

NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 25 April 2023 in the Newington Room, Newington Village Hall

Present: Cllr Richard Palmer (Chairman), Cllr Tony Mould (Vice Chairman), Cllr Michael Barlow, Cllr Steve Godmon, Cllr Stephen Harvey, Cllr Elaine Jackson and Cllr Eric Layer; and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk)

Also present were County Councillor Mike Baldock and Mr Bob Jackson, Pavilion Caretaker.

Cllr Palmer welcomed everyone to the meeting

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Ward Member Alan Horton (unwell); apology noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Godmon declared a pecuniary interest in item 8ii.

3. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 31 MARCH 2023

Cllr Layer **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting as a true record: **SECONDED** by Cllr Barlow: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Palmer duly signed the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Cllr Palmer said the litter picking equipment will be collected from Swale Borough Council on Friday.

Cllr Jackson said the Council is waiting to hear back from the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church as to whether the space by the hall is suitable for their catering unit.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the church.

Cllr Palmer said the Annual Parish Meeting was very successful and good reports were received from the village groups.

ACTION: letters of thanks to be sent to all groups.

Cllr Harvey thanked the Clerk for organising the buffet.

Cllr Layer thanked the Clerk for taking the minutes.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The meeting was adjourned for the public time.

There are two manhole covers at the junction of Playstool Road and London Road which need repairing again. Also, when it rains water accumulates where the crossing is.

Cllr Baldock said he would raise that the issue has previously been repaired. Flooding is endemic and roads everywhere flood when it rains. It is not an acceptable service but KCC is not in the position financially, to deliver an acceptable service.

Cllr Harvey said the issue needs to be reported to Aprille Hall, KCC Highways Steward. There will be a Highways Improvement Plan meeting with an officer on 22 May and issues will be raised there.

ACTION: Clerk to report.

The meeting was reconvened.

6. VISITORS

i. County Councillor

Covered in the public time.

Borough Councillors

SBCllr Palmer reported that there have been a few neighbour disputes and reports of flytipping, mainly in Bricklands.

7. PLANNING

i. To receive an update

Application: 23/501012/FULL 60 London Road, Newington ME9 7NR

Proposal: Erection of a first floor and a two storey front extension including changes to fenestration.

Cllr Harvey said a decision is yet to be made.

Application: 23/500760/FULL 2 Caroline Cottages, Keycol Hill, Bobbing, Kent ME9 7LG

Proposal: Insertion of a dropped the kerb.

Cllr Harvey said KCC Highways have commented that vehicles have to be able to drive forwards and off forwards from a drive onto a main road, also the visibility splay is on another property; a decision is yet to be made.

Previously discussed: for information

Application: 22/505618/FULL Land At School Lane, Newington ME9 7JU

Proposal: Erection of 25no. residential dwellings with enhanced renewable energy features and the provision of a 20 space staff car park and 20 space pupil pick-up/drop-off area for Newington C of E Primary School, together with associated access, landscaping, drainage and infrastructure works (Resubmission of 21/504028/FULL)

Cllr Harvey reported that a site meeting has been arranged Tuesday 13 June 2023 and the application will be determined at SBC Planning Committee on Thursday 22 June 2023. The previous Planning Officer recommended approval. SBCllr Baldock requested further reports but was ruled out of order.

Application: 22/501005/FULL 77 High Street, Newington ME9 7JJ

Proposal: Erection of 10 no. detached C3 dwellinghouses with repositioned vehicular access from public highway.

Cllr Harvey informed Members that a decision is yet to be made.

Not in Newington

Application: 22/503654/EIOUT Land To The West Of Bobbing, ME9 8QL

Proposal: Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) for a mixed used development comprising up to 2,500 dwellings, a 4.99ha commercial employment zone including doctors surgery, a 4.2ha sports hub, primary school, community facilities, local retail provision, public open space, children's play areas and associated parking, servicing, utilities, footpath and cycle links, drainage, ground and other infrastructure.

Application validated: Tuesday 29 November 2022

Cllr Harvey said a decision is yet to be made.

Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate

Application: 19/502206 61 Playstool Road, Newington ME9 7NL

Proposal: Retrospective application for the erection of a first floor rear extension, loft extension and lean to roof at front and side of dwelling (resubmission of 18/502531/FULL).

PINS Reference: APP/V2255/C/21/3287191

Cllr Harvey said the appeal is yet to be determined.

Application: 21/504028/FULL Land At School Lane, Newington ME9 7JU

Proposal: Erection of 25no. residential dwellings and the provision of a 20 space staff car park and 20 space pupil pick-up/drop-off area for Newington C of E Primary School, together with associated access, landscaping, drainage and infrastructure works.

Planning Inspectorate PINS reference APP/V2255/W/22/3312284

Cllr Harvey said that the appeal will be determined on the basis of an Informal Hearing on 27 June; this is after the second application is considered at the Planning Committee meeting on 22 June. We are looking into whether Bruce Bamber can give evidence to the appeal hearing. Waiting to hear back from the officer on this matter.

Cllr Palmer said that it would be good to have a professional person to argue the Parish Council's case. He has requested to attend as a third party under Rule 6.

Application: 22/500275/OUT Land South Of London Road, Newington

Proposal: Outline planning application for up to 135 dwellings with the retention of existing farm buildings, new public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and vehicular access point (Access being Sought).

PINS ref: APP/V2255/W/23/3318448

Cllr Harvey reported that the Planning Inquiry will start on July 2023 and last for eight days with a break in the middle. The University of Kent has been contacted regarding expert evidence

Application: 21/501839/OUT Land Off Otterham Quay Lane Upchurch

Proposal: Outline application for up to 74no. dwellings with public open space, landscaping and sustainable drainage system (SuDS) and vehicular access point. (All matters reserved except for means of access).

PINS Ref: APP/V2255/W/22/3301685

Cllr Harvey informed that the appeal has been allowed because the Inspector said that Swale did not have a five-year housing land supply.

ii. Address: 55-57 High Street Newington Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7JJ

Ref: 23/501221/FULL

Proposal: Conversion of restaurant and existing two residential flats into a 6no. two bedroom and 1no. one bedroom residential flats including erection of a first floor north elevation extension, insertion of balconies and changes to fenestration. Conversion of existing outbuilding to an office.

Ref: 23/501222/LBC

Proposal: Listed Building Consent for the internal alterations including removal walls, doors, two set of stairs, external alterations including erection of a first floor north elevation extension, insertion of balcony, roof lights and changes to fenestration including conversion of outbuilding
Councillors considered the applications and noted that residents had raised concerns about parking and also the character of the building should be kept. It was considered that a village the size of Newington should be able to support a restaurant; a restaurant would be preferred; the number of flats seemed too high; concern was raised that the building is falling into disrepair.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to respond:

On the understanding that a rigorous process of assessing the business potential continues to show that a restaurant is unviable, Newington Parish Council would support the conversion into flats as long as the parking provision and Conservation Area are taken into account. The Council is concerned that there would be seven flats on a site of this size.

iii. Ref: 23/501647/FULL

Address: Tommy All Alone Keycol Hill Bobbing Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7LG

Proposal: Erection of single storey front extension.

Councillors considered the application and **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to respond that there were no comments save a request that neighbours' concerns be taken into account.

iv. Ref: 23/501691/LAWPRO

Address: 4 Church View Cottages Boxted Lane Newington Kent ME9 7LD

Proposal: Lawful Development Certificate for proposed erection of an outbuilding.

Cllr Harvey said the Council has not been consulted on this application. Also it has not been consulted on the Chicken Farm which now claims not to be viable and they want to build five houses in the barn using Prior Approval as the law has been changed to allow agricultural buildings to be converted. A year ago, the chicken farm was a successful business.

Cllr Palmer thanked Cllr Harvey for his report.

16. RELATIONSHIP WITH SWALE BOROUGH COUNCIL

It was agreed to bring this item forward.

