

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 4th February 2020 in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

Present: Cllr K Howard-Challis (Chair); Cllr R Smith (Vice-Chair); Cllr T Portman; Cllr A Smith; Cllr M Szabo; Mrs A Smith (Clerk); SBC Cllr C Woodford; KCC Cllr M Whiting and 7 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apology was received from PCSO Lee Fennell.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

Cllr Szabo declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 8 (a) and Cllr A Smith declared a pecuniary interest in 8 (c).

3. Public Session

Mr Drury gave an update regarding the planning application for the bungalows in School Lane regarding the legal agreement. In the event that not all the bungalows are taken by retired, aged over 55 residents from Lower Halstow then the second criteria would be that they go to non-retired, aged over 55 residents from Lower Halstow. The Management company will be set up by the developer with the Parish Council, as properties are sold the occupiers take a seat on the board, until they are all sold and the developer no longer takes a seat. The Parish Council will be involved in perpetuity. The third clause will be to remove any permitted development rights for alterations and extensions to the bungalows.

A resident asked that representation is made to the telecommunication bodies for improved mobile phone coverage in the village. Cllr Szabo explained that the deadspots in the village are due to the positions of the masts not being able to create a triangular net to cover the area.

4. Visitors reports or comments

a) KCC Councillor.

Cllr Whiting reported that KCC are investing quite heavily in fibre for property broadband connectivity. There is a lot of work going on with that between KCC and BDUK the Government delivery arm of broadband. There is a voucher scheme to improve broadband connectivity and suggested that the Clerk contacts George Chandler to invite him to the next meeting to explain the system.

The English Coastal Path consultation is live for residents to get involved and Cllr Whiting urges residents to respond.

As part of carbon offset, KCC are planning to plant 1.5 million trees in the County, which is one tree per resident in Kent.

The bus services – Chalkwell are requesting a new licence with the Office of the Traffic Commissioner for a new timetable, where they want to miss out the occasional bus through Lower Halstow and to create a new feeder (shuttle) service, so that there will still be buses into the village to take passengers to the A2 to connect with a bus to either Sittingbourne or the Medway towns. This new service will commence on 24th February 2020.

SGN are being slow at coming forward with the next phases. Cllr Whiting is encouraging them to meet with parishes so that the next phases can be understood. Work will continue until October and there will be road closures on the A2.

b) SBC Councillors:

Cllr Woodford reported that Swale Borough Council are now consulting on their Heritage Strategy. Meetings are also being held with coastal parishes about how they can be supported in developing their marine interests or tourism. The deadline for applying for the Members' Grant Scheme is 28th February 2020.

c) PCSO sent the following report:

Crimes of note:

No reports of note

Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:

Resident was called by an unknown person on phone and told to press 1, otherwise a warrant for the resident's arrest would be issued. Resident called police instead. Details taken and resident advised to report this to Action Fraud.

Updates of previous reported issues-:

Concerns about school parking – the PCSO has attended a few times, but there have been no serious issues. A few cars inappropriately parked have been moved on.

d) Friends of the Brickfields

There is a work party taking place on Saturday 8th February.

5. To agree Minutes of the Meetings held

It was resolved to agree the Minutes for the meeting held on 7th January 2020 and they were duly signed.

6. Correspondence

- a) The England Coastal Path was discussed from opposite points of view. The Chair directed the Councillors to consider their views for further discussion at a future meeting.
- b) It was discussed that tree planting could be done by integrating ideas and funds with local landowners and businesses. Agreement was not reached as to where, how many or what type of trees should be planted.

7. Matters Arising

- a) Photographs of the rare Roman Coin that had been found locally was passed around. Since the agreement from the Parish Council, at the last meeting, that it should be sent to a local museum, it had been discovered that there is not an accredited museum in Sittingbourne and that the future of Canterbury Museum is not certain. It is currently in the hands of the British Museum and it was agreed that the British Museum was the best place for it to be researched, displayed and kept safely.
- b) It was agreed to remove one tree from the former allotments at Westfield where a planning application is being made to expand the car park. It was also agreed to produce a flyer for residents at Westfield to inform them of the site clearance and improvements to the existing car park.

