**Newington (Folkestone and Hythe) Parish Council**

**Annual Parish Meeting**

**held at The Barn, Newington on Monday 20th May 2019**

**MINUTES**

**Present**

Councillors: John Neale (Chairman)

Kevin Golding (Vice-Chairman)

Sue Smith

Craig Watt-Peters

Robin Peters

Kent County Councillor Susan Carey

Gary Harrison (Community Warden Elham Valley)

Vic Coleman (Newington and District Gardeners Association)

Greta Raja (Friends of St Nicholas Church)

One member of the public

Clerk: Melvyn Twycross

**Apologies** District Councillor David Godfrey

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| **1** | **Welcome from the Chairman of the Parish Council**  Cllr John Neale welcomed all present to the Annual Parish Meeting |
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| **2** | **Agree and sign the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 9 April 2018**  The minutes were **agreed** and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting |
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| **3** | **End of year Financial Report**  The Financial Report for 2018/2019 was reviewed (see Appendix A) |
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| **4** | **Chairman’s Report from Sally Coleman**  “This is a very sad meeting for me – my last as Chairman of Newington Parish Council. It is a job that I have thoroughly enjoyed and I can’t thank my fellow Councillors enough for their constant hard work. The Parishioners have also been superb and have worked with us so well.  The word ‘potholes’ has been a well-used one in the last twelve months. Ironically, work has commenced in this last week. Not a good positive result but at least now the work is being undertaken.  I can’t thank the Councillors enough for the work they have undertaken within the Parish. We have a wonderful little Parish, let us, the Parishioners, work together to maintain it.  May you achieve all that is on the ‘to-do’ list.  May I take this opportunity to personally thank Robin, Councillor Thornby, for all his hard work, and hope that his health improves to what a ‘good boy’ deserves.” |
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| **5** | **Presentations**  Reports were delivered on behalf of the following organisations summarising their activities during the past year:   1. **Kent County Council Councillor Susan Carey**   Cllr Carey distributed copies of her Annual Report for town and parish councils in the Elham Valley. She particularly highlighted that, at a time when many other councils are reducing services to the statutory minimum, Kent still boasts 99 libraries, continues to fund Community Wardens, subsidise the Young Persons Travel Pass by over £8 million a year and supports communities through the KCC Member Grants. Cllr Carey noted that Newington Parish did not receive grants for any projects during the past year, but would be happy to consider any applications for the coming year.  Cllr Neale raised the ongoing problems with the delays caused by Operation Brock on the westbound carriageway of the A20 between Junctions 9 and 8.  Cllr Carey explained that the cost of removing the metal barriers meant that they would remain in place until the Brexit situation has been resolved. Cllr Golding thought that the speed limit should be increased from 50mph to 60mph to help prevent bunching of HGV’s and other traffic.   1. **Folkestone & Hythe District Councillor David Godfrey**   Councillor Godfrey sent the following written report that was read to the Council by the Chairman:  Please accept my apologies for not being able to attend this year’s Annual Meeting and may I thank all those who voted for me enabling my successful return to the District Council.    I would also like to congratulate Cllrs John Neale, Sue Smith and Kevin Golding for standing for the residents of Newington Parish and look forward to working with them again. They may have been elected un-opposed but should be commended for putting themselves forward and being prepared to give up their time to serve the Parish.  The District Council has taken on a new shape with no group in overall control which will necessitate the forming of coalitions. The District Council meeting on 22nd May will determine the political direction that will be taken and until that time we will not know who will lead the Council and what cabinet/committee positions will be allocated to Councillors.  There will be some challenging times ahead but I hope we can all work together for the benefit of all residents of Folkestone and Hythe District to build on the many successes that I have been able to report on during the past year.  I will finish by saying that during the lull before and after the elections I enjoyed a couple of family weekend outing to Georges Barn and the Railway Museum where train rides were enjoyed by several of our grandchildren. No matter how challenging future Council work becomes I can always look forward to the events that the community of Newington and Peene successfully organise throughout the season.   1. **Kent Community Warden Gary Harrison**   Gary Harrison presented the following report of activities and incidents in the area during the past year:  He said that this year he had not had any reports of Antisocial Behaviour in Newington or Peene.  