

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 12 May 2023 in St Peters church at 7.30 pm

Present:

Mr D Rose (outgoing chairman)
Mr D Wheeler (chairman)
Mrs T Gethin
Mr A Garman
Mrs N Holland
Mrs V Robertson

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were 18 members of the public present.

Apologies for absence

1. None.

Declarations of interest

2. None.

Election of chairman

3. The outgoing chairman thanked the Councillors not standing for re-election and asked for nominations for a new chairman. Mrs Gethin nominated Mr Wheeler and there being no other nominations Mr Wheeler was elected as chairman.

Election of Vice chairman

4. Mrs Gethin was nominated to be vice chairman. There being no other nominations Mrs Gethin was elected as vice chairman.

Signature of Declarations of Acceptance of Office

5. Elected Councillors signed their declarations of acceptance of office.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interests

6. The clerk distributed forms for the declaration of pecuniary interests of new Councillors. These should be returned to the chairman and the clerk would then collect them and send them to Ashford Borough Council. Completed forms should be given to the chairman by 1 June.

Allocation of Business Responsibilities between Councillors

7. The following allocations were made:

Highways: Councillor V Robertson

Planning: Councillors Mrs T Gethin and Mrs N Holland

Responsibility for banking transactions (payments etc): Councillor Mrs N Holland

Website and social media: Councillor Mr A Garman

Police liaison and PCSO: the chairman

8. The chairman said that the Council had created a new post with responsibility for the environment and conservation and he would deal with issues in this area.

9. The clerk reminded Councillors that they needed to appoint a safeguarding officer. This was necessary although the Council rarely, if ever, had any dealings with children or vulnerable adults. The chairman said he would be the designated safeguarding officer assisted by somebody from the village who was DBS vetted.

10. Mr Livsey had agreed to take responsibility for footpaths.

Nomination of Parish Council Representative on the Selmes Trust

11. The chairman reported that in consequence of a change in the Governing document of the Selmes Trust the number of Trustees had been increased and now included a representative of the Parish Council. The Parish Council had therefore been invited to nominate a person to represent the Council on the Selmes Trust. The Council had decided to nominate Mr R Gould. Mr Gould was willing to represent the Parish Council.

Withdrawal of the Parish Council from the Management Agreement with the Selmes Trust

12. The chairman reported that in consequence of the revision of the Selmes Trust Governing document the Parish Council had decided to withdraw from the agreement under which they had managed the Selmes Trust land. The Selmes Trust had been given the appropriate notice.

Minutes of the Meetings on 21 February and 24 April

13. The minutes of the meeting on 21 February and the extraordinary meeting of the 24 April were approved as a correct record. The chairman said that the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of 24 April which Ashford Borough Council had published on their planning website, because it contained a record of the discussion on planning application PA/2023/0585, needed to be clarified with the Borough Council because he did not have a pecuniary interest in the application. This needed to be made clear to the Borough Council.

Matters arising from the Minutes of the Meetings on 21 February and the 24 April

14. None.

Financial Statement of 12 May

15. The clerk said that the Council had so far incurred little expenditure and there was nothing exceptional to report.

Children's Playground Replacement of Swing and Refurbishment Work

16. The chairman said that the swing in the children's playground had been repaired and the playground was now open for use. However, he commented that the play equipment was now very old and it might not pass the next safety inspection. Any replacement of equipment would be very expensive.

Highways

17. Councillor Robertson said that the problem of speeding was of concern throughout the village. She had been in touch with Kent Highways to discuss the problem. The clerk added that he had emailed Kent Highways and they had sent him a form for a Highways Improvement plan for the Parish which the Council would have to complete. He would send this to Councillor Robertson.

Planning

18. There were no planning applications to report.

Any other Business

Noise from Bourne's Premises

19. A resident raised concerns about the noise coming from Bourne's premises. The problem was particularly bad for residents of Copt Hall because they lived at a distance, but opposite the premises. There was some seasonality to noise levels being more prevalent in Spring and Summer and not quite so much in the Winter. This seasonality was taken as being indicative of activity. Councillor Gethin said she had spoken to Mr Bourne and the company was attempting to reduce the noise from machinery. It was her view that the company wanted to help and was asking employees to keep the noise levels down.

20. The chairman said that residents should continue to keep records of the noise so as to provide them to the Environment Agency.

Date of next meeting

21. The next meeting would be on 20 June.

Chairman.....

Date.....

