

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of Newenden Parish Council on 24 April 2023 in St Peters church at 7.30 pm

Present:

Newenden Parish Council

Mr D Rose (chairman)

Mrs J Eldridge

Mr D Wheeler

Mrs T Gethin

Mrs H Masters

Ashford Borough Councillor Mrs K Walder

Applicant's Agent Mrs H Whitehead

Clerk

Mr J Leeves

There were 22 residents of Newenden present.

Apologies for absence

1. None.

Declarations of interest

2. The chairman explained that two Councillors had personal interests and one Councillor a pecuniary interest in the application for a car park. Consequently, the Council would not be making a recommendation on this planning application but would send an account of the discussion to Ashford Borough Council. The chairman then said he would propose to deal with items of miscellaneous business first.

Children's Playground swing

3. Councillor Wheeler had repaired some of the items of equipment but the swing required more major repairs. It was estimated that these would cost around £300.00. The Council agreed that these repairs should be carried out.

Replacement mooring poles

4. The river warden had reported that several of the mooring poles had been swept away by the strong currents in the swollen river over Winter. The cost to replace 10 of these would be around £98.00. The Council agreed to replacement poles.

Remaining Part of Coronation Grant

5. There remained £200.00 of the Coronation grant from Ashford Borough Council that had not yet been allocated. It was proposed that this be used for a seat on the periphery of the cricket pitch. Councillor Wheeler would carve an inscription.

Planning Application PA/2023/0543 Airfield Hexden Marsh

6. The Farm Manager for Lossenham Farm whose ground the airfield was located, explained the application. The application was in fact regularising the current situation as the airfield was in fact being used more than the current authorisation permitted. The airfield was used entirely for private aviation with a maximum of 10 flights per day, but the average being less. There would be no change in the number of flights. The use of the airfield was subject to weather and it was not used in Winter.

7. Access was via a gate off the A28 and there would be no access via Lossenham Lane. No aviation fuel was stored on site and there would be no infrastructure on the airfield. Given that the planning application was to regularise the existing situation and effectively would not result in any changes the Council agreed to approve it.

Planning Application PA/2023/0585 Car Park at Friar's Marsh off Lossenham Lane

8. Mrs Whitehead outlined the application for a car park and displayed full scale plans of the site taken from the application. The car park was intended to deal with the problem of lack of parking in the village. It would be for three years and would be open between Easter and Michaelmas each year. The operation of the car park was weather dependent. There would be no parking fee. There would be no infrastructure except a notice directing people to the park and publishing parking conditions.

9. By providing parking it would alleviate the parking situation along Lossenham Lane which was difficult to drive along at times because of the numbers of cars parked on the sides. It would also help to keep the lane clear for emergency services vehicles. Camper vans would not be permitted and there would be a ban on barbeques.

10. Mrs Whitehead said that the car park had the support of village organisations like the Janus Foundation and businesses. This was disputed by residents and there was no evidence that the proposal had widespread support in the village.

11. Residents expressed concern about the lack of toilet facilities in the village and the problems that would arise because of the influx of visitors. Social media and word of mouth might refer to the availability of car parking and in consequence the numbers of visitors could be expected to increase. There would be an increase in traffic along Lossenham Lane which was very narrow and unsuited to carry an increased volume of traffic. An increase in visitor numbers would also mean that there was more noise to disturb residents.

Any other Business

12. A resident raised the question of noise from Bourne's. The chairman said that it was not appropriate to discuss the issue under any other business and he would see that it was put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Date of next meeting

13. The Annual General meeting of the Council would be held on 12 May.

Chairman.....

Date.....