

NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Assembly of the Parish held on 29 May 2018 in the Newington Room, Newington Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Debbie Haigh (Chair), Cllr Sue Brewster, Cllr Dean Coles, Cllr Ray Cuffley, Cllr Steve Godmon, Cllr Stephen Harvey and Cllr Richard Palmer.
Minutes- Cllr Haigh.

Also present were Mr Cliff Curtis (Parish Council nominative Trustee on the Wickham Trust), Mr Dave Fagg (Parish Council nominative Trustee on the Wickham Trust), and one member of the public.

Cllr Haigh welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies had been received from Cllr Tony Mould (in hospital) and Cllr Eric Layer (holiday), Cllr Jackson (held up in traffic); apologies accepted.

Apologies had also been received from KCllr Mike Whiting (at another meeting), SBCllr Lewin (at another meeting), and SBCllr John Wright (at another meeting); apologies accepted.

2. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 30 May 2017

It was **PROPOSED** by Cllr Harvey to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting on 30 May 2017; **SECONDED** by Cllr Godmon: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**. Cllr Haigh duly signed the minutes as a true record.

3. Matters Arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Report of the Chairman of Newington Parish Council

Cllr Haigh reported:

As ever I would like to thank all our volunteers for their contribution of time in delivering the Village Voice; looking after the Pavilion and our contractors who work to keep the environment safe and pleasurable for all.

Much of what Council delivers is only made possible by kind additional grants provided by County Councillor Mike Whiting and our two ward representations Cllrs Gerry Lewin and John Wright. All three of whom regularly attend Council and give us support at the next levels of Local Government.

It was a sound year financially with the Council delivering services within budget and utilising 106 monies from the Solar Farm, received in the previous year to deliver the newly refurbished village Pavilion. Work continues here and we will strive in the current year to refurbish the children's play area and finish the new style Pavilion fencing. The 106 money from the Parsonage Farm development will be used to contribute towards the former.

Major maintenance also took place at the Cemetery with arboriculture works, the marking out of new plots and the building of a new path.

Council has tried to get Tree Protection Orders in place for three oak trees, two at Keycol Hill and one on the recreation ground. We patiently await Swale's approval.

We transferred the security system at the Pavilion from ADT to Master Security to reduce costs and remain in a dispute with ADT regarding CCTV repair costs in and around the Village Hall. Council fought a successful battle with British Telecom to recognise their responsibility of damaging water pipes at the Recreation Ground, leading to the Pavilion. The pipe has been repaired at BT's cost and money reimbursed to cover the additional costs from Southern Water.

Street Lighting has been an onerous task this year with the Council contractor, PFL failing to maintain and repair lights as Council reported faulty or damaged lamps and columns. As such Council served notice and has terminated the contract. We have commissioned a survey of all village lights, initially with the intent of introducing a programme of works, following public consultation, to LED lamps. Having set aside £8,000 in the current budget to convert to LEDs we now fear that this money and more will be required to put right years of neglect by the contractor.

Contractor issues were also encountered in the spring when our grass cutting company, Grasstex pulled out of Kent. We are currently looking to appoint a new contractor.

Planning Applications have created concern within the Community with people quite rightly extremely agitated by the persistence build in the village. People really rallied, supported by Councillors to object to the Persimmon application but unfortunately our opposition was not upheld by Swale Borough Council and the site was adopted into the Local Development Plan.

Planning will remain a key focus for Council as we try to uphold the characteristic of our built and green community. Swale is now in consultation for their next LEP and we will work hard to put forward the wishes of the village.

Council and volunteers worked very hard to deliver the Newington Festival which I believe gets bigger and better every year.

The Village fun fair put on by the Smiths brothers is also popular and co-ordinated by Councillors.

Council works on a regular basis with our Community Warden, Georgina and our PCSO John, both of whom I have to thank for supporting Councillors and assisting the Community.

Each and every Councillor generously gives a considerable amount of time making sure the Parish runs smoothly, with the support of Wendy. My thanks to each of them.

Finally, it is with great personal and professional sadness that we say goodbye to Mel Harris who has dedicated eleven years of unfaltering service to Newington Parish Council.

5. Financial report of the Parish Council

Cllr Haigh reported that the income was significantly higher than forecast for 2017-18 with an increase of 8%. Expenditure was down 5% to budget. The Pavilion refurbishment was overspent by £9,400 however, underspend in all other categories negated this.

The Balance Sheet is £29,122 to the positive closing at £78,156

This is adjusted by the Cash Statement, taking available funds to £76,504 up £24,631

Having reviewed the Year End position March 2018; taking into account actual spend during the year and Council's plans and unforeseen challenges for the current financial year, the Finance Working Group forecasts an overspend of £6,391, however, the cash brought forward had a betterment of £17,351

Finance Working Group forecasts a cash position at year end of c.£62,000, up £12,000 as it currently stands.

The budget of £8,000 for Street Lighting Repairs may need to be increased following the street light survey, thus eroding the £12,000.

6. The Wickham Trust

Cllr Haigh said a copy of the Wickham Trust's account had been received and she commended them for their support of the community and for their prudent investments to grow their working capital.

7. To receive questions and comments from parishioners.

A Village Hall representative asked if a copy of the contract with ADT can be sent to the Village Hall Committee.

ACTION: Clerk to send details to the committee.

8. Any Other Business

No matters were raised.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.16pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

Chair

Dated 29 May 2018

DRAFT