

NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee held at Newington Pavilion on 25 August 2021

Present: Cllr Elaine Jackson (Chair), Cllr Eric Layer (Vice Chairman), Cllr Stephen Harvey, Cllr James Morgan and Cllr Tony Mould; and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk). Also present was Mr Jackson the Pavilion Caretaker.

Cllr Jackson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

All Members were present.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Jackson declared a pecuniary interest in item 6.iv and signed the Members' interests book.

3. Matters Arising from minutes 22 June 2021

Visit with KCC Highways Steward

Cllr Jackson said Aprille Hall, KCC Highways Steward will meet with Councillors on 1 September.

Cllr Harvey said that he and Cllr Palmer will meet with the Highways Steward, this will be for the annual village walk about which could not take place last year due to the pandemic. Some issues will have been dealt with following a meeting with Sarah-Jayne Ellcock, KCC Highways Swale Project Manager. Bollards will be installed outside Charlotte Court at the end of October, beginning of November. It was suggested that the work outside the school be carried out in half term.

4. Public Question Time

Mr Jackson reported that sometimes there is rubbish on the field.

Cllr Morgan said the Council could discuss this with the litter pickers, there may be a need to rethink the work.

Cllr Harvey said if the problem is the litter bins being full, Swale Borough Council needs to be informed and the bins will be emptied. The litter pickers could notify Swale when the bins are full.

5. Anti-Social Behaviour

i. PCSO report

Apologies had been received from PCSO John Cork who sent the following report.:

Crimes of note

Garden tools stolen from a property in Bull Lane and from the shed in the grounds on Newington Manor both incidents happened on 05/08/21. Two suspects were seen climbing over the fence that lead to the property in Bull Lane.

Criminal damage to a van parked on the drive of a property in Bull Lane. Window was smashed 27/07/21

Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:

Off road motorbikes reported to Kent Police by two residents of Newington riding in the local area, three scramble motorbikes.

Suspicious event on the Railway Station. One male was seen hiding behind the concrete fence 17/08/21 at 23:30 reported to Kent Police and British Transport Police.

Male looking into cars in Dennis Wilcock Close on 17/08/21

Removal of a camp that was erected in the grounds of Newington Manor

ii. Community Warden report

Community Warden Georgina Springall sent the following report:

- 1) Regular welfare visits to elderly/vulnerable residents who are still self-isolating.
- 2) Concerns for welfare of resident – Referral made to Social Services.
- 3) Resident not receiving parcels as assumed gone to wrong address.
- 4) Ongoing neighbour dispute regarding driveway.
- 5) Ongoing resident dispute now affecting children who are worried to go to playground – PCSO Cork and Optivo aware. I will be regularly patrolling Recreation Ground during the summer holidays.
- 6) Concerns from resident that other residents have converted their car ports/barns into additional rooms on the new Persimmon estate – Swale Borough Council aware.
- 7) Attempted burglary to works van parked on driveway in Bull Lane – Police aware.
- 8) Complaints from residents regarding litter bins overflowing/not been emptied in recreation ground. Due to shortage of Swale Borough Council workers who are isolating/ been pinged.
- 9) Resident rural walk to Lower Halstow and this month, included pub luncheon.
- 10) Theft of strimmer and hedge cutter whilst gardener present from grounds in Bull Lane – Police aware.
- 11) Theft from barn at Newington Manor of tools of the value of £3000.00 – Police aware.
- 12) Complaints from resident that neighbours rear garden lights are shining into his property – discussed problem with neighbour to make them aware.
- 13) Assisted PCSO Cork in the removal of youths camp that had been erected in the back of the manor grounds. Excessive litter and signs of cannabis smoking.
- 14) Removed broken glass off pathway next to entrance of small play area Playstool Road.
- 15) Reported fly tipping in Bull Lane to Swale Borough Council.
- 16) Complaints from Optivo housing residents that they received letters from Optivo regarding the playing of ball games on housing areas prohibited, whilst private residents living in same areas did not receive one.
- 17) Advice given to resident regarding possible planning requirements to contact Swale Borough Council.

