Minutes of a Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 5 September 2023 at 7.30 pm in St Peters church

Present:

Councillors

Mr D Wheeler (chairman)
Mrs N Holland
Mrs V Robertson
Mr A Garman

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

Apologies for absence

1. Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs T Gethin and Ashford Borough Councillor Mrs K Walder.

Declarations of Interest

2. None.

Minutes of the meeting on 20 June

3. The minutes of the meeting on 20 June having been circulated were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on 20 June

4. None.

Financial statement for 5 September

5. The clerk said that the bank had finally completed their procedures for authorising new Councillors to operate the bank account. Consequently, the Council could now make BACS payments.There had been a backlog of payments due to the non operation of the bank account which had now been cleared. However, the payments that had now been paid were all expected and there was no out of the routine expenditure.

6. The chairman explained that during the freeze of the bank account it had been necessary for Councillor Holland and him to pay urgent invoices from their personal bank accounts. In his case this had been for the new website costs and Councillor Holland had paid for planning changes for the bus stop. These expenses would be properly audited.

Update on new village hall

7. The chairman said that the Newenden and Selmes Trusts would make statements on the position of the new village hall at the conclusion of the meeting. The statements would not be followed by a general discussion and the statements would not form part of the Parish Council meeting. The Parish Council would listen to the statements and consider them in due course.

Children's Playground Report

8. The chairman reported that the safety report on the children's playground had been received. The report was not wholly bad, but several pieces of equipment required repair and on safety grounds the playground would remain closed. The Selmes Trust had indicated that they were willing to make more land available for the playground in the meantime whilst the playground remained closed the Trust would waive the rent on it.

9. The safety report was available from the clerk.

Planning

10. There were no planning applications to report.

Highways

Newenden Bridge

11. Councillor Robertson reported that after making a Freedom of Information request she had obtained a copy of the report on the Newenden bridge. This had shown that no load assessment had been made for several years. Repairs were scheduled for November/December.

Speed

12. Councillor Robertson said she had written to KCC Mike Hill about continuing problems with speeding traffic in the parish. As she had had no reply she had written to the KCC Councillor responsible for highways and was awaiting a reply.

Cricket Balls and Safety

13. Councillor Robertson said that the danger from cricket balls continued to be a problem. She had spoken to the person with responsibility for cricket in Kent who had advised that funding may be available to help deal with the safety problems. The chairman added that a ball strike assessment was required from the cricket club and the Parish Council would write to them requesting it. The answer may be for nets to be erected on the boundaries.

Any other Business

Website

14. Councillor Garman reported that the new website was now operational. The previous minutes of the Parish Council would be published. The clerk said that he would supply Councillor Garman with the last two years of minutes and if anybody wanted any minutes from farther back the clerk could supply them.

Report on completion of bus shelter

15. The chairman reported that the new bus shelter was now complete.

Precept for 2024-25

16. The clerk said that Ashford had given advanced notification of the requirement to submit precept amounts for 2024-25. There was no change to the basic timetable and the Parish Council would need to submit the precept requirement by early January 2024.

Parking trial

17. The Selmes field was again being used for parking as a trial. The trial would close at the end of September.

Date of next meeting

18. The next meeting would be on 7 November.

Chairman……. Date…….