

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 8 September in St Peter's church at 7.30 pm

Present

Mr D Wright (chairman)  
Mr D Rose  
Mrs J Eldridge  
Mrs H Masters  
Mr J Turnbull

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were seven members of the public present.

**Apologies for absence**

1. Ashford Borough Councillor Mrs K Walder sent apologies.

**Declarations of Interest**

2. None.

**Minutes of the Meetings on 25 February, 20 June and 10 July**

3. The minutes of the meetings on 25 February, 20 June and 10 July having been circulated were approved as a correct record.

**Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meetings on 25 February, 20 June and 10 July**

4. None.

**Financial Statement of 8 September**

5. The financial statement to the 8 September having been circulated was approved.

Invoices for payment

6. The following invoices were approved for payment:

Parish Council Account

Friends of St Peter's	Donation in lieu audit fee	£50.00
Mr D Wright	Digging children's playground	£60.00
Mr D Wright	Repairs children's playground	£8.14
Came & Co	Parish Council insurance	£1,229.21
Mr D Wright	Printer ink cartridges	£22.98

Mr D Wright	Traffic cones	£29.99
Mr D Wright	Post mix repair child playground	£13.01
Mr J Leeves	Arrears of salary	£17.55
Mr S Pemberton	Mowing grass playground, grave	£80.00

Amend monthly standing order for clerk's salary to £130.52 from £127.01.

#### Management account

Gardenscape	Road plainings	£84.00
Gardenscape	Car park material	£146.40
Mr D Macrae	Diesel credit for mowing	£50.00
Mr D Wright	Car park materials	£56.19
Iden Signs	Signs for car park	£38.40
Mr D Wright	Flood gate protection	£11.23

### **Car Parking arrangements in the Selmes Field**

7. The chairman said that there had been significant use of the new car park in the Selmes field since it was opened at the end of June. Opening hours were from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm until the end of September when it would be closed for the Winter. About £630.00 had been collected in voluntary parking fees. The chairman said that thanks were due to Mr and Mrs Turnbull for their work in opening and closing the gate to the field.

8. A resident from Copt Hall commented that although the car park had alleviated the problem of parking in Lossenham Lane other problems had now arisen. There had been a large number of vehicles using the car park some of which had overstayed the opening hours and had had to individually be let out or had exited by driving along the river bank and going out via the entrance to the new village hall car park. Notices had requested no barbeques but some visitors had ignored this. There was also a large amount of litter in the car park area.

9. Car park use was also being increased by local businesses who were directing people to use it. This was the case with the Bodiam Boating Station who were selling food and then suggesting that customers consume it on the river bank parking in the car park. The resident wondered whether the Boating Station had any plans to increase their own parking provision. Even if this was the case she thought that the Parish Council needed to have plans for the operation of the car park next year.

10. The chairman responded by saying that the Parish Council was aware of these and other problems that had arisen as a result of opening the car park. These other problems included swimming in the river and the launching of kayaks and canoes. A problem had also arisen with screws and nail residues from previous bonfires on the surface of the field which could puncture the tyres of vehicles. Mr Macrae had installed bollards to prevent vehicles from exiting via the village hall car park. A meeting with the Selmes Trust was planned in October at which these problems would be discussed and a way forward developed for the New Year.

## **Scrape in part of Selmes Field**

11. Councillor Eldridge reported that Mr Macrae had scraped the surface of part of the Selmes field to a depth of 4 to 5 centimetres. This shallow area would then fill with water over the Winter but would drain a little in the Spring and Summer. A drain had been installed so that the water level did not become too high. Over time it was expected that the area would attract insects and birds. In October it was planned to plant Yellow Rattle and it was hoped to get young people involved in the project.

12. The project was supported by the Selmes Trust and the Parish Council both of which felt that it would be an enhancement to the village.

13. During the creation of the scrape a drain had been uncovered which was blocked with silt. This would be rodded to improve the drainage in Lossenham Lane. It was suggested that drainage within the village could usefully be explored with the object of improving it. The chairman said that he would look in his archives of documents relating to the village to see if there were any maps of drainage.

## **Update on New Village Hall**

14. The chairman reported that the Newenden Trust had published an update on the construction of the new village hall on the Parish website. The clerk then explained the latest formal status of the Newenden Trust and the 1948 Village Hall Charity Scheme which Mr Edmonds confirmed was the current position. He added that the Trust was now registered with HMRC and could reclaim VAT on charity supplies.

15. The chairman said that the Parish Council had asked to have a representative present at meetings of the Newenden Trust, but this had not been possible because the Trust had been unable to meet during the pandemic. The clerk had written to the Trust again this time to ask about their financial position.

## **Highways**

16. The chairman reported that he had been in contact with Highways and had discussed the damage to the parapet of the bridge on the Sussex side. The chairman said that he had previously established that Kent Highways were responsible for the complete bridge including the Sussex side. Highways were aware of the damage but would defer making repairs until they undertook a complete refurbishment of the whole bridge later in the year.

17. The chairman said that he had also spoken to Highways about accidents at the junction of the A28 and the A268 and discovered that Highways maintained an insurance policy on which they could claim if accidents damaged road signs or street furniture. It was therefore important that all accidents were reported to Highways and not just those involving personal injury which would be reported by the police.

18. Highways were also willing to talk about a possible 20 mph speed restriction in Lossenham Lane.

**Planning**

19. The chairman said that there were no planning matters to discuss. Councillor Eldridge asked if the clerk could enquire of Ashford Borough Council about their dark skies policy and if Newenden was included in the dark sky area which the Parish had requested a few years ago.

**Any other Business**

20. There was no further business.

**Date of Next Meeting**

21. The next meeting was scheduled for 10 November.

Chairman.....

Date.....