

# NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 28 February 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 Mr Jackson, Pavilion Caretaker, and one member of the public.

Cllr Palmer welcomed everyone to the meeting

## 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Cllr Ruth Brown (unwell); apologies accepted. Apologies had also been received from KCCllr Mike Baldock (personal) and SBCllr Alan Horton (annual leave); apologies noted.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

## 3. MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 31 JANUARY 2023

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

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

## 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Cllr Palmer reported that, so far, seven groups have indicated that they will send a representative to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Cllr Harvey said he has the 20mph banners, there needs to be a meeting of the Highways Improvement Plan Working Group.

Cllr Harvey said pressure needs to be kept up on the Community Warden provision, currently the village has a part-time shared Community Warden and soon we will lose the PCSO. If KCCllr Baldock were able to help that would be good, it seems to be blocked by the ruling party.

Cllr Mould said concern had been raised that the fete and fun fair were on the same day and that some families might not be able to afford both.

Cllr Harvey said this year was an experiment, it was decided not to have the fete in May as it could be too cold and the weather might not be good in June so it was decided to hold the fete in July.

*ACTION: Cllr Mould to discuss with resident.*

## 5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

*The meeting was adjourned for the Public Question Time*

1#- A representative from the Village Hall Management Committee said they are applying for a free Microsoft 365 license and the form requires a web address which the hall does not have. There is a page for the Village Hall on the Council's website, please can the committee use this?

It was agreed that the Village Hall Management Committee should use the Council's web address.

2#- There have been cold callers in the village, are the signs still up.

Cllr Harvey said one sign is up but the other is in his garage, the Clerk has been looking into obtaining fixings for the last two years.

The Clerk said she had tried but could not get them.

Cllr Harvey said the Clerk should look at the signs and take a photo.

*ACTION: Cllr Layer to get fixings.*

3#- The Council's website has a photo of a bare orchard, could this be changed?

*ACTION: Cllr Godmon to take photos for website.*

*The meeting was reconvened.*

## **6. VISITORS**

### i. Borough Councillors

SBCllr Horton was unable to attend the meeting and reported: *I have nothing Newington specific to report, I have picked up on the issues in Bricklands (Mill Hill) with the state of the road*

SBCllr Palmer said Bricklands has been reported to KCC Highways and has been marked up. Fly tipping is a problem and this is being reported and cleared. The Speed Watch registration has been completed, there are sites in the village and information on equipment will be obtained.

Cllr Harvey said there is a Speed Watch presentation at the KALC Swale Area Committee on 14 March.

SBCllr Palmer said he had also been contacted regarding neighbour disputes; the cost of living crisis and heating issues and has referred residents to agencies.

### ii. County Councillor

KCCllr Baldock was unable to attend the meeting and reported:

The main news from Kent County Council this month is that the Conservative Budget has been passed by Full Council.

This budget, whilst set against a national picture of high inflation and reduced Government grants to local Councils, is still a huge disappointment as the 'business as usual' model of KCC is quite clearly failing - as indeed was pointed out to the Conservatives last year when they set the 2022 Budget.

With an astonishing multi-million pounds cut to Highways Maintenance, against a backdrop of a backlog nearing £3/4 billion and roads in Kent found to be the worst in England by the RAC in 2022, this effectively signals the end of any real pretence by KCC that our highways will ever be properly addressed, and again brings forward the possibility that with a decade they will have to start closing roads.

A fresh approach to the administration of KCC is needed urgently, but sadly the current administration seems unable to consider alternative ways of working and of addressing this looming disaster.

There is also a further cutting of the budget for Community Wardens which is a hugely negative

approach as these Wardens save the council so much for future years by tackling anti-social behaviour, and encouraging vulnerable residents to seek early intervention in care and health matters.

The Green and Independents Group that I am part of sought to address some of these cuts by proposing amendments to be paid for by introducing Council Tax charges on empty homes once the government permits this, as it is expected to do later this year, or by estimated council tax collection fund balance surplus.

Our amendments sought to introduce funding for EV Community Buses, protect the number of Community Wardens, to restore the second grass cutting swathes each year, reduce our reliance on harmful glyphosates in weed sprays, support Community Grants, and investigate new ways of delivering home to school transport funding. Sadly all our amendments were voted down by the Conservatives

## 7. PLANNING

Cllr Harvey said planning officers can only be contacted on Wednesday mornings and they do not have to be at their desks, concern has been emailed regarding this.