Cllr Harvey said that it used to feel like the Parish Council worked with Swale Borough Council, now it feels the opposite; the offices are closing on Friday afternoons and you can only speak to a Planning Officer on Wednesday mornings but it is difficult to get through and some do not return calls.

Following concerns with the Officers' report to Swale Planning Committee on application 22/505618/FULL Land at School Lane and the lack of response from Swale officers, the Clerk, with the support of the Chairman of the Parish Council Planning Committee, submitted a formal complaint on 7 March. The response to the Stage 1 complaint was received two hours before the Swale Planning Committee meeting on 9 March and was circulated to all Parish Councillors who agreed that the matter be escalated to a Stage 2 complaint. The response from the Monitoring Officer to the Stage 2 complaint was circulated to all Members when received.

The Clerk was also asked to submit an FOI request which was due last week but the information will be sent tomorrow 26 April.

Councillors thanked the Clerk for the actions taken on behalf of the Council.

8. AMENITIES

i. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities Committee held on 18 April 2023 and consider the recommendations

Cllr Jackson reported that losing the Community Warden has left a huge gap and the PCSO is no longer there either. Wicksteed has agreed to drop the £300 storage charge for the adult exercise equipment and work has started on the installation. A pack of four hundred and twenty saplings has been ordered from The Woodland Trust, the vision is to make the Recreation Ground feel more park-like. The Council will fund the planting which will take place in the Autumn.

Cllr Layer said the grass cutting in the play area was bad, they have not been using the larger cutter.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Landscape Services to request the area be swept up and ask why the team is not using the second padlock on the gate.

Cllr Jackson reported that the pavilion roof has been cleaned and photos of broken tiles will be sent to the Council with a quotation. Wheelie bins stickers have been distributed to residents; more are available.

Cllr Jackson **PROPOSED** to accept the minutes of the meeting as a true record: **SECONDED** by Cllr Mould: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Jackson duly signed the minutes as a true record of the meeting.

Cllr Palmer thanked Cllr Jackson for her report.

ii. To consider quotation for garage mural

Cllr Jackson **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation of £300 from Hetty Godmon to paint the side of the garage: **SECONDED** by Cllr Layer: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

iii. Review of track gate.

Cllr Layer said that it had been reported that the track gate was not being locked at night. The track gate keeper said there were issues with people staying late on the Recreation Ground or are out walking their dogs and if the gate is locked, they knock on his door late at night. There is a height barrier which prevents commercial vehicles from using the track. People are using the play area in the correct manner but not leaving on time. Previously there were problems with vehicles racing their vehicles down the track and “donutting”.

Cllr Palmer said he would prefer people to be using the area if there are no anti-social issues. Cllr Harvey said that it is possible that people are unaware of the closure time. Notices could be put on vehicles left late at night.

Cllr Jackson said the opening time could be adjusted to the same as the ball court lights in the summer.

ACTION: Clerk to discuss with track gate keeper.

9. SWALE BOROUGH COUNCIL LAND

There was nothing to report.

10. ALLOTMENTS

Cllr Layer reported that the rest of the fencing has been replaced.

11. VILLAGE VOICE AND MEDIA

Cllr Mould said the May edition will be online and the June edition will be printed. Articles will include details of the Fete; a report on the Great British Spring Clean in the village; wheelie bin stickers and cold calling stickers; a report on the Annual Parish Meeting; Food Banks; the election results; Parish Council information on planning; and the adult exercise equipment.

Cllr Palmer thanked Cllr Mould for his sterling work.

