

NEWENDEN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on TUESDAY 5 November 2024 in St Peter's church.

PRESENT: Councillors Mr D Wheeler (DW) Chairman, Mrs V Robertson (VR) Vice Chairman, Ms. G Dalton (GD) and Mr J Turnbull (JT).

IN ATTENDANCE: Kent County Councillor Mike Hill, Ashford Borough Councillor Kate Walder, ABC Cllr (*tbc*), Mrs L Dobson, Clerk and 14 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence.** None. Alex Garman has stepped down as a Councillor due to home commitments. The PC would be happy to hear from anyone interested in joining the team to fill the vacancy. DW thanked Alex for his time and commitment to the PC over the last 18 months.
2. **Declarations of interest.** None.
3. **To consider and approve** the minutes of the Parish Council meetings held on 3rd September and 15th October 2024 respectively. Both sets of minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meetings and, with one typo corrected at point 5c in the September minutes, duly signed by the Chairman.
4. **Matters arising from the minutes / action points from 3rd September / 15th October 2024** (*not covered elsewhere on the agenda*).
 - i. Footway to Sandhurst – update. Cllr Dalton reported PC actions following complaint from a resident. The pathway has now been cleared with thanks to the Clerk for Sandhurst PC who helped by reporting to KCC.
 - ii. Letter to Romney Marsh pony club – action outstanding re: written request for traffic direction when have events at Lossenham Farm. **ACTION:** Clerk
 - iii. Potential relocation of noticeboard and post box – Cllr Wheeler reported he has had several calls with the post office. The Selmes Trust has agreed that the post box, noticeboard and bin can all be relocated provided the PC gains the relevant permissions. **ACTION:** DW
5. **Verbal reports / progress updates** from Council members and Clerk.
 - i. **Highways – Cllr Robertson**
 - a. latest position on bridge and plans to write to KCC raising need for traffic calming measures (including to see what might be possible with regards yellow lines or similar at the A28 end of Lossenham Lane and reduced limit outside playground). Cllr Robertson stated that the latest bridge report (obtained under an FOI request) is from November 2023 – it suggests the river is not a problem which is a concern given so many people now use the river and could be struck by debris from the bridge. The PC has drafted a response raising concerns in report and will keep residents updated. The 2023 report contains a lot of assumptions which are concerning. KCC Hill and ABC Walder both have concerns and are supporting the PC. When the tractor crashed recently, ESCC police attended but not KCC. Cllr Robertson thanked Bournes, Ivan and Lewis Wheeler who all helped clear traffic build up.
 - b. Village gates – funding has been available for a few months but waiting for ESCC to agree to the other side.
 - c. Update on issue of surplus water run off onto the Rye Road. Enquiries sent to highways re overspill from Battery bank – expectation is now an annual clean of the drains (increased from 3 years). If residents report to KCC then have a stronger case. Finding out if PC can pay a private contractor to empty the gullies. The storm drain by the school house is the worst but it is understood that this doesn't appear on the

plans held by the drains department. Landowner not keen to do anything. **ACTION:** **VR** to find out which drains are tackled in the annual inspection.

- d. Traffic calming – speaking to KCC about traffic calming – JT asked if Cllr Hill or Cllr Walder could help – Cllr Hill sees no reason why can't consider signs. Kieran from KCC is going to come and look and Cllr Hill will come with him and will liaise on dates. Suggestion of a pedestrian button. Likely to be more movement of people once new park is installed. 45second gap between red and green but cars do jump and accelerate over the bridge. Cllr Hill undertook to provide a speed survey as soon as possible – this will need to be placed in the right places – Lossenham lane and coming into the village. **ACTION:** Cllr Hill to meet with KCC highways and PC – scheduled for 22nd January.

ii. **Playground – Cllr Turnbull / Clerk**

- a. Update on new play equipment project following meeting on 15th October. New playground will start to go in w/c 2/12. Huge thanks to Dennis Rose who negotiated the deal and did the majority of the work. The PC also thanked Nicola Holland for her efforts on fundraising and presented a small gift.

