

Newick Parish Council

Minutes of the Meeting of Newick Parish Council held at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 29th November 2016 in the Sports Pavilion, King George V Playing Field, Allington Road, Newick.

Present: Councillors R. Allum, C. Armitage, N. Berryman, M. Halsey, B. Horsfall, C. Jago, J. Smerdon, and C. Wickens.

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

An audio recording was made of the meeting

At the start of the meeting the Chairman, Cllr. Nick Berryman, read out a statement in which he referred to the decision of the Secretary of State to allow planning permission for the Mitchelswood Farm site to be developed for housing (APP/P1425/W/15/3119171). Cllr. Berryman praised the councillors who had been involved in the preparation of Newick's Neighbourhood Plan and expressed surprise that the Secretary of State had comprehensively undermined his own Government's Localism policy. Cllr. Berryman stated that this decision had forced him to consider his own position as a Councillor and he announced that he would be resigning from his position as Chairman and Member of Newick Parish Council with immediate effect. He thanked his fellow Councillors and the Clerk and left the meeting at 7.03 p.m.

The Vice Chairman, Cllr. Chris Armitage took over as Chairman of the meeting.

Cllr. Armitage proposed that, in accordance with Standing Order 10a (viii) the order of the agenda should be changed and items 11.1, 11.5 and 12.7 should be brought forward. This was agreed.

It was noted also that the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting scheduled for 6th December would not take place and that the Clerk would continue with the preparation of the 2017/18 budget for approval by the Council when convenient prior to the Lewes District Council deadline.

1. **Apologies for Absence:-** Apologies had been received from Cllrs. Jean Sheppard and Melanie Thew.
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:** - Cllr. Allum disclosed that he had a prejudicial interest in agenda item 6.2 (Planning Application LW/16/0857) as joint owner of the property in question.

11.1 Schedule of payments for November 2016 – It was resolved to approve the schedule of payments for November 2016 subject to some minor amendments to the spreadsheet that had been circulated at the meeting.

Payee	Item	Invoice Amount	Cheque Number
Waiting to be signed			
S.E. Berry	Clerk's Salary	£713.48	Standing Order
Post Office Ltd	Tax and NI from Clerk & PC	£271.03	201208
East Sussex Pension Fund	Pension Contributions from Clerk & PC	£264.73	201209
Lewes District Council	Play Area Inspection	£18.00	201210
D. Sankey Ltd	Routine Mole Treatment	£100.80	201211
Newick Football Club	Grant (approved 25/10/16)	£200.00	201212
SSALC Limited	Clerks Networking Day	£78.00	201213
Peter J Consultants	Interim Review (audit)	£124.60	201214
Office Depot (UK) Ltd	Stationery x 2 invoices	£38.72	201215
Upper Bridge Enterprises	Website services (including final 50% for new website)	£714.26	201216

S.E. Berry	Reimbursement for items purchased by Clerk on behalf of Parish Council	£438.14	201217
S. Orwin	Village Maintenance	£200.00	201218
Qik Group Ltd	Portable toilets for Bonfire Celebrations	£408.00	201219
Queensbury Shelters Ltd	Replacement bus shelter	£5,852.40	201220
Treewise Tree Services Ltd	Fell and dispose of dying Ash tree	£264.00	201221
The Society of Local Council Clerks	Membership Subscription 2017	£139.00	201222
C. Wickens	Travel and subsistence, 15/11/16	£19.79	201223
C. Armitage	Travel and subsistence, 15/11/16	£13.89	201224
Bosence Ltd	Village Hall Survey	£655.20	201225
Dawson Hart Solicitors	Charges in connection with Lease of Allotment Land	£640.00	201226
Total		£11,154.04	

Public Works Loan Board Repayment instalment due 1/12/16 £2,501.01 Direct Debit

Income in November 2016

Barclays Bank	Interest	£68.48
HMRC	VAT Reclaim	£1,584.79
Newick Allotment Society	Rent for Cricketfield Allotment Site	£100.00
Aviva	Insurance payment for damaged bus shelter	£4,627.00
Total		£6,380.27

11.5 Arrangements for approval of payments and signing of cheques in December 2016 – It was agreed that, should existing cheque signatories no longer be Members of the Council at the time of payment of December's invoices, two remaining Members of the Council would check and authorise the payments and ask any two existing signatories to sign the cheques on the Council's behalf pending the change of signatories.

12.7 Allotments – It was noted that the lease between Mr and Mrs P. Fuller and Newick Parish Council for rental of land at Cornwell's Bank for use as allotments had been finalised and, having been checked by Cllrs. Smerdon and Jago, was ready to be signed. It was agreed that this lease should be signed.

A draft management agreement between Newick Parish Council and Newick Allotment Society for management of the aforementioned allotment site had been circulated prior to the meeting and it was agreed that this document should be signed on behalf of the Parish Council.

Following the conclusion of the above business, a statement was read out by Cllr. Jago in which he said that he had given his total support to the concept and final form of Newick's Neighbourhood Plan as a way of ensuring that development could not proceed unchecked. He detailed the process of preparation, examination and approval of the Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the rules. He stated that the recent decision by the Secretary of State would set a precedent for other developments and would mean that Parish Councils would no longer have a say in what developments could take place in their locality. Cllr. Jago also referred to a recent email from local resident, Mr Thomas, which he considered sought to mock the many hours of hard work undertaken by the Council on behalf of the village. He said that he considered the future function of the Parish Council to be so limited that he no longer wished to be part of it. Cllr. Jago gave thanks to his fellow councillors and the Clerk and tendered his resignation as a Member of the Parish Council. He left the meeting at 7.09 p.m.

Cllr. Wickens then read a statement in which she stated that the Secretary of State had essentially taken away Newick's Neighbourhood Plan and had left the village at the mercy of developers. She said that the Neighbourhood Plan had been exceptional, it accurately reflected the parishioners' views and was fit for purpose.

Cllr. Wickens stated that she considered that the Council had been let down both by Lewes District Council and by the Secretary of State, and that she would be tendering her resignation as a result. She proposed that those Councillors who had resigned should hold a public meeting to inform residents and the press of what had happened, why it had happened, and what the implications would be. Cllr. Wickens stated that current members of the Council were exhausted and disheartened and that new councillors were needed to take their place. She thanked the Clerk, tendered her resignation and left the meeting table at 7.18 p.m.

Cllr. Armitage then announced that an email had been received from Cllr. Melanie Thew, who was not present at the meeting, tendering her resignation from the Council.

Cllr. Armitage referred to an email that he had circulated to other members of the Council prior to the meeting in which he had indicated his intention to resign his position as Vice Chairman and member of Newick Parish Council. He stated that if this is the way that Parish Councillors are treated then nobody will want to do the job unless there was something in it for them. Cllr. Armitage stated that during his time as a Councillor he had only encountered one other Councillor who was on the Council for their own ends and that that person had finally won. Cllr. Armitage thanked the Clerk, tendered his resignation, and left the meeting table at 7.20 p.m.

The Clerk gave guidance to the four remaining Councillors as to their options for continuing the meeting and advised on what would need to be dealt with prior to the Parish Council meeting in January 2017. The remaining councillors agreed that they did not wish to continue with the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.24 p.m.

Signed:.....
Chairman

Date:.....