

Newick Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Newick Parish Council held at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 25th April 2017 in the Sports Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Allington Road, Newick.

Present: Councillors C. Armitage, G. Clothier, M. Halsey, B. Horsfall, G. Jones, J. Sheppard, J. Smerdon (Chairman), J. White, C. Wickens and K. Wrench.

In Attendance: Mrs S. Berry (Clerk)
Four members of the public

An audio recording was made of the meeting

- 1. Apologies for Absence:-** Apologies had been received from Councillor I. Nesbitt.
- 2. Disclosure by Members of personal interest in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct: -** Councillor Jones declared an interest in agenda item 11.4 (Allotments).
- 3. Questions or statements by Members of the Public**

Mrs Thew read out a statement in connection with agenda item 9.6 (recommendation by Neighbourhood Plan Committee to co-opt Mr Lucas and Mrs Thew to the Neighbourhood Plan Committee). She introduced herself and for the benefit of those who did not know her and outlined her past experience as a member of Newick Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. She gave her reasons for resigning from the Parish Council in November 2016 and spoke of the subsequent action taken by Newick Action Group and Baroness Cumberlege. Mrs Thew gave her reasons for not accepting the position of co-opted councillor in January 2017 and offered her services as a co-opted member of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

Mr Lucas spoke in connection with agenda items 9.6 and 13 (Issues raised at Annual Parish Meeting). In connection with agenda item 9.6 he stated that he believed that, had six councillors not resigned from the Parish Council in November 2016, Baroness and Mr Cumberlege would not have taken legal action in connection with the Mitchelswood Farm planning appeal.

In connection with agenda item 13 he, firstly, corrected a statement made by Mr Cumberlege at the Annual Parish Meeting regarding the Mitchelswood Farm planning appeal, clarifying that the Secretary of State had conceded on the grounds that Lewes District Council's saved policy CT1 (Planning Boundary and Key Countryside Policy) had been found to be sound in two other appeal cases and not on whether or not the District Council could demonstrate a five year land supply. Secondly, Mr Lucas referred to the fact that the Chairman's report presented at the Annual Parish Meeting did not name or thank the six councillors who had resigned from the Council in November 2016, although two others who had resigned earlier in the year were thanked. He requested that a letter of thanks should be sent to the six councillors who resigned.

The Chairman apologised for this oversight but clarified that she had sent an email to the resigning councillors shortly after they had resigned and that she had thanked them publicly in an article published in the Parish Council Newsletter (Winter 2016/17 edition).

Mr Young and Mr Harding spoke in connection with agenda item 11.5 (Update on Newick Post Office). They outlined their involvement in a project which aimed to maintain a post office in Newick as a community initiative. They had been in discussion with the current Postmaster and with Post Office Ltd and were in the process of putting together a business plan. They had concluded that the contract on offer from The Post Office would not be viable unless it was operated alongside another thriving business. As this would not be the case in the short term, they were investigating how best to raise the funds (estimated at £17,000 per annum) to maintain the Post Office. The suggested possibilities included using volunteer staff, appealing to the community for donations, raising funds through the Parish Council precept, or selling shares in the business. Mr Young indicated that he would be willing take on the role of Postmaster but stressed that no discussions regarding remuneration had taken place as there were currently no funds available to pay the Postmaster. Mr Young and Mr Harding answered some questions raised by members of the Parish Council and agreed to provide an updated report for further consideration.

It was agreed that the Finance and General Purposes Committee would look in to this matter further once the report had been received.

Two members of the public left the meeting at 7.29 p.m.

13. To agree any issues raised at Annual Parish Meeting held 19th April 2017 to be taken forward by Parish Council – This item had been brought forward in order to assist the member of the public who had made a statement on this matter under agenda item 3 above. There were no further comments or issues raised. The Chairman thanked members of the Parish Council for their help with organising the meeting and Cllr. Wickens for her presentation.

