

NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee held remotely on
23 June 2020.

Present: Cllr Elaine Jackson (Chair), Cllr Eric Layer (Vice Chairman), Cllr Ryan Condron, Cllr Richard Geldard, Cllr Stephen Harvey, Cllr James Morgan and Cllr Tony Mould; and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

1. Apologies for Absence

All Members were present.

2. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

3. Matters Arising

Cllr Jackson asked for an update on the replacement of the Bakelite meter at the Pavilion. The Clerk reported that she has had no response and is chasing for an update.

4. Public Question Time

No members of the public were present.

5. Anti-Social Behaviour

i. PCSO report

PCSO John Cork was unable to attend the meeting and sent the following report:

Newington has been quiet and I have only had reports again of our local drug dealer who is dealing drugs down the alley and in the station car park. We have been patrolling the area to combat anymore issues and with the help of residents we should catch him very soon.

20/05/20 Damage to a bench in Outdoor Pursuits UK, suspects caught and words of advice given.

09/06/20 Rock thrown at a vehicle causing damage to the driver's window. This happened in the High Street Newington.

12/06/20 damage trees in a garden in Church Lane believed to be done by the neighbour by weed killer

ii. Community Warden report

Community Warden Georgina Springall was unable to attend the meeting and sent the following report:

1) Regular welfare visits to elderly/vulnerable residents who are self-isolating.

2) Residents brown bins not been emptied – Swale Borough Council aware.

3) Arranged and delivered repeat prescriptions for residents self-isolating.

4) During weekends, children playing on play equipment and aerial runway- advised residents to report to PCSO John Cork or 101 when it is happening. Kent Police have a COVID-19 team to deal with people breaking regulations.

5) Adults also using outside gym equipment which again, is not permitted at present.

6) Two vehicles with same number plate on parked on public highway – Reported to PCSO John Cork who attended.

7) Resident in Brookes Place had glass in front door porch broken due to ball bearing catapulted from rear garden in Bull Lane – Police aware.

8) Fly tipping in Mill Lane, rubble, five tyres and asbestos sheeting – Swale Borough Council aware.

- 9) Further fly tipping in Mill Lane, wooden posts, wood and rubbish – Swale Borough Council aware.
- 10) Neighbour dispute – Optivo housing aware.
- 11) Suspected drug dealing – Police aware.
- 12) Dog bin overflowing at bottom of track in Recreation Ground – Reported to Swale Borough Council.
- 13) Two unsafe trees now both removed from green in Bramley Close.
- 14) High Street closed due to major gas leak – Police attended to manage traffic diversions.
- 15) Complaints from residents again regarding dog fouling (from same large dog) down track that leads to Monkey Island.
- 16) Complaints from residents regarding large vans constantly parking on pavement at entrance to Playstool Close causing complete obstruction to pedestrians – Advised to report to Police on 101.
- 17) With SBCllr Palmer's help, have now organised through 'Staying Put' a lower step and galvanised rails fitted to the back door of an elderly resident. It will now be safer for her to leave her property with her walker.

Unfortunately, unable to source plants for the village planters any more.

Cllr Jackson said there is an issue with people using the play equipment and outdoor gym equipment, currently some restrictions are being eased but the equipment should not be used. Cllr Harvey reported that Kent Police have refunded money taken in fines for breaches of lockdown. The Parish Council is covered as it has put up notices that the play area is closed and the equipment should not be used, if people chose to use it it is not the Council's responsibility.

Cllr Jackson said that as the track gate it closed the contractor may not be able to empty the dog waste bin, item 12.

Cllr Layer said that he had reported the matter and the bin was emptied. The issue is the trees need to be cut back along the track.

Cllr Harvey said there is a house in Playstool Road and one in Bull Lane which are clearly carrying out car repair businesses, they block the pavement, the road as well as their front garden areas.

ACTION: Clerk to request Community Warden to investigate.

6. Recreation Ground

i. To receive an update

Cllr Jackson said the hedge along the track was reported in February to the agents have asked the tenant to cut back the hedge along the track. This has been raised again by the allotment holders and the agents have been contacted again. The Allotment holders have been informed.

