



**MINUTES OF NEWTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 in Newton Village Hall at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Councillors Paul Presland (Chairman), Roy Gardner, Lee Parker, Rita Schwenk, Philip Taylor, Alan Vince and Deborah Williams.

**Attending:** James Finch (Suffolk County Councillor), James Cartlidge (Babergh District Councillor), 5 residents and D Crimmin (Clerk).

**14/001 Apologies for Absence**

The Police sent their apologies.

**14/002 Declaration of Interests**

Cllrs Gardner and Vince declared personal interests in item 14/009d and 14/010a as they are members of the Newton Green Golf Club. Cllr Taylor had a pecuniary interest in item 14/010d and left the meeting while this item was discussed.

**14/003 Requests for councillor dispensation**

None were received.

**14/004 Minutes of meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2013**

The minutes of the meeting were approved by the councillors and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**14/005 Newton Youth Council**

The councillors reviewed the draft constitution of the Newton Youth Council and following discussions with the young people's representatives present at the meeting unanimously resolved to adopt the constitution. With the NYC being a working group of NPC and the Clerk acting as Clerk to the NYC the councillors agreed to:

- The Clerk will investigate what NPC need to undertake under the Disclosure and Barring Service
- The Clerk and one councillor will be present for each NYC meeting
- An NYC budget to be agreed by councillors
- A Notice of Election to be issued for NYC candidates with an application closing date of the 28<sup>th</sup> February. Clerk to act as returning officer.

**14/006 Public Forum**

The reports are contained in Appendix A.

**14/007 Correspondence (Appendix B)**

Following a review of the Correspondence and the emails circulated the councillors resolved that no further action was required in connection to a farm track closure from Rotten Row after the update received from Cllr Schwenk on the matter.

**14/008 Clerks Report (Appendix C)**

Following a review of the Clerk's Report the councillors wished to note their appreciation to all the residents who provided Christmas Lighting along the A134 and to Richard Morris of Mill Green in Edwardstone who donated the Christmas Trees on the Green to NPC.

**14/009 Finance**

- a. All cheques signed and due for signing, as itemised in Appendix D, were authorised by the councillors. The councillors also noted the income received since the last meeting and reviewed the Statement of Accounts against the budget and the bank reconciliation against the bank statements.
- b. The councillors resolved to award the 2014 Footpaths Cutting contract to D Gotts at £50 per cut.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



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- c. The councillors resolved to award the 2014 Playground Maintenance grass cutting contract to G Flowers at a total cost of £700.
- d. The councillors considered the request from Newton Green Golf Club for a donation towards their project to build the Arthur Davey Starter shelter and resolved to donate £100.
- e. Following a review of the agreed Expenditure budget and proposed reserves (Appendix E) the councillors resolved to set a Precept of £9,067.02 for 2014 / 2015 which will mean a 0% increase in the Band D Council Tax. The councillors further resolved that if the Government introduces a Precept Cap on NPC for 2014 / 2015, then the Precept is to be set so that the Band D Council Tax is 0.05% below the threshold of the referendum criteria so avoiding a referendum.

#### 14/010 Planning

- a. The councillors reviewed **Planning Application B/13/01445 Newton Green Golf Course - Erection of shed for starter's shelter at 1st tee on the golf club** and resolved to support the application.
- b. The councillors noted **Planning Application B/13/01351 Land north of Redwoods, Church Road** - Application for Hedgerow Removal Notice - Section of hedge removal to allow work on burst water pipe.
- c. No further planning applications had been received since the agenda was posted.
- d. The councillors noted that a further mobile home is to be located on Gouldings Farm and asked the Clerk to confirm with Babergh if this is also part of the conditions given with the planning permission. The councillors reviewed the communication from BDC regarding NPC's response to Planning Application B/13/01107 and resolved their acceptance of the proposal. The status of previous applications, reviewed by NPC were as follows:

Date Received	BDC Ref	Application	NPC Ref	NPC Response	BDC Response
22/12/08		Zebra Crossing in Newton	09/006 b	Requested James Finch to support funding of a safety audit by Highways.	Now awaiting priority from residents.
14/09/12		Enforcement enquiry on the expected completion date of building works at Motts Farm.	12/118d		
03/10/13	B/13/01107	Rogers Farm, Rogers Lane - Change of use of agricultural land to use as solar farm for generation of electricity from solar energy together with associated works comprising solar panels mounted on frames, security fencing, inverters, transformers and a switch gear cabinet.	13/141a	Supported application.	
14/11/13	B/13/01351	Land north of Redwoods, Church Road - Application for Hedgerow Removal Notice - Section of hedge removal to allow work on burst water pipe.			Approved 12/12/2013