Cllr Harvey informed Members that item 6 is now an enforcement complaint.

Cllr Jackson that the issue regarding overflowing bins, item 8, is due to a shortage of bin men as they have been pinged by Track and Trace. This needs to be included in the Village Voice. Details of the rural walks could be publicised in the Village Voice.

ACTION: Clerk to ascertain details of the rural walks.

Cllr Jackson asked that there be an article about thefts from vans and a reminder that owners must be vigilant in the Village Voice.

Cllr Harvey said there had been an issue with a motor bike on the playing field, a photo was sent to PCSO Cork.

Cllr Jackson reported that Neighbourhood Watch does not have any Cold Calling Controlled Zone signs, Swale Safe has been contacted but there has been no response.

ACTION: Clerk to ask the Community Warden if she has any No Cold Calling stickers.

6. Recreation Ground

i. To receive an update

Cllr Harvey reported that the play area had been inspected and all the old equipment has passed. There are still issues to be resolved on the new equipment. The zip wire brake has broken and a quote was requested, the company had replied two weeks later with a quote

after making good one new piece of equipment, there were six items requiring attention. The company has agreed to replace the zip wire brake and pay for a new report if necessary. The brake will last for approximately three years and will need to be budgeted for. There were no major issues on the inspection report.

Cllr Jackson said everything was low or very low risk. The new rope swing was highlighted as being too low.

Cllr Harvey said the company will come out this week to resolve it. There are also some loose bolts. The tools for the new equipment is being kept at the Pavilion.

Cllr Jackson thanked Cllr Harvey for his report.

ii. Adult exercise equipment

Cllr Harvey said the Council should seek maximum grant funding that is available. The inspection report highlighted that some instruction labels are missing. The equipment should be kept, the broken item replaced and, dependant on grant funding, further equipment could be added to.

ACTION: Clerk to apply for a grant of £10,000 to compliment the £110,000 extra equipment in the play area.

iii. Grass cutting specification

Councillors considered and revised the grass cutting specification, there will be two contracts allowing smaller contractors to bid for the play area.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain tenders

iv. To consider request from mobile coffee van

Cllr Jackson left the room and took no part in the discussion or decision of this item

Councillors considered a request from a resident for suggestions as to where he can park his mobile coffee van and trade in Newington. The only suitable area the Council owns in Newington is the Recreation Ground and car park. Concern was raised that this might cause an increase in litter in the area.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** that the trader be permitted to use the car park for a trial period of one month, to be commenced in the next four weeks, excluding Saturdays and Sundays. Food Hygiene certificates and insurance must be supplied; the trader must provide a litter bin and remove all rubbish; there will need to be a deposit for the height barrier key when it is installed. There will be no charge during the trial period.

Cllr Jackson returned to the meeting.

v. Annual inspection report

Discussed earlier.

7. Pavilion

i. To receive an update

Mr Jackson reported that the guttering has come apart.

Cllr Harvey said he will ask the contractor to push it back together.

Cllr Harvey reported that the graffiti has been removed from the Pavilion, the garage has been repaired and repainted. The contractor will return to install the bench base and height barrier.

ii. To consider quotations for baby changing unit

Cllr Jackson said that the sink in the toilet needs to be replaced before making a decision to be able to ascertain how much room is available for a changing unit.

Cllr Harvey said the unit should not have drawers, fold up units are problematic as dirty nappies are sometimes left in them. A cupboard would be useful.

iii. To consider quotation for water heaters

Councillors considered the quotations for water heaters; it was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to recommend to Full Council that the following quotes from Watson Electrical Services be accepted:

- o Replace the toilet hand basin, tile splash back and install water heater- £900.00
- o Decommission water tanks in the loft- £475.00
- o Installation of a push button timer to the main hall thermostat - £245.00
- o Works to be carried out as soon as possible and completed by 1 November

iv. To consider quotation for Community Sports Room flooring

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to recommend to Full Council accepting the quotation from Mr McLugash to replace the Sports Room flooring for £1480.00

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotations to remove the gym equipment.

