

Newchurch Parish Council

Draft Minutes of Ordinary Meeting 2025-8 held on Monday 8th September 2025 in-person and in-public at The Community Room, Newchurch Village Hall, Newchurch, Romney Marsh, TN29 0DP. At 7.31pm Chairman Colin Woollard opened the meeting.

Unique Minute Number	Agenda Heading	Record	Action by whom and within what timescale
2025-8-1	Persons Present	<u>Parish Councillors</u> Colin Woollard, Michelle Barden, , Scott Fielding; one member of the public; <u>Officer</u> , Mr Michael Sharpe (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer/RFO to Newchurch Parish Council/ NPC).	
2025-8-2	Apologies	<u>Invited speakers</u> Cooper & Hills (FHDC Ward Councillors)	
2025-8-3	Declarations of Interest	The Chairman reminded all Parish Councillors to declare any conflicts of interest in the business before them. He declared that he did not consider he has any conflict of interest in Item 8 on Solar Farms.	
2025-8-4	Application for Dispensation	Councillors then debated and RESOLVED to grant Cllr Woollard a dispensation to speak and vote on items of Parish Council business dealing with Solar Farm developments, notwithstanding his membership of Hands Off Our Marsh. Such dispensation to last 2 years, and the text to be open to public inspection on request. NPC Code of Conduct para 14 and Appendix B refer, available online from the website: Newchurch Parish Council Code of conduct.pdf Proposed S Fielding, seconded M Barden, agreed unanimously.	
2025-8-5	Approval of minutes of previous PC meeting	The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 7th July 2025 were examined, discussed and unanimously APPROVED. Proposed S Fielding, seconded M Barden. The Clerk filed the signed Minutes immediately.	ACTION <u>Clerk</u> to update website by 23rd September.
2025-8-6	Matters Arising	These were raised during later agenda items.	
2025-8-7	Invited speakers & public participation	District Councillors Tony Hills and Tony Cooper had emailed their short reports to the Clerk, who had circulated these to Councillors before the meeting. These were 'taken as read'. One member of the public made a number of representations regarding Item 8 Solar Farms. In particular, there is to be a petition presented to FHDC at its Full Council meeting on 1 st October protesting against the over-development of Romney Marsh for energy infrastructure. The text is available online at Petition - Stop industrial-scale solar sprawl on Romney Marsh Folkestone & Hythe District Council	
2025-8-8	Solar Farms	Parish Councillors debated a request from the Stakeholder Engagement Manager at SSE Renewables to attend a Parish Council meeting and offer a presentation regarding the Shepway Energy Park (SEP) proposals. Councillors RESOLVED that the October meeting would be a suitable opportunity. Councillors then proceeded to discuss the issue more generally, agreeing that as a sovereign body NPC can undertake to represent the feeling of the majority of local electors and their families. NPC therefore RESOLVED to take a critical stance towards developments at whatever Planning level, with a general presumption against excessive energy infrastructure development. The costs and benefits to Newchurch residents are to be the key criteria for taking a future position.	ACTION <u>Clerk</u> to confirm invitation, and check what type of presentation is envisaged.

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2025-8-9	FINANCIAL REPORTS	<p>A. Mr Sharpe as RFO informed Councillors that the monies at bank on 7th September totalled £7,029.56 according to the online statements. The online Bank app reconciliation against the NPC accounting records was duly initialed by Cllr Fielding.</p> <p>B. Ratification of payments made since last meeting (Financial Reg 6(6) refers): Playsafety Limited, Swindon <i>Annual Playground Inspection Report July 2025</i> £100 + VAT £20 = £120.00 Warren IT Services Ltd, Folkestone <i>Web hosting and domain name renewal 12 months August / Oct 25/26</i> £155 + VAT £23 = £138.00 Michael Sharpe (Clerk) <i>Reimbursement for mobile phone handset and extra credit</i> £78.96 + VAT £10.04 = £89.00 Michael Sharpe (Clerk) <i>Reimbursement for McAfee antivirus renewal 12 months to Aug 2026</i> £49.99 NO UK VAT After due debate, Councillors RESOLVED to ratify these 4 payments</p> <p>C. Cheques for payment: Simon Collinge Landscapes & Tree Surgery Ltd, Brookland <i>Turf for Jubilee Field Playground - supply and install August 2025</i> £620.00 NO VAT Brooker Farms, Newchurch <i>Grass mowing in Jubilee Field Jan-Dec 2025</i> £550 + VAT £110 = £660.00 Information Commissioner, Wilmslow <i>Annual Data Protection Registration fee</i> £52.00 NO VAT (7 cheques in total, value £1,728.99)</p>	
2025-8-10	Playground – (<i>Minute 2025-7-9 refers</i>)	<p>Councillors noted they had conducted a group inspection of the playground on 31st July, and commended the replacement turf surface. After this visit, a report of damage to the climbing net had been received. They RESOLVED to arrange repair of the broken metal ferrules and reinstallation of the net.</p> <p>The grants available from FHDC 'Member Ward Grant' and 'Rural England Prosperity Fund' were mentioned.</p>	<p>ACTION Cllr Woollard to arrange repair, as soon as possible.</p> <p>ACTION Clerk/RFO to pursue funding when plans agreed.</p>
2025-8-11	Highways Improvement Plan (<i>Minute 2025-7-7 refers</i>)	Cllr Woollard reported he has had further information regarding the possibility of a 20mph zone. After due debate, Councillors RESOLVED not to pursue this initiative, because of the costs which would fall to the Parish Council for the planning and implementation of the HIP.	
2025-8-12	Village Sign agreement	Mr Sharpe presented the renewal agreement, constituting a 10-year Tenancy Agreement signed by the other parties. Councillors RESOLVED to sign as a Deed, and Cllrs Woollard and Fielding did so, witnessed by Mr Sharpe.	ACTION Clerk to copy to landowners, by 21 st September.
2025-8-13	Interim Audit and .gov.uk	Mr Sharpe reminded Councillors of the routine mid-term audit on October 1 st . He presented a paper on the likely requirement to change email and website arrangements. After due debate, Councillors RESOLVED to note the report.	
2025-8-14	Informal information - sharing	Cllr Barden noted that potholes had recently been addressed by Kent Highways, making a general improvement in the centre of the village.	
2025-8-15	Next Parish Council Meeting	Councillors confirmed the next meeting on Monday 6 th October at 7.30pm in the Community Room, Newchurch Village Hall.	

The Chairman Colin Woollard thanked all those present for their contributions, and declared the Parish Council meeting closed at 8.20 pm. END.