

Newchurch Parish Council

Minutes of Ordinary Meeting 2025-9 held on Monday 6th October 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
2025-9-1	Persons Present	<u>Parish Councillors</u> Colin Woollard (Chairman), Michelle Barden, , Scott Fielding; <u>Invited speakers</u> County Councillor David Wimble; District Councillor Tony Hills; Ms Clark & colleague from SSE Renewables; 2 members of the public; <u>Officer</u> , Mr Michael Sharpe (Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer/RFO to Newchurch Parish Council/ NPC).	
2025-9-2	Apologies	None received	
2025-9-3	Declarations of Interest	The Chairman reminded all Parish Councillors to declare any conflicts of interest in the business before them. He declared that he had an interest in Item 11 (Village Hall hire agreement)	
2025-9-4	Approval of minutes of previous PC meeting	The minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 8th September 2025 were examined, discussed and unanimously APPROVED. Proposed S Fielding, seconded C Woollard. The Clerk filed the signed Minutes immediately.	<u>ACTION Clerk</u> to update website by 13 th October.
2025-9-5	Matters Arising	These were raised during later agenda items.	
2025-9-6	Invited speakers & public participation	Cllr Wimble (KCC Division member) provided a short verbal report, stating that he intended to attend NPC in person on a 2-monthly basis. He has responsibilities as KCC Cabinet member for Environment, and there are current initiatives on Flood Protection and Water Quality relevant to Newchurch residents and visitors. District Councillor Tony Hills (FHDC Ward joint Member) reported on the petition received there against over-industrialisation of Romney Marsh, particularly solar farms. FHDC is to write to the relevant Government Ministers. He has also pressed for greater co-ordination between FHDC and other bodies to resolve the bathing water quality issues nearby. He has involved himself in planning at FHDC level for adverse weather events during the coming season. Lastly, he commended the 'Marsh Bee' dial-a ride service, especially for hospital appointments. Councillors put questions on various matters, at the conclusion of which the Chairman thanked Cllrs Wimble and Hills for their input.	
2025-9-7	Solar Farms	At the Chairman's invitation, Emma Clark the Stakeholder Engagement Manager at SSE Renewables spoke regarding the Shepway Energy Park (SEP) proposals. Councillors and residents joined in the 45-minute discussion, making the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5-metre tall 'tracker' panels are to be deployed • Co-ordination of consultation processes and periods between the several solar schemes affecting the Romney Marshes is to be commended • Traffic surveys don't pick up on cyclists, horse-riders and pedestrians, and are compromised by seasonal variations • Other bodies such as the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), the Planning Inspectorate (PI) and National Energy System Operator (NESO) / 'National Grid' hold decision-making powers. After a thorough airing of several issues, the Chairman thanked participants. Contact details were exchanged.	

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At 8.38pm Ms Clark & colleague, Cllr Wimble and the 2 members of the public left the meeting room. The Chairman called a short pause, and the meeting resumed at 8.41pm. Persons present CW, MB, SF, MS, TH.			
2025-9-8	FINANCIAL REPORTS	<p>A. Mr Sharpe as RFO informed Councillors that the monies at bank on 6th October totalled £5,661.40 according to the online statements. The mobile Bank app was accessed by Cllr Woollard, and the printed statement reconciliation against the NPC accounting records was signed and dated by Cllr Fielding.</p> <p>B. Ratification of payment made since last meeting (<i>Financial Reg 6(6) refers</i>): Kevin Davis, Newchurch <i>Refurbishment of Parish Council Notice Board by Church View</i> £100 NO VAT</p> <p>C. Cheques for payment: Mulberry LAS Ltd, Farnham <i>Mid-Term Governance and Financial Audit Fee</i> £162.50 + VAT £32.50 = £195.00 HMRC <i>Clerk's Income Tax from 11hJuly to 10th October 2025</i> £366.30 NO VAT Michael Sharpe <i>Clerk's Salary same period</i> £366.30 NO VAT</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(4 cheques in total, value £1,027.60)</p>	ACTION Clerk to post cheques post-haste.
2025-9-9	Internal Audit & handover	Mr Sharpe reported that Andy Beams the Internal Auditor had completed his interim remote audit with a telephone call on 1 st October, and his full report had been emailed to Councillors. The 4 minor non-conformances noted on the governance side were capable of immediate remediation. He was planning to surrender all NPC property and papers to his successor on a date to be agreed between 10 th and 23 rd October.	ACTION Clerk to update website as appropriate, by 14 th October
2025-9-10	Spinney memorial flags	Following a complaint from a member of the public, Councillors reviewed the NPC arrangements for keeping the flag at The Spinney in good repair. They noted that a new flag has appeared recently.	
2025-9-11	Community Room Hire Agreement	Councillors formalized the booking for The Community Room by acknowledging the Hire Conditions and signing a written agreement.	ACTION Cllr Barden to deliver VH copy to Bookings Secretary, forthwith.
2025-9-12	NPC ICT/IT Policy	Councillors reviewed the draft Policy required in advance of the end-of-year Audit Assertion 10. They unanimously RESOLVED to adopt it. They discussed the future adoption of a Document Disposal Policy.	ACTION Clerk to update website, and circulate guidance on document disposal, by 14 th October.
2025-9-13	NPC FR amendments	Councillors reviewed the proposed amendments to align with mobile banking practices. After due debate, they RESOLVED unanimously to amend the NPC Financial Regulations.	ACTION Clerk to post the amended FRs on website by 13 th October.
2025-9-14	Informal information - sharing	Councillors heard of a possibility that the leader of FHDC was willing to attend a future meeting to provide a progress report on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Kent.	
2025-9-15	Next Parish Council Meeting	Councillors confirmed the next meeting on Monday 3rd November 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 9.07 pm. END.