Thefts from Rural locations raised their ugly head a few times over the year in nearby locations, although not directly in Newington or Peene, with tools from work vans and trailers being targeted.  Scams remain on the increase and are becoming more and more difficult to detect.  Some of the latest ones are listed below.  Sextortion Claims – Cyber criminals are sending victims their own passwords in an attempt to trick them into believing they have been filmed on their computer watching porn and demanding payment.  This means your passwords have been compromised and you should change them and refuse to pay any money.  Buying fake goods online puts you at risk of fraud – An emerging trend where fraudsters attempt to embed malicious software onto consumer's browsing devices to gather personal and banking detail  HMRC are warning that fraudsters are sending scam emails and text messages that promise tax rebates to trick people into disclosing their account and personal details.  There's a New pilot programme to combat scams targeting older people launched by Age UK – Contact them if you have been a victim of a scam as they are working in partnership with Action Fraud.  Most scams evolve from a telephone call, email or text.  Just delete them or hang up the phone if a company you do not know calls.  Cold Callers have done the rounds a few times this year and again I would advise you do not buy anything from them as the items are often substandard and overpriced.  Please report all non-urgent crimes to Kent police on 101 and any scams you have not lost money or personal information to Action Fraud  As always please report crimes in Progress to Kent Police on 999.   1. **Kent Police (Local Policing North Downs East Ward)**   The following report was sent by PCSO Daniel Mills 58997 and PCSO Nicholas Hazell 59007 and was read to the Council by the Chairman:  First of all, please accept our apologies for our absence at this meeting. We have compiled a report regarding Newington and the surrounding area which summarises key elements of crime and Anti-social behaviour. There may be certain incidents not mentioned with this report but have been reported to Kent Police.  Reported Crime and ASB (anti-social behaviour) 01/05/2018 – 30/04/2019:  1 x ASB noise related  2x ASB nuisance vehicles  1x Theft from a motor vehicle  Here is a link to the latest figures:  <https://www.kent.police.uk/your-area/ashford-and-shepway/tolsford/>  Other Information:  Vehicle security – There have been several reports throughout the year of unattended vehicles being broken into and valuables taken from within. This has predominantly happened in the rural lanes near to well-known walking trails and parking locations. Officers have patrolled locations when possible but are still finding a large number of persons leaving valuables on display in cars.  The forestry commission has been contacted in relation to displaying more visible posters in relation to this, if anyone witnesses anything suspicious or untoward then please contact police via 101, or visit the Kent Police website if time has passed.    Reporting suspicious persons/vehicles – If there is a person or vehicle that is behaving in a manner that is concerning or causing alarm or distress then please note as much detail as possible and call 101.    Please find advice on these issues and crime prevention on our website at:  <http://www.kent.police.uk/advice/advice.html>  If you have any worries, concerns or information you would like me to know, please do not hesitate to contact on 101 (non-emergency) and the information will get to me.  PCSO Daniel Mills 58997 and PCSO Nicholas Hazell 59007  North Downs East, North Downs West   1. **Newington Village Hall Committee**   Cllr Kevin Golding presented the Newington Village Hall Annual Report to Parish Council:  Regular Hall Bookings include the following:  Parkinson’s UK, Quilting Bees, Folk Dancing, Line Dancing, Dance Classes, Exercise Classes, Gary Dean Music Night, Yoga, Gardeners Association (Meetings and Shows), Parish Council Meetings, Hindu Services, Bingo, Church Jumble Sales, Church Socials and Annual Fete.  Non-Regular Bookings include the following:  Children’s Parties, Family Parties, Wedding Receptions, NHS Training, Children Activity Mornings and Polling Station for Elections.  There is rarely a day when the hall is not being used and sometimes it is used twice a day and on odd occasions three times a day!  Newington Village Hall Improvements - apart from the ongoing maintenance (light bulb replacement, minor repairs, etc.) major improvements to the hall have included:  Car park completely re-surfaced with high grade tarmac, new storage container installed, hall floor renovation new front door, new side door, new stage curtain rail track, new automatic taps in toilets and new water heater.  New Works Planned for implementation in coming 24 Months:  Kitchen refurbishment, external painting, window maintenance/replacement, led lighting and movement sensitive external lighting.  