**NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL – JULY UPDATE**

**NHDC Grants Policy:** NHDC awards grants every year of around half a million pounds. The existing policy for determining eligibility for grants largely dates back to 2002 and was no longer fit for purpose, and a revised grants policy was approved by the NHDC Cabinet on 14th June. The revised policy puts some more stringent requirements on bodies applying for grants, with recommendations that: ‘precepting bodies' (i.e. parish councils) be no longer eligible to apply for grants, no more than grant will be awarded to a body in any one year, and no grant will be given where a body has been awarded a grant in two consecutive years. Southern Rural, along with the other area committees, will suffer an approximately 50% drop in the funds available for grants.

It is recognized that parishes such as Knebworth may have difficulty raising funds for capital projects so a new capital funding scheme has been proposed which is designed to help both rural and urban capital projects. The idea is that village and community halls can be helped out when they have larger capital spending needs. The proposal is to make available a quarter of a million pounds annually.

**Parking in Knebworth – meeting on 13th July:** NHDC Councillor Julian Cunningham will be attending the Parish Council meeting on 13 July at 8pm. He is the Executive Member (i.e. member of NHDC Cabinet) with responsibility for parking policy. An hour at the beginning of the meeting has been set aside to discuss parking problems in the village.

**NHDC Draft Local Plan – meeting on 20th July:** On 20th July there will be an extraordinary meeting of the Council to approve a draft Local Plan; as with other Council meetings this meeting is open to the public. The plan will be scrutinized by a planning inspector at a public enquiry, probably in 2017.

**Flooding in Knebworth Cemetery:** Stephen McPartland MP, officers from Herts CC and NHDC and I will be inspecting Knebworth cemetery (off Wadnall Way), part of which has been subject to periodic flooding, to understand what practical solutions to improving the drainage can be found.

**Knebworth Neighbourhood Plan Area:** At its meeting on 14th June the NHDC Cabinet approved the Neighbourhood Plan Area for Knebworth as being the whole of the Parish. See the Parish Council article in this issue for further information about the Neighbourhood Plan.

Please contact your NHDC councillors if you would like to discuss these or any other matters:

**Steve Hemingway, steve@stevehemingway.com or phone 01438 940594 (please include STD code when dialling)**

**Steve Deakin-Davies, stevedeakindavies@gmail.com or phone 07949 435435**

Or be in touch directly with your County Councillor Richard Thake or your Member of Parliament Stephen McPartland:

* Richard Thake, Herts County Council: richard.thake@hertfordshire.gov.uk, phone 07973 157605
* Stephen McPartland MP: stephen@stephenmcpartland.co.uk, Stephen McPartland MP, House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA