

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 5th November 2019 in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

Present: Cllr K Howard-Challis (Chair); Cllr R Smith (Vice-Chair); Cllr A Beerstecher; Cllr M Szabo; Cllr A Smith; Cllr T Portman; Mrs A Smith ((Clerk); and 9 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Whiting, Clark and the PCSO.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

There were none.

3. Public Session

A resident from Wardwell Lane complained regarding that the drains in Wardwell Lane are blocked and the water run-off is going into the telecoms box. This has been complained about to KCC Highways for some years and nothing appears to have been done to alleviate the problem.

4. Visitors reports or comments

a) KCC Councillor Mike Whiting sent the following report:

Apologies, I cannot attend your meeting this evening as I have meetings elsewhere. Below is a summary of my work on behalf of the residents since my last report.

As you will be aware, the gas works have started on the A2. Many people contacted me and I was able to pass their comments and suggestions on to both KCC and SGN. You will note KCC has actioned my request for weight limits on all the lanes north of the A2. This mirrors the situation south of the A2. Lorries can still use the lanes to access properties but cannot use them as a shortcut to simply get round the traffic lights. The second phase of the works has now started near Hartlip Hill. Enforcement of these new HGV limits falls to the police, KCC and SGN don't have enforcement powers.

I have enclosed a report of my current Member Grant spending for information. If you are aware of any other community projects requiring assistance, then please let me know. You will note I have funded a number of speed surveys, and I am happy to fund two in the parish if councillors have specific areas of concern.

I am no longer KCC's cabinet member for highways, waste and environment. They have split my old portfolio and Michael Payne is now in charge of roads and Susan Carey oversees the environment brief.

b) SBC Councillors

No report.

c) PCSO sent the following report:

Front number plate stolen from vehicle parked in Lapwing Drive – crime report taken. Report of young people on top of the garages at the end of Burntwick Drive – patrol attended but did not find anyone.

d) Friends of the Brickfields

The Friends of the Brickfields seek permission to plant daffodil and bluebells at the Memorial Wood, particularly around the "Tommies". It was proposed by Cllr Beerstecher, seconded by Cllr Szabo to give permission for this to go ahead. Agreed unanimously. Plans for siting of the information board are being progressed.

There is a Memorial Service being held on 11th November at 10.45 pm where a wreath will be laid by Cllr Portman on behalf of the Parish Council.

5. To agree Minutes of the Meetings held

It was resolved to agree the Minutes for the meeting held on 1st October 2019 and they were duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Beerstecher, seconded by Cllr Szabo. Agreed unanimously.

6. Correspondence

a) A tree with a massive longitudinal split in a bough directly above the Avenue path may need the attention of a tree surgeon.

A quote will be requested regarding any work to be done.

Action: Clerk

- b) Complaint received regarding the street light in Cumberland Drive opposite numbers 11 and 13 that it shines too brightly in the bedroom window.
A quote will be sought to adjust it.

Action: Clerk
- c) Complaint that the street light in The Street outside Neptune Bungalow is not bright enough.
A quote will be sought to adjust it.

Action: Clerk
- d) Response from KCC Cllr Whiting regarding yellow lines at Westfield Cottages.
It was decided to continue with the car park plans and to consider whether yellow lines would be pursued at a later date.
- e) KCC Budget Consultation 2020-21. Deadline is 25th November.
Further savings are still required by KCC. Cllr Howard-Challis will look at this and it will be discussed at the Finance Working Group meeting.
- f) Letter from Bridger's Law regarding purchase of land adjacent to Brickfield site.
It was proposed by Cllr R Smith, seconded by Cllr Beerstecher that no surveys are required. Agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk

7. **Finance**

- a) **To replace goal netting and basketball board.**
Cllr Szabo had procured a quote of:
£49.98 each for the goal netting
£74.89 plus £15.00 carriage for the basketball hoop
£52.00 for the artwork and legal wording
Total of £191.87 plus VAT. Cllr Szabo would be able to install the equipment.
It was proposed by Cllr R Smith, seconded by Cllr Beerstecher to accept this quote and it was agreed unanimously.
- b) To amend the Standing Order to better reflect the Clerk's salary to £448.66
Proposed by Cllr A Smith, seconded by Cllr Beerstecher. Agreed unanimously.
- c) To agree next Working Finance Group meeting.
Cllr Howard-Challis will check the diary and confirm with Cllr R Smith and the Clerk a date for the next meeting.

8. **(g) To discuss and agree response (if any) to the following Planning Applications:**

There were no new planning applications.