8. Allotments

Councillors considered the request from the Allotment Association to cut back the trees adjacent to the fence and whose responsibility it is to do this. The Council could pay as a goodwill gesture if the cost was reasonable. The woodland and allotments site belong to the Council. It could be part of the woodland project.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotations for the work.

9. Community Woodland

Cllr Harvey reported that he had been trying to contact the officer from the Forestry Commission but to no avail, he will try again. One of the Youth Workers is training to become a Forest Schools Leader and is writing a dissertation on a woodland area that she uses for activities and wants to talk to someone about the woodland. Cllr Harvey said he will talk to her about the woodland.

10. Highways

Cllr Harvey reported that he has met with Sarah-Jayne Ellcock, KCC Highways Swale Project Manager. Bollards will be installed outside Charlotte Court; the 20mph zone will be as specified as it cannot be extended to Callaways Lane as, by law, there has to be 600m for a change of speed limit. A few complaints had been received from Bull Lane residents so the one-way will be from The Bull car park to the High Street. There will be further hatching and an asymmetric sign outside the school.

11. Streetlights

Councillors discussed the streetlight at 35 The Willows, the resident has appealed against the Council's decision not to permit the light be moved. It was noted that a resident had objected to the request when it was discussed at Full Council in June, however, it was also noted that the resident making the request was unaware that the matter was being discussed or that he could attend the meeting to address the Council. Consideration was given as to whether the Council should consult with residents and review the decision.

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** that a provisional quotation be forwarded to the resident highlighting that there may be additional expense if there is a problem; the Council's own contractor has to be used; if the resident is prepared to accept this the Council will consult with neighbours in the walkway and those fronting the turning circle.

The Clerk asked for a seconder.

Cllr Jackson said it should go to the vote.

1 - FOR; 4 AGAINST; MOTION FAILED

Cllr Jackson said the matter should go to Full Council.

Item for Full Council

Cllr Jackson said Network Rail is denying that the streetlight under bridge is their light.
Cllr Layer said network Rail has previously repaired it.
ACTION: Clerk to inform Network Rail that it is their light and that it is an urgent public safety issue.

12. Footpaths and Bridleways

There were no issues to report.

13. Village Voice and media

Cllr Mould circulated the first draft of the Village Voice which will include planning. The rural walks will be included; theft of tools from a van; and cold calling. Sarah-Jayne Ellcock will be submitting text.

Cllr Jackson thanked Cllr Mould for his sterling work.

Cllr Harvey asked for an update on the World War 1 information boards and also for details of payment towards the Newington History Group's video.

ACTION: Clerk

14. Cemetery and Churchyard

Cllr Layer reported that the church is considering a wildflower area at the back of the church. Cllr Mould said that nothing has been mentioned about the gate, the church needs to obtain a faculty from the Diocese.

15. Queen's Platinum Jubilee 22 June 2022

i. The Queen's Green Canopy

Cllr Mould said Newington History Group is lighting the beacon for the Jubilee. There was an article in last month's Village Voice.

ii. Village Celebration

Cllr Jackson said there could be a village fete.

Cllr Mould said planning for the event needs to start and it can be a different event from the Festival and would last two to three hours.

Cllr Harvey said if the event was at the Recreation Ground there could be no admission charge. People could be encouraged to bring a picnic and local organisations could have stalls.

Cllr Layer said it would need a draw such as a Tug-of-War.

ACTION 1: Cllr Mould to draft ideas for the event.

ACTION 2: Clerk to inform the Allotment Association of the event.

16. Any Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9pm

Date of Next Meeting: 21 September 2021

Signed as a true record of the meeting:

Chairman

Date: 31 August 2021