12. FINANCE

i. Cheque list: to consider invoices for payment

Payee	Reason	Amount
Business Stream	Cemetery Water	£15.25
Mr A Mould	Expenses	£49.50
Mrs W Licence	APM expenses	£46.25
DCK Accounting	Payroll fees – Year end	£52.80
Mr E Layer	Parish Basic Allowance	£271.50
Mr A Mould	Parish Basic Allowance	£271.50

Mrs E Jackson	Parish Basic Allowance	£271.50
Mr R Palmer	Parish Basic Allowance	£543.00
Staff	Salary	£992.21
HMRC	PAYE & NI	£524.55
Administration	Expenses	£131.36
Mr R Malone	Litter Picking Recreation Ground - April Litter Picking	
	Total	£527.00
Mr MJ Marshall	Cemetery and Churchyard maintenance - April	£625.00
Mr R Burrows	Track gate keeper- April	£100.00
DCK Accounting	Payroll fees – April	
		£52.80
KALC	Subscription	£1,021.66
JBCS Kent	Pavilion Roof Cleaning	£595.00

Councillors considered the subscription to KALC and whether or not to renew. It was suggested that there could be better communication and the Council would want sound advice. This will be reviewed in 2024.

Cllr Godmon **PROPOSED** the payments be authorised; **SECONDED** by Cllr Mould: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Bank accounts

NatWest:- 31.03.23 £43,028.40

Nationwide:- 31.03.23 £46,034.40

Unity Trust:- 31.03.23 £37,232.62

Payments

21.03.23	NEST	Pension	£155.14
31.03.23	Unity Trust Bank	Bank charge	£18.00

Receipts

07.03.23	Vibe	Parish room hire	£20.00
----------	------	------------------	--------

ii. Finance report

Noted.

iii. To consider request from Swale Citizens Advice for a grant

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** that a grant of £100 be given to Swale Citizens Advice; **SECONDED** by Cllr Godmon: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

13. CHURCHYARD AND CEMETERY

Cllr Layer said that two recent graves have sunk and that he had discussed the matter with Rev Lane.

14. HIGHWAYS

Cllr Palmer said there will be a Highways Improvement Plan meeting with KCC Highways on 22 May.

15. STREET LIGHTING

i. To receive an update

Cllr Palmer said UKPN is arranging a date for early May to replace the column in Station Road. Cllr Palmer said light under bridge is not working and this has been reported to Network Rail

ii. To consider quotation to replace street light column

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the quotation of £815.02 + VAT to replace the column in Orchard Drive from Prime One Maintenance Ltd.

ACTION: Clerk to inform the track gate keeper.

17. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

Cllr Mould reported that he had attended a Finance Meeting at the School. The amalgamation with The Cherries Pre-School is progressing. The school is at its maximum roll. The budget has been agreed for the year and, if adhered to, there will be a surplus at the end of the year. Cllr Palmer thanked Cllr Mould for his report.

18. CORRESPONDENCE

C1- 27.03.23- Kent Police: Violence Against Women and Girls Community Event on Wednesday 26 April 2023

C2- 28.03.23- Kent Highways: Additional Phase - Temporary Road Closure – Various Roads, Maidstone & Swale

C3- 28.03.23- NALC CEO bulletin

C4- 03.04.23- Kent Local Authority Chief Executives Policy Round -up

C5- 06.04.23- National Highways: Roadworks in Kent next week

C6- 06.04.23- KCC Highways: 20mph speed limit - post survey analysis - A2 High Street, Newington

C7- 13.04.23- Kent Police Community Engagement Event - 26 April 2023

C8- 13.04.23- KALC Newsletter

C9- 13.04.23- National Testing of the UK's new Emergency Alerts system on Sunday 23rd April 2023

C10- 14.04.23- National Highways: Roadworks in Kent update

C11- 18.04.23- Kent Local Authority Chief Executives Policy Round -up

C12- 19.04.23 KCC Plan Tree: Parish Council Expression of Interest- NB this does not include the creation or reinstatement of hedgerows

C13- 20.04.23- KCC Highways & Transportation: Testing of a new fault reporting tool by Parish and Town Councils

C14- 21.04.23- NALC CEO bulletin

C15- 21.04.23- National Highways: update

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Jackson said Brogdale has free fruit trees for schools.

ACTION: Cllr Mould to inform the school.

Cllr Palmer reported that a magician has been booked for the Fete.

Cllr Mould said local businesses have offered sponsorship for some Fete activities.

Date of next meeting: Annual Parish Council Meeting- Tuesday 23 May 2023

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Date: 23 May 2023