Notification of Appeal Lodged with the Planning Inspectorate:

Location: Funton Brickworks, Sheerness Road, Lower Halstow

Cllr Beerstecher had received a letter regarding the above and responded as a resident. The applicant was appealing the decision, which was refusal. The appeal would be determined on written representations and the date for this has now passed. Any representations that had been made prior to this would be taken into account. It was made clear by a resident that any responses for an appeal have to be addressed to the Planning Inspectorate in Bristol and not the local authority's portal.

9. **(h) To discuss and agree action on the following:**

a) **BRICKFIELDS & PLANNING**

There will be a meeting this month with the Environment Agency regarding the cutting of the vegetation on the sea wall.

b) **PARKS & LEISURE**

There are a couple of areas where the ground has sunk around some of the play equipment and the seat needs rubbing down and re-painted.

c) **DOCKS & BARGES and CAR PARKS**

Various suggestions and costings have been received regarding the dock repair. Cllr R Smith proposed that the Parish Council engage the services of a qualified civil engineer to give options on repair, specifications and possible contractors for presentation to the Parish Council. Seconded by Cllr Portman. Agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk

d) **FOOTPATHS HIGHWAYS LIGHTING and HEDGEROW MAINTENANCE**

There was a successful litter pick on part of Breach Lane and The Street. The hedgerow was also cut near the Three Tuns by the bridge. Biffa has been contacted and has agreed to clean the road around this area every two or three months. A lot of photographs of weeds around the village were sent to Swale Borough Council and they have now been sprayed.

A quote to cut back the overgrown graves has been asked for from Treecraft. Advice was sought from Swale Cemeteries Department to check what could and could not be done. The Burial Ground needs to be kept clean and tidy and the Parish Council is perfectly within its rights to do this. It was agreed that a notice will be put up at the site to inform any relatives when the work will take place.

The hedge will be cut outside the Green Farm House in the second week of November.

e) **FLOOD PLAN, EMERGENCY PLAN, TOTAL QUALITY ITEMS (POLICY, SAFETY, AUDITS).**

No report

f) **VILLAGE INVENTORY, PARKING and HANDYMAN LIAISON**

g) No report.

10. To acknowledge Reports on meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council:

a) **KALC Rep**

The AGM is being held on 30th November 2019 which will be attended by Cllrs Howard-Challis and R Smith.

b) **Memorial Hall Rep**

The toilet system in the hall will be refurbished next year.

11. Clerks Report:

I am pleased to report that the bulk of the Parish Council funds have now been moved to Unity Trust Bank and that Swale Borough Council have also paid in the second half of the Precept for the year 2019/20. There will be no further transactions on the Barclays account with the exception of the transfer of the balance left, once any outstanding cheques have cleared. All direct debits and standing orders have been cancelled.

No payment has been requested from EDF since March 2019. A query is in progress, but it appears that the change to LED street lights may be the issue. The UMS certificate from UK Power networks has been sent to EDF again to confirm. All the documents that have been requested from the conveyancing solicitor have been sent. Payment of £300 on account is in November's pay run.

A members' grant for £150 has been applied for from Cllr Corrie Woodford in respect of the VE75 events. This will pay for the Piper.

The Clerk has submitted a VAT claim of £4613.15 to HMRC.

Apart from the transfer of £55000.00 a total of £5027.50 has been paid in; that is made up of a grant of £4500.00 from Queenborough Fishery Trust and the rest in allotment rents.

As of 31st October 2019 Unity Trust Bank balance is £81,133.66

A Barclays statement is still awaited but calculate that the balance is £2980.26

12. Items for information only:

Items required for the Christmas Tree lighting event will be finalised at the next meeting.

13. To receive items for Village News and the Website:

The Clerk will place an advert in the Village News regarding the vacant allotments.

Date of next meeting: 3rd December 2019

The meeting closed at: 7.55 pm.

Cheques – November 2019

It was agreed that the signatories to authorise November online payments will be Cllrs Portman and Szabo.

Payee	Description	Amount £	Cheque No/Transaction No
SLCC	Membership Invoice: MEM225889	106.00	30969561
M & L Contracting	Westfield Hedge Cutting Invoice:11160	120.00	474838778
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	Third Quarter Grounds Maintenance Invoice: LS194951	747.60	25487550
Mr K Howard-Challis	Batteries for Christmas Lights	10.00	74251465
Bridger's Law	Payment on account for conveyancing fees	300.00	958862773
Business Stream	Water Services - Allotments 1 May – 15 October 2019	160.03	796182766
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust Fund	Hall Hire 3/9/19 Invoice: 89	25.50	300001

Other Payments:
Standing Order 25th November

Clerk's Salary

£448.66

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**