

NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on Tuesday 21 November 2017 in the Wickham Room, Newington Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Elaine Jackson (Chair), Cllr Eric Layer (Vice Chairman), Cllr Sue Brewster, Cllr Dean Coles, Cllr Ray Cuffley, Cllr Stephen Harvey and Cllr Tony Mould; and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk)

Also present were PCSO John Cork, PCSO Lorraine Holmes and one member of the public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Richard Palmer (illness); apology accepted.

2. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Amenities Meeting on 24 October 2017

Cllr Harvey asked if a key had been given to the disabled person using the allotments.

Cllr Layer said he had no news.

Cllr Jackson reported the lights in the ball court have been adjusted to be on between 4pm and 7pm.

4. Public Question Time

This item was deferred to later in the meeting.

5. Anti-Social Behaviour

i. PCSO report

PCSO Cork reported flower pots have been stolen from Playstool Road. There has been damage to a window in Station Road.

There is a growing issue of young people riding bicycles in front of cars in the dark and doing wheelies, a practice which is extremely dangerous to themselves and other road users. It might be possible to confiscate the bikes if they are riding dangerously.

The car wash has been raided and some illegal immigrants were found to be there. Anyone with information should report the matter to Crimestoppers.

PCSO Cork said he had attended a house in Bull Lane with a housing officer and the owner was found to be renting a summerhouse to someone who worked at the car wash. The Police are aware of organised gangs in the district using illegal immigrants as slave labour.

Cllr Harvey said there is currently a planning application to build a ground floor flat at the car wash, the Parish Council has lodged an objection especially as there is a clause that it be for use of workers at the car wash. The Police may wish to submit a comment.

PCSO Cork said the nuisance motor bikes have been quiet.

Cllr Coles said the bikes go down Bull Lane and through the alleyway to Callaways Lane. Young people are riding the bikes and the schools need to be contacted.

PCSO Cork said the bikes are also going to Iwade. The Police have a good working relationship with Westlands School. Any incidents of nuisance bikes must be reported and any photographs are helpful.

Youths have been onto the roof of West Cars sales a few times; the Community Warden is also aware and monitoring the situation.

Cllr Cuffley said there is an abandoned car in front of Robin Cottages, Callaways Lane. It has been reported to the Community Warden.

PCSO Cork said it is the responsibility of Swale Borough Council to deal with abandoned vehicles, if there is a registered owner the person will be contacted. The car has been there a long time and PCSO Cork will check the situation regarding tax and insurance.

Cllr Cuffley said there is a car in Pear Tree Walk with no tax or insurance and it is being driven. It has been reported that people are sometimes sitting in the car smoking drugs.

PCSO Cork said he is happy for his mobile number to be given to residents so they can contact him with concerns. PCSO Cork says he works well with the Community Warden and appreciates her support.

Cllr Jackson thanked PCSO Cork and PCSO Holmes for attending the meeting and for their report.

ii. Community Warden report

Community Warden Georgina Springall has sent her apologies for not attending the meeting and sent a written report:

- 1) Residents complaining about removal of flowers from lamp post in London Road. These are regularly put there in memory of youth who died 6 months ago and Kent Messenger now reporting on this. KCC Highways do not mind flowers being put there within reason. Resident who is removing them and leaving notes has their own specific reasons for doing so. Joint visit to this resident with PCSO John Cork.
- 2) Tent and old garden sun umbrella fly tipped in recreation ground – reported to SBC who removed it.
- 3) Complaint again from the Biffa driver who empties dog bin at end of track in recreation ground, all the trees/shrubs along track hit his mirrors and need cutting back.
- 4) Supporting elderly resident who has very recently lost her husband.
- 5) Lost very young kitten from Bull Lane area – Now found.
- 6) Five sacks of rubbish left for days next to bus stop, by The Bull – Reported to SBC.
- 7) Joint visit with PCSO John Cork to guardian of youth seen riding his bike dangerously on roads in the village.
- 8) Successful bingo club session, twenty attended. Discussed latest scams with group paying special mention to bogus policeman caller.
- 9) Antisocial behaviour Halloween night, damaged cars in Church Lane. Youths throwing eggs and potatoes – Police attended and patrolled area.
- 10) Residents dog attacked and bitten (£100.00 vet bill) by other resident's dog whilst walking on lead up track from monkey island towards Callaways Lane – Advised to report to SBC.
- 11) Resident complaining about dog barking and whining at all hours – Advised to report to SBC.
- 12) Untaxed vehicle parked on Optivo housing land – Reported to housing agency.
- 13) Three youths on bicycles cycling dangerously in front of cars in Playstool Road – PCSO John Cork aware.
- 14) Resident walking her three dogs on lead top of Mill Lane when large Bernese Mountain dog came out of unsecured gate that leads into 'Canine Connections' training field and attacked them – Reported to SBC Dog Warden.
- 15) Welfare visit to elderly residents on estate area, discussed financial scams and other matters.
- 16) Burglary of flat in Wickham Close during weekend daylight hours – Police attended.
- 17) Fly tipping in Boxted Lane – Reported to SBC.
- 18) Plant pots stolen from front garden in Playstool Road – Advised reporting to police which resident has done.
- 19) Group of girls being a nuisance, knocking on doors and running off and being generally rowdy during the evenings in Orchard Drive – Reported to PCSO John Cork.
- 20) Four vehicles damaged in a 'hit and run' in Church Lane at 9.00pm one evening – Police attended.
- 21) Complaint from cyclist regarding hump across School Lane incurred by Jones Builders.

