

**Newington Parish Council
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
Held at Georges Barn, Newington on Monday 11th March 2024**

Present: Councillor Sarah Wright
Councillor Jill Sage
Councillor Bob Laslett
KCC Councillor Susan Carey

Clerk: Jean Gilham

01	Apologies: Councillor John Neale (Chairman) DCC Councillor David Godfrey The meeting was Chaired by Sarah Wright	
02	To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) and Other Significant Interests (OSI) relating to items on the agenda – None	
03	Minutes of 8 th January 2024 = Agreed and signed. These minutes were circulated to the Parish Council (PC) prior to this meeting.	
04	Matters arising from previous minutes - Matters arising were added as articles within the agenda	
05	<p>Public Participation</p> <p>Q.A member of the public asked why the trees at the edge of the playing field were removed, especially as some were only 15 years old (approx.) and one was to commemorate the village twinning with France, there was also a Plaque which seems to have been removed does anyone in the PC know what has happened to it?</p> <p>A. Sarah Wright responded on behalf of the committee informing those present that the condition of the trees were fully assessed before removal took place and was unable to give specific reasons for individual trees, however, she would make enquiries relating to both the trees and the plaque and give an update at the next meeting.</p> <p>A number of questions were raised by members of the public relating to Southern Water and the Sewerage Problem –</p> <p>Q. The costs to Southern Water are considerable as the tankers are being used 24 hours per day 7 days per week, is there some reason why this situation has not been fixed as it has been ongoing for a number of years?</p> <p>A. <i>Southern Water are aware of the problem and they carry out regular checks for on the river water quality is undertaken to ensure the wellbeing of the village inhabitants. Should Ammonia be found Southern Water will activate the contamination protocol and residents will then be advised, with guidance from SW.</i></p> <p><i>The situation has indeed been ongoing for 8-10 years approx. The main problem is that the sewerage pipe fills up and rain water gets into the pipe which caused the overflow. Southern Water have cleaned the pipeline but unfortunately this has not had the desired effect of removing the problem. The pipe itself is a 9" pipe which runs the length of the Elham Valley down to the edge of the old railway</i></p>	SW

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line in Peene then down again through the village of Newington. When capacity is at its highest it can not cope with the volume. Originally the tankers were taking the contents to Sandgate but they too are overwhelmed so it is now removed to Hythe/Dymchurch.

Q. Do Southern Water have plans to remedy the situation soon?
A *a new pipe line needs to be laid between Elham Valley/Etchinghill and then on into Newington, Southern Water suggest that they do not have the budget to carry out major works during 2024 however they are producing a plan going forward moving into 2025/26.*

Southern Water have reportedly explained that these works are on a 'priority list' but before the tankers can be removed the water level must drop.

It is hoped that all drivers have turned off their 'reversing beepers' to ensure that night time disturbances are kept to a minimum.

And there are assurances that the damage to verges will be repaired once all the work is completed.

Damages caused to the road surfaces are subject to KCC Highways Department and will have to be taken up with them. Their telephone number is: 03000 418181

The Flood Elevation Ditch is Environment Agency property and not the Parish Council please report any issues with them directly.

There are blocked drains in Peene these need to be reported to KCC Highways Department directly their telephone number is: 03000 418181.

Flooding affecting the Village Hall and Newington are due to blocked drains and the adverse camber on the road, please report to KCC Highways Department directly their telephone number is: 03000 418181

District Councillor James Butcher ensured those present that pressure has been and is continually being put upon Southern Water by the main council in order to ensure a swift resolve to this matter. Mr Butcher will forward any correspondence to the clerk for distribution to the PC and all matters will be discussed at forthcoming meetings.

Parish Councillor Bob Laslett gave an in-depth report relating to the complexities of the proposed upgrading to the sewerage system after which a list of questions were compiled to send to Southern Water for their response.

A resident at the meeting suggested that the PC invite the Highways Department to a meeting to discuss improvement plans.

