

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 4 October at 7.00 pm in the village hall

Present:

Councillors

Mr A Neilson (chairman)

Mrs J Eldridge

Mrs R Edmonds

Mr B Livesey

Mr D Richardson

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

Apologies for absence

1. None.

Declarations of interest

2. None.

Minutes of Meeting on 21 June

3. It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on 21 June having been circulated were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on 21 June not covered elsewhere on the agenda

White Hart

4. Councillor Eldridge reported that she had spoken to the Conservation Officer at Ashford Borough Council who had spoken to the owner of the White Hart. The owner was asking his architect to draw up new plans for the dormer windows slightly modifying them. The redesigned windows would then be considered by Ashford.

Link Hill

5. The clerk reported that Kent Highway Services were currently consulting on a speed restriction order limiting the maximum speed to 40 mph in the Link Hill area. Road improvements at Link Hill scheduled to take place imminently had been postponed because Southern Water wished to undertake urgent works. It had therefore been considered sensible for them to do so before the improvements were undertaken.

Resurfacing work on A268

6. The A268 Rye road had been closed recently for resurfacing work on the Sussex side of Newenden bridge. An inconvenient diversion had been implemented whilst the road was resurfaced. Residents had not been advised of the re-surfacing work in advance. The clerk was asked to write to East Sussex Highways asking them to inform residents and Kent Highway Services of work on Sussex roads that would affect road users in Kent.

Correspondence

7. None.

Finance

8. The financial statement to 4 October was approved. The clerk commented that the second half precept had been received.

Payments

9. The following payments were made:

Came and Co	Insurance Parish Council village hall	£2,634.51
Playsafety Ltd	Playground inspection	£86.40
Mr J A Leeves	Clerk's allowance, postage stamps	£20.47
Selmes Management Account		
Mr A Seal	Reimbursement fencing materials	£557.96

10. The chairman explained that the £50.00 annual rental for the children's playground paid to the Selmes Trust would form a paper transaction in the end of year accounts to the Selmes Trust and there was no need to make an actual payment.

Other Financial matters

Internal auditor

11. The clerk reported that he had spoken to Mr Burns and subsequently sent him two spreadsheets showing the Council's accounts to 31 March 2011. He was awaiting a response.

Litter picker

12. The chairman said there were a number of matters that needed to be resolved in relation to the litter picker. These were:

- a). insurance;
- b). proper invoices;
- c). method of payment; and
- d). rate of pay.

13. The clerk reminded Councillors that the internal auditor had raised points a,b and c. Point d had arisen because the national minimum wage had increased to £6.08 which was more than the Council were paying the litter picker. Although he was self employed and the Council were not bound to pay the national minimum wage it was not very satisfactory were they not to pay it.

14. Councillors agreed to increase the payment per hour from £6.00 to £8.50. This was intended to cover the cost of insurance for which the litter picker had obtained a quotation of £175.00 per annum. The chairman said he would provide the litter picker with a pro-forma invoice that looked like an invoice.

15. The chairman said that he and Councillor Edmonds would meet with the litter picker and agree the changes and at the same time get his agreement to being paid by cheque. They would also ask the litter picker if he would be prepared to be paid quarterly. The clerk would then write to the litter picker confirming the arrangements.

Precept 2012-13

16. The clerk said he would be providing Councillors with proposals for the precept in 2012-13 at the next meeting. The internal auditor had also suggested that the Council review their general and financial standing orders and he would be circulating revised versions for approval at the next meeting.

Reports

Planning

17. Mr Seal was planning to mend his window frames because they were rotten. The building was listed but planning permission was unlikely to be required as this was a like for like replacement.

Estate Agents signs

18. The clerk reported that he had written to both estate agents asking them to remove their signs. If they did not do so within one week he would remove the signs and temporarily store them before taking them to the recycling facility at the end of October.

Highways

Vegetation overhanging A268 on Newenden hill

19. The clerk reported that he had sent a copy of the conveyance of a strip of roadside (A268) land along Newenden hill to the County Council to Kent Highway Services and reminded them that as they owned the land they were responsible for cutting roadside vegetation. He had received a telephone call from a highways inspector who had said she would look at the vegetation and arrange for it to be trimmed back. This had not yet been done.

