

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 12 November in St Peter's church at 7.30 pm

Present:

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

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

Six members of the public were present.

Apologies for Absence

1. None.

Declarations of interest

2. None.

Minutes of the Meeting on 17 September

3. The minutes of the 17 September having been circulated were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on 17 September

4. Councillor Eldridge commented that the Minutes of 17 September needed to refer to a climate emergency. This was agreed. There were no other matters arising that would not be covered later in the meeting.

Financial statement to 12 November

5. The financial statement to 12 November having been circulated was agreed. The clerk commented that Ashford Borough Council had now paid the second instalment of the precept and the concurrent functions grant.

Invoices for payment

6. The following invoices were approved for payment:

Parish Council Account

Mr S Siggery	Maintenance children's playground		
£334.00	Mr J A Leeves	Reimbursement for	
notice board		£622.22*	Kent
Highways	Road improvements signage	£715.00*	
Mr D Wright	Reimbursement repairs children's playground		

£4.89*	Mr D Wright		Reimbursement
advertising hoarding		£45.54*	KALC Training courses
		£180.00*	Mr D Wright
	Reimbursement for spade		£27.49*

Management Account

Mr D Wright	Purchase metal gate
£129.95	

*Already paid

Payment for use of St Peter’s church for Parish Council Meetings

7. Mrs Edmonds said that the PCC would write to the Parish Council after their next meeting.

Precept for 2020-21

8. The clerk said that Ashford Borough Council would ask for the proposed precept for 2020-21 in early December. The Parish Council would then set the precept at their meeting on 10 December. In the meantime the clerk would prepare a forecast of expenditure for the current year and an estimate of what might be spent next year.

Parish Council Vacancies

9. The chairman reported that Councillor Baker had resigned and that in consequence the Council now had two vacancies. These vacancies would have to be advertised and provided that ten electors did not ask for an election could be filled by co-option. Ashford Borough Council had sent an official advertisement which would be displayed on the notice board for ten days from tomorrow and electors would then have 14 days to ask for an election. An election would cost the Parish about £3,000 and was therefore to be avoided. If there were to be an election then the cost would be reflected in next year’s precept.

Update on new village hall

10. Mr Seal reported that trees had been cleared behind the cricket pavilion in preparation for building work to begin. This had been a big job which Bourne’s had done at a very small cost of £100. There was now a very large amount of branches to be cleared which would not be done by burning and instead a chipper would be hired. Mr Pemberton commented that Bourne’s had been extremely helpful and it was agreed that the Parish Council would write to Mr Bourne thanking him for cutting down the trees.

11. Mrs Edmonds wondered whether the branches could be cut up for firewood and offered to residents. Mr Seal said it would take about four or five days to cut up all the wood and it would not be suitable for burning immediately until it had dried out. There was no reason however why it should not be offered to residents although there would have to be a small charge.

11. Ashford Borough Council had now given Building Regulation approval and the foundation and ground works could now begin. This would be quickly followed by the steel work which would be erected in a matter of days. A contract for the foundation slab would be awarded in the next few days.

Children's Playground Repairs

12. The chairman reported that he had made a grant application to Ashford Borough Council which if approved, would cover half of the cost of refurbishing equipment in the children's playground.

Planning

13. The chairman said that several residents had concerns that the house being built on the site of the old village hall was not being constructed in compliance with the approved plans. In particular there were concerns over the height and angle of the roof and the practicality and adequacy of space for parking in front of the house. Both of these issues were of concern to Mr Pemberton who lived nearby to the development. In consequence the chairman had been in contact with the Planning Enforcement Department at Ashford Borough Council who had asked the developer to suspend work on the site.

14. It was the chairman's understanding that in response to his concerns Enforcement would ask the developer to submit a new set of plans specifying any modifications that were being proposed. The Parish Council would then get the opportunity to comment on the modifications in the new planning application.

Highways

15. The chairman reported that grants to pay for the road safety improvements had been received and Kent Highways would now install them.

Any other Business

Re-wilding the Selmes Field

16. Councillor Eldridge said that a useful meeting had been held with Nikki Gammans about re-wilding the Selmes field. In order to suppress grasses to give Yellow Rattle the opportunity to germinate and grow, tarpaulins had been placed on the field. Once the grass had been suppressed then the Yellow Rattle seed would be scattered together with seeds of other wild varieties. This would provide a habitat for insects including bumble bees.

17. The proposal for a wetland area by creating a scrape had also been revived and this possibility was being explored.

Date of next meeting tarpaulins

18. The next meeting would be on 10 December when the precept for 2020-21 would be set.

Chairman.....

Date.....