JG

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	It was requested by a resident that the PC include a list of emergency contacts to help residents, this would be kept on the notice boards in the village, this was discussed and agreed.	JG
06	Reports - KCC Councillor – Susan Carey (Appendix 1) District Councillor – David Godfrey (Appendix 2) Community Warden – Garry Harrison no report received	
07	Planning – No planning applications have been received	
08	Financial Reports - January expenditure and bank reconciliation agreed and signed February expenditure and bank reconciliation agreed and signed Payments made since last meeting agreed Ratify payments falling due in March (as known) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerks' salary • Hugo Fox – web site monthly payment Amendments to be made to banking signatories	JG
09	Policies and Procedure Review – A new timetable to ensure all policies and procedures are up to date to be brought to the PC at their next meeting.	JG
10	Southern Water – Discussed under item 05	
11	Co-option of new Parish Councillor – Agenda Item for next meeting – May 13 th 2024	JG
12	Internal Auditor – Parish Councillors were informed that the clerk has now made arrangements for the internal audit to be carried out – she is awaiting date conformation.	
13	Email Address Update- Clerk to contact Fasthosts to update information relating to email address for the Councillors.	JG
14	Grounds Maintenance Contract – Councillors were informed that all contracts are signed and returned to the Clerk, they will be kept on file for future reference. Envisage have been given a key to the playing field which will ensure that the grass cutting can be carried out without any delays. Another key is held by a Councillor and one is with the Clerk	
15	Defibrillator – A permanent power supply will be required for the installation of a defibrillator. Agenda item for next meeting.	JG
16	20 mile per hour signage for Frogholt – A request has been received by a Councillor. If residents feel that changes are required, they need to work on a Highways Improvement Plan (HIP). Highways have to prioritise spend to reflect need and a HIP identify needs. A key element of this is the number and frequency of crashes. Frogholt currently has none recorded and Peene one incident classified as slight. This being the case there is	

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	no evidence to support an application to highways for traffic calming at present.	
17	Telephone Box – Has been tidied and is currently being maintained by Bob Laslett/Jill Sage.	
18	AOB - The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents report will be available for discussion at the next meeting	JG
	There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.10pm The next meeting which will be the AGM followed by a Parish Council will be held on - Monday May 13 th at 7pm Venue – Georges Barn, Newington Road	

Appendix 1 – Report from KCC Councillor Susan Carey

Report for Newington Parish Council 11 March 2024

The KCC budget was agreed at a full day meeting of the County Council on 19th February. The papers for the meeting and a webcast of the debate are on the KCC website www.kent.gov.uk. The Labour Group, Liberal Democrats, Greens and Independents all put forward amendments to make small changes to spending but their proposals also all involved a 5% increase. None of the amendments were accepted (one involved opening a bar in County Hall to make money!) The budget that was passed has increased spending on adult social care, children in care and home school transport in line with demand.

KCC has stepped up its campaign for all those involved but particularly the Government to do more to help preparations for the proposed introduction of the new EU Entry Exist System (EES). From 06 October 2024 EES will replace stamping passports with an electronic system to register the dates of entry and exit by non-EU travellers and is similar to systems already in operation in the USA, Canada and Australia. EES requires biometric information such as facial recognition and fingerprints. It is technically possible to do most of these checks before arriving at the ports, but current plans do not allow this. Roger Gough, KCC's leader, told Parliament's EU Scrutiny Committee on 31 January that traffic modelling showed a worst-case scenario of delays of up to 14 hours at the ports and Eurotunnel once EES is in place. Roger called for funding for measures to cope with the change. He pointed out that delays in Kent also impacted on the whole UK economy and urged the Government to look at technological and legal changes to enable remote registration. Roger has also visited Eurotunnel to see the preparations being made to reduce the potential impact of the new checks. Eurotunnel has invested E80m to prepare their terminals for the change. Such work is reassuring but more facilities are needed particularly for freight traffic. A report on this issue went to the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 07 March and you can read this and watch the debate on the KCC website www.kent.gov.uk.

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Another current campaign is the one to restore the Kent stops for Eurostar services. There is a petition on this which has nearly reached 50,000 signatures. If you'd like to support it you can sign the online petition. KCC has also surveyed Kent businesses and found strong support for the reintroduction of the Kent stops. I know Damian Green MP, Ashford Borough Council and KCC are all involved in the campaign to persuade Eurostar to restore the services.

