

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council in the village hall on 3 November at 7.30 pm

Present:

Mr A Nilson (chairman)  
Mr D Richardson  
Mrs R Edmonds  
Miss C Bond  
Mrs E Hannavy-Cousen

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

**Apologies for absence**

1. None.

**Declarations of interest**

2. None.

**Minutes of the meeting on 8 September**

3. The minutes of the meeting on 8 September were agreed as a correct record.

**Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on 8 September**

Salt bag

4. The clerk reported that as requested he had asked Highways to deliver a bag of salt to the corner at the end of Lossenham lane.

Safety inspection of children's playground

5. The chairman said that he had read through the inspection report to see what repairs needed to be undertaken on safety grounds. However, he had not yet decided which could be dealt with during a day of action and those requiring professional help.

Broadband in Newenden

6. Councillor Bond reported that Newenden was served by the telephone exchange in Northiam. This had been enabled for fast broadband but no date had been given for when it would be available and the improved service rolled out. The chairman suggested that she could write to British Telecom and ask them about the position. Councillor Bond said she would make further enquiries.

Selmes Trust management account

7. Councillor Edmonds said that the organ in St Peters church was in need of some repairs. At the last meeting the clerk had said there was nearly £5,000 in the Selmes Trust management account and

she wondered when this would be divided between the Trust and the Parish Council. The clerk confirmed that there was now slightly over £5,000 in the management account.

8. The chairman said that the funds in the management account had not yet been divided because the Council was awaiting the appointment of a new vicar so as to discuss possible use of the funds to finance the construction of new river moorings. However, if funds were needed by St Peters then a division could be done when required and before a new vicar was appointed.

#### **Financial statement for 3 November**

9. The financial statement for 3 November was circulated and approved.

#### **Accounts for payment**

10. The following account was approved for payment:

Action with Communities in Rural Kent	Affordable housing conference	£30.00
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#### Donation receipt

11. Councillor Edmonds gave the clerk a donation of £21.00 from the farmer whose sheep had grazed the Selmes field for payment into the management account.

#### **Preliminary consideration of Precept for 2016-17**

12. The clerk had circulated a spreadsheet showing the Council's expenditure over the last five years. The chairman had circulated a spreadsheet modelling a forecast of precept levels, expenditure and balances in the bank on assumptions of various levels of expenditure and precept. The chairman explained that until figures for the Council Tax base and the amounts of the Council Tax Support and Concurrent Functions grants were available from Ashford Borough Council and inserted into the forecasting model it was not possible to set the level of the precept for 2016-17. These figures were expected in early December and the Council would meet again on 15 December to decide on the level of the precept.

#### **Newenden Historic Footpath**

13. Vanessa Ferrett from the Bodiam Boating Station had been expected to attend the meeting and speak about the Newenden Historic Footpath. The chairman said that as she was not present and this was not an urgent matter, discussion of it would be deferred to the next meeting.

#### **KALC Community Awards Scheme 2016**

14. The chairman said that KALC had invited nominations for their Community Awards Scheme for 2016. The nominations were for persons who had made significant contributions on a voluntary basis to the community. The chairman recalled that in 2012 the Council had nominated Rhoda Smith for a similar scheme being run by Ashford Borough Council the Diamond Jubilee Awards. He thought that there were no particularly outstanding candidates and that perhaps the village would not participate in the Scheme this year. Other Councillors agreed that the Parish would not make a nomination this year.

#### **Affordable housing seminar**

15. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen reported that she had recently attended a seminar on affordable housing run by Action with Communities in Rural Kent. There had been a presentation on a community land trust that could be established to provide land on which affordable housing could be built. The housing was then sold on a shared basis to low income occupiers. On leaving the housing occupiers would have to sell it back to the community land trust.

16. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen had mentioned the block of Ashford Borough Council owned garages in Lossenham lane as a possible site for housing and the Borough Council's Housing Enabling officer had expressed an interest. It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with the Housing Enabling officer.

### **Highways**

17. Councillor Edmonds said that there was nothing to report on Highways apart from the marking of potholes for repair. However, the chairman had received a report that there was a dangerous hole in the wooden footbridge over a channel running into the river Rother located behind the White Hart inn. He had discovered that Highways were responsible for the bridge and had reported the problem to them.

### **Planning**

18. Councillor Richardson said that he had attended a planning training course run by the planning department at Ashford Borough Council.

### **Any other business**

#### Bonfire and firework display

19. The chairman reminded Councillors that the bonfire and firework display would be on 5 November.

#### Christmas lights

20. The chairman said that many of the bulbs in the existing set of Christmas lights that the Council had purchased several years ago were not working and he proposed that the Council purchase a new set at a cost of between £100 and £150. Councillors agreed. The lights would be strung up in the trees in the cricket field along the roadside boundary.

#### Footway between Rolvenden and Newenden and Sandhurst and Newenden

21. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen said that she had received a request to do something about the footway between Rolvenden and Newenden in the Hexden channel area because people were being forced to walk in the road. The chairman said that this was a matter for Rolvenden Parish Council and he would take it up with them. Similarly the footway between Sandhurst and Newenden was overgrown. This was mainly in the area of Sandhurst Parish Council and was the responsibility of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.

### **Village hall**

22. In connection with funding arrangements for a new village hall the chairman set out the current position in relation to ownership and management of the village hall. The village hall would come under an umbrella organisation the Newenden Trust in whose name the hall would be registered with the Land Registry and who would manage it. He had applied to the Land Registry for a voluntary first registration some time ago but had still not received any reply from them. However, there was uncertainty about what to do about the village hall once the land ownership formalities had been resolved.

**Date of next meeting**

23. The next meeting to set the precept for 2016-17 will be on 15 December.

Chairman.....

Date.....