4. **Lewes District/East Sussex County Councillor Jim Sheppard's report on matters affecting Newick** – Cllr. Jim Sheppard had sent his apologies that, owing to other commitments, he was unable to attend the meeting.
5. **Maria Caulfield MP** – there was no report from Maria Caulfield MP. It was agreed that, in view of the forthcoming general election, this item would not appear on the agenda for the next Parish Council meeting.
6. **Approval of draft minutes of Parish Council meeting held 28th March 2017** – It was agreed by those who had been present that the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 28th March 2017 could be signed as a true record.
7. **Clerk's Report** – A report from the Clerk which included a list of correspondence received since the last meeting and confirmation that Register of Members' Interests forms from Cllrs. Armitage and Wickens had been submitted to Lewes District Council (LDC) had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk confirmed that the forms had since been published on the LDC website. The Clerk had also reported on a seminar that she had attended where the focus was on social media and suggested that the Council should consider having a social media policy. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee would be brought forward to look at this matter and to discuss the report on the Post Office.
8. **Report by Clerk on any action taken under Delegated Powers in consultation with Chairman and/or Vice-Chairman** – There was nothing to report.
9. **Planning:**

9.1 **Approval of minutes of Planning Committee meeting held 11th April 2017** – It was agreed by those who had been present that the draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held 11th April 2017 could be signed as a true record.

9.2 Consideration of Planning Applications

Newick	Flat 2 20 Church Road
LW/17/0272	Planning Application - Replacement window to front of property for Ms J James.
Case Officer:	It was unanimously agreed to support this planning application as it respected
Mrs Sarah Sheath	the Conservation Area in accordance with policy EN1 of Newick's Neighbourhood Plan.

9.3 Approvals/Refusals etc. –

LW/17/0196 The Glass Houses, Fletching Lane - It was noted that Lewes District Council had determined that prior approval as to the method of demolition of the site was not required.

9.4 Tree works applications –

TW/17/0026/TPO – Oak, T2 of the Order. Shorten lowest horizontal branch over A272, to growth point approximately 1m from the BT wire. Reason: To unimpede the BT wire to prevent it being damaged. It was noted that the Council's Tree Wardens had supported this tree works application.

9.5 **Approval of minutes of Neighbourhood Plan Committee Meeting held 5th April 2017** – It was agreed by those who had been present that the draft minutes of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee meeting held 5th April 2017 could be signed as a true record.

9.6 Recommendations by Neighbourhood Plan Committee

The draft updated Terms of Reference for the Neighbourhood Plan Committee had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was agreed that these should be approved.

It was agreed that Mr John Lucas and Mrs Melanie Thew should be co-opted as non-councillor members of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee, giving the committee the benefit of their experience as members of the former Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (Local Government Act 1972 s.102(3)).

It was agreed that an annual subscription to Planning Resource should be taken out at a cost of £195 (or £165 if it were possible to sign up to a direct debit arrangement). The Clerk was asked to check the situation regarding direct debits and to arrange for this method of payment if the Financial Regulations allowed. **Action Clerk**

9.7 Consideration of S1/242 Western Road s278 highway proposals

Highway proposals to provide access to the SANG, including a pedestrian crossing place combined with a 30mph gateway feature and new vehicle access to the SANG had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed that the following comments should be passed on to East Sussex Transport Development Control:-

- All kissing gates to be used at the site should be of a square (or mobility) design to allow easy access for the disabled and those with child buggies.
- It had previously been understood that a pedestrian refuge would be provided but this does not appear on the plan. The reasons for this omission were not clear.
- The lengthening of the 30 mph speed limit zone further to the west was to be welcomed, however, the Council considered that this should be extended further to the point where the 40 mph limit currently begins.
- The Council does not believe that the proposed location for pedestrian crossing to the site is safe and would strongly recommend that pedestrian crossing lights should be provided at this location.
- Although possibly outside the scope of this consultation, the Council wanted to know whether the fencing around the site would be dog proof.

In answer to a query raised about the cutting of the verges, the Clerk confirmed that grass cutting of the highway verges at this location was carried out for the Parish Council by Barcombe Landscapes under and agency agreement with East Sussex County Council.

