT	INFLATION OPTION
	2017-18	2018-19	2018-19	2018-19
CT Base	412	416	416	416
Precept	£28,006	£28,017	£28,298	£29,147
CTRS grant	£921	£910	£910	£910
Total	£28,927	£28,927	£29,208	£29,147
Precept / Band D house	£ 67.98	£ 67.30	£67.98	£70.01



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Precept Ranking

The table below shows the precepts for each parish in North Herts. However, treat this with caution, as the level of services provided, and the size of the electorate, is hugely varied. For example, Great Ashby is more like a small town, so the amount actually raised is high. Barkway is very small so even £95.67 doesn't raise much.

PARISH/COMMUNITY/TOWN COUNCIL AREAS If you live in an area with a Parish, Town or Community Council, the following amounts will be added to your Council Tax bill for an equivalent Band D property.

Parish	Precept per Band D
Baldock Barkway	95.67
Ashwell	77.63
St. Pauls Walden	74.59
Knebworth	73.28
Wymondley	71.75
Kimpton	69.55
Kings Walden	67.98
Barley	66.39
Hexton -Hinworth	64.37
Codicote	64.09
Ickleford	60.99
Pirton	59.77
Lilley	55.03
Hitchin -Holwell	54.68
Offley	48.41
Bygrave	47.28
Weston	44.13
Royston	42.53
Kelshall	37.23
Graveley	32.31
Sandon	30.55
Caldecote & Newnham	28.57
Reed	27.61
St. Ippolyts	25.82
Preston	25.40
Clothall	23.35
Therfield	21.73
Rushden & Wallington	20.06
Great Ashby	19.98
Radwell	16.41
Langley	0.00
Nuthampstead	0.00

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Payments made / approved to 21st November 2017

Power	Status	Date	Payee	Description	Total	Net	Parks & Play Areas	Staff	Admin	Youth Hut	VAT
4		21/11/2016	Todeka	Office Svcs Sep	60.00	50.00			50.00		10.00
4		21/11/2016	T Brindley	Clerk Expenses	48.86	43.89					4.97
4	+	07/11/2016	Billington	Gardening	326.57	324.64					1.93
		21/11/2016	Chilterns society		30.00	30.00			30.00		0.00
7		21/11/2016	Breachwood Green Baptist Church	Grant	500.00	500.00					
					955.43	948.53					16.90

* = Approved

+ = Already paid

Powers:

- 1 Grass cutting: Open Spaces Act 1906 s.10
- 2 Play area/Glebe land: LG (Misc Provisions) Act 1976 s.19
- 3 HAPTC membership: LGA 1972 s.143
- 4 Audit, Insurance, Training: LGA 1972 s.111
- 5 Salary/expenses: LGA 1972 s.112(2)
- 6 Other, Localism Act 2011
- 7 S137: LGA 1972 s137