KCC has launched a Biodiversity Net Gain Site Register for Kent. Since 12 February all developments with over ten houses are required to deliver a 10% increase in biodiversity. The aim is for this improvement to be delivered on the site itself but if this is impractical then the site register will provide a pipeline of suitable land to deliver this commitment. The Making Space for Nature Kent website has more details on this.

I have been contacted by a resident in The Street about the tankers going through Newington. Southern Water's systems are overloaded and they have been pumping water into tankers to move it and prevent flooding. Groundwater levels are higher than normal and I have not yet been advised of an end date for this measure.

Do please keep reporting potholes preferably on the KCC website or to 0300041 81 81. Nearly 60,000 potholes were repaired on Kent's roads between April and December 2023 and the work continues. The Government has allocated Kent £135m of additional funding over the next 11 years for road repairs. £8.6m of this will be spent between March and October this year. This is on top of the £50m in KCC's own road and footway maintenance budget. Reporting by residents ensures our local roads are added to the list for this spending.

Susan Carey, Member for Elham Valley, Kent County Council

Appendix 2 - District Councillor Report March 2024

Budget Meeting – held on Wednesday 28 February had to be adjourned for over an hour while protesters were removed from the Gallery. The protest was about the situation in Gaza and one gentleman in particular, refused to sit down or stop shouting and eventually had to be evicted by the Police. There was then a debate on the Housing Revenue Account and the Revenue Budget and associated documents. As is required by law, the budget is a balanced budget which has been achieved through a better-than-expected Government settlement of just under £1m additional funding and £3.6m of savings, (£2m on staff and £1.6m on services), Lower inflation and interest rates also contributed. Cuts include reduction in bins across the District, reduced street cleansing in some areas, area officer team reduced, rural verge cutting reduced to once a year, no Air Show for 2024, Tall Ships project (joint with Boulogne) axed and all fees and charges increased. Garden Waste charges will rise from £48 to £60 and collection of bulk items will rise from £35 for one item to £53 for three items. As from 1 April, car parking charges at the Sandgate Road and Costal Park car parks will be to 9pm instead of 6pm. This all results in a Council Tax increase of 2.94% (£280,08 at Band D-an increase of £8.01 on the current charge). Voting on the budget was – in favour – 13 Green/LibDem, abstentions 10 Labour/1independent and against 5 Conservatives/1 independent. On the housing front, social rents will increase by 7.7% which equates to an increase of £7.37 per week or £390.61 per annum. The budget

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debate can be accessed via this link Council – [Wednesday 28 February 2024, 7:00pm – Folkestone & Hythe webcasting \(public-i.tv\)](#)

Landslips – there have been a number of landslips in Folkestone. The Road of Remembrance has suffered quite badly with initially trees blocking the road followed by two further slips. The road will not be reopened until the area has been assessed as safe to work in, and due to the most recent slips and continued rainfall this could be some time. The District Council is working closely with KCC who are the Highways Authority. Further details on all landslides can be found on the website.

Planning Application 23/2061/FH Erection of 3 detached dwellings – Rectory Lane Lyminge – This application is still being assessed by Officers.

Police & Crime Panel – At the meeting on 6 February, it was agreed to support the PCC's proposal to increase the police precept of the council tax by £13 a year or 5.34% for an average Band D property (£1.08 a month or 35p per day). This will maintain the record number of police officers (over 4,000) in the county as well as supporting the New Neighbourhood Policing Model, which is seeing officers deployed to local communities and schools, the PCC has secure funding from the Home Office to deliver extra visible policing in antisocial behaviour and drug hotspots, to help drive crime down. However, even with this increase the Police budget still needs to find £7.3 million of savings!

Princes Parade – The Leader of the Council has made a decision to take down the current hoarding and replace it with 1.2m stock fencing at a cost of £70,000 with a further £20,000 allocated for contingency and £10,000 allocated for maintenance! Otterpool Park LLP will cover the cost of removing the current hoarding and store it on the Otterpool site for future use.

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