

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 10 December at 7.30 pm in the village hall

Present:

Councillors

Mr A Nilson (chairman)

Mrs R Edmonds

Mrs J Eldridge

Mr D Richardson

Mr B Livesey

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

Apologies for absence

1. None.

Declarations of interest

2. None.

Minutes of the Meeting on 22 October

3. Having been circulated the minutes of the meeting on 22 October were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on 22 October

4. Councillor Richardson reported that he had written to Cranbrook school requesting that Newenden be included within the catchment area for the school. The school had responded indicating that they were not prepared to change their catchment area to include Newenden. Councillors discussed the issue and felt that children in Newenden were being precluded from a grammar school education. Councillor Richardson said he would write again to the school pressing the case but if they were not prepared to change their view he would put the issue to the County Council.

Financial Statement

5. The financial statement was approved.

Update on Community Speedwatch

6. Councillor Livesey reported that although motorists were still being caught exceeding the speed limit at Beech Road numbers had fallen. A further speed watch session was being planned for the following week. A new site was also being sought outside of the Old Rectory to monitor traffic moving in the opposite direction.

Precept for 2014-15

7. The clerk had circulated a spreadsheet showing expenditure over the previous five years and the chairman had prepared a cash flow statement showing what happened to bank balances up to 2018-19 with various changes in expenditure. Councillors thought that the standstill in the precept could not be continued for the forthcoming year and that it would need to be increased. An increase was necessary because both the concurrent functions grant and the Council Tax Support grant would be lower next year and to continue with the standstill would eventually result in a decrease in reserves.

8. Councillors thought that an increase of 3% was required to support expenditure. However, the clerk was attending a training session about calculating the precept on 19 December when the Borough Council might provide some more information that could affect this figure. It was agreed in principle that an increase of 3% would be proposed, but this would be confirmed by e-mail in the light of any new information provided by the clerk after the 19 December training session.

Community Noticeboard

9. Councillors thought that it would be a good idea to have a community noticeboard located between the bus stop and the village sign on which local events could be advertised. The chairman had obtained a quotation for a noticeboard constructed in aluminium that had magnetic lettering that could be changed to make different notices. The cost was around a £1,000 to include fixing posts. The clerk was asked to obtain some further quotations.

Newenden Housing Needs Survey

10. The chairman reminded Councillors that at the recent meeting with Miss O'Sullivan it had been suggested that the Council met with the developer Miles Hall to discuss his proposals before undertaking the housing needs survey. Mr Hall had again been in contact to enquire about progress on the survey. The chairman reminded Councillors that they would be under no obligation to Mr Hall by meeting him nor would an obligation be created by asking him to pay for the survey. Councillors agreed that the chairman should invite Mr Hall to a meeting in early January.

Revised Code of Conduct

11. The chairman said that Ashford Borough Council had revised the Code of Conduct and were recommending that Parish Councils adopt the amended Code. The amendments were minor. Councillors agreed to adopt the amended Code of Conduct.

Any other Business

12. Councillor Eldridge asked if anyone knew the whereabouts of the Christmas lights that the Council had purchased a year or so ago. Other Councillors thought that they might be stored in the cricket pavilion or with the Treasurer of the village hall committee.

13. Councillor Eldridge said that she would be suggesting that the more publicity was given to the bonfire to encourage greater attendance. It was suggested that the bonfire might always be held on 5 November but some Councillors felt that this was not practical when 5 November fell on a weekday as most of the organisers had to work and would not be available early in the evening to make preparations for the event.

14. The clerk mentioned that the noticeboard providing information on footpaths in the parish was lying on its side. This board he believed belonged to the County Council who were responsible for footpaths and should maintain it. The clerk said he would contact the County Council and ask them to re-erect it.

Dates of Meetings in 2014

15. The following dates for meetings in 2014 were agreed:

- 11 February
- 6 May for AGM
- 24 June
- 2 September
- 4 November
- 16 December

The Annual Parish meeting will be on 18 March.

Date of next meeting

16. The next meeting will be on 11 February at 7.00 pm. It will be followed by a Township meeting at 8.00 pm.

Chairman.....

Date.....