

Minutes of the Newenden Annual Parish Meeting on 24 March 2015 at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall

Present:

Parish Council

Mr A Nilson (chairman)

Mr B Livesey

Mrs R Edmonds

Mrs J Eldridge

Mr D Richardson

Kent County Councillor

Mr M Hill

PCSO

Ms J Ghost

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were 21 members of the public present.

Apologies for Absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from: Peter Bourne, Josephine Butler, Patiricia Cole, Sarah Cole, Pauline Morton-Jack, Mark Cathcart and Jane Livesey.

Minutes of the Meeting on 18 March 2014

2. The minutes of the Annual Parish meeting on 18 March 2014 were agreed as a correct record.

The Bodiam Boating Station

3. The chairman invited Vanessa Ferrett of the Bodiam Boating Station to tell residents about some developments that they were planning to enhance the business. The Bodiam Boating Station would be opening a cafe next week with opening hours between 8.30 am and 6-7 pm. It would have 40-50 covers and would be open all year round. It was intended to eventually open a farm shop.

4. The existing campsite had been extended. Trees had been planted around the campsite area to shield it from view. There would be no permanent lodges and no caravans beyond a maximum of six.

Kent County Council

5. The chairman invited Kent County Councillor Mike Hill to report on the work of the County Council. Councillor Hill said that the County Council had had to save £90 million in the year. It had been very hard to maintain services but none had been closed. Services had in some cases been

undertaken by volunteers and charities. In particular the community warden scheme was being run by volunteers as a pilot.

6. Flooding had not been a problem this year. On potholes it was hoped to have patched the worst of these by May. Newenden bridge had had white lines painted on the side of the road across it but it had been considered impractical to install a system of pedestrian controlled lights. A pedestrian bridge would be far too costly to construct.

Police matters

7. PCSO Julia Ghost reported that there had been ten crimes in Newenden in 2014. These were: 1 burglary, 1 shed broken into, 6 theft offences and 2 violence against the person. There had been burglaries in the neighbouring villages of Rolvenden and Wittersham. One person had been caught and charged as a result of CCTV. There had also been two instances of criminal damage in Rolvenden. PCSO Ghost advised residents to keep sheds locked up and install outdoor sensor lights.

Newenden Parish Council

8. The chairman reported on the work of the Parish Council. A local needs housing survey had been completed which showed that there was a requirement for three houses. This was a very small number and it was unlikely that any housing association would be interested in building such a small number of dwellings. The Council had heard nothing further from the developer would had purchased Battery bank although a surveyor had been seen on the land recently and the Council did not know if there had been any developments.

9. The Council had held a meeting with Kent County Council highways steward recently at which the problem of potholes at the A28 junction had been raised. The Council had been advised that highways would only repair potholes if they were more than 50 mm in depth.

10. Highways had said that they had no finances for rodding drains. Consequently the Parish would have to undertake the work itself. In general it was apparent that Ashford Borough Council and the County Council had no funds for work in Parishes and anything that needed to be done would be undertaken on a voluntary basis.

11. Regular speed watch sessions had been held throughout the year and there had recently been a meeting with police in Rolvenden. Average speeds measured were reducing.

12. A public access defibrillator had been purchased and installed in the White Hart inn. The Council had written to Cranbrook school about including the village within the school's catchment area. The school had initially rejected the request and the Council would be writing again. A flood warden had been appointed who would be responsible for liaison with Kent Resilience on flooding problems. The village was now included in the Marsh Millions scheme making local villages eligible for grants and loans. Finally there had been two days of action during the year on which work had been done to tidy up the village.

13. There were currently five Parish Councillors, but Mrs Eldridge and Mr Livesey would be retiring in April. The Council was therefore looking for two people to stand at the election in May to replace them. Councillor Livesey would continue with his voluntary work for the village as flood warden, litter picker and organiser of the community speed watch.

Selmes Trust Management

14. The chairman said that during the year the Environment Agency had undertaken works to the river bank and these were now complete. The sheep would be back to graze the Selmes field shortly. It was proposed to make an intentional wetland area in the field to encourage wildlife and different plant species.

Parish Council Accounts

15. Copies of the Parish Council accounts for 2014-15 were circulated. The clerk explained the expenditure during the year which had been less than the previous year. There were no comments.

Village Hall Accounts

16. There was a balance of £1,090.25 in the village hall accounts. It was agreed that the accounts would be put on the Newenden website.

Newenden Trust Formation

17. The chairman said that a new charity called the Newenden Trust had been set up with three trustees. The trust would be looking for applications for one or two more trustees. It was intended that the trust would eventually own the land on which the village hall stands when it was registered with the Land Registry.

Samuel Bishop Foundation

18. Councillor Eldridge reported that 14 children in the village had qualified for grants: 10 seniors at £50.00 each and 4 juniors at £30.00 each. The grants had been spent on such things as additional French lessons and art and design equipment. The Foundation needed another trustee. There was little work involved and Councillor Eldridge appealed for a volunteer.

Friends of St Peters

19. Mr Seale said that the Friends of St Peters had held activities like the duck race and quizzes to raise funds for the fabric of the church. Funds had been spent on insurance for the building (£1,500), the replacement of floodlights and the installation of a new handrail at the entrance to the church.

Village sports clubs

20. The secretary to the cricket club said that the club was in good health with a vibrant youth section many of whom came from outside of the village. During the year the club would be repairing the boundary fences to the cricket field.

Chairman.....

Date.....