Next year I am hoping to start a new art group in the village, hopefully, this be led by a resident who is a brilliant artist and knows a couple of people who would like to join already. I have spoken to Rev. Julian and he is more than happy for us to use the spare room which is located up a few stairs in the church. We can also use the Church tea making facilities and toilets. During the summer months, the artists can sketch and paint outside if they wish, in the many beautiful areas of Newington. Details will be advertising it after Christmas. I have planted the planters in the High Street with polyanthus so they should look good through to late Spring.

6. Recreation Ground

i. Pavilion

Cllr Jackson reported that KCCllr Mike Whiting has offered £1000 and SBCllr Gerry Lewin has offered £200 towards the Parish Room refurbishment.

ACTION: Clerk to contact SBCllr John Wright again to see if he would contribute from his grant fund.

Cllr Jackson said the key to the new lock on the door cannot be copied.

Cllr Harvey the front door needs to have a new lock as there is no record of how many people have a key to the door.

ACTION: Cllr Jackson to arrange for a photograph of the side of the door to be taken.

Cllr Jackson report the Clerk is waiting for confirmation from the contractor of the date to start work on the new alarm system.

Cllr Harvey said the system needs to have be able to text specified numbers if the alarm is triggered. Neighbours needs to be asked to report the alarm to the Police.

Councillors agreed to have ten key fobs for the alarm.

ACTION: Clerk to ascertain start date for installing the alarm.

a) Report from the Pavilion Working Group

Cllr Jackson said a meeting will be called to progress further refurbishment work on the exterior of the building.

b) Parish Room Flooring and Furniture

Cllr Harvey reported the Sports Club has offered to donate their tables and chairs for the Parish Room and these can be stored in the old disabled toilet. The condition of the chairs needs to be inspected.

Cllr Mould asked whether it would be possible to have the Amenities Committee meeting in the Parish Room.

Cllr Harvey said it is and there will need to be at least thirty chairs so that if a Full Council meeting were to be held there the room would be able to accommodate members of the public as well.

c) To consider the quotation to remove Pavilion fence

Cllr Coles reported he has spoken to a resident who is willing help take down the fence and the Council will have to hire skips to remove it.

Cllr Jackson said this will be progressed when the alarm system has been replaced.

d) Review of Pavilion hire fees and terms and conditions

Councillors AGREED the Parish Room should not be used after 10pm; the deposit for hiring the Parish Room should be £50; exceptional lettings would be subject to approval; additional cleaning will be charged at £20 per hour.

Cllr Mould asked whether hirers of the playing field should hire access to the toilets as well.

Cllr Coles said anyone hiring for a special event should hire the facilities.

Cllr Jackson said the Swans Group have booked the Parish Room on 19 December 10am – 3pm for their Christmas social.

Councillors AGREED the Swans could have the Parish Room free of charge for the event this year because of the disruption to the Pavilion. It was AGREED that the tables and chairs should be inspected prior to the party to ensure the safety of the furniture.

Cllr Jackson said consideration needs to be given to fire regulations.

ACTION 1: Clerk to contact Kent Fire & Rescue Service for advice.

ACTION 2: Clerk to ascertain signage required to be displayed.

Cllr Harvey said consideration needs to be given regarding access for hirers of the Parish Room.

ii. Play equipment update

Cllr Coles said the quotation looked good, it does not have to be the full park.

Cllr Brewster said she had visited Iwade and looked at the play area there, it was full of families. The park is wheel chair friendly with a disabled swing, there is sensory equipment and it is very colourful. They are planning to add a walk.

Cllr Mould said there is a new play area at Hartlip.

Cllr Harvey asked whether consideration should be given to adding the Captain Mannering equipment as an extension and when funds are available the rest could be replaced.

Cllr Coles said the rest of the equipment is deteriorating rapidly, it could be removed and replaced with the Captain Mannering and it would be a focal point of the Recreation Ground. There needs to be a path from the track gateway to the play area and then linked to the ball park. A working group needs to be formed and residents need to be consulted as to what they would like.

ACTION 1: Clerk to inform contractor the budget is significantly less and ask if it is possible to do the scheme in stages.