Secretary – Tracey Brudenell  Treasurer – Bob Laslett  Letting Secretary – Jenny Laslett  Gardeners Rep. – Dee Everett  Committee Member – Kevin Golding  Committee Member – Betty Smith  Committee Member – Mary Patterson  Committee Member – Kirsty Howard  Trustees – Kirsty Howard  2nd Trustee to be appointed following the resignation of Karen Lloyd  A special vote of thanks to all the NVH Committee Members who continue to give up their time and without whom it would not be possible to run and manage a very successful Village Hall.   1. **Elham Valley Line Trust**   Cllr Kevin Golding presented the following report on behalf of the Elham Valley Line Trust:  2018 was another very successful year for the Trust. Visitor numbers maintained a similar level to the previous year, with good numbers coming from our returning visitors with family memberships.  As usual we had a very busy year, some of the highlights include:  A Miniature Steam weekend, which was a new event for us, involving a number of small traction engines as well as a couple of visiting steam locos on our 7" track, one coming all the way from Norfolk. Possibly also due to the superb weather we experienced, this proved to be hugely successful and was the best attended weekend of the year, apart from the Christmas Fayres. This will definitely return again this year.  The Military event was again very successful, although the weather wasn't as favourable last year.  The Apple Pressing weekend continues to be successful and creates a lot of interest particularly for our younger visitors. Our apples were again provided free of charge, and this year we managed to sell all the juice we pressed.  Our Spooky evenings were coordinated by some of our younger volunteers and with a theme of 'Nursery Crimes' turned out to be very successful, with people trying to book on the evening for this year's event, which it looks like we will have to have.  The two weekends of our Christmas Fayre were again extremely successful last year and provided us with over 10% of our annual income.  This year we have been invited to be part of the Wheels of Time scheme, which is a badge collecting scheme for youngsters, whereby they receive a badge for visiting each of the 40 participating sites of interest across Kent with awards for visiting certain numbers of sites. As the scheme is sponsored, it costs us very little to participate and we are hopeful that this will generate interest from visitors throughout Kent.  I reported last year that the refurbishment of the loco has been very slow due to the lack of an experienced welder. As a result, very little progress was made last year, but I can report that we have now found a tame welder and progress has been made over the winter. Hopefully it will be back resplendent again during this season.  The miniature railway continues to be a popular attraction carrying almost 4500 paying passengers last year, bringing the total since it was introduced, just over 5 years ago, to almost £20,000.  Some people may have noticed the item under a cover in the corner of the car park. This is part of a railway carriage which was built around 1850 and would have run on the Elham Valley Line when it was open. This was found in garden at Bridge, when what was thought was a garden shed was about to be demolished and the owner approached us and asked whether we would be interested in it. This turned in to a full-scale rescue mission, involving a number of visits to free it from the ground, build an internal frame to stabilise it for transport and then, thanks to Bob Laslett, lifting and transporting it back to Peene.  The aim is to refurbish it and place it on the embankment as an educational and display space. Obviously, this will require a lot of work and volunteers, so if anyone is interested or knows anyone who might be interested, please contact me or anyone else involved with the Trust.  During the process of removing the carriage, we needed to remove a large wooden garage, which was going to be disposed of. Being forever resourceful and not wishing to spend lots of money, the garage has been repurposed over the winter as a new building at the museum, which is currently partly a new WW1 display and partly a storage shed, tidying up a very scruffy corner of the museum in the process.  Having already mentioned volunteers, I am pleased to say that we have managed to hang on to most of the young volunteers I reported on last year despite the onset of GCSEs and other exams.  However, with the risk of sounding like a broken record, I will finish with the usual plea for volunteers. As mentioned earlier, if you are interested or know anyone who may be, please come along and see us when we are open again.  Thank you for listening.   1. **Friends of St Nicholas Church**   Greta Raj presented a report on the activities of the Friends of St Nicholas Church during the past year:  As most of you know, since the Friends were formed about 11 years ago to look after the maintenance of St Nicholas Church, we have replaced the church tower shingles, built a toilet and reorganised the church to include a kitchen and social area. We have also repaired the roof and windows and various other smaller jobs.  We have achieved this with several grants and the support of everyone coming to our events. Many thanks to all who have helped us including Susan Carey and David Godfrey. Our problem is that we are a very small group of people and mostly rather old.  