

**Newington and Peene Parish Council Meeting**  
**Held at Newington Village Hall**  
**11<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

Councillors: Councillor John Neale MBE (Chair)  
 Councillor Sarah Wright (Vice-Chair)  
 Councillor Jill Sage  
 Councillor Bob Laslett  
 Councillor David Godfrey  
 FHDC Stephen Scoffham

Clerk: Jean Gilham

<b>1.</b>	Apologies – KCC Susan Carey, FHDC James Butler	
<b>2.</b>	Declaration of interest – none noted	
<b>3.</b>	Minutes of meeting held on 9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024, agreed and signed by Sarah Wright	
<b>4.</b>	<p>Matters arising from previous meeting –</p> <p><b>4.1</b> Payment for Village Hall – following discussion it was agreed that the parish council would make an annual donation for the use of the village hall. Cllr. Laslett to discuss with the Village Hall committee.</p> <p><b>4.2</b> Repairs to Play Equipment – the clerk informed the council that other parish councils use Harmer to carry out their repairs to play equipment, however, envisage (grounds maintenance contractor) hope to be able to offer this service in the coming year. This will enable the parish council to seek tenders when works need to be carried out.</p> <p><b>4.3</b> Ground shrinkage - at the edge of playing surface in the field, this is one item which needs to be addressed asap. Cllr. Wright will review the 2024 ROSPA report and produce a concise list of any other works which need to be carried out. Cllr. Scoffham informed the parish council that there is a possibility of obtaining a grant to help cover the costs of repairs.</p> <p><b>4.4</b> Goal Posts - in playing field Cllr. Laslett reported that the goal posts are not in good condition and it would be best if these items could be replaced. Cllr. Laslett has kindly offered to donate new movable goal posts, along with secure storage when they are not in use. Cllr. Wright pointed out that ROSPA report identified issues for repair with the goal posts however, they had a low risk score.</p>	<p>BL</p> <p>SW/SS</p> <p>BL</p>
	<b>4.5</b> Path behind properties backing onto Eurotunnel – these paths have become overgrown and need to be cut back so villagers can once again use them. Cllr. Laslett has offered to speak to Eurotunnel and cut back the paths if necessary, using his own equipment.	BL
	<b>4.6</b> Telephone Box Library – Cllr. Laslett has several boxes of new childrens books, some of which will be put out as soon as possible. If villagers could return any books, they would no longer need it would be appreciated.	BL
	<b>4.7</b> Notice Boards – the locks on the Newington notice board are broken only one of the two actually lock, also the Peene	

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	notice board is becoming difficult to open – it was agreed that all the locks would be changed, by Cllr Sage’s husband, one set of keys then being held by the clerk and one by either the Chair or Vice Chair	JS
	<b>4.8</b> Work on the playing field to level off where the electrical cable was put through the field. Cllr. Laslett has emailed Kevin Golding for the information relating to this, Cllr. Laslett is awaiting a response from Kevin.	BL/KG
	<b>4.9</b> Parish Online update – the move from Fasthosts to Parish Online for the parish councillors’ emails has taken place and it is hoped that any inconsistencies will be ironed out very soon. The new website is up and running and it is hoped that the Hugo Fox site will be discontinued in January, until this time both sites will carry the same information relating to parish council meetings/finance etc.	JG/PO
	<b>5.0</b> Parish Council Laptop – facilities for backing up have been made and are being carried out. The parish council will discuss cloud storage facility offered along with the Parish Online service.	JG/PO
<b>5.</b>	<b>Open Session/Public Participation</b> – no members of the public were present.	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Reports</b> – were received from: - KCC Susan Carey – see appendix A FHDC Stephen Scoffham – see appendix B FHDC David Godfrey – see appendix C	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Planning</b> – Item no 24/1307/FH – approved with conditions on 17/10/24 Item no 24/1080/FH Item no 24/1079/FH Item no 24/1080/FH Item no 24/0978/FH No comments have been received on any of the above	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Finance</b> – payments made, bank statements, spreadsheet for September and October were circulated prior to the meeting. <b>8.2</b> September bank reconciliation – was agreed and signed by JG/Clerk & RFO and Cllr. Neale Chairman. <b>8.3</b> October bank reconciliation – was agreed and signed by JG/Clerk & RFO and Cllr. Neale Chairman. November payments discussed and agreed include: Scribe 2025 annual fees Hall Donation Envisage Grounds Maintenance Salary for Clerk Payment to HMRC	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Policies and Procedure Review</b> – Equal Opportunities Policy – no changes to be made. Social Media Policy – The Parish Council do not need to appoint a moderator at present as they are not using any Social	