ACTION 2: Clerk to contact Daniel Gooch at Swale Borough Council for advice.

iii. Recreation Ground padlock

Cllr Harvey said he has the new padlock for the gate from the track and keys need to be available to the Sports Clubs and the Football Club.

iv. To receive any other update

Cllr Mould said the grand opening in 2018 needs to be well publicised.

Cllr Coles said proper disabled access needs to be made and there should be limited disabled parking for three or four cars for disabled people and also for an ambulance if it were ever needed.

The clerk informed Members the Internal Auditor has asked about the inspection of the play area and what the remit is for doing this.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Craigdene and Came & Co for advice.

4. Public Question Time

The meeting was adjourned for the public time.

Cllr Jackson declared a pecuniary interest, as her husband wished to raise a matter, signed the declarations of interest book and left the room.

Cllr Layer took the Chair.

Mr Jackson said he has spoken to the Football Club regarding the tuck shop and the club are willing to let him run it. He is also willing to open and close the pavilion to hirers, respond to the alarm and to be the caretaker. Mr Jackson said he is willing to hire the Parish Room to run the tuck shop. If the Council does not charge for the hire of the pavilion he is willing to be caretaker without pay.

The meeting was reconvened.

Cllr Mould said there were two separate issues, running the tuck shop and the caretaker role. Cllr Harvey said he was concerned because, if the offer were not being made, the Council would be looking to rent the Parish Room to the Football Club. The Council would need to advertise for a caretaker as it did for a litter picker.

Cllr Coles said an interim appointment could be made during the refurbishment work and then the post could be advertised. The role needs to be discussed.

The Clerk advised that no decision can be made as the matter is not on the agenda.

It was AGREED to refer to Full Council.

7. Allotments

There was nothing to report.

8. Newington Festival 2018

Cllr Jackson informed Members there had been a meeting of the Festival Committee on 14 November. Four bands have been booked; the security and marshals have been booked; the staging company has been contacted with regards to availability; quotes are being obtained for the toilets. Application forms for the stalls are being drawn up.

Cllr Coles reported the aim is to have more arena events. The PCSOs will attend later in the day.

Cllr Jackson said the raffle prize will be a barrow of booze and Cllr Brewster has started collecting for the hamper. Cllr Mould will start work on the programme in the New Year.

Cllr Brewster said The Third Wheel, a motor cycle trike club are interested in attending.

Cllr Harvey said the removal of the toilets had been an issue for the school and the school could be asked where the best site for them to go would be.

8. Lights

i. To receive an update

The following lights have been reported to the contractor: 14 The Willows; 4 Church Lane, which has recently had a new bulb; the light on the junction of Callaways Lane and Bull Lane; St Mary's View; and 70 Church Lane which was recently repaired.

Cllr Coles said there is a bent lamp post at the end of Playstool Road by the roundabout. The light in the hedgerow in Bull Lane still has not been repaired.

ii. LED lighting update

Cllr Jackson thanked all who attended the meeting with KCC.

Cllr Layer said there are quite a few lights on telegraph poles, KCC will not work on concrete or fiberglass poles. The Parish Council might not be liable for all the electricity. The wattage of the lights needs to be ascertained.

Cllr Jackson said a survey needs to be carried out and it will cost £1250.

Cllr Coles **PROPOSED** to recommend to Full Council to accept the quotation from Street Lights to survey the lights; **SECONDED** by Cllr Mould: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Cllr Harvey said confirmation needs to be obtained to ensure that if the Council takes out a maintenance contract the survey cost will be deducted from it.

9. Footpaths and Bridleways

Cllr Harvey said KCC Highways need to be contacted to ascertain if the High Street railings have been ordered.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Alan Blackburn.

The Clerk reported she is waiting to hear back from Swale Borough Council for information to obtain a Tree Preservation Order.

Cllr Brewster said she has reported to KCC Highways the layby on the A249 which is being used as a toilet by drivers.

10. Village Voice

Cllr Jackson said details of Crimestoppers and reporting crime online must be included.

Cllr Mould said half a page has been set aside for planning and there is three quarters of a page spare and this could be for a Parish Council report.

11. Defibrillator

Councillors considered eight quotations for defibrillators.

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** not to progress the matter until the planning application for a doctors' surgery has been decided: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

12. Cold Calling Controlled Zone Signs

Cllr Harvey informed Members he has two signs which need to be erected at each end of the village.

ACTION: Cllr Harvey and Cllr Layer to liaise and erect signs.

13. Any Other Business

Cllr Mould said the Council should offer refreshments at the December meeting for Christmas.

Cllr Harvey said people will be invited to the Pavilion celebration.

Cllr Coles said the bus stop next to The Bull is deteriorating.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotes for repairs.

Date of Next Meeting: 23 January 2018

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.29pm

Signed as a true record of the proceedings

Chair

Dated 28 November 2017