

Minutes of the Meeting of Newenden Parish Council held on 30 November
in the village hall at 7.30 pm

Present

Councillors

Mr M Berry (chairman)
Mr A Nilson
Mrs R Edmonds

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

Members of the Public

None.

Apologies for Absence

09.105 Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs J Eldridge and Mr C Turnbull

Declarations of interest

09.106 None.

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September

09.107 It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting on 29 September having been circulated be signed as a correct record. Proposed Councillor Edmonds seconded Councillor Nilson.

Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 29 September

Selmes Trust Moorings

09.108 The chairman reported that he had liaised closely with Mrs Jo Butler the representative of the Selmes Trust dealing with the moorings. It had been established that nobody had claimed ownership of the boats on the riverbank. Accordingly Mrs Butler had put an advertisement in the Wealden Advertiser and on the gates to the riverbank on the Selmes field asking for them to be removed by 30 November.

09.109 Mrs Butler had indicated that the Selmes Trust would like to take up the Parish Council's offer to meet the cost of removing the boats if their owners did not come forward and do so by 30 November. The chairman felt that the cost would not be that great. It was agreed that the clerk should now write to the vicar copied to Mrs Butler formally offering to make a discretionary grant to meet the cost.

Battery Bank: vegetation overhanging the highway

09.110 The clerk reported that he had heard nothing further from Kent Highway Services who had requested a search of Land Registry records to see whether the County or Borough Councils owned a wide strip of land along the highway as claimed by Mr Kenny. However, he had noticed that the vegetation had been cut away from the speed restriction signs making them visible to motorists. The clerk said he would ask Highways whether they yet had the result of the Land Registry search.

Accident Statistics for the Junction of A28 and A268

09.111 The clerk circulated copies of the letter he had received from the County Council on behalf of Kent Highway Services detailing accident statistics involving personal injury for the A28 and A268 junction over the three years to 30 June. Councillors discussed the statistics which showed only five accidents over the period. This was far fewer than expected and Councillors thought that this was because the records only related to accidents involving personal injury. It was felt that information should be sought about all accidents.

09.112 The clerk was asked to write again to Kent Highway Services asking if this was all the accident information in their records or whether they also had details of accidents not involving personal injury. If they did have records relating to accidents in which nobody was injured or killed then they should provide details. It was also suggested that the clerk wrote to the traffic police to ask if they had any more comprehensive records of accidents.

Reports

Planning

09/01260/AS

2, The Holt, Rye Road, Newenden, Cranbrook, Kent TN18 5PX

First Floor side extension and single storey rear extension

09.113 The clerk reported that he had advised Ashford Borough Council of the objection to the application for 2, The Holt, but he needed to return the blue form. Councillor Nilson said he would send it to the clerk.

09.114 The chairman had reported that several residents were concerned at construction work taking place at Lycin in Lossenham Lane. Refuse skips had been obstructing the lane and the nature of the work seemed quite extensive. It appeared to involve the conversion of a double garage into living accommodation and the building of a conservatory. The house was not in the village conservation area nor was it listed. However, residents were aware that other houses in the village had needed planning consent to build a conservatory.

09.115 The clerk said that construction might be taking place under the new permitted development rights, but that these did not apply within Areas of Outstanding Natural

Beauty, conservation areas or to listed buildings. It was agreed that as the Parish Council had received complaints from residents the clerk should report the matter to Ashford Borough Council Planning Department.

Highways

09.116 Nothing further to report.

Clerk's Report

Invitation from Lord Lieutenant of Kent to attend thanksgiving service on April 22 2010.

09.117 Councillor Edmonds took the invitation and said she would consider attending.

Kent Fire and Rescue Service: Risk Management Plan 2011

09.118 Kent Fire and Rescue Service were consulting about their risk management plan for future years. The clerk explained that the Fire and Rescue Service did not have limitless resources and attempted to tailor them to meet likely risks. Thus they only maintained a small amount of specialist equipment which they deployed strategically where it was considered there were risks. They also tried to identify risks and these were set out in the management plan. Councillors felt that there were no points they could make in relation to the consultation.

Adopt a Red Telephone Kiosk

09.119 The clerk reported that the adopt a telephone kiosk scheme had been overtaken by events. English Heritage had advised that the kiosk was in the process of being listed. It was within the Newenden village conservation area and in a prominent position at the foot of the church steps. Whilst listing might ensure the box was well maintained BT were not required to maintain it as a fully functioning telephone kiosk and could remove the telephony equipment. It was as well that the box was being listed because information about the costs of adopting it indicated that as well as maintenance and insurance EdF would charge several hundred pounds to disconnect the electricity supply.

Tenterden and Rural District Development Plan

09.120 The clerk reported that he had received that morning a DVD setting out changes to the rural development plan for Tenterden and the surrounding area. He had not had the opportunity to look at the DVD. Ashford Borough Council wished to consult on the changes and wanted a response by 5 January 2010. It was agreed to give the DVD and covering letter to Councillor Eldridge.

Finance

Financial Statement for 30 November

09.121 It was resolved that the financial statement to 30 November be approved and a copy is attached to these minutes.

Accounts for payment.

09.122 The following accounts were approved for payment:

Mr S Siggery	Mowing children's playground	£220.00
Selmes Trust	Rent for children's playground 2009-10.	£50.00

Precept for 2010-11

09.123 Councillors considered the spreadsheet setting out the clerk's estimates for expenditure for 2010-11. This showed that the Council would again be overspent by a small margin (£400) if the current precept of £5,000 was maintained and the concurrent functions grant increased slightly to £300. The clerk calculated that the overspend this year would be about £200 excluding any financial assistance offered to the Selmes Trust for removal of abandoned boats on the river bank. The chairman also mentioned that many of the Christmas lights would also need to be replaced when they were put up shortly. One of the problems was that the insurance premium for the Council and the village hall for which the Council gave the committee a discretionary grant had now increased to over £1,000 and almost £2,000 respectively. Applying even a small percentage increase, say 1%, to these figures resulted in a large sum and there was nothing that could be done about the position. Councillor Nilson wondered whether the village hall committee could meet some of the insurance cost themselves but it was felt that although their income was currently reasonable letting revenue from Country Kids was unstable and could not be relied on.

09.124 The Council currently had £5,220 in reserves and this would fall to around £4,800 by 31 March 2010. If another £400 of reserves were spent next year the total amount would be reduced to just over £4,000 by 31 March 2011. Councillors felt that this amount was still an adequate reserve. Councillors therefore agreed that the precept should be kept the same at £5,000 for 2010-11.

Any other business

Dates of meetings in 2010-11

09.125 As Councillors Mrs Jill Eldridge and Mr Chris Turnbull were unable to be present it was suggested that the clerk propose dates for the meetings in 2010-11 and circulate them by e-mail. However, subject to it being convenient, the first meeting would be held on 23 February 2010.

Eligibility of the chairman to continue as a Parish Councillor

09.126 The chairman reported that he had now sold his business and moved to Rye some seven miles away. The clerk said he had consulted KALC about the position. It was not straightforward and depended upon the eligibility criteria under which the

Councillor stood for election originally. The chairman said that he thought the criteria upon which he stood for election was that he lived within three miles of the Parish (in reality he had lived within a few yards of the Parish boundary). The clerk said he would have to take advice from the electoral registration officer at Ashford Borough Council and would do so within the next few days.

Dates of next meetings

09.127 The next meeting of the Parish Council would be on 23 February 2010 in the village hall.

Chairman.....

Date.....