

# NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee held in the Parish Room, Newington Pavilion on 20 May 2025

Present: Cllr Elaine Jackson (Chairman), Cllr Eric Layer (Vice Chairman), Cllr Michael Barlow, Cllr Ruth Brown, Cllr Stephen Harvey, Cllr Tony Mould and Cllr Barbara Weight; and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk)

Also present was Mr Bob Jackson, Pavilion Caretaker

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr C Palmer (at another meeting); apologies accepted.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR LOBBYING

Cllr Brown declared a pecuniary interest in item 15, as her husband is employed by a street lighting contractor.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 MARCH 2025

Cllr Jackson reported that dates to lay the wood chippings at woods have been given to the contractor who he is liaising with local businesses for free use of their services. The ladder was purchased. There is still no response regarding if planning permission is needed to install the new village Notice board.

### 4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

No matters were raised.

### 5. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

No report was available.

### 6. RECREATION GROUND AND GREEN SPACES

#### i. To receive an update

Cllr Layer reported that the recent grass cutting was disappointing as strips had been missed and the area near the goal post should have been strimmed.

Cllr Jackson reported that there had been an under-9s football match on Saturday and there will be another in two weeks. The 11-aside is not currently used.

Cllr Harvey informed Members a large toy car had been left at the Recreation Ground, the litter picker informed the Clerk who reported it to Swale Borough Council.

#### ii. To review the specifications for litter picking streets and Recreation Ground

Councillors reviewed and updated the specifications for litter picking streets and Recreation Ground; the contracts are due for renewal from 1 November.

*7.12pm Cllr Mould arrived.*

#### iii. To review the specification for Recreation Ground maintenance

Councillors reviewed and updated the specification for Recreation Ground maintenance.

*ACTION: Clerk to ascertain when fence line will be treated by the contractor.*

#### iv. Sponsorship of woodland bulbs

Cllr Harvey said this will be launched in the Village Voice, the fete and on the notice board outside the Pavilion; possibly in communications with the bereaved. Quotes for planting the bulbs need to be obtained; the tree work will need to be carried out before the planting. The

trees need to be marked before the leaves drop, previously the contractor had requested to do this and did not hear back.

The Clerk said she had asked the contractor if he needed to meet with a Councillor and also chased on several occasions but did not hear back.

Cllr Harvey asked for an update on repairs to the barrier.

The Clerk reported that she is still waiting for a quotation.

Cllr Layer **PROPOSED** to purchase 250 bluebell bulbs at £98: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

v. To consider quotation to replace the posts around the village sign

Waiting to receive quotation from contractor.

## **7. PAVILION**

Mr Jackson reported that the contractor will phone tomorrow to arrange a date to install the lock hasp at the garage.

## **8. YOUTH CLUB**

Cllr Jackson reported that the quotation of £149.34 per session from Vibe for the Summer Holiday Club has been accepted for five sessions. This needs to be promoted in the Village Voice and through flyers. Vibe does not have the funding to go into assemblies and a quotation has been requested.

*ACTION: Clerk to chase.*

Cllr Harvey asked if Vibe will be attending the Fete.

The Clerk reported that Vibe hopes to be there.

## **9. ALLOTMENTS**

Cllr Layer reported that the allotments are tidy and there has been a manure delivery. There are a few vacant plots which will be advertised in the Village Voice.

Cllr Jackson informed Members that compensation has been received from the Police for the lock and paid to the Allotments Association.

## **10. HIGHWAYS**

Cllr Harvey said PC Chittim has sent an update regarding an issue in Calloways Lane, the resident needs to be informed.

*ACTION: Clerk.*

Cllr Harvey said it will take twelve weeks to replace the heritage railings in the High Street.

## **11. FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS**

Cllr Harvey informed Members that people keep removing the signs on the PROW at the back of The Tracies.

## **12. SPONSORSHIP OF PLANTERS**

Cllr Jackson said a quote has been requested from a local person.

