

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Newick Parish held
at 7.30 p.m. Wednesday, 19th April, 2017
at Newick Village Hall, Western Road, Newick.**

An audio recording was made of the meeting.

1. Chairman's Welcome

The Chairman of Newick Parish Council, Cllr. Jenny Smerdon, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies had been received from Parish Councillors Mr Jed Jones and Mr Iain Nesbitt

Approximately ninety parishioners attended the meeting including Newick Parish Councillors: Chris Armitage, Guy Clothier, Mario Halsey, Ben Horsfall, Jean Sheppard, Jenny Smerdon, Joe White, Cathy Wickens and Ken Wrench

The Parish Council Clerk, Mrs. Sue Berry, was in attendance to take the minutes.

2. Approval of the Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held 13th April 2016

It was proposed (Cllr. Armitage), seconded (Mrs Hart) and agreed that the draft Minutes for the Annual Parish Meeting held on 13th April 2016 should be approved as a true record of that meeting. Copies had been made available at the meeting, on the Newick website, and at Newick Post Office.

3. Newick Parish Council – Chairman's Report

Copies of the Parish Council Chairman's report were circulated at the meeting. The Chairman introduced members of the Parish Council who were present at the meeting and paid tribute to former Parish Councillors, Ross Houghton, who had died in November 2016, and Cris Allen who had moved out of the area. The Chairman's Report covered items of interest including the Parish Council precept, the school crossing patrol, new allotments at Cornwells Bank, the unveiling of the Centenary Stone on The Green, Newick Food Fair and Festival 2016, the appearance of the village, replacement fingerposts, the parish office, the new parish website, Neighbourhood Watch, Community Speed watch, neighbourhood planning, the play area on the new development at Newick Hill and attempts being made to help prevent the closure of Newick Post Office.

Cllr. Cathy Wickens gave a presentation on events since 2015 when Newick's Neighbourhood Plan was made. These included the creation of a SANG (suitable alternative natural greenspace) to be known as Reedens Meadows and the legal challenges by DLA (David Lock Associates) following the refusal of their application to develop Mitchelswood Farm. Cllr Wickens stated that the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan Committee was monitoring emerging housing and planning legislation and planning decisions concerning neighbouring parishes. She highlighted the Neighbourhood Plan Community Actions which the Parish Council would be seeking to implement and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding which would be available to be spent on local projects. Finally, Cllr. Wickens gave more detail on the background to and plans for Reedens Meadows which would, once completed, be available for local residents to enjoy in perpetuity.

4. Report from LDC & ESCC Councillor, Jim Sheppard

Cllr. Sheppard explained that he was restricted in what he could say in his role as East Sussex County Councillor for Newick in the lead up to a County Council election. He stated that the main challenge facing the County Council was the reduction in funding. The County Council budget was £781.6 million, £307.8 million of which would be spent on children's services and £226.9 million on adult social care. The remaining £246.9 million would cover public health, community services, planning and environment, libraries, public transport and waste. Issues highlighted included the best ever school results, a new link road from Bexhill to Hastings, investment in improved broadband, investment in highway maintenance, increased recycling of waste, investment in Newhaven harbour access and flood defences, retaining the 31 bus and continued funding for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

In his role as Lewes District Councillor, Cllr. Sheppard, spoke about planning issues, a new green waste collection service, flytipping, the Newick Hill housing development play area and landscaping at Reedens Meadows.

5. Report from Baroness Julia Cumberlege on her involvement with the Neighbourhood Planning Bill

Baroness Cumberlege spoke about her involvement with the Neighbourhood Planning Bill which had been working its way through parliament and was expected to become law in the very near future. She detailed the various stages through which the Bill had passed, explained her interest in this particular Bill and detailed how, with the help of others, she had tried to ensure that the resulting law would allow local people a say in how their local area was developed and ensure that Examiners would have to communicate with those who had produced draft Neighbourhood Plans to understand the reasons behind their decisions.

Following on from this, Mr Cumberlege gave an update on the legal action that he and Baroness Cumberlege were taking to challenge the Secretary of State's decision to allow the Mitchelswood Farm development to proceed.