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	Medi. However, this will be reviewed/amended if a Social Media account is opened by the Parish Council in the future.	JG
10.	<p><b>A.O.B.</b></p> <p><b>10.1</b> Seabrook Stream – a site survey has now been carried out and a full copy of the report will be available shortly. It is proposed that on November 25/26 a crawler machine will take soil samples and the flow of the ditches will be investigated.</p> <p><b>10.2</b> Cllr. Laslett gave a report following his attendance at the FHDC meeting.</p> <p><b>10.3</b> The clerk has again requested a report or attendance by PC Mehmet no response has been received.</p> <p><b>10.4</b> Lorry Damage within the Village – Cllr. Laslett was asked to attend the site of lorry damage, Cllr. Laslett has taken photographs of the site and has details of the incident. Euro tunnel have now rectified the damage. Cllr Laslett suggests that new signage at the entrance to the village be sought which would state that the road has a 2-metre width restriction with 6’6” underneath. The clerk will contact Highways to see if this is possible.</p> <p><b>10.5</b> Cllr. Wight Vice-Chair will be attending the meeting with Sojan Joseph MP, at 1900 on Friday 15 November on behalf of the Parish Council.</p> <p><b>10.6</b> Cllr. Neale and Cllr. Laslett are attending a meeting of the Highways &amp; Transportation Autumn Parish Seminar on November 20<sup>th</sup>.</p> <p><b>10.7</b> Proposal to increase Parish Council numbers from 5 to 6. This proposal was originally made at the meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024, unactioned due to insufficient councillors in attendance.</p> <p>Cllr. B Laslett briefly outlined the detail of his proposal to increase the number of parish councillors, there followed a short debate where the procedure for any increase as well as cost was discussed. A vote was requested by Cllr. Wright (vice-chair) on the proposal –</p> <p>The Proposal – to increase the Parish Council members from 5 to 6, brought by Cllr. B Laslett on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024.</p> <p>Vote results -     For the proposal 1                               Against the proposal 3                               Abstention 1</p> <p>The proposal was unanimously defeated.</p> <p>Following the defeat Cllr. B Laslett tendered his resignation to the Chairman effective immediately, with all offers of help or assistance which had been made during the parish council meeting this evening would be removed, effective immediately.</p> <p><b>10.8</b> Potholes Beechborough to Bargrove – can these be reported as soon as possible please.</p> <p><b>10.9</b> Petty Cash/payments made by Clerk for stationary items etc – the clerk was given authorisation to spend up to a</p>	<p>BL/SB</p> <p>JG</p> <p>SW</p> <p>JN/BL</p>

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	<p>maximum of £200 without consultation of the parish councillors, agreed by all present.</p> <p><b>11.</b> Order of salt for both villages – Cllr. Sage to review the amount of salt currently in the boxes and report back for the clerk to order salt if required.</p> <p><b>12.</b> Cllr. Neale has received a request to have the overhanging bush at the kissing gate entrance cut as it is making entrance difficult. The grounds contractor will be advised.</p>	<p>JS/JG</p> <p>JG</p>
<p><b>The meeting was closed at 8.45pm</b>  <b>Date of next meeting 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025</b>  <b>Time and Venue – Newington Village Hall at 7pm</b></p>		

## Appendix A

### Report for Newington Parish Meeting 11 November 2024

The new Government’s Budget saw some welcome announcements on extra funding for Adult Social Care, children with Special Educational Needs, continued funding the Household Support Fund which helps the most vulnerable and extra money for road maintenance. Less welcome was the increase in the Employers’ National Insurance Contributions and the National Living Wage as these will increase costs particularly for the companies and charities we use to deliver Social Care. The final settlement for Local Government will be confirmed in late December and we still expect we will need to make substantial savings to balance the KCC budget for 2025/26.

It was dismaying to see no changes in the Budget to eligibility levels to the Winter Fuel Allowance and KCC has a campaign to try to get more people to apply for Pension Credit so that they can still receive the Winter Fuel Allowance. The changes to Agricultural Property Relief are also alarming in their impact on family farms.

Current consultations include one on the use of pharmacies and another on KCC’s Education strategy and you can take part at <https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/> Matthew Scott, Kent’s Police and Crime Commissioner, also has a survey for the public to help shape the new Police and Crime Plan. It takes around 5 minutes on the link below:

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/PoliceandCrimePlan2024/>

There was a paper about the preparations for the much-postponed European Entry Exit System (EES) at last week’s meeting of the Full Council at KCC. EES, which replaces passport stamping with a biometric system, was due to be implemented from today but most EU countries (including France) are not yet ready. I spoke in the debate to make the point that our communities face regular disruption to our roads whenever there are problems with cross Channel traffic quite apart from the potential of long

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delays as people register for EES. More needs to be done to enable people to register away from the ports and to manage the cross-Channel traffic both tourist and freight so it doesn't blight Kent's roads. You can read the paper and see the full debate on the KCC website.