Two members of the public left the meeting at 8.15 p.m.

10. Financial Matters:

10.1 Clerk's Salary – It was agreed that the Clerk's salary should be increased by 1% with effect from 1st April 2017 in line with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) agreement.

10.2 To approve schedule of payments for April 2017 – It was agreed that the schedule of payments for March 2017 should be approved. It was agreed that the cheques would be signed by Cllrs. Halsey and Sheppard.

Payee	Item	Invoice Amount	Cheque Number
	Total amount to be paid for Clerk's Salary, tax & national insurance and pension contributions.	£1267.10	201276, 201277 201294
Spoilt cheque			201278
D. Sankey Ltd	Routine Mole Treatment	£100.80	201279
Lewes District Council	Play Area Inspection	£18.00	201280
Barcombe Landscapes Ltd	Hedge and grounds maintenance - KGVPF	£377.96	201281
East Sussex ALC Ltd	ESALC & NALC Subscriptions 2017/18	£728.17	201282
S.E. Berry	Reimbursement for items purchased by Clerk on behalf of Parish Council	£201.84	201283
CHEC	Printing of newsletters, clubs & societies leaflets & notices for annual parish meeting	£382.00	201284
Mr C R Goddard	Delivery of newsletters etc.	£120.00	201285
C.P. Griffiths	Repair of Community Centre wall	£220.00	201286
S. Orwin	Village Maintenance	£262.50	201287

Fields in Trust	Membership Subscription	£50.00	201288
NACCA	Hire of Community Centre 1/4/17 (all day) & 11/04/17 (evening)	£54.00	201289
Ms. A Harrison	Reimbursement for Food Fair expenditure	£128.21	201290
Mrs J Smerdon	Refreshments for Twitten Tidy Day and Annual Parish Meeting	£144.65	201291
NVHMC	Hire of Village Hall 19/04/17 & annual fee for storage	£188.00	201292
Lewes District Council	Annual Play Inspection	£137.93	201293
Total		£4,381.16	

Income in April 2017

Food Fair	Stallholders	£70.00
Rose Cottage, 36 & 40 The Rough & 6 Vernons Rd	Payment for access across PC land	£20.00
East Sussex County Council	Contribution towards fingerpost work	£979.20
UK Power Network	Wayleave payments	£63.89
Lewes District Council	Precept & Grant - 1st instalment	£27,697.00
Newick Allotment Society	Annual Rent for Cornwells Bank Allotments	£500.00
Total		£29,330.09

10.3 To note statement of performance against budget as at end March 2017 – The statement of performance against budget for the year ending March 2017 had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted.

10.4 Approval of minutes of Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting held 11th April 2017 – It was agreed by those who had been present that the draft minutes of the Finance & General Purposes meeting held 11th April 2017 could be signed as a true record.

10.5 Recommendations by Finance & General Purposes Committee –

It was agreed that the year-end surplus funds of £7660 should be transferred to the General Reserve.

It was agreed that £2000 currently held in a High Street Verge fund should be transferred to the General Reserve in line with a recommendation made by the Council (26th April 2016, minute 11.5, page 100).

It was agreed to approve the updated Freedom of Information Scheme

It was agreed to approve the updated System of Internal Controls document

10.6 It was noted that Cllr. Horsfall had checked the quarterly bank reconciliation carried out by the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and found it to be in order. Copies had been circulated prior to the meeting.

11. Committees' and Councillors' Reports

11.1 Environment & Recreation Committee – The minutes of the Strengthening Local Relationships meeting with East Sussex Highways held on 12th April 2017 had been circulated in advance of the meeting and were noted.

11.2 Newick Village Hall Management Committee (NVHMC) – Cllr. Smerdon reported that NVHMC was still intending to replace the extractor fan in the kitchen and to redecorate the hall. She advised that the cost of the stage curtains, towards which the Parish Council had given a grant, had turned out to be considerably cheaper than had originally been quoted which meant that the Parish Council grant would cover more than 25% of the cost of the work. It was agreed to take no action on this matter.

