

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 4 July in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present:

Mr A Nilson (chairman)
Mrs R Edmonds
Mrs C Baker
Mr D Richardson
Mrs E Hannavy-Cousen

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were nine members of the public present.

Apologies for Absence

1. None.

Declarations of Interest

2. None.

Minutes of the Meeting of 9 May

3. The minutes of the meeting of 9 May were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting of 9 May

Twining

4. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen reported that she had contacted Michelle Byrne at Ashford Borough Council about arrangements for twinning. The arrangements had to be made through the European Union in Brussels. Michelle Byrne would contact them and get back to Councillor Hannavy-Cousen. It appeared that some funding might be available from the EU for the twinning arrangement.

Bus shelter

5. Mr Crowley was present at the meeting and reported that the forester, Mr Gladwell, who had made shelters worked at the Tonbridge Golf club. He had written to him about the possibility of making a bus shelter for Newenden but had not received any reply. Mr Crowley said that he would see Mr Gladwell and ask him about making a shelter for Newenden.

Dog fouling

6. Councillor Edmonds said that dog fouling continued to be a problem particularly on the footpath leading to the graveyard on the hill behind Battery bank. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen reported that she had spoken to the dog warden at Ashford Borough Council Mr Colin Leek. Mr Leek had said that it was an offence not to clean up after your dog on public footpaths. He had agreed to come out and

visit the parish and advise on what might be done about the problem if he received a request from the Parish Council. The clerk said that he would write to Mr Leek.

Financial statement

7. The financial statement to 4 July had been circulated and the clerk explained the main expenditures. Councillors agreed the financial statement.

Accounts for payment

8. The following accounts were approved for payment under the Selmes Management Agreement:

Mr L Leadbeter	Cutting the hedge on Lossenham lane on the Selmes field	£80.00
Mr D McRae	Mowing the Selmes field	£120.00

Update on New Village hall

9. Councillor Richardson reported that the committee advising on the new village hall had decided to engage a professionally qualified person to draw up the plans for the new village hall and residence to be built on the site of the old one. Quotations had been obtained from four companies and it had been decided to engage Rachel Newton of Hadai. She was not a qualified architect but an architectural technician. Her quotation at around £6,000 was about half of that of the other tenders and included the planning fees that would be payable to Ashford Borough Council. The committee would now hold a meeting with Hadai to discuss the project in detail.

10. Councillor Richardson said that the budget for building the new village hall was about £120,000. It was anticipated that the site of the existing hall would sell for about £200,000 leaving an amount in reserve to meet future maintenance costs. Action with Communities in Rural Kent had advised that grants were available to meet associated costs such as fencing.

11. The chairman reminded Councillor Richardson that the new village hall committee needed to obtain a lease from the Selmes Trust for the land on which the new village hall would be built which would have to be prepared by a solicitor. He also said that the committee might find a survey of the site of the existing village hall had already been done when plans for a new village hall on the existing site were prepared several years ago. This might save some costs.

12. Councillor Richardson asked about the public liability insurance position of members of the Newenden Trust in relation to the new village hall. The clerk said that this was unlikely to be covered by the public liability insurances of the Parish Council or the separate policy for the Selmes field. The contractor building the village hall should have their own insurances during the build but on completion it was likely a new policy would be needed. The clerk said he would ask the insurance brokers about the position nearer the time renewal was due in September.

Rother Fishery Agreement

13. The clerk had recently submitted an invoice to the Rother Fishery Association (RFA) for the annual rent for their fishing Selmes Trust bank of the river Rother for 2017-18. Mr Crowley, secretary of the RFA explained that the mooring of more boats reduced the area that could be fished. There had also been a gradual reduction in the numbers of angling Associations in membership of the RFA with in some cases an Association becoming defunct. Members of the RFA felt that the rental was

too much and had threatened to leave the Association. Fishing techniques had also changed with technological innovation and river fishing of the sort on the river Rother was now less popular.