#### 14/011 Playground and Asset Maintenance Programme

No issues raised.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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#### **14/012 Parish Survey**

The councillors reviewed the following issues and agreed the following actions and review dates:

Issue (Priority)	Current Status	Review meeting
Housing (1)	Selection of a Housing Association partner by NPC in January 2014.	Late January
Youth Engagement (2)	Youth Council to be set-up who will meet in February, June and October each year once a constitution is established.	March
A134 Safe Haven (5)	Views of residents on the priorities of A134 road safety issues to be developed by working group and be presented to March meeting.	March

#### **14/013 NPC Byelaws**

The Clerk updated councillors on the feedback from the Department of Communities and Local Government on their review of the draft byelaws compliance to DCLG's guidelines. It is hoped to have these discussions completed and feedback given to stakeholders by February.

#### **14/014 Local Housing Needs Scheme**

Hastoe and Orwell will present their portfolios to NPC on the 24<sup>th</sup> January following which NPC will appoint its preferred partner.

#### **14/015 Road Safety**

The councillors agreed to consult with residents over their priorities for the various road safety initiatives suggested for Newton via a questionnaire. A working party to draft questionnaire for formal adoption at the March meeting.

#### **14/016 Effectiveness of Internal Controls and Internal Audit process**

The councillors reviewed the current system of NPC's internal controls and internal audit and resolved that they were satisfied:

- With the review of the Internal Audit as per Appendix F
- That the scope of the audit is in accordance with The Governance and Accountability in Local Councils in England and Wales, A Practitioners Guide 2011 and the guidelines issued by BDO LLP and by the Suffolk Association of Local Councils
- With the report provided by the internal auditor at the conclusion of audit for review by NPC.
- The councillors further resolved that Heelis & Lodge scope of internal audit work was in accordance with the role required to be undertaken by the internal auditor for NPC
- With the Internal Control processes undertaken by the council.

#### **14/017 Risk Management Register**

Following a review of NPC's Risk Management Register the councillors considered that it was appropriate for NPC's operations.

#### **14/018 Spring and Autumn cleans**

The councillors agreed Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> April and Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November for the 2014 litter picks. Both events to start at 8.30am in the Village Hall.

#### **14/019 Village Hall and Trust representative updates**

The Village Hall committee are reviewing solar panels for the Village Hall as well as running a Summer Munch on the 20<sup>th</sup> July. Newton Green Trust have nearly completed the project to resurface the Saracens Head car park.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**14/020 Questions to the Chair**

The Chairman requested that the Clerk contact the agency responsible for the sewage pipe replacement in Church Road to see when the field used as a depot will be restored to field.

**14/021 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January starting at 9.45am.

**The meeting closed at 9.45pm.**

**Appendix A Public Forum**

James Finch updated councillors on Adopting a Child, Investing in Apprentiships, Further investment in Local Broadband, Good rail service for Suffolk, Managing a Masterpiece. James Cartlidge updated councillors on the Core Strategy being found sound after examination.

The Clerk read the Police report. "This report covers the period from 12/11/2013 to 10/01/2014. During this time there has been 1 crimes recorded within the parish, this compares to 1 crime for the same period last year. 1 report of Burglary Dwelling - Between 1500 and 1600 on 21/11/13 a property was broken into on Church Road. Nothing was stolen but damage was caused. Due to lack to evidence, witnesses and CCTV this crime has been finalised."

**Appendix B Correspondence**

	Date Received	Raised by	Regarding	Agenda	FYI
CL13025	12/12/13	Babergh District Council	Planning Approval - Land North of Redwoods		√
CL13026	20/12/13	Babergh District Council	Planning Application - Newton Green Golf Course	√	
CL13027		Resident	Thank you for Christmas Parcels		√
CL13028		Newsletters	The Local Councillor		√