11.3 Neighbourhood Watch – A copy of an email dated 10th April 2017 from Inspector Rob Lovell, Sussex Police, to Cllr. Sheppard had been circulated prior to the meeting and was noted. Cllr. Sheppard reported that she had experienced difficulties in getting any response from the Police when she reported low level problems such as anti-social behaviour, however, it was noted that they did attend when a more serious problem at one of the pubs was reported. It was suggested that the Council could get together with other Parish Councils, possibly through Lewes District Association of Local Councils, to try to find some way of letting Sussex Police know of their dissatisfaction with the current situation. Cllr. Halsey reported that he had seen Police patrol cars in the village on several occasions recently.

11.4 Allotments – Cllr. Smerdon reported that that the Cornwells Bank allotment site had been cleared and that plots had been allocated. There would be a designated parking area provided, but this may require planning permission. It was proposed that the access gate to the site should be relocated further in to the site which would prevent allotment holders from having to park on the road while they unlocked the

gate. It was agreed that Cllr. Smerdon would obtain two quotations for installing new wooden gate posts and rehanging the gate, the cost of this work to be funded from the allotment reserve.

11.5 Update on Newick Post Office – This had been discussed earlier in the meeting under agenda item 3.

11.6 Food Fair – Cllr. Smerdon reported that plans for the Food Fair were progressing well.

11.7 Newick Sports Pavilion – It was reported that a solicitor contacted via Sussex & Surrey Association of Local Councils had estimated that the legal work required to provide a lease to the Sports Pavilion Management Committee would cost £1500. Cllrs Smerdon and White had met with the Clerk to go through the checklist provided by the solicitor. There were a few items which required clarification and the Clerk would be pursuing this. **Action Clerk.** It was agreed that the Parish Council should proceed with the granting of a lease and that the Clerk should be nominated as the point of contact for communication with the solicitor.

11.8 Newick Rootz – Notes from the meeting of Newick Rootz held 6th April 2017 had been circulated prior to the meeting and were noted. Cllr. Wickens asked councillors to look at the plans for the River Ouse Restoration project and make comments where appropriate. It was noted that some members of Newick Rootz had attended training in preparation for work that the group would be carrying out at Reedens Meadow, once the site had been handed over to LDC.

12. Consultations

12.1 Proposed Antisocial Behaviour Policy – Cllr. Armitage reported that he had looked at the draft Antisocial Behaviour Policy jointly drafted by Lewes District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council and Eastbourne Homes. It was noted that this policy would cover housing owned and estates managed by the two councils and Eastbourne Homes, but it did not specify the procedure for investigating antisocial behaviour, which would be the responsibility of the individual council or housing association. Comments made by Cllr. Wrench were noted and it was agreed that Cllr. Armitage would respond to the consultation on behalf of the Parish Council.

13. To agree any issues raised at Annual Parish Meeting to be taken forward by Parish Council – This agenda item had been brought forward and dealt with earlier in the meeting. See above.

14. Land between Vernons Road and The Rough – Cllrs. Armitage and Wickens reported that they had been in touch with Lewes District Council to check on the designation of the land between Vernons Road and The Rough in order to find out whether or not any variation would be required for it to be developed in accordance with Neighbourhood Plan policy HO5. The enquiry had been acknowledged by LDC and a full response was awaited.

15. Consideration of request for permission to erect a memorial bench on grass verge in front of 6 and 8 Oldaker Road – A report from the Clerk containing details of a request received from the resident of 6 Oldaker Road to place a memorial bench between the trees on the East Sussex Highway verge outside her house had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed in principle to allow a bench to be installed at this location subject to a licence being granted by East Sussex Highways and the resident agreeing to meet the purchase and installation costs.

16. Items for the next agenda – The following items to be included on the next agenda:-

Concerns regarding High Street property which is in disrepair

Update on Post Office

Updating of Procedure for dealing with consultation requests (Appendix)

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....