

## NEWICK PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of the Meeting of Newick Parish Council Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) Committee held at Newick Sports Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Allington Road, Newick, on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 at 7.00 p.m.

**Present:** Councillors: B. Horsfall, G. Jones, I. Nesbitt and K. Wrench

**In Attendance:** Mrs. S. Berry (Clerk)  
Two members of the public were present

An audio recording was made of the meeting

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Chairman, on behalf of the committee, expressed his sympathy for the family of Newick Postmaster, Terry Coombes, who had died suddenly on 21<sup>st</sup> May.

1. **Apologies for Absence** – No apologies had been received.
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** – No disclosures were made
3. **Questions or Statements by Members of the Public**  
There were no questions or statements by members of the public.

*It was agreed to defer consideration of agenda item 4 until later in the meeting as it was anticipated that Mr Young and Mr Harding would be attending to answer questions on their report.*

- 5 **Consideration of grant applications for 2017/18** – Eight applications for grants from the Parish Council had been received. The applications had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was agreed to make the following recommendations to the Parish Council:-

Applicant	Amount applied for and reason	F&GP Recommendation
Lewes District Citizens Advice	£200 Towards running costs of advice service	Award grant of £200
St Mary's Church PCC	£500 Towards maintenance of churchyard	Award grant of £500
Dancing for Fun & Fitness	Amount not specified. Subsidy for dance and exercise classes	Award grant of £150
St Mary's Lunch Club	Amount not specified. Towards costs of lunch club and entertainment for elderly residents	Award grant of £200
Newick Table Tennis Club	Up to £770 Set up costs for new table tennis club	Ask for further information – How much will members pay? Where will the club meet? What will happen to the equipment if the club is not successful? Is any other

		fundraising taking place?
Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance	£250 Towards ongoing costs of providing air ambulance service	Award grant of £250
Newick Rootz	£165 Hire of Sports Pavilion and audio visual equipment for monthly meetings	Award grant of £165
Newick Santa Sleigh	Up to £2,000 Towards cost of building santa sleigh to tour village at Christmas time	Ask for further information – Details of costings and how much funding from other sources has been raised to date.

**6 SLCC Advice Note – Social Media Policy** – A copy of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) Social Media Policy template had been circulated prior to the meeting. There was discussion as to how the template could be customised to suit the needs of Newick Parish Council and it was agreed to recommend that the Council should adopt this policy once it had been amended.

**4. Report from Mr Young and Mr Harding regarding future of Newick Post Office** – Copies of the Interim Business Plan (version 2), Newick Post Office Summary of Financial results, Newick Post Office Profit Projections and an email dated 16<sup>th</sup> May 2017 from Mr Young regarding the Plunkett Foundation had been circulated prior to the meeting.

*Mr Young and Mr Harding did not attend the meeting, therefore, it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders at 7.42 p.m. in order to allow Mrs Smerdon, who was present as a member of the public, to speak.*

Mrs Smerdon said that she was unsure as to why Mr Young and Mr Harding had not attended the meeting, but she thought that it may be because, following the sudden death of the Postmaster, they were trying to obtain information from The Post Office Ltd about what was likely to happen with Newick Post Office both short and long term. Mrs Smerdon had attended a meeting with the group hoping to set up a Community Post Office and she understood that the Parish Council would be asked to support the project and contribute towards the costs of setting up and publicity/public consultation, but the ongoing costs of running a Community Post Office would be met by the community e.g. through the sale of shares, donations or taking out a loan. The group had also suggested that a number of local businesses might be prepared to pay to have a presence at the Post Office whilst carrying out the main part of their work elsewhere.

Concern was expressed by the committee that the figures which had been provided indicated that the proposed project would almost certainly be loss making and that any financial support would need to be ongoing rather than one-off payments towards set up costs. Cllr. Nesbitt noted that the lack of space would limit opportunities for the growth in sales for any supporting business. There was also concern that a part time Postmaster would be personally responsible by the Post Office for any losses which might occur through error, whether or not they were present at the time.

*Standing Orders were resumed at 7.54 p.m.*

It was agreed that more information was required before making a recommendation to the Parish Council as to whether or not to provide financial support for the project. Cllr. Horsfall recommended that consultation should take place to find out from residents what services provided by the Post Office they actually need and whether or not they would be prepared to make a contribution through extra Council Tax payments to keep a post office in Newick.

The Clerk was asked to make contact with Mr Young and Mr Harding to find out whether or not they they had been in touch with The Post Office and, if so, whether the position had changed in any way following the death of the Postmaster. Further information was also required about their business plan and what products they were proposing to sell, as the viability of the project would be dependant on its profitability. **Action Clerk**

The Meeting Closed at 8.03 p.m.

**Signed**.....**Dated**.....

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