We had hoped that small local groups who do not rent the village hall would make use of our new facilities. This has not as yet happened but please bear it in mind.  Our present project is to repair the churchyard walls which were in a bad state and were in danger of falling down onto the road and possibly causing injury.  We initially broke up the job into four sections. Since then we have had to add another section alongside the bungalow which is in a bad way. We have managed to raise enough funds to complete or put in hand three sections of the work costing over 25.000. I am struggling to find the funds to complete the other two sections of the wall, approximately f 7000 but we will keep battling on.  Mel Wrigley organises the churchyard work party groups which I know some of you help with. These have made a big difference in keeping the churchyard tidy.  We had several successful functions last year. The folklore conference, fish and chip supper and U3A band concert with cream tea were particularly popular so we are repeating them this year together with some interesting talks. There is a talk on Wednesday evening on 'Neanderthals in the Elham Valley' by Anne Beecham.  If you are not already a member do consider joining the Friends. A single membership now costs £10 per year and a joint membership of £15 per year. I have forms if you are interested.  Pease contact me on [greta.rajadhyaksha@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:greta.rajadhyaksha@tiscali.co.uk)   1. **Newington and District Gardeners Association**   Vic Coleman presented the annual report on behalf of Newington and District Gardeners Association:  2018 was another busy year in respect of the local Newington and District Gardeners Association.  As always, the year restarted in February with the AGM. This is where amongst other items our Charity of the year is chosen, and for 2018 it was decided it would be Demelza House. We raise money for our chosen charity mainly via a sponsored walk held in August and a Garden party, as in previous years this was held in the garden of Mrs Jan Fagg, also in August. This year we were very pleased to hand over a cheque for £1,500, a fantastic achievement.  During the year we were pleased to see membership maintained with new members joining, although we had some sad losses, but we finishing the year with more than 60 members.  A monthly meeting was held in Newington village hall every 3rd Monday where we had guest speakers on various subjects some garden related some not!! and lots of social nattering tea and biscuits. Each month we also arrange a mini show, just 9 classes, which in 2018 was very well supported boasted by interest from new members.  Three main shows were held, Spring, Summer and Autumn. The shows were very well supported by both the members entering the classes and then their friends coming to see their achievements  Three outings were organised in 2018, the first an evening visit to Rock Garden, Bilsington, the second an outing to Bressingham and the third to the National Dahlia Show at Wisely. All were excellent trips and good experiences. Unfortunately, the summer outing lacked support which has made us put this event on hold for 2019.  As has become the norm we managed a stall at the Village Hall Fete and again were able to share profits with the village hall. This money will be sadly missed this year following the cancellation of the event due to ElecLink’s failure to complete their project.  Our usual Christmas Social Barn Dance had to be cancelled due to poor ticket sales, so we are changing the event for 2019 to a social dinner which we hope will be well supported by members and friends.  2019 has already started with a full calendar of events which we hope will keep the members out of mischief and truly occupied.  New members are always welcome any time in the year (every 3rd Monday except June). |
| **6** | **Public Forum**   1. It was reported that hedgerows were overgrown on either side of the Newington Road between the Village Hall and entrance to The Barn, restricting visibility particularly on the bends. The Clerk will contact the landowners and ask them cut back the hedges. 2. It was reported that the wall around the War Memorial had been damaged again. The Clerk will inspect and arrange for repairs. |
| **7** | **Close of meeting**  The Chairman thanked everyone for their contributions and the meeting closed at 9.30. |

**Chairman’s Signature Date**

**Appendix A**

**NEWINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Finance Report 2018/19**

The income and expenditure for the Parish Council during the 2018/19 financial year (preliminary figures) was:

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| Income (precept): | £6,500.00 |
| Expenditure (see below): | £4,440.08 |
| Surplus: | £2,059.92 |

**Expenditure**

During the year, major items of expenditure were:

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| Grounds maintenance: | £1,338.00 |
| Insurance: | £402,24 |
| Staffing costs: | £2,304.72 |

The balance in the bank as at 1st April 2019 = **£6484.81**