

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 14 May in St Peter's Church Newenden at 7.30 pm

Present:

Councillors

Mrs R Edmonds (Chair previous Council)
Mr D Wright (chairman)
Mrs C Baker
Mrs J Eldridge
Mrs H Masters

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were seven members of the public present.

Apologies for Absence

1. None. PCSO Mrs K Richards apologised for absence. The clerk commented that the Council had one vacancy. He did not imagine that the Borough Council would be unduly concerned about this as there was still a fully functioning Council. However, steps should be taken to fill the vacancy by co-option.

Declarations of interest

2. None at the meeting. Councillors completed notifications of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests. Councillors each completed their declarations of acceptance of office. These would need to be sent to Ashford Borough Council.

Election of Chairman

3. Councillor Eldridge proposed that Councillor Wright should be chairman. This was seconded by Councillor Baker. There being no other nominations Councillor Wright was elected as chairman.

Election of Vice chairman

4. Councillor Eldridge proposed that Councillor Baker be vice chairman. Councillor Masters seconded. There being no other nominations Councillor Baker was elected as vice chair.

Allocation of Business Responsibilities between Councillors

5. It was agreed that Councillors would divide business responsibilities as follows:

Planning: Councillor Eldridge
Highways: Councillor Masters
Police liaison: Councillor Baker

The clerk reminded Councillors that there were also a number of other meetings in which the Council participated. These were KALC meetings, the Tenterden Forum and the monthly surgery in the White Hart. The chairman said that he would attend KALC meetings and Councillor Eldridge said that she had in the past attended Tenterden Forum meetings held by Kent County Councillor Mike Hill.

Minutes of the Meeting on 26 February

6. The minutes of the meeting on 26 February having been circulated were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on 26 February

7. None that would not arise later in the course of the meeting.

Financial Statement to 14 May

8. The clerk said that he had just been advised by Ashford Borough Council that they had paid the first instalment of the precept amounting to about £2,670 which needed to be added to the balance in the current account. There was also a return of insurance premium as a result of the cancellation of the insurance on the old village hall. There were no payments due.

9. The Newenden Trust had just repaid the loan from the Management account and this had increased the sum in the management account to around £10,000.

Invoices paid since meeting on 26 February:

KALC	Annual subscription
£147.17	
St Mary Virgin Rolvenden	Printing for Annual Parish Meet
£24.30	
Mr J A Leeves	Clerk's allowance and postage
£31.50	
Mrs E Hannavy-Cousen	Gift for Retiring Councillor
£79.70	

Annual Return: Accounting and Governance Statements

10. The clerk said that he had hoped that the Annual Return would have been ready to sign off at the meeting. However, the internal auditor had not yet completed his work and would not do so for about a further week. Once his work was complete he would send by e mail the Governance and Accounting Statements for approval. A special meeting would then be necessary to approve and sign these documents which would need to be held before the end of May. This meeting would be very short.

Bank Mandates

11. The clerk said that retiring Councillors would need to be removed from the banking mandate and the new ones added. He had obtained an electronic form from the bank and would need new Councillors to complete and sign it. It could

then be sent to the bank. Councillors would then need to go to the branch in Tenterden with their identification. The exception was Councillor Baker who would need to take her marriage certificate and proof of identity to the bank to get the existing mandate changed into her married name.

12. In addition the bank required the Parish Council to pass a resolution at the meeting agreeing to the amended signatories. This stated as follows:

It was resolved that:

The Authorised Signatories in the current mandate, for the accounts detailed in section 1.3, be changed in accordance with section Authorised Signatories.

And the current mandate will continue as amended.

Councillors so resolved.

The bank also required the Council to agree that one of the new signatories to the mandate was authorised to become a signatory. Councillors so agreed and that the account with the bank should continue.

Update on new village hall

13. Mr Edmonds reported that the village hall had been sold and contractors had already demolished it. Planning permission for the new hall had been approved. The Newenden Trust would be meeting tomorrow to take the project forward. Various fundraising activities were planned to raise more funds to build the new hall. The clerk said that he had emailed the chairman of the Newenden Trust to ask for the Parish Council to be kept informed of progress on the project.

Gardenscape Ltd: Continuing Loading Noise

14. Mrs Edmonds reported that noise from Bourne's yard caused by the loading of aggregates and horticultural materials was continuing. The length of time during the day that the loading noise continued was an important part of the problem. Measures to mitigate the noise which Bourne's had implemented did not appear to have been very effective. The Council had again written to Rother District Council about the problem. A resident said that noise could be reduced by baffling and the chairman said that he would contact Bourne's and discuss with them the possibility of planting some more trees which might absorb more of the sound.