8. Finance

- a) It was agreed to change the Parish Council website to the HugoFox platform, which is free for Parish Councils. Proposed by Cllr A Smith and seconded by Cllr Portman. Unanimous.
- b) It was agreed to accept the quote for the new noticeboard at Britannia Green. Proposed by Cllr Szabo and seconded by Cllr A Smith. Unanimous.
- c) It was agreed to accept the quote to improve the existing car park at Westfield and to include the removal of the tree. Proposed by Cllr R Smith and seconded by Cllr Portman. Unanimous.
- d) It was proposed by Cllr Szabo and seconded by Cllr Portman to accept the quote for the service on the defibrillator located at the Three Tuns. Unanimously agreed.
- e) Grounds Maintenance:
 - i) Treecraft: Proposed by Cllr Portman, seconded by Cllr A Smith it was agreed to accept the increase in the cost for grass cutting. Unanimous.
 - ii) Landscape Services: Proposed by Cllr A Smith and seconded by Cllr Portman to accept the quote. Unanimous.

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

There were none.

10. To discuss and agree action on the following:

a) **BRICKFIELDS & PLANNING**

At the last meeting it was highlighted that one of the steps going up to the sea wall is damaged. The entrance at Heron Close is very uneven and also needs to be looked at. A contractor will be approached for a quote.

Action: Cllr Portman

The reed bed is dying and drying out in summer. Cllr Portman suggested that they consult with an expert to give them guidance before any work commences.

b) **PARKS & LEISURE**

Cllr Szabo has received some correspondence asking for a skate park. The cost of a small scale concrete skate park is about £45,000 upwards. Unless a local business or another stream for funding comes forward this is beyond the reach of the Parish Council. The basketball hoops, the seat and football nets are being replaced or mended.

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

The floating dock holding the remains of the Sailing Barge Westmoreland is in Lower Halstow Dock for repairs to make it seaworthy. If the repairs take longer than originally planned and over run the short term contract it was agreed to go to a daily rate. Cllr R Smith will make the arrangements together with the Clerk.

Action: Cllr R Smith and Clerk

Regarding the long term, major project of dock repairs, the surveyor will supply the Parish Council with suitable contractors who will be able to take on this specialist work.

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

The hedge at the B&B has been cut. The back hedge will be cut at the Burial Ground by the neighbouring resident.

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

a) **KALC Rep**

The next meeting is 4th March 2020.

b) **Memorial Hall Rep**

The plan for solar panels is ongoing and the work for new toilets will be starting shortly.

12. Clerks Report:

The allotments are now fully occupied and there is a waiting list in operation. The heritage grant application for the VE75 events has been sent to Swale Borough Council. A date is being arranged for the KCC Highways team to give a presentation regarding the Parish Highways Plan. The Clerk received an enquiry as to the rights of cyclists on the Saxon Shore Way. The KCC Public Rights of Way officer has confirmed that it is a footpath and as such, because the land is owned by the Parish Council, permission is required for any cyclists to use it. The Parish Council has not given any cyclists permission to ride on the Brickfields or the Saxon Shore Way. The bank balance as at 31st January 2020 is £80,625.41.

13. Items for information only:

There were none.

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

An item for the Village News will be placed regarding the site clearance and work about to commence at Westfield car park

Date of next meeting: 3rd March 2020

The meeting closed at: 8.16 pm.

Bank Payments February 2020

Payee	Description	Amount £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Bridger's Law	Transfer of sum to pay the Seller's solicitors regarding fees for land purchase	720.00	Bank Payment
Village News	Donation	600.00	Bank Payment
AN Surveys	Topographical Survey of allotments for proposed car park expansion at Westfield Invoice 19321	450.00	Bank Payment
Branchett Ltd	Grounds Maintenance Invoice 2001312	930.00	Bank Payment
APX Architecture	Preparation of planning drawings regarding proposed car park expansion at Westfield Invoice 20_01/01	571.30	Bank Payment

Other payments:

25 February 2020 Standing Order – Clerk's Salary - £448.66

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**