

# NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Amenities Committee held on  
22 October 2019 in the Wickham Room, Newington Village Hall.

Present: Cllr Elaine Jackson, Cllr Eric Layer (Vice Chairman), Cllr Dean Coles, Cllr Ryan Condron, Cllr Richard Geldard, Cllr Stephen Harvey, Cllr James Morgan, Cllr Tony Mould and visiting Member Cllr Richard Palmer; and Mrs Wendy Licence (Clerk).

Also present was PCSO John Cork, PCSO Casey and Mr Jackson, the Pavilion Caretaker.

Cllr Jackson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

## 1. Apologies for Absence

All Members were present

## 2. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

## 3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Amenities Meeting on 17 September 2019

Cllr Jackson informed members that the insurance policy sets out clear requirements in regards to playground inspections in that a visual check of all play areas should be carried out by an appointed person (no qualifications are necessary but they should be deemed competent by the Parish Council), and recorded in writing, every four weeks at least. A full safety check must be carried out once a year by an independent specialist like RoSPA or Play Inspection Company. Again, any defects or issues identified at any point should be acted on as soon as possible and checks following a period of bad weather are recommended.

There are no policy requirements in regards to the other equipment like street furniture, however, sporadic visual checks are best practice with all findings recorded and issues acted on.

Cllr Jackson said the KCC PROW portal states the footpath by the Persimmon development has been cleared. This needs to be checked.

Cllr Harvey said the resident in Callaways Lane has suggested removing the dog bin on the telegraph post and putting a larger dog bin on the corner about nine metres from his house. Swale have said that they will empty the bin and the resident has said he will pay for the new bin and for the installation on a concrete base.

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** the resident's offer be accepted on the condition that a proper concrete base and bin be installed and then the bin will be removed from the telegraph pole and moved elsewhere: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

*ACTION: Clerk to contact resident.*

Cllr Mould said he had been tasked to get a valuation for the Pavilion, unfortunately local agents were unable to help but a firm has agreed to do this.

*ACTION: Clerk to contact agent.*

Cllr Mould said he had spoken to the Youth Club leader regarding painting a mural on the garage but they were unable to help.

#### 4. Public Question Time

No matters were raised.

#### 5. Anti-Social Behaviour

##### i. PCSO report

##### ii. Community Warden report

Georgina Springall, the Community Warden was unable to attend and sent the following report:

- 1) Complaints from residents regarding barking/crying dog left in outside kennel – Advised reporting to Swale Borough Council.
- 2) Police attended suicide victim in Village Hall car park.
- 3) Swale Borough Council refuse collectors missed emptying numerous bins – Emptied during following days.
- 4) Burglary at Brookes Place – Police aware.
- 5) Burglary at Dennis Willcocks Close – Police aware.
- 6) Complaint regarding vehicle parked all morning on pavement in Church Lane causing obstruction – Took vehicle details into school.
- 7) Arranged for the Swale Borough Council refuse workers to take away fly tipping from recreation ground when they empty dog bin down there.
- 8) Swale Borough Council refuse collectors would appreciate the hedging cut back at side of track that leads to recreation ground as it obstructs their high sided vehicle.
- 9) Excessive dog fouling on footpath/track that leads from Callaways Lane to Wormdale Farm – Monitoring area.
- 10) Quad bike stolen from farmhouse in Breach Lane.
- 11) Made appointment for Kent Fire & Rescue Services to call at elderly loan residents to check and replace her smoke alarms as necessary.
- 12) Residents suspect someone is putting long nails down in Bull Lane as several residents have found nails in their tyres – Advised each victim to report to police on 101.
- 13) More complaints of crying dog at all hours in Bramley Close – tenants reported to Optivo.
- 14) Resident worried that Air Ambulance charity worker knocking on doors was genuine – Checked out and he was a genuine collector with full ID.
- 15) Made another referral to KFRS for elderly resident to have her house safety checked and smoke alarms replaces as necessary.
- 16) Fly tipping with evidence in Wardwell Lane – Reported to Swale Borough Council.
- 17) Mobile phone stolen from offices in Newington High Street – Police aware.
- 18) White Suzuki stolen from Playstool Road – Police aware.
- 19) Tools stolen from work van over night in Eden Meadow – Police aware.
- 20) Suspicious male seen watching houses in Callaways Lane – Monitoring area and making residents aware.

Cllr Jackson said she was concerned about the incidents of theft within the village. The issue with the hedge at the track has also been raised by the Allotment Association.

*ACTION: Clerk to contact the Rochester Bridge Wardens Trust.*

Cllr Layer reported there had been issues with young people on motor bikes in Church Lane going towards High Oak Hill. In Denham Close one bike had been ridden across someone's garden and churned up the grass, this has been reported to the Police.