The Clerk informed Councillors that she had contacted a local garden centre but they have said that someone needs to go in and choose a planter and plants; the garden centre does not offer a maintenance service.

Cllr Harvey said that Swale Borough Council maintains the planters by the bus stop; they could be approached regarding maintenance.

*ACTION: Clerk to seek further quotes.*

Cllr Layer said the planters by the junction of Playstool Road and by the bus stop are being maintained by members of the Allotments Association.

Cllr Jackson said a resident has suggested planting spring bulbs in the planter she maintains; this has been agreed.

### 13. VILLAGE VOICE AND MEDIA

#### i. To receive an update on the Village Voice

Cllr Mould reported the next edition will be a paper copy with an A5 insert promoting the Fete and dog show; sponsorship of woodland bulbs and the allotment availability will also be included. The Village Directory will be updated.

#### ii. To consider Parish Council Facebook page

Cllr Jackson said a Facebook Page would be for information only, people would not be able to add comments.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to have a Parish Council Facebook page. Cllr Barlow to set up.

Cllr Harvey asked how many people have signed up to the website.

*ACTION: Clerk.*

#### iii. To consider Parish Council email addresses

Cllr Jackson said that currently .gov.uk emails are not mandatory but advisable. In the 2025-26 audits, Mazars will raise this as a matter on the Annual Return.

Cllr Harvey said if it is not mandatory, a watching brief should be kept.

*ACTION: Clerk to check.*

### 14. CEMETERY AND CHURCHYARD

#### i. To receive an update

Cllr Layer reported that a complaint had been made regarding the strimming of graves and a broken vase at the cemetery; this has been resolved. The Cemetery looks good at the moment.

Cllr Jackson said there had been an enquiry to add a plaque to the memorial bench.

The Clerk reported that she has just received the text and is waiting for a quote to install it.

Cllr Layer said a forthcoming interment of ashes without a Funeral Director needs to have an official from the Council, this needs to be the Clerk.

Councillors **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** that the cost for an attended interment of ashes and administration be £150.

#### ii. To review the specification for Cemetery and Churchyard maintenance

Councillors reviewed and updated the specification for the maintenance of the Cemetery and Churchyard.

### 15. STREET LIGHTS

*Cllr Brown left the meeting and did not take part in the discussion*

Cllr Jackson reported that the contractor does not recognise the Bull Lane lanterns. Another contractor has been contacted for a quotation.

#### **17. ii. Christmas lights** *(item brought forward)*

Cllr Jackson reported that Bobbing Parish Council have commercial Christmas Lights, enquiries will be made regarding installing the lights where the former public toilets were.

*Cllr Brown returned to the meeting.*

### 16. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLAN

Cllr Harvey said the initiative is being promoted by KALC; previously he and the Clerk looked into this but it was not progressed because there was no guarantee the plan would be used. Now, if there were to be an unexpected event, the Council would have access to Swale Borough Council Emergency Officer who can contact the Kent County Council Emergency

Officer if necessary. There needs to be a prime contact, could be a group to organise a response.

## **17. EVENTS**

### **i. Summer Fete 2025**

Cllr Jackson informed members that the grant application to The Wickham Trust for feather banners for fete was unfortunately found to be outside their remit.

Cllr Mould said another Fete Working Group meeting will be arranged.

## **18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Cllr Mould said questions have been asked as to why the beacon was not lit for VE-Day, the problem is that the beacon is in an inaccessible location. Residents have requested that the beacon be moved, it could be sited at the Recreation Ground.

It was **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY** to consider moving the beacon to a more accessible location.

*ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotation to move the beacon.*

Cllr Weight asked for an update on replacing the bins in Bull Lane.

The Clerk reported that she has chased Swale Borough Council and is waiting to hear back.

## **DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 17 JUNE 2025**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.25pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chairman

Date: 27 May 2025