

Minutes of the AGM of Newenden Parish Council on 9 May at 7.30 pm in the village hall

Present:

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

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There was one member of the public present Mr A Seal.

Apologise for absence

1. None.

Declarations of interest

2. None.

Minutes of the Meeting on 27 February

3. The minutes of the meeting on 27 February having been circulated were agreed as a correct record.

Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on 27 February

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

Election of chairman

5. Councillor Edmonds nominated Councillor Nilson to continue to be chairman. There being no other nominations Councillor Nilson was unanimously elected as chairman.

Election of Vice chairman

6. The chairman nominated Councillor Edmonds as vice chairman. There being no other nominations Councillor Edmonds was unanimously elected as vice chairman.

Allocation of Business Responsibilities between Councillors

7. Councillors discussed the allocation of business responsibilities and agreed not to make any changes.

Financial Statement for 9 May

8. The financial statement for 9 May having been circulated was approved.

Invoices for Payment

The following invoices were approved for payment:

Homeleigh	Materials for noticeboard	£79.20
KALC	Annual subscription	£145.78
Mr J Leeves	Clerk's allowance & postage	£31.34
Mr J Leeves	Arrears of pay	£6.08

Management Account

Romney Marshes Area Internal Drainage Board	Drainage rate	£7.62
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The internal auditor had not yet submitted his invoice.

Annual Return

Exemption Certificate

9. The clerk explained that the process for submitting the Annual Return had changed and it was now possible for small parish councils with expenditure and or income of less than £25,000 to exempt themselves from the requirement for a limited assurance audit by the external auditor. Newenden Parish Council met this requirement and the other provisions for exemption and Councillors agreed that the Council should exempt itself from external audit for the year ended 31 March 2018.

Annual Governance Statement

10. The annual governance statement had already been circulated. Councillors agreed that the Council had complied with the requirements of the Governance Statement and it could be signed.

Accounting Statement

11. The Accounting Statement had been seen and agreed by the internal auditor and Councillors agreed that it could be signed.

Internal Audit

12. The clerk confirmed that the internal auditor had completed his audit and had had no comments.

Annual Return: Additional Publicity Requirements

13. The clerk explained that the Annual Return would have to be displayed on the Parish Council's website as well as on the Council's notice board.

Update on New Village Hall

14. Councillor Richardson said that following the granting of planning consent for the construction of a private residence on the site of the existing village hall the estate agents Harpers and Hurlingham had been appointed to market the site. These estate agents had estimated the guide price for the land at £300,000. The solicitors Nelson McLean had been instructed to deal with the sale.

15. Councillor Hannavy-Cousen said that a problem had arisen with a resident in Beech road who apparently wanted a footpath to be diverted because of an overgrown hedge and the proposed diversion would impinge on the land at the rear of the village hall that would be included in the sale. There had not yet been a formal application to divert the footpath made to the County Council. The chairman said that this was not a matter for the Parish Council but for the Newenden Trust.

16. Councillor Richardson reminded the meeting that gardens would be opened at Lossenham Manor on 2 June in order to raise funds for the new village hall. There would also be a plant sale.

17. Councillor Richardson then explained that once the existing village hall had been sold a planning application would be submitted for the new village hall. He expected that Hadai would then submit an account for their work on the design of the village hall and the planning fee. He expected that this would be in the region of £2,500 plus the planning fee. The chairman said that this cost would have to be met by a loan from the Management Account for the Selmes Trust. The clerk said that the Parish Council should consider making the Newenden Trust a grant to cover the cost of the two planning fees that would be incurred. The planning fee for the house had been £192.50 and it could be expected that the fee for the new village hall would be the same.

Village Caretaker Scheme

18. The chairman said that there had been two applicants to be village caretaker. However, financing was available only for about £80.00 per day and the day rate of both applicants was about double this amount. It was unlikely that either applicant would be prepared to reduce their daily rate to what could be afforded. There might be less work in the winter than in summer but he still thought that the funding the Parish could afford would not be adequate. In the future the position might change if insurance costs for the new village hall were lower and in consequence more money would be available. The chairman said he would speak to both applicants.

GDPR

19. The chairman said that data protection law was changing later in the month and there would be a number of consequences for parish councils. Parish councils would unless there were last minute changes to the law that was coming into effect, would be required to appoint a data controller. The data controller could not be a councillor or the clerk. He had spoken to Mr C Harris who if necessary, was prepared to act as a voluntary data controller for the council.

20. The Council would need to have a privacy policy which he would need to draft and make an inventory of all of the types of data being held. The Council's website was currently hosted by an American firm and to be in compliance he would change this to a firm based in this country.

Highways

21. Councillor Edmonds said that potholes had been filled and the reflector posts on the roadside by the junction with the A28 cleaned. There had been an accident recently at the junction of the A268 and A28, but the car involved had been removed quickly before she had obtained any details. She would speak to residents at Frogshill to try to get details. A log of accidents at the junction would be maintained on the website.

Community mini-bus

22. Councillor Richardson reported that at the Tenterden Forum it had been mentioned that a 17 seat community mini-bus provided by Ashford Borough Council to provide transport to make up for the lack of bus services. Newenden was eligible to join the scheme. Councillor Edmonds said that she would follow this up with the person organising the mini-bus in Rolvenden.

Bus shelter application

23. Councillors thought that a bus shelter should be considered as part of the changes associated with the construction of the new village hall in particular the entrance and footpath access arrangements.

Highway around Newenden Bridge

24. Mr Seal said that there was a small banked area owned by Bourne's that people could if flattened walk on and keep out of the way of traffic on the approaches to the narrow bridge. The chairman said he would speak to Bourne's.

Parking

25. Mr Wheeler had set up a business hiring out bicycles. This had been very successful so successful in fact that large numbers of people had come to Newenden at the weekend to hire cycles. These people had found it difficult to park and had done so in any place they could find causing congestion and difficulties in access along Lossenham lane. Councillors discussed a possible solution of using the Selmes field. It was decided that an urgent meeting of affected parties should be convened to resolve the problem.

Planning

26. Councillor Richardson said that there had been no planning matters since the last meeting.

Any other business

Civic awards

27. Ashford Borough Council had asked for nominations of residents for civic community awards. Councillors discussed possible nominations but concluded that although there was at least one candidate it would not be appropriate to nominate them at present.

Community Emergency Plan

28. Ashford Borough Council had written to ask whether Newenden had an emergency plan. Councillors thought that being so small in population size and geographical extent communications with residents in an emergency was not a problem. An emergency plan was therefore considered unnecessary and the chairman said he would advise Ashford Borough Council accordingly.

Litter Picker

27. Mr McKinley the voluntary litter picker was moving out of the village. Mr McKinley had done the work of litter picking around the village for many years and it was thought appropriate to give him a small token in recognition of his work. It was agreed to give him a voucher for a meal in an Italian restaurant in Tenterden.

Firewood

28. There remained some remnants of the oak tree that had been cut down which were only suitable for use as firewood. Mr Gould had offered to take the wood away and use it for firewood and make a small donation to village hall funds. It was agreed that Mr Gould should take the wood in return for a donation.

Rubbish in bonfire field

29. Mr Seal agreed to burn up the lump of rubbish in the bonfire field.

Letters from Citizens Advice and Air Ambulance seeking donations

30. The clerk reported that the local Citizens Advice and the Air Ambulance had both written asking for donations. In keeping with the policy of not normally making donations Councillors agreed not to do so.

Date of next meeting

31. The next meeting will be on 10 July.

Chairman.....

Date.....