Cllr Coles said the Community Warden had contacted him regarding nails being propped up against car tyres.

Cllr Coles said residents are not aware that they might be eligible for a free Safe & Well visit from Kent Fire & Rescue Services.

*ACTION: Clerk to obtain information to be included in the Village Voice.*

## 6. Recreation Ground

### i. To receive an update

Councillors considered the quotation to replace the bearings in the sputnik and agreed to wait until the play area inspector carried out the annual safety check.

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** that Full Council be requested to allow up to £400 for repairs: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The Clerk said that she is waiting to hear back regarding a date for the safety inspection.

Cllr Layer reported the gate to the play park is being pushed against the fence and staying open.

Cllr Harvey said it could be remedied by fixing hardboard to the fence.

*ACTION: Cllr Layer and Cllr Harvey to consider solutions.*

*PCSO John Cork and PCSO Casey arrived.*

Cllr Jackson said advice from a contractor is that the garage should not be repainted and it would attract further graffiti.

Cllr Harvey said it could be left and perhaps a local school could be invited to paint a mural on it.

Cllr Palmer said the Ideas Trust in Sittingbourne might be able to help.

## 5. Anti-Social Behaviour

### i. PCSO report

PCSO Cork said there is a professional group in Medway which met with young people for a project and they might help with the issue. If young people from the area help create a mural, they would respect it.

PCSO Cork informed the Council that someone had been arrested in connection with burglaries in Brookes Close and Denham Close, jewellery had been stolen. The offender admitted to other offences. There have been similar burglaries in the area.

The quad bike which had been stolen in Breach Lane was not working. Residents need to be vigilant and lock their parked cars. All crimes must be reported to the Police, some matters are being reported on Facebook but for non-emergency matters people must call 101 or use 101 online.

There have been no further reports of drug taking in Church Lane.

The motor bikes in Church Lane are doing circuit and have even been seen in Iwade. Residents must report all occurrences and can phone on the mobile number.

There was a house to house search following the theft of tools from the van, tools must not be left in vans overnight.

The incident of the male seen watching houses in Callaways Lane, CCTV footage has been viewed. There is an empty house in the area but it has alarms and a CCTV system in place.

There was a report of drugs at an address in Playstool Close but nothing was found.

Keys have been stolen from a vehicle in Keycol Hill.

There has been damage to garden furniture in a garden opposite the car wash.

PCSO Cork reported that he and a colleague had attended the gas works at the top of Oak Lane and had turned vehicles back, drivers are not using the one-way system. The Police have turned many vehicles away but the SGN employees have said they will not turn vehicles away or take details of registration numbers.

Cllr Harvey asked if there were battery operated cameras which could be used.

PCSO Cork said SGN should take responsibility and that it is a health and Safety issue if the employee does nothing as it could cause an accident.

Cllr Palmer said that it has been agreed for permanent speed restriction signs to be installed.

PCSO Cork reported he had attended the last Cornerstone Café.

Cllr Jackson thanked PCSO Cork for attending and for his report.

## ii. Friends of Newington Recreation Ground

Cllr Harvey reported the Friends of Newington Recreation Ground have met and have invited play equipment companies to meet with them. The Persimmon S106 money has been paid to Swale Borough Council.

Cllr Mould said the group has been accepted for the Asda coins scheme and also the Co-op Good Causes scheme, there will be an article in the Village Voice.

Cllr Harvey reported the Friends group has details of the agreed benches in case residents want to buy a bench.

The Pavilion Caretaker reported the litter pickers have left two bags of rubbish by the bin.

*ACTION: Clerk to check with Swale Borough Council the arrangements for collecting the rubbish.*

## **8. Pavilion**

### i. To receive an update

The Pavilion Caretaker reported that he had completed the facilities checklist. Pain of the parish Room is coming off the heater in the Community Gym Room, the heating cannot be adjusted. The ceiling cracks in the Parish Room by the door are appearing again.

*ACTION 1: Cllr Harvey and Cllr Layer to meet with Mr Jackson for a review.*

*ACTION 2: Clerk to arrange a meeting with the Football Club,*

### ii. To consider quotation for extra CCTV camera at the Pavilion

Cllr Harvey **PROPOSED** to accept the quotation for an extra CCTV camera from Master Alarms for £240; **SECONDED** by Cllr Layer: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

## **9. Defibrillator**

Cllr Layer said there was nothing to report.

## **10. Allotments**

Cllr Layer said there was nothing to report.

Cllr Jackson asked that the Allotment Association be assured that the issue with the track hedge will be dealt with.