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix C Clerk's Report**

<b>Minute</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Complete ✓</b>
13/037 d	Application for Christmas Lighting made to James Finch.	
13/099	Babergh has agreed to empty new litter bin in Village Hall car park.	✓
13/137	Draft & Approved Minutes published on website and in newsletters.	✓
13/141	Response sent to BDC on Planning Applications.	✓
13/142 a	Cheques distributed to suppliers.	✓
13/143	Bolts and loose fencing repaired by Cllr Gardner.	✓
13/143	Grass matting o repair in Spring by Cllr Gardner	
13/143	Inspection of foundations of wooden supports planned with contractor for spring.	
13/145	Letter sent to Russell Bower.	✓
13/146	Lights purchased.	✓
13/151	Meeting dates circulated to SCC & BDC Councillors, Police, Newsletters and placed on website and notice boards.	✓
13/153	SCC have requested landowner to replace stiles.	✓
13/153	Babergh checking on use of mobile home.	
	<b>Speed Watch outings (Drivers Reported)</b>	
	No further Speed Watch undertaken. NPC has invoiced each of the 4 other Parish Council's for £50 for share of Speed Watch costs.	
	<b>Other Issues</b>	
	Clerk hours worked to 29th December 274 / Paid 195	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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**Appendix D RFO Report**  
**Receipts & Payments**

Date	Details	Ref	Power	Receipts	Payments
19/11/13	Cash pay-in from Fireworks			1,270.78	0.00
19/11/13	SCC P3 Grant			103.80	0.00
<b>Petty Cash</b>					
19/11/13	Cash proceeds fro Firework Night			1,776.54	0.00
19/11/13	Firework Night costs			0.00	505.76
19/11/13	To Bank			0.00	1,270.78

**Reconciliation**

Account	Statement Date	Statement Balance	Actual Balance	Unpresented Cheques	Credits not shown	Difference
Community Premium Accounts	29/11/13	£100.00				
Tracker Account	29/11/13	£9,481.26	£8,858.06	£723.20	£0.00	£0.00
Petty Cash	30/09/13	£11,092.10	£11,092.10	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
	31/12/13	£0.00	£0.00			£0.00
		£20,673.36	£19,950.16	£723.20	£0.00	

**Statement of Accounts vs Budget**

	Budget	Actual	Reserves	Budget	Actual
Assets B/F		£16,997.12			
<b>Income</b>			<b>Expenditure</b>		
Precept	£9,000.00	£9,000.00	Clerks Salary	£2,994.00	£2,008.53
Grants	£200.00	£457.60	Admin	£1,700.00	£507.32
Recycling	£400.00	£375.31	Grants	£700.00	£415.00
Other	£0.00	£865.00	Annual Subscriptions	£280.00	£241.83
Bank Interest	£10.00	£4.57	Street Lighting	£0.00	£0.00
VAT Repayment	£0.00	£435.57	Footpath Maintenance	£350.00	£300.00
			Insurance	£500.00	£407.88
			Inspection	£245.00	£223.00
			Maintenance	£1,760.00	£998.83
			Projects	£1,000.00	£1,187.75
			Other	£0.00	£442.00
			Village Hall	£1,000.00	£0.00
			VAT Paid	£0.00	£202.87
			Contingency	£500.00	£0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,610.00</b>	<b>£11,138.05</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,000.00</b>	<b>£10,029.00</b>
			Assets Carried Forward		£19,950.16
<b>Total</b>		<b>£28,135.17</b>	<b>Total</b>		<b>£28,135.17</b>

Un-recovered VAT = £202.87



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**Appendix E Precept**

At the November meeting you agreed a total expenditure budget of £9,825 for 2014 / 15 as follows:

	2012 / 13		2013 / 14			2014 / 15
	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual to Date	To year end	Budget
<b>Income</b>						
Grants	0.00	1,457.00	200.00	353.80	<b>450.00</b>	200.00
Recycling	300.00	592.50	400.00	375.31	<b>500.00</b>	400.00
Other	0.00	750.30	0.00	865.00	<b>865.00</b>	0.00
Bank Interest	10.00	8.57	10.00	4.57	<b>10.00</b>	10.00
VAT Repayment	0.00	387.65	0.00	435.57	<b>435.57</b>	0.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>310.00</b>	<b>3,196.02</b>	<b>610.00</b>	<b>2,034.25</b>	<b>2,260.57</b>	<b>610.00</b>
<b>Precept</b>		<b>9,000.00</b>			<b>9,000.00</b>	
<b>Expenditure</b>						
Clerks Salary	2,866.00	2,947.26	2,994.00	2,008.53	<b>2,935.50</b>	2,995.00
Admin	1,500.00	1,336.25	1,700.00	507.32	<b>1,500.00</b>	1,750.00
Grants	700.00	565.00	700.00	415.00	<b>700.00</b>	700.00
Annual Subscriptions	240.00	261.03	280.00	241.83	<b>280.00</b>	290.00
Street Lighting	290.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>	0.00
Footpath Maintenance	0.00	0.00	350.00	300.00	<b>300.00</b>	350.00
Insurance	500.00	427.46	500.00	407.88	<b>407.88</b>	425.00
Inspection	275.00	241.00	245.00	223.00	<b>223.00</b>	245.00
Maintenance	1,650.00	1,233.55	1,760.00	998.83	<b>1,760.00</b>	1,820.00
Projects	3,000.00	2,946.52	1,000.00	681.99	<b>1,000.00</b>	750.00
Other	0.00	150.27	0.00	442.00	<b>0.00</b>	0.00
Village Hall	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,250.00	<b>1,250.00</b>	0.00
VAT Paid	0.00	435.57	0.00	202.87	<b>400.00</b>	0.00
Contingency	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	<b>500.00</b>	500.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>11,521.00</b>	<b>10,543.91</b>	<b>10,029.00</b>	<b>7,679.25</b>	<b>11,256.38</b>	<b>9,825.00</b>

**Reserves held by NPC**

In order to support the implementation of the new byelaws I am proposing that a reserve of £1,000 be established in order to cover legal fees incurred in any prosecution of offenders.

	2012 / 13		2013 / 14		2014 / 15	
	Start of year	End of year	Start of year	End of year	Start of year	End of year
Asset Replacement	5,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	6,500.00	6,500.00	7,000.00
Village Hall	500.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	500.00	500.00	1,000.00
Legal Fees	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
Village of Year Prize	1,500.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Election Costs	1,100.00	1,100.00	1,100.00	1,250.00	1,250.00	1,250.00
Speed Watch	200.00	200.00	200.00	50.00	50.00	50.00
Clerk Gratuity Fund	637.00	746.00	746.00	856.00	856.00	969.00
<b>Total Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>8,937.00</b>	<b>9,046.00</b>	<b>9,046.00</b>	<b>10,156.00</b>	<b>10,156.00</b>	<b>11,269.00</b>
General Reserves	4,631.47	6,174.58	6,174.58	5,068.77	5,068.77	?

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Precept for 2014 / 2015**

Barry Hunter, Babergh's Corporate Manager for Financial Services, has written to NPC regarding the setting of the Precept for 2014 /2015:

Dear Parish Clerk/Chairman

**PRECEPTS, TAXBASE AND GRANTS**

I'm very sorry not to have got back to you sooner on this.

Firstly, there was nothing in the Autumn Statement about Council Tax threshold increases ('capping') or in the Government's financial settlement announcement on the 18 December - so we still await any details on this.

Mr Pickles has indicated that there will be an announcement on whether the existing 2% threshold will be changed (reduced) but no suggestions on whether this might or might not apply to Town and Parish Councils from April 2015.

Secondly, a reminder and clarification that we do not need your precept return for 2014/15 until the 31 January 2014. (The Form to complete is attached).

Now onto the taxbase and grants position, which is as follows:

- (a) Your 2014/15 taxbase and how this compares with 2013/14 is set out in the attached table
- (b) Some parishes are increasing and some reducing. This is partly as a result of reviewing the methodology and data used for both years, specifically in relation to the new Local Council Tax Reduction (LCTR) scheme
- (c) As a result, we have decided to increase the grant payable in future years for some Town and Parish Councils and reduce some others (due to the methodology change on LCTR) in order to compensate and equalise income and produce what we see as a fair and equitable outcome
- (d) The table also sets out these grant changes.

This new amount of grant will be paid to you in addition to your precept.

I appreciate that you will need a little time to digest and understand these changes. Can I emphasise that a lot of careful thought has been given to the position as there are significant percentage increases and reductions to individual taxbases. We could clearly not leave individual Towns and Parishes with either significant taxbase reductions or 'windfall' increases, which would be unacceptable and unfair.

Overall, the Council will be paying out more grant in 2014/15 than we previously agreed.

We believe that the result of these changes should not, therefore, impact detrimentally on any individual Town or Parish.

Should you require any further clarification or wish to discuss the position for your council, please do not hesitate to contact either Sue Palmer or myself.

