

NEWICK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of Newick Parish Council held at the Sports Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Allington Road on Tuesday, 11th March 2014 at 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors: C. Allen, N. Berryman, R. Houghton, J. Lucas (Chairman of the Parish Council), Mrs J Sheppard, Mrs J Smerdon, Mrs DJ Sprackling, and Mrs C Wickens.

In Attendance: Mrs. S. Berry (Clerk)
Mr Ed Sheath, Interim Head of Planning, Lewes District Council (for part of meeting)
District and County Cllr. Jim Sheppard (for part of meeting)

- 1. Apologies for Absence and to consider whether to approve reasons given,** Apologies had been received from Cllr. C. Armitage (work commitments), Cllr. C. Jago (prior family engagement), and Cllr. Mrs M. Thew (prior family engagement). It was resolved to approve the reasons given for these absences.
- 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.

Cllr. Mrs Smerdon joined the meeting at 6.35 p.m.

- 3. Presentation by Mr Ed Sheath, Interim Head of Planning at Lewes District Council (LDC).** Mr Sheath had been invited to attend the meeting as the Parish Council was very concerned that its comments were not being taken into consideration by LDC Planning Officers and that LDC had not following its own stated procedure in at least three recent planning applications. Mr Sheath commented as follows in respect of the three applications that had been highlighted by the Parish Council:-

LW/13/0756 (30 Leveller Road) – This had been recommended by the planning officer for refusal because the proposed extension would project forward beyond the existing front elevation of the property which would not normally be acceptable. The application had been referred to the Planning Committee by a senior planning officer following a review of the case and the application had been approved.

LW/13/0796 (1 The Pagets) - Mr Sheath referred to LDC Planning Information Leaflet DC1, which contained advice regarding residential extensions and explained the standard method for ensuring that proposed extensions would not adversely affect neighbouring properties in terms of overlooking or loss of light or privacy. In this case LDC considered that any refusal would have been overturned by a Planning Inspector on appeal and the application had been approved.

LW/13/0826 & 0827 (New Greenfields House, 34 Church Road) – This application had been approved at officer level, largely based on the comments and advice of the LDC Design and Conservation Officer. Mr Sheath advised that he had reviewed the decision himself and agreed that, in retrospect, it should probably have been referred to the planning committee. However, it was not possible to overturn the decision made other than by a judicial review. Any such review would consider the decision making process rather than the planning merits of the application.

Mr Sheath explained that Parish Councils have a significant role in the planning process and stated that the majority of applications were determined in line with the Parish Council's views. He advised that LDC was under considerable pressure to determine as many applications as possible at officer level under delegated powers and only those where the arguments were finely balanced would be referred to the planning committee. It was necessary for planning officers to have a robust argument for refusal in case there was an appeal. However, if the Parish Council felt strongly that a particular application was contentious, it could ask the District Councillor to 'call it in'. This must be done within fourteen days of the application being published, although contact could be made with the planning officer in order to request additional time. Mr Sheath also stated that in cases where a planning application had been determined contrary to the Parish Council's recommendations an explanation as to the reasons should be given. This had not happened in any of the above cases.

Mr Sheath agreed that he would send a website link to Planning Information Leaflet DC1 and that he would try to arrange for the Design and Conservation Officer to run an informal session with councillors to give some guidance on how planning applications in conservation areas were considered. It was agreed that this would be helpful

Mr Sheath left the meeting

4. **Questions or Statements by Members of the Public.** There were no members of the public present
5. **Exclusion of the press and public** – There were no members of the press or public present, therefore, it was agreed that it would not be necessary to make a resolution to exclude the press and public.

6. **Planning Applications**

The following planning applications had been received:

Newick LW/13/0762	Hunters Farm Blind Lane Planning Application - Change of use and conversion of barn to a two bedroom holiday let for Mr & Mrs C Goddard
Newick LW/14/0112	5 Cricketfield Planning Application - Erection of first floor extension for Mr J Vyner
Newick LW/14/0115	59 Allington Road Planning Application - Erection of single storey extension to side to replace existing extension for Mr D Russ

It was proposed that no comments on planning applications should be sent to Lewes District Council until after a decision had been reached as to whether or not the Parish Council was able to form a Planning Committee. This proposal was agreed by a vote of 7 in favour and 1 abstention.

6.1 **Tree Works Applications**

There were no Tree Works Applications for consideration

6.2 **Approvals/Refusals etc.**

It was noted that application **LW/14/0005 (Deerview Cottage, Cockfield Lane)** had been approved by Lewes District Council subject to conditions relating to its use solely as short term holiday accommodation and restrictions on the area to be used for the parking and turning of vehicles.

7. **Neighbourhood Plan – Progress Report from Steering Group –**

Notes from the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting held on 6th March 2014 were circulated at the meeting and were noted. It was reported that most of the problems regarding mapping used in the draft Neighbourhood Plan had been resolved but that the question of how to acknowledge copyright was still outstanding. It was noted that the Clerk would be attending a training course at Ordnance Survey in Southampton on 12th March and that she would be clarifying the copyright acknowledgement issue whilst she was there. It was agreed that the Clerk's travelling expenses for attending this course would be reimbursed by the Parish Council.

It was noted that the draft Neighbourhood Plan had almost been finalised and that hard copies would be delivered to councillors in advance of the Parish Council meeting on 25th March. Councillors were reminded that the document would remain confidential until it had been published.

Minutes covering the remainder of the meeting have been recorded separately as the matters discussed remained confidential until after the publication of the Neighbourhood Plan. Mr Sheath and Cllr. Jim Sheppard had already left and only Parish Councillors and The Clerk were present at this point in the meeting.

The Meeting Closed at 7.50 pm

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

The Clerk: Mrs SE Berry, 18 Newlands Park Way, Newick, BN8 4PG
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