

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 11 December at 7.30 pm in the village hall

Present:

Mrs R Edmonds (chair)
Mr D Richardson
Mrs E Hannavy-Cousen

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were two members of the public present.

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs C Baker.

Declarations of interest

2. None.

Minutes of the Meeting on 6 November

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

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on 6 November

4. None that would not be covered later in the meeting.

Financial statement

5. The financial statement having been circulated was agreed. The clerk commented that there was now little expenditure outstanding before the end of the financial year.

Invoices

6. The following invoices were approved for payment:

Mr D Richardson	Reimbursement Xmas lights	£98.27
Rolvenden Parish Council	Subscription to Rolvenden Rocket	£160.00
Mr A Goodhew	Christmas Tree	£20.00
Mrs E Hannavy-Cousen	Christmas Tree lights	£45.50

Selmes Management Account

Newenden Trust	Loan architectural fees new village hall	£3,450.00
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Mr Edmonds confirmed that the cheque for the second instalment of the architects (Hadai) fees for the new village hall should be made out to the Newenden Trust.

Precept for 2019-20

7. Ashford Borough Council had asked for Parish Councils to set their precept for the next year 2019-20. The Council Tax Support Grant for Newenden had been reduced by £10.00 from £110.00 to £100.00, but the Concurrent Functions Grant remained the same at £280.00. To assist with the setting process the clerk had already circulated a spreadsheet showing expenditure over a number of previous years. He then circulated another spreadsheet modelling the budget for the year 2019-20.

8. This showed that for the current year 2018-19 there would be a significant deficit between income and expenditure as a result of several items of expenditure the largest of which were subsidisation of the loss on the fireworks event, new battery for defibrillator, annual maintenance of speed watch equipment and subscription to the Rolvenden Rocket. There were also a number of smaller items of miscellaneous expenditure. Although some of this expenditure was unlikely to be repeated in 2019-20 if some of the larger expenditure s were incurred again there would be a continuing deficit.

9. Councillors said that participation in the speed watch scheme had been discontinued and there would be no more equipment maintenance in future. Councillor Richardson said he would contact Mr Livesey and ensure that he had notified Cranbrook and Sissinghurst Parish Council that Newenden were no longer participating. Councillors recognised that the Parish Council could not subsidise the fireworks event in future years and different arrangements would have to be made to finance the event as in most years it made a loss. Some of the occasional expenditure would also not be incurred in 2019-20. Once the existing village hall was sold there would be a reduction in the annual insurance premium for the new village hall which would reduce a significant item of expenditure in future years.

10. The clerk had modelled the budget for 2019-20 with an illustrative rise in the precept of 3.5% which would more-or-less eliminate the deficit provided that there was no exceptional expenditure. Councillors did not wish to see any increase in the precept as the general cost of living was increasing and they did not wish to add to it. The reduction in Council Tax Support Grant was only £10.00 and this was so small that there was no need to compensate. Councillors voted unanimously to keep the precept at the same amount as the current year of £4,975 for 2019-20.

Update on new village hall and Planning Application

11. Councillor Richardson said that there had been no further news about progress with conveyancing for the sale of the existing village hall. The architect had submitted an application for planning permission to Ashford Borough Council on which the Parish Council had been asked to comment. Following comments from the public rights of way Department of the County Council an amendment to the plans had had to be submitted so that visibility could be improved from the vehicular entrance to the car park and a footpath constructed along Rye road. The Parish Council had also been asked to comment on this amendment. Councillors discussed the plans and decided to support both applications.

Update on Plans and Proposals for the Selmes Field

12. The chair said that Ashford Borough Council had indicated that planning consent would be needed to move the access gate to the Selmes field to the corner of the cricket pitch. She was still waiting for a reply about the proposals from the Reverend Chris Hogkins and for details of the cricket club's plans for their nets before moving forward with the proposals.

RoSPA Play Safety Inspection Report

13. The RoSPA Play Safety Report had highlighted a number of safety issues in the children's playground the most serious of which related to the swings. Councillor Richardson agreed that the most serious issues concerned the children's swings which required some bolts to be replaced. The repairs would not be very costly but needed to be done because there was a real safety issue. The climbing frame also required some repairs as did the entrance gate. A no dogs sign was also needed at the entrance. It was suggested that the work should be undertaken at the next day of action which would be in the Spring.

Highways

Highways On Line Fault Reporting Tool

14. The chair reported that Highways had sent an email about an update of their Highways Portal which would provide for On Line fault reporting.

Salt Bag

15. The chair said that although the Council had not requested a bag of salt Highways had delivered one to the corner of Lossenham Lane. There was now an excess of salt and it was proposed that residents should be asked to help themselves to some of it. One of the bags should also be moved to the top of the hill on Lossenham Lane. A notice would be put up on the website.

16. The chair said that she had received an email from Janet Mckay about the salt bag and she would now reply.

Drain cleaning

17. The chair reported that Highways had jetted the drains in Lossenham Lane. They had used high pressure jetting to clear tree roots.

Planning

18. The chair reported on the village envelope exercise. Ashford Borough Council had marked the limits of the main built up area of the village which ran approximately along one side of Lossenham Lane, but did not include the gardens of the houses. Infilling would only be permitted within the area of the village envelope and no development would be allowed outside of it. However, this would not preclude any developments under the auspices of a Community Land Trust. The village would need to be informed about this restriction. Any comments would need to be made to Ashford Borough Council by 7 January.

Any other Business

19. The chair said that the deadline for the KALC community awards was 31 January.

Date of next Meeting

20. The next meeting would be on 26 February 2019.

Chair.....

Date.....