6. Reports from Newick Clubs and Societies

The following representatives of Newick Clubs and Societies gave reports on their club/society activities over the previous year:-

St Mary's Church Pastoral Care Team – Patsy Bailey explained that a number of residents struggled with issues such as isolation and loneliness and that a small team of volunteers from St Mary's worked to help by organising activities such as a monthly lunch club for the elderly, a monthly tea party, Ladies' and Men's Suppers, a Knit and Natter group, exercise and dance classes and bereavement support. The team also offered practical help such as lifts to medical appointments and support for parents of children with special needs. Mrs Bailey said that the work was very satisfying and that the team were always looking for more volunteers to help them.

Newick Village Hall Management Committee (NVHMC) – Mike Berry, Treasurer of NVHMC, spoke about the maintenance and upgrade work planned for the Village Hall which was seventy years old. This included redecoration, new lighting and replacement of the stage curtains. He reported that there had been a surplus of approximately £3,500 which would be used for future repairs, maintenance and to replace equipment, however, there would also be an increase in hire fees, made necessary by increasing costs. Mr Berry thanked the hall caretakers, the booking secretary and hall users for contributing to the ongoing success of the hall.

Newick Cinema – Mike Berry also reported on Newick Cinema which had been running since 2014. He stated that the monthly film showings had a loyal following and that with increased attendance numbers the cinema was now making a small surplus.

Chailey and Newick Colts Football Club – John Philpott gave a report on behalf of Newick and Chailey Colts Football Club which had 120 junior members, covering 7 age groups, and 25 adult helpers. The club was based at Chailey Sports Club in North Chailey and the clubhouse was about to undergo a major refurbishment funded by Chailey Parish Council. Mr Philpott advised that the club and its coaches worked to Football Association rules and standards and that it was financially stable thanks to membership subscriptions and sponsorship.

Newick Twinning Association – Andy Wilson gave a presentation on behalf of Newick Twinning Association. He explained that 2017 was the 25th anniversary of Newick being twinned with Itteville in France. He outlined the Twinning Association's various activities and spoke about the forthcoming trip by Newick members to Itteville in May.

Newick Badminton Club – Christine Howard spoke on behalf of Newick Badminton Club. She reported that the Club had 18 members and played every Tuesday evening during the season (September to May) at Newick Village Hall. The Club was affiliated to the Badminton England Association and played in the East Grinstead Friendly League. The Club also ran a summer club for

those wishing to come back to badminton after a break and held various social events and tournaments for its members.

Newick Food Fair – Alex Harrison and Steve Jones spoke about the success of the first Newick Food Fair held in 2016 and gave details of the second Food Fair which was planned for June 2017. There would be opportunities to purchase various food products from local producers and there would be demonstrations, live music and a big picnic.

Headway – Michele Flemming spoke about the work of Headway, a charity which supported people with acquired brain injury. The charity supported both survivors and their families from all over Sussex. It had been impacted by local authority cuts and was heavily reliant on fundraising to fund its services. Michele explained that Headway was trying to increase its volunteer base and encouraged local people to support its events.

Newick Rootz – John Samson gave a presentation on behalf of Newick Rootz. He described the group's work which concentrated on helping to keep the local rights of way network clear and safe. John explained that East Sussex County Council supported the group by providing tools, equipment and insurance cover and that the volunteer members had a wealth of relevant knowledge and experience. Other Rootz activities included hedge laying and carrying out wildlife surveys on Newick Common. The group was also helping to shape the future of Reedens Meadows and would be involved with surveys and maintenance work there once the land had been taken over by Lewes District Council.

Newick Post Office – Alan Young spoke about Newick Post Office and the work he was doing to try and find a solution which would allow the Post Office service in Newick to continue. He explained that he had been in communication with The Post Office but that the type of Post Office on offer would not be financially viable unless it was being run alongside another business to share costs and overheads. He urged anybody who was interested or who had ideas as to how this could be achieved to contact Cllr. Jean Sheppard who had been looking into this on behalf of the Parish Council.

7. Question and Answer Session:

There were no questions raised, however, District Councillor Jim Sheppard reported that Jenny Smerdon had recently been given a Lewes District Council award for 'Unsung Heroes'.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and invited them to take some refreshment.

The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.