Parish Council Noticeboard

15. The clerk reported that he had looked on the internet for noticeboards. He was in agreement with Dave Wheeler that an aluminium cased noticeboard was preferable to wood as it would not leak or require maintenance. These could be purchased in various sizes from those holding about six A4 notices up to a maximum of 24 notices. The front of the noticeboard could be opened upwards and was held open whilst notices were put up by gas struts. Councillors thought that a board with a capacity of about 12 A4 notices would suffice. The noticeboard could be located on the Lossenham Lane boundary of the cricket

pitch or on the side of the bus shelter that might be constructed from planks sawn up and stored from the oak tree that had been felled and located along Rye road as part of the works for the new village hall. The clerk said he would obtain estimates of the cost of a medium sized noticeboard for the next meeting.

Update on Playground repairs

16. Mrs Edmonds reported that she had ordered a new notice for the entrance of the playground and the chairman said that he had completed minor repairs to some of the equipment. Mrs Edmonds said that she had been in touch with Ashford Borough Council about grants for children's playgrounds. These were available and if the Council wished to refurbish or replace aged equipment then funding from the Borough Council was possible.

17. The clerk said that he had received an e mail from Playsafety Ltd saying that they would be undertaking the annual inspection of the playground equipment in July. They had not stated a specific date. Mrs Edmonds said she would circulate the last Playsafety inspection report to the new members of the Council. The chairman said he would like to meet the Playsafety inspector. The clerk would call Playsafety Ltd and see if this was possible and provide them with his contact details.

Highways

18. A resident who lived close to the junction of Rye road and the A28 Tenterden road reported that there had been another accident at the junction in the early hours of the morning. The police and ambulance had both attended. It appeared to be extremely difficult to get the authorities to take remedial action to reduce the number of accidents. The cost of installing a roundabout was considered prohibitive and Kent Highways were not prepared to install traffic lights. There was a lack of liaison between the police and Kent Highways with no information about accidents being shared between the two. One possibility to reduce accidents was to install more signage before the junction. It was concluded that the Parish Council could only continue to try to improve the situation.

Speedwatch

19. The village speedwatch scheme had been closed but motorists continued to speed through the village. There appeared to be a lack of support from the police who did not come out and undertake speed monitoring sessions. The chairman said that he would get in touch with the former chairman of the speedwatch group Mr Livesey and see if there was any possibility of reconstituting the group.

Planning

Settlement Confines

Mrs Edwards said that Ashford Borough Council had published a map indicating the confines for development. These were essentially along Lossenham Lane but did not include the gardens of the properties on the lane. In effect development was only permitted on an infilling basis within the confines. Development was therefore not permitted elsewhere.

Any Other Business

Newsletter

The chairman said that he had thought of publishing a newsletter about village matters which would be distributed in hard copy form although electronic form would be easier provided that residents agreed to their e mail addresses being used. It was thought that this could have a quarterly frequency.

Letter from the Rother Fishery Association

The clerk reported that he had received a letter from the Secretary of the Rother Fishery Association, Mr Steve Crowley, raising various issues. First, a fence had been erected on the river bank opposite Bourne's yard which could obstruct access to the river. Councillors said that there was a gate in the fence and so access was not a problem. Second the number of boats moored on the river had increased. Mr Seal, the river warden said that this was not correct. A total of 17 boats were registered to be moored, but in practice fewer would take up moorings. Mr Seal offered to meet Mr Crowley to walk the riverbank and discuss any issues the Association had. The Rother Fishery Association also had a sign and Councillors felt that this might be re-located to make it more visible. Third, Mr Crowley wondered what the position was on the proposal to make a wetland area on part of the Selmes field. Mrs Edmonds said that there had never been a convenient time for Bourne's to undertake the necessary excavation but it was still hoped to proceed with the proposal. The clerk said that he would reply to Mr Crowley.

Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan

The clerk said that he had received a letter from Ashford Borough Council about a consultation on the Rolvenden Neighbourhood Plan. The plan could be viewed on the Ashford website or at the church in Rolvenden. When this had arisen before the Council had not commented. The chairman said that he would take a look at the plan on line.

Change of Borough Councillor

A new Ashford Borough Councillor, Kate Waldron, had been elected. It was thought that she should be invited to attend a future Parish Council meeting.

Date of next meeting

The clerk had already indicated that there would need to be a short meeting before the end of May to agree the Annual Return. The next meeting after that would be on 9 July.

Chairman.....
Date.....