

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 10 May in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm

Present:

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

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Councillor C Bond.

Declarations of interest

2. None.

Election of Chairman

3. Councillor Edmonds, seconded by Councillor Richardson, nominated the current chairman to continue as chairman in 2016-17. There being no other nominations Councillor Nilson was elected as chairman.

Election of Vice chairman

4. Councillor Richardson nominated Councillor Edmonds to be re-elected as Vice chairman. There being no other nominations Councillor Edmonds was elected as vice chairman.

Business Responsibilities between Councillors

5. Councillors agreed to retain the current allocation of business responsibilities between them.

Minutes of the Meeting on 23 February

6. The minutes of the meeting on 23 February having been circulated were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on 23 February

Affordable Housing: Community Land Trust

7. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen reported that the Community Land Trust Committee were continuing to look into the situation.

Village Maintenance Contract

8. The chairman reported that he had had a meeting with Kent County Councillor Mike Hill on 22 April at which the issue of available of funding to carry out functions currently undertaken by the

County Council was discussed. There had so far been no response from the County Council. The chairman recalled that Ashford Borough Council had indicated that they would be willing for Newenden to takeover some matters for which they were currently responsible and would provide funding. As the mowing contracts with the County and Ashford Borough Councils both came to an end in September, it was important that the situation was resolved well before then to allow adequate time for alternative arrangements to be put in place.

Financial Statement to 10 May

9. The clerk had circulated the financial statement to 10 May which showed little expenditure because it was at the beginning of the year. The clerk explained that at the time the statement was prepared Ashford Borough Council had not paid the first instalment of the Precept and the Concurrent Functions Grant for 2016-17. This had since been paid somewhat late (usually by the end of April), but this had not caused any financial difficulty.

Accounts for Payment

10. The following accounts were approved for payment:

Mr J A Leeves	Clerk's allowance & postage	£32.64
Kent Association of LC's	Subscription	£128.47

Bank Mandate

11. The chairman had obtained some mandate forms from the bank so that the mandate could be amended to permit all Councillors to sign cheques and authorise other actions with the bank. The clerk would fill in account details and return the form to the chairman so that Councillors could sign it.

Annual Governance Statement

12. The clerk explained that there had been a number of changes in the procedure and requirements for the Annual Return to 31 March 2016 which had to be submitted to the external auditors by 13 June. The Annual Governance Statement now preceded the Accounting Statement for the year and had to be approved at a separate meeting of the Council before the Accounting Statement was approved at a later meeting. The Annual Governance Statement also had to be reviewed by Councillors before it was signed. The Annual Governance Statement had been circulated before the meeting and Councillors having read it resolved that the internal control systems in place were adequate during the year and therefore they were able to approve the Statement.

13. The clerk explained that he had prepared the Accounting Statement as far as he could but his move to Tunbridge Wells had caused a disruption to the receipt of bank statements. A final statement covering the last day of the year ie 31 March had not yet been received and this was delaying a visit by the Internal Auditor Mr Burns and completion of the Accounting Statement and the Annual Return. The clerk said that the bank could only be allowed a further two days to send the statement before it would be necessary to make enquiries as to its whereabouts.

14. Councillors agreed to meet on 7 June to sign off the Accounting Statement and with it the annual return.

Highways

15. Councillor Edmonds reported that Highways had not done any further work recently to either clean drains or repair potholes. A warning sign near Newenden bridge had been struck by a vehicle and fallen down. This needed to be repaired. There had been no further progress on signage of Beech road.

Planning

16. Councillors considered planning application 16/00500/AS for change of use of the Barn at Hill House from holiday to residential accommodation and decided to support it.

Any other business

17. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen reported that the Newenden Trust would only start to fully function when it had set up a bank account.

18. The committee looking at the possibility of establishing a Community Land Trust would be having a meeting with English Rural Housing and Action with Communities in Rural Kent to discuss the possibility.

19. In response to a question from the chairman about the appointment of a new vicar Councillor Edmonds confirmed a possible candidate had been identified. Councillor Edmonds confirmed that the PCC were content for the village hall committee to be abolished.

Meeting with Damian Green MP

20. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen said that in her capacity on a Local GP Patients Committee, she had secured a constituency appointment in June with Damian Green MP and asked what issues other than the lack of local GPs, Councillors would like her to raise with him. Councillors thought that the lack of access to fast broadband was a significant issue. There was also a problem with the lack of access to local Grammar schools because the village was outside of their catchment areas.

Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations

21. Councillor Richardson said that it had been decided to hold a birthday party on 11 June. There would be a lamb spit roast, a birthday cake competition and various games such as bowling for a chocolate pig, splat the rat and hook the fish. Park Farm Butchers had quoted £300.00 for the lamb roast or £500.00 if they carved it. This was costly and Councillor Hannavy-Cousen said that she would make enquiries to see if it could be provided more cheaply. Councillor Richardson said that tickets would cost £8.00.

22. Councillor Edmonds then said that it would be nice if a booklet marking the occasion could be provided. She said that a booklet entitled "The Servant Queen and the King she Serves" was available from The Bible Society. It cost £1.00 and was not available for retail sale. Councillors looked at the booklet and felt that it would be appropriate to order 50 copies. Councillor Edmonds said that she would order it through St Peter's church.

Date of next meeting

23. The next meeting to sign off the Annual Return would be on 7 June. The next routine meeting after that would be on 28 June. The meeting planned for 6 September had become inconvenient and Councillors agreed to change it to 13 September.

Chairman.....

Date:.....