The information that Barry has supplied is as follows:

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
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Babergh District Council		Taxbase and Grants				
Parish	2013/14 Taxbase	2014/15 Taxbase	% Change	2014/15 Original Grant Due	Grant Adjustment	Total New Grant
	No.	No.	%	£	£	£
Newton	197.03	198.49	0.74%	£648.75	-£131.00	£517.75

Using the projections for income, expenditure and earmarked reserves, NPC will also need to consider the level it wishes to maintain its General Reserves. Best practice would suggest that the level of General Reserves should be somewhere between 50 -100% of main income. The 3 examples I give below show:

Example 1 Increase the Precept by £1,000 to £10,000  
 Example 2 Increase the Precept but keeping the Band D Council Tax the same as in 2013/14  
 Example 3 If a referendum is applicable to NPC then increase the Band D Council Tax by 1.95%.

The Council Tax that a Band D household in Newton pays is the Precept demanded by NPC divided by the Taxbase for that year.

	2012 / 13	2013 / 14	2014 / 15	2014 / 15	2014 / 15
			Example 1	Example 2	Example 3
<b>START OF YEAR</b>					
Earmarked Reserves	8,937.00	9,046.00	10,156.00	10,156.00	10,156.00
General Reserves	4,631.47	6,174.58	5,068.77	5,068.77	5,068.77
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>13,568.47</b>	<b>15,220.58</b>	<b>15,224.77</b>	<b>15,224.77</b>	<b>15,224.77</b>
Income ex Precept	3,196.02	2,260.57	610.00	610.00	610.00
Precept	9,000.00	9,000.00	10,000.00	9,067.02	9,243.82
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>12,196.02</b>	<b>11,260.57</b>	<b>10,610.00</b>	<b>9,677.02</b>	<b>9,853.82</b>
Expenditure	10,543.91	£11,256.38	£9,825.00	£9,825.00	£9,825.00
<b>END OF YEAR</b>					
Earmarked Reserves	9,046.00	10,156.00	11,269.00	11,269.00	11,269.00
General Reserves	6,174.58	5,068.77	4,740.77	3,807.79	3,984.59
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>15,220.58</b>	<b>15,224.77</b>	<b>16,009.77</b>	<b>15,076.79</b>	<b>15,253.59</b>
<b>Tax Base</b>	216.25	<b>197.03</b>	198.49	198.49	198.49
<b>Band D Council Tax</b>	£41.62	<b>£45.68</b>	£50.38	£45.68	£46.57

As NPC will not be aware of the Government's decision on Town & Parish Council Precept referendums when it meets nor the threshold that may be set then, unless you wish to have another meeting to finally resolve a Precept once the decision is made, the following could be added to your Precept decision and the Precept Upon Charging Authority form completed accordingly and returned to Babergh.

"If the Government introduces a Precept Cap on NPC then the Band D Council Tax be set at 0.05% below the threshold of the referendum criteria." This would ensure that a referendum would not be necessary for the Precept set by NPC.

Finally, I would again recommend that the grant being given to NPC by BDC in relation to the Precept is not taken into account when resolving the Precept and is treated as an unbudgeted grant for 2014/15.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Appendix F Internal Audit Review**

Expected Standard	Evidence of Achievement	Yes or No	If the answer is 'no', state the action to be taken
Scope of internal audit	Has the Council approved the Heelis & Lodge scope of audit work?	Yes	
	Is the Council satisfied with what the internal audit work covers or do you require any additional work?	Yes	
Independence	Are Heelis & Lodge independent from the management of the council?	Yes	
Competence	Is the internal audit work carried out with integrity, objectivity and a good understanding of local council legislation and procedures?	Yes	
Relationships	Is the Clerk/RFO consulted on the internal audit plan and the scope of each audit?	Yes	
	Is the Clerk/RFO and the internal auditor aware of their responsibilities in relation to internal control? <i>(Refer to your councils risk management policies e.g. risk assessments, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations)</i>	Yes	
	Do councillors understand their responsibilities for financial management? <i>(It is the council as a whole that is responsible for ensuring that its financial management is adequate and effective and that it has a sound system of internal control for all the activities and services that they undertake and provide, which includes arrangements for the management of risk.- Governance and Accountability for Local Councils: A Practitioners' Guide 2008)</i>	Yes	
Audit Planning and reporting	Does this audit plan take account of all the risks facing the council?	Yes	
	Has this audit plan been approved by the council?	Yes	
	Have you received an internal audit report following each audit?	Yes	

**End of Appendices**

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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