Cllr Jackson said the litter pickers have sent a report: a quad bike has been using the Recreation Ground; there has been a bonfire in the picnic area which the litter pickers have tidied up; there has been broken glass on basketball court and they have cleaned this up; the bin at the rear of The Bull has not been emptied and the litter picker is reporting this to Swale Borough Council. PCSO Cork can be asked to monitor the Recreation Ground and picnic area as bonfires and glass is to be discouraged.

ACTION: Clerk to contact PCSO Cork.

Cllr Layer said the quad bike is being lifted over the fence and ridden on by a child,

Cllr Harvey said the Parish Council had given permission for a child's toy quad bike to be used on the Recreation Ground.

Cllr Layer asked that the replacement of the swing chains be carried out before 4 July when play areas might be allowed to re-open

Cllr Harvey said the bearings need to be replaced on the sputnik as well.

ACTION: Clerk to contact contractor for an update.

Cllr Layer reported that he and Cllr Harvey had met with Dr Sarah Arnold, University of Greenwich entomologist and ecology researcher, to consider the wildlife area at the church

yard and also the community woodland. Little work can be done until the lockdown restrictions have been lifted.

Cllr Harvey said the Council must liaise with the church. There could be a working day in September. The woodland needs to have some trees removed and quotes will be needed for the work. There is still some s106 money for the Recreation ground and it could be used for the project.

Cllr Layer said the church had approached the Parish Council regarding God's Acre at the church yard.

ACTION: Clerk to contact the vicar for a meeting.

ii. To review the Play Area Tender Process

Cllr Jackson thanked Cllr Condron for updating the tender documents.

Cllr Condron said the Council had paused the procurement so the changes could be termed as a material change, so the easiest course is to close the original tender and open a new tender invitation with extra text.

Cllr Harvey said that in order to avoid depriving local children of play facilities, all work to be done outside of school holiday periods as published on the Kent County Council website. The questions and answers should not be lost. Some contractors have put a lot of time and money into drawing up their tender and were about to submit their tender but the process was paused. Some questions regarding the specification have been answered reasonable loose, for example the colour of the matting. I am happy to re-start the process but I am not happy to lose the clarification questions.

Cllr Condron said that this would then not be a new one so you would have to re-open the process, this can be done but would need different wording. This will be open for anyone to take part, so essentially if it is an extension of the previous one so anyone new to this process will have had less time to draw up their submission than those who were part of it previously. That is why if you say all questions are null and void from the previous one and you have to ask questions again. We already have the stock answers and this can be used again. If you incorporate the questions in the tender as clarification questions you have a two-tiered field, those who did this previously and those who are new to the process. The other thing that can be done is to incorporate the answers into the specification but the answers were not definitive. The process should be restarted and if bidders want to submit the same questions again, they can, otherwise you are re-issuing documents and that is not restarting.

Cllr Harvey said we need to include specifically that grass bases be left to enable small pieces of equipment can be added when funds permit, the new surfaces to be aesthetically pleasing and long lasting.

Cllr Condron said the main changes are dates. The original tender said that variant bids will not be accepted which means tenders must hit the specification, this has been amended to say that unless it is an agreed or informed clarification question. We also need to ask for references earlier. Potential bidders will need to have an accompanied site visit. It will be clear to bidders that this is a new procurement and any documents from before cannot be relied upon, to avoid confusion label *version 2* will be added to all documents. The deadline can be 24 July and the panel can meet on Friday, Saturday or Monday to review the tenders to be agreed at Full Council on 28 July, otherwise this will have to wait until the August meeting.

The Clerk said there could be an extraordinary Council meeting to agree the recommendation if necessary.

Cllr Layer said that as this is a significant spend, the decision must not be rushed.