6. Finance

- i. Authorisation of accounts –payments and receipts since 3rd September approved and noted, along with the Council's current financial position.

Payments made	VAT £	Total £
Clerk salary – September and October		646.68
Zurich – insurance premium for year		471.00
KALC – year end and transparency training for Clerk	6.00	36.00
Grass cutting		362.00
Receipts		
Precept payment – second half of year		5000.00
HMRC – repayment of VAT to end Q2		199.64
Bank interest		56.71

Balance as per bank statements 30 th October 2024	£
Natwest bank – current account	7263.94
Natwest bank – reserve account	10390.88
Unity Trust bank – playground funds	40218.58
Total	57,873.40

- ii. *Update on banking and insurance.* The Clerk explained the move to a new bank account with Unity Trust bank was now complete. Insurance for the year had also been paid, the final price even better than the quotes discussed.
- iii. *Outcome of external audit for year ended 31st March 2024.* Clerk reported that the audit for the year ended 31 March 2024 was now complete and the certified Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) was available on the website along with the auditor's report. Matters raised are already being dealt with for the 24-25 financial year.
- iv. *To look at budget vs. spend to end Q2 and start discussing draft budget and precept for the year 1st April 2025-31 March 2026.* The Clerk circulated and went through a suggested draft budget. Cllr Walder warned to be aware of the costs of H&S inspections on the new playground. **ACTION:** Cllrs to come to January meeting ready to set and agree precept level ahead of ABC deadline.

7. **Planning** – to consider any planning applications received from Ashford Borough Council and any other planning matters.

PA/2024/1742 – 1 Unity Cottages, Rye Road - Proposed 2 storey side and single storey rear extension, following the demolition of existing garage and shed.

PA/2024/1921 - Lossenham Farm, Lossenham Lane, Newenden, TN18 5QQ, Erection of new farm office following the demolition of existing tractor barn.

Meeting stopped 8.40 to allow applicant representative to speak. Original design has been revised to include office space. No increase in footprint, trying to make it nicer to look at and more efficient for the farm. Some discussion about height and size and whether increasing. Main aim is a centralisation of all farm buildings. Meeting restarted at 8.50pm.

Cllrs unanimously agreed to support the application and had no further comments.

8. To consider and approve:

- i. Risk management protocol- some discussion around the draft protocol. Needs work. Council resolved to look at it between meetings. Defibrillator training to be organised. **ACTION:** DW to organise defib training. GD to look at the risk management protocol and provide comments to Clerk.
- ii. Establishment of a council sub-committee to work on a Community Resilience Plan using the templates provided by ABC. Discussion around what and who might be involved. GD suggested a first step would be to put together a plan of action by going through the template and work out what is needed and how many people will be needed. **ACTION:** Cllr Dalton

9. Newenden Art Exhibition – The event will be held 4th December at the White Hart 7pm. Three local artists have been commissioned, there will be mulled wine and an opportunity to buy a calendar and prints with proceeds going to the village hall project.

10. Matters for consideration as an agenda item for the next meeting on 7th January 2025. The following were suggested - Fishermen parking along lane. Risk assessment, precept, local plan / planning update – Cllr Walder. Mr Seal asked if the village hall and potential for PC to pay insurance in exchange for meeting space could be considered. **ACTION:** Alan Seal to send details to council in advance of next meeting and Clerk to find out what happened in the past with regards village hall insurance.

11. Public Questions – to allow members of the public to address or ask questions to the Parish Council in respect of any item on this agenda.

1. One resident reported the danger of people walking along lanes in dark and suggested people need to take more care / wear hi-vis.
2. Some discussion about how a rural village resilience plan might help with various issues – Cllr Walder to investigate this further. As part of the discussion about road safety for pedestrians Mr Seal mentioned the pathway on the edge of the cricket ground and whether the PC would consider paying for a proper path surface. The PC will consider once a formal request with full costs is made.

12. Date of next meeting: 7th January 2025 at 7.30pm

Signed _____

Date: