

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 17 September in St Peter's church at 7.30pm

Present:

Mr D Wright (chairman)

Mrs J Eldridge

Mrs H Masters

Mrs C Baker

Ashford Borough Councillor

Mrs K Walder

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were six members of the public present.

### **Climate Change Request for an Emergency Motion**

Mrs Hannavy-Cousen gave a short presentation on climate change and the need for action to take measures to mitigate it and prevent further serious damage to the climate. She asked the Council to pass an emergency motion calling on Government and Local Authorities to take urgent action to deal with the problem. She distributed copies of a suggested motion. The chairman said that the Council would consider the motion and give a response having done so.

### **Apologies for absence**

1. None.

### **Declarations of interest**

2. None.

### **Minutes of the Meeting of 9 July**

3. The minutes of the meeting on the 9 July having been circulated were agreed as a correct record.

### **Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting on 9 July**

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

### **Financial statement of 17 September**

5. The clerk commented that all expenditure had been anticipated. The insurance renewal had been about £1,500 less than the previous year as the village hall no longer needed to be insured. The amount in the management account continued to increase and was just over £11,600. The chairman said that

there would soon be a meeting with the Selmes Trust to discuss what to do about this build up of funds. The financial statement was agreed.

#### Invoices for payment

6. The following invoices were approved for payment:

Came & Co	Insurance renewal	£1,133.86
Mr S Siggery	Mowing children's playground	
£174.00		

Playsafety Ltd	Safety inspection children's playground	
£145.20	Mr J A Leeves	Clerk's
allowance & postage	£33.26	
Judy Vinson	Printing Newsletter	
£5.00		

#### Payment for Holding Meetings in St Peter's church

7. The clerk said that the Council needed to compensate the Parochial Church Council for heating and lighting consumed when meetings were held in St Peter's church. The chairman said that the Council was willing to pay for heating and lighting but he did not know what amount would be appropriate. Mrs Bourne the PCC Treasurer said that they would discuss this at their next meeting and let the chairman know how much the Council should pay. The amount would not be very much.

#### **Noticeboard**

8. The clerk said that he had obtained a quotation from the chosen supplier as the price had previously been based on those on the supplier's website. The website cost had been about £430 but the all in cost in the quotation was £622.00. Just over a £100.00 was attributable to VAT (which the council could recover) and there was a £15.00 delivery charge. Councillors agreed to accept the quotation and the clerk said he would order it. A cheque for £622.22 was signed. Delivery would be to the chairman's address.

9. It was agreed that the noticeboard would be located close to the footpath map so that it could be viewed from Lossenham Lane. Planning consent would not be required.

#### **Update on New Village hall**

10. Mr Seal reported on progress with the new village hall. A structural engineer had been engaged to advise on the slab on which the village hall would be built. Once this had been received plans would be re-submitted to Ashford Borough Council and quotations obtained from contractors for the slabs construction. It was anticipated that work would start late October beginning November. Quotes had already been obtained for the steelwork. Mr Seal said that he expected that

the village hall committee would approach the Parish Council for funding for the project.

11. Answering a question about construction of a footpath inside the road boundary of the cricket pitch parallel to the A28, Mr Seal said that it was hoped that the contractors doing the groundworks could be persuaded to construct this at no charge. Mr Seal said that it was planned to have solar panels on the roof of the new village hall facing South and therefore not visible from the village. Councillor Walder advised that funds were available for small village projects such as this from a scheme established by BA and she agreed to provide contact details to Mr Seal.

### **Playground safety inspection**

12. The chairman reported that the safety inspection of the children's playground had now been done, the report received and he had met with the inspector during the inspection. The overall condition of the playground was rather better than he had anticipated and the inspector thought that the equipment still had a reasonable lifespan remaining. There was some maintenance required: replace some chains and seats to the swings, replace rubber matting and two posts. The anticipated costs would be at most around £500 to £600. When the time came to replace equipment completely at considerable cost the Council would ask the village for their view as to whether or not there was a need for a children's playground and if they wished for the equipment to be replaced.