Cllr Condron said that if the winning tender is obvious this is not an issue, however, the problem will come if the bids are close or the panel is split or there need to be clarification from a bidder

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** that the process be expanded by two weeks, one week for the benefit of potential contractors and one for the Council's benefit, an Extraordinary Parish Council

meeting be scheduled for the middle of August; **SECONDED** by Cllr Layer: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ACTION: Cllr Condron to revise tender documents.

Cllr Jackson thanked Cllr Condron and Cllr Harvey for their contributions.

iii. To consider graffiti removal on the garage

Cllr Jackson said the graffiti will be expensive to remove, the play area contractor might be able to assist.

It was agreed not to progress with the matter at present.

Cllr Layer said the commemoration tree from the Newington History Group will have to be given consideration.

iv. To consider request to use Recreation Ground for football training

Cllr Jackson said there has been a request from the Chairman of Milton & Fulston Utd FC for under18s to train, possibly on Thursday evenings. Bredhurst Junior Football Club pays £11.00 for additional session and matches in the summer.

It was agreed that Milton & Fulston Utd Football Club be permitted to train at the Recreation ground one evening a week avoiding the main pitch but using the perimeter and the five-aside pitch for a peppercorn rent of £5 per session.

ACTION: Clerk to advise Bredhurst Junior Football Club.

8. Pavilion

Cllr Jackson reported that she and the Pavilion Caretaker have carried out the Annual Risk Assessment. When the Pavilion opens again hand sanitisers may need to be installed.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotations.

Cllr Jackson said there needs to be toilet signs for the Pavilion.

ACTION: Cllr Morgan to purchase signs.

Cllr Jackson said the veranda ceiling still needs to be repaired, the contractor has just started working again and this is on his list of jobs. It is not a priority as the Pavilion is locked at the moment.

9. Allotments

Cllr Layer reported that everything is fine at the allotments.

10. Highways

i. To receive an update

Cllr Harvey reported that the air quality monitoring station is being moved to the east of the bus stop and the bench will be moved to the other side. The moving of the bench is on condition that if it is damaged, Swale Borough Council will replace it. Also, the bench needs to be visible to the bus driver.

Cllr Harvey informed Members that he has raised concern with Sharron Davin about the works signage, one sign opposite 61 High Street has slipped down and cannot be moved, a resident fell over the sign. There has been no response from Sharron Davin and KCCllr Whiting has been informed. There was meant to be a meeting to look at what has gone well during the gas works and what needs improving and this was also raised two weeks ago with Simon Jones, KCC Highways, and there has been no response from him.

Cllr Jackson said that she was concerned that after recent work the streetlight has not been reinstated on the island on the A2 at the junction of Playstool Road and the bollards are not connected. A meeting would have addressed all of this.

ACTION: Clerk to chase.

Cllr Jackson said a large sign for the next phase of work on 25 July has been erected and there has been a Romanian lorry going the wrong way and another which was lost. The signage may be an issue again.

ii. Newington Parish Highway Improvement Plan

Cllr Jackson said the Parish Highway Improvement Plan has been put on hold.

Cllr Layer said that it cannot be progressed until the Village Voice can be printed and delivered.

ITEM FOR FULL COUNCIL.

11. Lights

Cllr Jackson reported that the light opposite 64 Bull Lane has been hit by a lorry and a resident has provided the lorry's details.

Cllr Layer reported that two lights in Church Lane have new columns.

12. Footpaths and Bridleways

There was nothing to report.

13. Events

Cllr Jackson said that a Newington Fayre had been suggested for 2021.

Cllr Mould said that due to the current pandemic, the event should be held in 2022.

14. Village Voice and media

i. To receive an update

Cllr Mould had circulated a draft prior to the meeting and ideas were put forward for inclusion.

ii. To consider the publicising of the hedgerows campaign and ask for residents to identify hedgerows of 30yrs plus in the village.

Cllr Jackson said the hedgerow campaign is important for anyone and needs to be published on the Council's website.

15. Any Other Business

Cllr Layer said there needs to be a meeting of the Cemetery Working Group.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange a meeting.

Date of Next Meeting: 21 July 2020

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chair

Date: 30 June 2020