## **11. Highways**

Cllr Harvey said KCCllr Whiting is now Cabinet Member for Economic Development.

Cllr Harvey said he was concerned about the traffic management of the gas works at the Oak Lane junction. Issues with contractors not manning the traffic lights during the agreed time has been reported and details of the consultation process has been requested. KCC Highways had wanted to postpone the works until next year but SGN have pushed this forward. There is no HGV ban, no consultation process, no permanent signs. There needs to be a review of the process.

*ACTION: Invite KCCllr Whiting to the next Full Council meeting and request that he be able to report the Parish Council's concerns to KCCllr Michael Payne, the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transportation.*

Cllr Palmer said Keycol Hill is now an Air Quality area.

The latest details from SGN suggests they are doing more

## **12. Lights**

Cllr Harvey said the lighting survey seemed to suggest the new lights are being put into old fittings.

The Clerk said there is to be a meeting with the contractor and that she is waiting to receive dates from Councillors.

Cllr Morgan said there are trees near a light in Callaways Lane creating a dark area, can they be cut back.

Cllr Coles said the trees are in the garden part of the houses.  
 Cllr Harvey said Swale Borough Council could issue an order for the trees to be cut back.  
 There could be a different type of light fitting which would shine out more.  
*ACTOPN: Cllr Morgan to send the Clerk a photo of the issue.*  
 Cllr Condron asked if a shield could be fitted to a light.  
 The Clerk said that she needs to know the house number where the light is.

### 13. Footpaths and Bridleways

There was nothing further to report.

### 14. Village Voice and media

#### i. To receive an update

Cllr Mould said the Village Voice will have an article on the Autumn litter pick; the Friends of Newington Recreation Ground fund raising schemes; a membership drive by the Short Mat Bowls Club; the Council's concern regarding the A2 gas works; Newington History Group Article; reporting of issues to 101; Kent Fire & Rescue Service Safe and Well visits; reporting nuisance bikes and No Cold Calling.

Cllr Jackson said it has been suggested the emailing of news such as the Village Voice be stopped and residents asked to sign up for website alerts.

Cllr Palmer said some residents may prefer to receive an email.

Cllr Mould said that if it was not too arduous, it could be streamlined and only the Village Voice could be sent out and residents requested to sign up to the website for other news.

Cllr Layer said the new website is very good and is proactive.

#### ii. To consider content of Facebook page

Cllr Jackson said there needs to be clarification on the content of the Facebook page. News and events posted on the website can be shared to Facebook automatically from the website. Things like the agendas, minutes, planning reports, community warden reports cannot be shared on Facebook from website.

Cllr Geldard said he has set up an account in the name of Newington Clerk.

The Clerk said that she has activated the account.

*ACTION: Cllr Geldard and Clerk to liaise.*

### 15. Christmas Decorations

Cllr Palmer reported Swale Borough Council has £25,000 in its Festive Grant Fund and that applications of up to £1,000 can be made.

Cllr Mould **PROPOSED** to apply for a grant of £1,000 to purchase decorations on the lamp posts in the High Street: **AGREED UNANIMOUSLY**.

The Clerk said details of the expenditure are required to support the application.

*ACTION: Cllr Mould to research appropriate decorations.*

### 16. Any Other Business

Cllr Mould said that three years ago there was a thankyou reception for the Village Voice distributors and volunteers before the December meeting and said it would be good to thank volunteers at Christmas. It is a gesture to people who help the Council.

Cllr Harvey said it is a good idea and this was partly done at the Annual Parish Meeting which was a great success.

*ITEM FOR FULL COUNCIL*

Cllr Jackson asked whether it would be possible to ask the Allotment Association if they would plant bulbs around the village.

The Clerk said the Council could apply for funding for the scheme from the Swale Borough Council Environment Grant.

*ACTION: Clerk to apply for a grant of £250.*

Cllr Mould asked whether consideration should be given to reinstating the Newington Festival. Cllr Coles said an event should be different to the festival and held at the Recreation Ground. There could be a brass band. It could be a village fete type of event and free to attend. If there is no alcohol there would be no need for security.

*ITEM FOR FULL COUNCIL*

Cllr Coles asked if the speed sign has been found.

Cllr Palmer reported that he has looked into this, there is a crime number and KCC Highways have said that they will replace the sign.

Cllr Harvey asked for progress on the planning application for the fence work at the Recreation Ground completed in July and requested this be submitted in time for Full Council next Tuesday.

Cllr Palmer said that he will deliver the prizes for the best Kept Garden Competition.

Cllr Jackson said the Youth Club have the keys to the Pavilion.

*ACTION: Clerk to request key deposit of £100.*

**Date of Next Meeting:** 19 November 2019

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm