

Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 21 February 2023 in St Peters church at 7.30 pm

Present:

Councillors

Mr D Rose (chairman)  
Mr D Wheeler  
Mrs J Eldridge  
Mrs T Gethin  
Mrs H Masters

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were eight members of the public present.

#### **Apologies for Absence**

1. None.

#### **Declarations of Interest**

2. None.

#### **Minutes of the Meeting on 15 November 2022**

3. The clerk had had internet problems and consequently had been unable to circulate the minutes of the meeting on 15 November 2022. The minutes would be approved at the next meeting.

#### **Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting on 15 November 2022**

4. Nothing that would not be dealt with later in the meeting.

#### **Financial statement of 21 February 2023**

5. The clerk said that there had only been routine expenditure in the last two months. There was one exception and this was a grant of £1,000 to the Selmes Trust as a contribution to the legal fees that would be incurred in drafting the lease for the new village hall. This would be dealt with later in the meeting. The public liability insurance for the Selmes field had been renewed at a cost of £350.00.

#### **Grant towards the cost of legal advice on lease on new village hall**

6. It was proposed that the Parish Council would make a grant of £1,000 to the Selmes Trust as a contribution to the legal costs that would be incurred in drafting the lease for the new village hall.

The leases, including a sublease for the cricket club, would be available by the 24 April. It was hoped that they would be available earlier for a meeting between the Parish Council and the Selmes Trust on 30 March.

7. The chairman explained that the lease was complex needing to safeguard the funds from the sale of the old village hall that had been used for the construction of the new village hall. The legal fees would be substantial and the Parish Council had decided on a majority basis, to make the grant contribution as the Selmes Trust could not afford the legal fees. Without the grant, the leasing arrangements could not be taken forward and in turn, the project to construct the hall would be stalled. One member of the Council disagreed with the decision to make a grant to the Selmes Trust but the remainder agreed. The Selmes Trust would be told that they could only use the grant for meeting the cost of legal fees.

#### **Update on new village hall**

8. The chairman reported that the former trustees of the Newenden Trust had met on 11 January. The trustees thought that they should await the conclusion of a lease for the new village hall before taking the project forward. It was agreed that the Parish Council should have a representative on the Newenden Trust and had provisionally asked Mr Mills to attend meetings of the Trust.

9. The problem of VAT on the construction costs of the building had been resolved. Provided that the building was entirely separate from the sports pavilion then the construction would be exempt from VAT.

#### **Children's Safety Inspection Report**

10. The chairman reported that he had read the safety report again and had inspected the playground to see what maintenance had been identified. There were a number of minor items that could be easily repaired. However, there were two major items that needed repair as the wood was rotten. Councillor Wheeler would establish the cost of replacing/repairing the two items. It might be possible to apply for a grant towards the cost. In the meantime the playground would be closed.

#### **Planning**

11. The chairman said that he had made enquiries of the Environment Agency and Ashford Borough Council as to whether planning permission was required for the river moorings. Both had advised that no planning permission was required.

12. Councillor Eldridge reported on recent planning applications. Hill house application had finally been approved. The Old Granary had been refused. The Holt had not yet been decided.

#### **Highways**

13. The clerk was asked to get Councillor Hill to ask the County Council Highways Department to take action over pot holes in Lossenham Lane.

**Any other Business**

14. Councillor Masters advised that the defibrillators could be serviced at a cost of £189.00 each. The service company was not worried about condensation causing problems as the unit was housed in a waterproof case. The defibrillator in the telephone box was registered on the national website.

15. The company provided free training in the use of the defibrillator for up to 12 people. Councillor Masters would arrange a training session.

**Dates of next meetings**

16. The Annual Parish meeting would be held on 4 April. The Parish Council AGM following the elections on 4 May, would be held on 11 May. The clerk reminded residents that they now needed identity documents to vote in the elections.

Chairman.....

Date.....