### i. Ref: 22/504243/FULL

Address: Bobbing Solar Farm Nr Sittingbourne Kent ME9 8NN

Proposal: Addition of 40 CCTV cameras and poles at Bobbing Solar Farm.

Cllr Harvey said the Parish Council had objected to the proposal and raised questions, responses have been received.

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** to respond that the Council is somewhat reassured by the applicant's response and, as long as conditions are met, the Council withdraws its objections; **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**

**ACTION:** Clerk to ascertain if the cameras are to be fixed or motorised.

### ii. To receive an update

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 said a decision is yet to be made, the application will go to committee, nothing has changed since the proposal was turned down in October 2022.

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 said 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 reported that a decision is yet to be made.

*Previously discussed: for information*

Application: 22/504579/FULL 47 Bull Lane, Newington ME9 7LT

Proposal: Creation of new driveway, insertion of crossed over and dropped Kerb.

Cllr Harvey said a decision is yet to be made.

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).

Cllr Harvey informed Members that the application had been refused.

*Appeal to the Planning Inspectorate*

Application: 21/501791/PIP Land At 164 Bull Lane, Newington ME9 7NB

Proposal: Permission in Principle for the erection of a detached two storey sustainable self-build or custom building dwelling with new access onto Bull Lane.

PINS reference: V2255/W/21/3286759

Cllr Harvey reported the appeal had been dismissed.

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 a decision is yet to be made.

Application: 22/500887/FULL 77 Playstool Road, Newington ME9 7NL

Proposal: Erection of rear conservatory (retrospective

PINS Reference: APP/V2255/D/22/3304011

Cllr Harvey reported that the appeal had been allowed and planning permission has been granted.

Cllr Palmer thanked Cllr Harvey for his report.

Cllr Jackson asked for an update on the mobile homes on London Road.

Cllr Palmer said enforcement action is taking place regarding several alleged breaches of planning conditions.

## **8. AMENITIES**

i. To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Amenities Committee held on 21 February 2023 and consider the recommendations

Cllr Jackson reported that the bushes for the swings and the fence bolts were done earlier this month. The sputnik is being repaired and the contractor hopes to reinstate it this week. One hundred wheelie bin stickers have been ordered. The Pavilion electricity cost is 17.73p per kWh.

*ACTION: Clerk to maintain updated electricity and water tables.*

ii. To consider allocating Fun Fair fee to the fete budget

Cllr Jackson **PROPOSED** to allocate the Fun Fair fee to the fete budget; **SECONDED** by Cllr Harvey: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Jackson said the Clerk is looking into grants for the fete.

iii. Replacement litter bin

The Clerk reported that she is still trying to get a price for a bin from Swale.

Cllr Palmer said there needs to be a bin by the woods and also by the entrance to the Recreation Ground. Consideration could be given to dual use bins.

Cllr Jackson said there is a problem with dog waste on the Recreation Ground.

The minutes were amended.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to accept the minutes of the meeting, as amended, as a true record

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

Cllr Palmer thanked Cllr Jackson for her report.

## 9. SWALE BOROUGH COUNCIL LAND

Cllr Palmer said the Clerk has been contacting Swale Borough Council since beginning of July 2022 but has had no answer. This will continue to be chased.

## 10. ALLOTMENTS

There was nothing to report.

## 11. VILLAGE VOICE AND MEDIA

Cllr Mould said the next edition, which will be online, will include an article about cold callers and stickers being available at the pharmacy; Parish Room hire; Annual Parish Meeting; Medway Arts Society; Newington History Society; Swale Foodbank; May elections; Newington Charities; Spring Clean.

It was agreed to have the annual Spring Clean on 29 April.

*ACTION: Clerk to email groups.*

## 12. FINANCE

### i. Cheque list: to consider invoices for payment

Payee	Reason	Amount
Mrs LJ Bullard <i>Paid out of meeting</i>	Face painter deposit- Coronation Fete	<b>£65.00</b>
Mr R Jackson	Pavilion expenses	<b>£6.39</b>
DCK Accounting	Payroll fees – February	<b>£36.00</b>
Staff	Salary	<b>£766.90</b>
HMRC	PAYE & NI	<b>£40.33</b>
Mrs W Licence	Expenses	<b>£64.00</b>
Mr R Malone	Litter Picking Recreation Ground - February Litter Picking	
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£527.00</b>
Mr MJ Marshall	Cemetery and Churchyard maintenance - February	<b>£625.00</b>
Mr R Burrows	Track gate keeper- February	<b>£100.00</b>
Mrs W Licence	Reimbursement of wheelie bin stickers	<b>£95.00</b>
Railton TPC Ltd	Transport report	<b>£400.00</b>
Business Stream	Cemetery Water	<b>£434.15</b>