**Susan Carey**

**Member for Elham Valley, Kent County Council**

## **Appendix B**

### **Newington Parish Report 11.11.24**

**Cllr Stephen Scoffham**

#### **Corporate Plan Consultation**

Work on the new corporate plan is proceeding steadily. There were over 500 responses to the consultation from all sections of the community. The feedback on the draft plan was generally very favourable and was particularly useful in highlighting issues which residents regard as important. Attracting this level of engagement is a significant achievement and is one way in which the Council is reaching out to people locally. The decision to move the full council meeting in early October in New Romney is another example of community engagement.

#### **Sustainable Futures Forum**

There are two mini events this autumn designed to help local groups develop and promote their activities. The first Forum was held on 4<sup>th</sup> October at Folkestone College. The session was divided into two parts focussing (a) on communication and promotion and (b) on issues and common concerns. Around 50 people from very different walks of life attended the forum. Businesses and financial advisers shared ideas with local action groups and educationalists. The benefits in terms of networking were immediately apparent and there are plans to develop the scheme in the year ahead. A second forum, following a similar format, is due to be held on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

#### **North Downs Forum**

The next meeting is due to be held in early January in Elham Village Hall on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January with a special focus on health. The Forum is proving a useful way to identify issues relating to the rural area and seeing that they are drawn to the attention of the Council. Local action groups, councillors and interested residents are all warmly invited so please do come along. James Butcher ([james.butcher@folkestonehythe.gov.uk](mailto:james.butcher@folkestonehythe.gov.uk)) is the point of contact.

#### **Liaison with Sojan Joseph**

The next occasional meeting between councillors in North Downs East and North Downs West and Sojan Joseph our local MP is due to be held later this week. All local town and parishes councils have been contacted.

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### **Road to rail**

I reported last month about the need to get freight off the roads and onto rail. The benefits this could bring in terms of both reducing both traffic congestion and air pollution are manifest and the business case is compelling. I have been having meetings with representatives from Eurotunnel over the past month and there is now growing support from across all sections of the Council and beyond. Encouragingly Tony Vaughn MP asked Gareth Thomas (the Minister of State for Business and Trade) about this in the House of Commons last week. It will be interesting to see how the campaign unfolds.

### **Planning Matters**

As part of its preparation for the new Local Plan the Council has launched a call for sites. This is an opportunity for residents, parish councils, landowners, developers and other stakeholders to suggest land – with the potential for future development – for a wide range of uses. These include housing, employment, leisure, community, open space or areas set aside for nature. The consultation closes on 18<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Appendix C**

### **Report from District Councillor David Godfrey**

#### **District Housing**

More than 40 new affordable homes are set to be acquired by Folkestone & Hythe District Council.

Cabinet members have approved the purchase of 44 properties at Risborough Barracks, secured with the planning consent obtained for the site in Shornccliffe and funded by the council's Housing Revenue Account.

The homes will be let to applicants on the council's housing list through Kent Home choice once they are completed. A mixture of properties for affordable rent and shared ownership will be made available.

I was very pleased that the housing team had won a prestigious award for a project that was delivered during my tenure as Cabinet Member for Housing in the previous Conservative Administration and is being further developed by the Council,

The Asset and Social Housing Decarbonisation staff were judged to be a top team at the Kent Housing Group Excellence Awards on Wednesday (25 September) winning the Asset Management category against stiff competition.

The Folkestone team has led the multi-million pound project to help keep tenants warm in winter and cool in the summer. Work included the installation of measures such as: cavity wall, under floor and loft insulation, ventilation, double-glazed windows, new external doors, high heat retention storage heaters, as well as the installation of air source heat pumps and solar pv panels.

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On the subject of awards at the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV)'s national awards ceremony last week, the council tax, benefits and welfare team were named the winners of the Benefits and/or Welfare Reform Team of the Year and Excellence in Social Inclusion categories.

Judges praised a "holistic approach to supporting residents" including an "innovative" collaboration scheme with Reach Out, a private sector service from Sigma Connected, aimed at working with the most vulnerable.

The work of "alleviating poverty and deprivation" within targeted groups in the district through the Household Support Fund and Home Essentials Fund was also commended.

### **Beach Management**

The latest chapter of bi-annual beach management work helping to protect more than 3,000 homes and businesses from flooding starts next week.

Contractors will begin recycling and regrading shingle along the five-mile stretch of coast between Fisherman's Beach in Hythe and Folkestone Harbour on Monday 4 November – a process that takes up to eight weeks to complete.

### **Enforcement**

After numerous warnings residents who failed to clear a build-up of waste from their back garden in Lydd have been fined heavily

A dog walker who failed to clear up after a dog on a visit to The Warren has been fined. Hopefully these successful prosecutions which have been reported in the press and on social media will deter others.

Obviously, our enforcement teams cannot be everywhere at all times but residents can report such anti-social behaviour anonymously at <https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/report>

### **Christmas Parking**

Charges in Folkestone & Hythe District Council car parks and on-street pay and display bays are once again being waived on the three Saturdays leading up to the big day:

Saturday 7 December

Saturday 14 December

Saturday 21 December