14. The chairman said that the Parish Council was prepared to freeze the rental at £800.00 per year for three years provided that the RFA committed to this amount for this period during which time there would be no more rent reviews. The RFA would also have to undertake to provide a fishing day for youngsters in the village every year. Mr Crowley agreed to do this during the October half term when the moored boats would be removed. This year it was agreed to do so on 22 October. The chairman said that he would provide a revised agreement for the RFA to sign.

Safeguarding Policy

15. The chairman said that Ashford Borough Council had notified him that they would no longer make grants to organisations that did not have a safeguarding policy in place for young people and vulnerable adults. A safeguarding policy was not in fact very relevant to much activity in the parish apart from that carried out by the church and the cricket club. Nevertheless, he proposed that there should be a safeguarding policy adopted by all community organisations in the village under the umbrella of the Newenden Trust as well as the Parish Council.

16. Councillors discussed the implications of a safeguarding policy and decided that any persons at risk should be advised that any serious issue would be passed on to the safeguarding officer and could not be regarded as confidential. The safeguarding policy that had been previously circulated was adopted.

Community Land Trust

17. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen reported that the Community Land Trust (CLT) had held a meeting with Tessa O'Sullivan of Action with Communities in Rural Kent at which it had been agreed to undertake another housing needs survey which would be similar to the first survey carried out three or four years ago. It would be paid for by Ashford Borough Council and would be completed by the first week in September.

18. The survey would indicate whether or not there was a need for affordable housing. Recalling the previous survey that had shown that there was a requirement for three affordable houses, Councillor Richardson said that normally housing associations would only be interested in building a minimum of five houses but that associations could be found that would take on very small numbers. There would possibly be an opportunity to build a rural workshop for businesses in addition to affordable housing. On the development mechanism Councillor Hannavy-Cousen explained that the housing association would buy the land and sell the freehold back to the CLT for £1. Any building done would be through the housing association and private builders would be precluded.

19. A member of the public volunteered that in addition to the possible site on Lossenham Lane another landowner had come forward with a site.

20. The chairman said that when the result of the housing needs survey were available in the autumn a Township meeting would be held to present them to the village.

Highways

21. The chairman reported that motorists were speeding in the village on the approach to Newenden bridge between the White Hart inn and the bridge. There had even been instances where motorists had overtaken on this very short stretch of road. The speeding was probably because motorists were trying to get across Newenden bridge before the traffic lights controlling traffic across it changed to red and they would have a long wait before they changed again to green. Councillors thought that traffic light sequencing was the problem. The Parish Council had suggested to highways that double white lines be painted on the road but these had been refused. Another possible solution was to relocate the traffic lights farther down the road away from the bridge. Councillors agreed that they should speak to the PCSO and again to Highways about the issue inviting the latter to make a parish visit.

22. There was also a problem with speeding along Lossenham Lane. Members of the public said that the offenders were often people in a hurry to get to work. The chairman said that the Parish Council would speak to the motorists concerned and would also ask the PCSO to speak to them.

Planning

23. There had recently been no planning applications, but the chairman said that he had received an e-mail from Shadoxhurst Parish Council with a draft letter they wished to send to the Minister for Housing and Planning on behalf of all of the parishes in Ashford Borough Council's area making representations about housing policy. Although this did not directly concern Newenden it was agreed that the parish wished to be associated with it. The chairman said he would advise Shadoxhurst.

24. Ashford Borough Council had revised their Local Plan, but there were no changes affecting Newenden.

Any other business

Day of Action

25. It was agreed that there should be a day of action to tidy up the village.

People Jumping from Newenden bridge into the river Rother

26. Councillor Edmonds reported that with the hot weather young people had started to jump off of Newenden bridge into the river Rother. This was dangerous as the depth of the water varied and it was uncertain what obstructions there were below the surface. Councillor Edmonds said that she would speak to the proprietors of the Bodiam Boating Station to ask them to warn those visiting the cafe or staying in the field behind it of the dangers.

Date of next meeting

27. The next meeting will be on 12 September.

Chairman.....

Date.....