Bus stop

20. Councillor Edmonds reported on the latest situation concerning the bus stop on Frogs hill. Stagecoach was now prepared to pick up and drop off passengers by request rather than forcing them to use the dangerous bus stop opposite Frogs Hill lane. There was no further news on the removal of the bus stop.

Management of Selmes Trust lands

21. The chairman reported that at a recent day of action the fencing that had been purchased from Tate Fencing had been erected. Some boat owners had still not paid their mooring fees and this needed to be followed up. Boats were required to have been removed from the river by the end of September but some were still in the water. An architect living in the village had agreed to draw up some designs for proper moorings similar to those on the opposite bank of the river.

Village Handiman Scheme

22. The clerk had received an e-mail from a Mr Rivers about a village handiman scheme whereby a number of villages shared the cost of a handiman. There were no details of how the scheme would work in practice nor of the cost involved. Councillors said that they would rather use a local person who was aware of the Council's requirements than an outside person would be. Councillor's would be prepared to consider the scheme but would need more information in order to do so.

Children's Playground safety inspection report

23. The chairman said he had read the report and there were only a few matters requiring attention. The remainder were very minor and some had already been addressed at the recent day of action.

Any other business

Township meeting

24. It was agreed to hold the next township meeting on 8 November at 8.00 pm. The clerk would invite the Mayor of Ashford.

Bonfire Arrangements

25. Councillors discussed the arrangements for the annual 5 November bonfire. There had been a complaint previously that a person trained in first aid was not available. The chairman commented that it was not a legal requirement to have a person trained in first aid in attendance at a village bonfire. It was however, perhaps desirable to have a trained first aid person and it was agreed that the Council should approach the village hall treasurer, Mr M Berry, for his view.

26. The clerk explained that the bonfire organisers were covered under the village hall insurance policy for the event. However, it was necessary to advise the insurance company of the bonfire, take adequate precautions to ensure that the public were kept at a safe distance and for those setting off fireworks to be trained. The clerk was asked to check the provisions of the insurance policy so that Councillors could be assured of the cover provided.

27. Councillors considered the siting of the bonfire as a number of concerns had been raised about the current site. The bonfire needed to be located at a distance from the children's playground and also not over the newly installed drainage pipe on Selmes land because it was made of plastic.

Canoeists

28. Councillor Edmonds said that she had received a complaint about the number of canoeists using the banks of the river to launch their canoes. The chairman commented that this was a reflection of

publicity given to Newenden as being a good point on the river for canoe launching. It was agreed that the problem was not the actual canoes, but the parking of vehicles carrying them and the canoeists. The parking problem needed to be resolved and this was a Township matter.

Gateway on A268

29. Councillor Livesey suggested that a “gateway” should be placed at the roadside marking the approach to the village. Various locations on Newenden hill were suggested. The chairman said that the issue was a Township matter and should be on the agenda for the next meeting.

Drains outside Copthall

30. Councillor Edmonds reported that Southern Water had excavated a hole at the bottom of the steps at Copthall. There had been a problem with drainage with water apparently coming off the hill behind Copthall and Southern Water were letting it drain into the car park outside Copthall. It was felt that this was on land belonging to Ashford Borough Council or private property and was therefore not a matter for the Council.

Tree and other works in cemetery and land leading to the cemetery

31. Councillor Livesey mentioned that there had been a number of works undertaken presumably at the request of the church or the parochial church council. An ash tree in the churchyard of St Peter’s church had been cut down. A path had also been built on land leading to the cemetery on the hill. While these were matters for the church and not the Parish Council it was felt that prior consultation with affected residents would have been helpful. Communication with residents was important and as such it was a Township matter. However, Councillors asked the clerk to make the vicar aware that out of courtesy the church might like to consult with residents before undertaking works that affected them.

Date of next meeting

32. The next meeting will be on 29 November at 7.30 pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....