Business Stream	Recreation Ground and Allotments water	<b>£32.55</b>
Mr R Malone	Street litter picking- period 13	<b>£327.00</b>
WES Electrical Services	Pavilion works	<b>£276.00</b>
Swale Borough Council	Printing- Village Voice	<b>£111.00</b>

Cllr Godmon **PROPOSED** the payments be authorised: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ii. Finance report

No questions had been raised

iii. Any other finance matter received by 28 February 2023

Bank Accounts

NatWest:- 03.02.23 £42,9462.99

Nationwide:- 31.03.22 £45,774.68

Unity Trust:- 31.12.22 £59,363.74

Payments

04.01.23	Drax Energy	Pavilion	£2,489.25
16.01.23	NEST	Pension	£ 159.37
20.01.23	Drax Energy	Pavilion and lighting	£ 481.07

Cllr Palmer thanked Cllr Godmon for his report.

**13. CHURCHYARD AND CEMETERY**

Cllr Layer said the churchyard and Cemetery are looking good. The Amenities Committee agreed to recommend paying Business Stream, they had given the refund in error and have made an ex-gratia payment of £200.00. Business Stream now has the correct address for the Cemetery.

Cllr Palmer thanked Cllr Layer for his report.

**14. HIGHWAYS**

Cllr Palmer said he had raised the issue of HGVs using rural lanes with Kent Police and also regarding not acting on speeding even when reported. The signage issue in Bull Lane has been raised with David Brazier, KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, as KCC is responsible for signposting lorry routes.

**15. STREET LIGHTING**

Cllr Harvey said the alleyway light still has not been repaired.

Cllr Palmer said he has contacted the officer and the person dealing with this is on leave until next month.

Cllr Jackson said two lights on the London Road are out.

Cllr Palmer said the Clerk has been chasing the contractor regarding the Station Road light, UKPN is waiting for permits to be issued by KCC as they need to arrange for road closure in Station Road due to Parking issues and access to the effected column and underground Cable Network.

*ACTION: Clerk to contact David Brazier, it has taken over a year to get a permit.*

## 16. REPORTS FROM MEMBERS

There were no reports.

Next KALC Swale Area Committee meeting on 14 March.

## 17. CORRESPONDENCE

1. 31.01.23- KCC Member briefing note, highways maintenance and winter service
2. 31.01.23- SBC Area Committees – February 2023 round of meetings
3. 02.02.23- Southern Water news release covering the recent bill announcement
4. 03.02.23- KCC Consultation: Home to School and Post 16 Transport for Mainstream and SEND Pupils
5. 03.02.23- KALC Newsletter
6. 03.02.23- KALC elections bulletin
7. 06.02.23- (via SBC): Kent Local Authority Chief Executives Weekly Policy Round-Ups
8. 06.02.23- KCC Highways: Temporary Road Closure and Temporary 40 & 20 MPH Speed Restrictions - Various Roads, Swale (Surface Treatments) - 17th March 2023
9. 07.02.23- SBC Western Area Committee Meeting - Thursday 16 February at 7 pm – Agenda
10. 09.02.23- Kent Police & Crime Commissioner Newsletter: Victim Voice Special Edition
11. 10.02.23: KCC's Community Services Consultation
12. 13.02.23: Kent Local Authority Chief Executives Weekly Policy Round-Ups
13. 13.02.23: NALC CEO bulletin
14. 13.02.23: KALC: Nomination call for International Women's Day
15. 14.02.23: NALC CEO bulletin
16. 14.02.23: SBC: Invitation to attend Swale Corporate Peer Challenge focus group
17. 14.02.23- NALC newsletter
18. 14.02.23- KCC: Armed Forces Awareness training
19. 15.02.23- NALC newsletter
20. 17.02.23- NALC CEO bulletin
21. 17.02.23- Swale Borough Council: Agenda for Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting on Monday 27 February 2023
22. 22.02.23- KALC events flyer
23. 23.02.23- Keep Britain Tidy- Great British Spring Clean
24. 24.02.23- National Highways: roadworks in Kent

## 18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr Harvey said the Council accepted a quote to have the roof inspected but the contractor said this was on condition the roof was cleaned first.

*ACTION: Clerk to obtain further quotations.*

It was agreed that the quotations be considered by Amenities with a budget of £500.

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 28 March 2023**

There being no further business, the meeting finished at 8.21pm

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Date: 28 March 2023