### **Poster Board**

13. Councillor Eldridge said that a large poster board had been erected on the A28 cricket pitch boundary on which had been displayed a number of advertising posters. The board was unsightly and had been removed by the County Council because it infringed their policy of not having commercial signs close to the roadside and they had received complaints about the poster board. The chairman said that there would be space on either side of the bus shelter for advertising posters.

### **Parish Council website**

14. The chairman said that the Parish Council website needed to be revised to make it friendlier and provide more information. He had made some enquiries and a refurbishment would cost around £60.00 per year. The clerk explained that Newenden.org was maintained by the previous chairman of the Parish Council Mr Ake Nilson. It contained the names of Councillors (but not their telephone numbers), dates of Council meetings, previous minutes of meetings and when required details of the Annual Return and elections. As far as he was aware Mr Nilson had not indicated that he was unwilling to continue maintaining the website. Councillor Baker said that she would speak to Mr Nilson and see what might be needed to refurbish the website.

### **Highways**

15. The chairman reported that he had discussed with Kent Highways a number of road safety measures. These were: vertical chevrons on the left at the top of the hill approaching the village from the Sandhurst direction, replacement road narrows sign, dragons teeth on the left carriageway approaching from Sandhurst

and a new Newenden entrance sign. Highway works were very costly and the total cost was £1,430.00. However, County Councillor Mr Mike Hill had agreed to meet half the cost. Councillor Walder said that she would meet the remaining half cost from her allowance.

16. The chairman said that he had considered whether to install gateways on the roadside marking the entrance to the village. These were however less popular and were falling out of use. The cost would be in the region of £500.00. He had therefore decided that gateways would add nothing to the village and would not be erected.

## **Planning**

### Gardenscape Ltd: Application to Ashford Borough Council: 19/01163/AS

17. The chairman said that the Council thought that this was a well thought out application and in principle supported it with only one point of detailed concern. The security fencing that was planned abutted the Grade II listed Newenden bridge across the river Rother and thus detracted from the setting of the bridge. This could be mitigated by setting the security fencing back from the bridge with the intervening space planted in keeping with the remainder of the landscaping. The chairman read out this proposed response to Ashford Borough Council.

### Lossenham Farmhouse: Tree Preservation Order: No: 12/2019

18. Councillor Walder explained that the Tree Officer at Ashford Borough Council having visited the site at Lossenham Farmhouse had made the order because the site was one of exceptional beauty and the trees needed to be protected. The owner had already started to fell some of the trees and the order would prevent him from doing further felling. It was possible to do a great deal of damage to trees in a short period with a chain saw which could not be subsequently rectified. The site needed arboricultural management and was a good advertisement for the village. The owner had appealed against the order.

## **Any other business**

### Newenden Facebook Page

19. Mr Turnbull complained about the unpleasant messages on the Newenden facebook page and asked whether anybody moderated the page and was able to take such messages down. The facebook page was used for advertisements but messages were sometimes unpleasant. Councillor Baker said that she thought Mr Harris was nominally in charge of the facebook page and she would speak to him to see if there was anything that could be done to deal with unpleasant messages.

### Letters from the Parish Council

20. Mrs Bourne asked the clerk when the Council sent letters. The clerk explained that apart from routine administrative matters he would only send letters when asked to do so at Council meetings. Such letters were headed Newenden Parish Council, sent from his home address and signed Clerk to Newenden Parish Council. Mrs Bourne was then more specific and asked about the letter sent to

Rother District Council by the chairman about the planning application from from Gardenscape. This letter had raised concerns by residents about noise from the loading of aggregates.

21. The clerk explained that the Council met infrequently and when urgent matters arose in between meetings that caused disquiet to residents then there were two possible courses of action. First call an emergency meeting of the Council to decide what to do which would take about a week or take action such as by writing a letter.

22. The chairman explained that there was ongoing concern by residents about noise from the loading of aggregates. This noise had not been reduced by measures taken by Gardenscape Ltd and the Parish Council needed to make representations to Rother District Council about it. Mrs Bourne thought that the Council should have given Gardenscape Ltd the opportunity to comment on the letter before it was sent.

**Date of next meeting**

23. The next meeting would be on 12 November.

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