

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 5th April 2022

Present: Cllrs: K Howard-Challis (Chair); M Szabo (Vice-chair); T Portman; A Smith and Mrs A I Smith (Clerk)

In attendance: Cllrs Baldock and Woodford and 5 members of the public

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Groves

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Public Session

A resident from Sheerness Rd asked on behalf of Michael Ellis the PROW officer who the Highways Officer is who is dealing with Parish Council regarding the 20 mph, so that he can speak with them as there is no "joined up thinking" between Public Rights of Way and Highway regarding Sheerness Road. Cllr Smith who is dealing with this for the Parish Council replied that he does not have a name and we will not find anything out else until May. A resident asked if the grass will be cut by Easter weekend and if she could clear some of the stream for the duck race.

It was asked if the Parish Council could do anything regarding the planning application for the Happy Pants Ranch. Cllr Szabo replied that it is not within the boundaries of Lower Halstow and also it would only be one voice, however, if residents individually responded that would be many being heard.

4. Visitors:

a. KCC Councillor

Cllr Baldock was on the Planning Committee last time regarding the Happy Pants Ranch and argued that objections could be met by conditions in the planning permission and will be speaking again, in favour, at the meeting on Thursday 7th April. However, at the last meeting there was a challenge from a member of public regarding pre-determination and therefore Cllr Baldock will not be on the committee for the next meeting.

KCC have said that the damage to kerbs in The Street is not their responsibility, but Cllr Baldock said, that of course it is and will chase that up. There is currently no one person responsible for the Swale area regarding the 20 mph speed zone works. This will also be followed up.

b. SBC Councillor

Cllr Woodford reported that there was a public meeting regarding the solar farm and one of the things that came from that was when there is a public consultation, there will be someone happy to speak to the three Parish Councils involved, in which case there will need to be some co-ordination between Iwade, Bobbing and Lower Halstow. Would the Council prefer to wait until an application goes in, or would it prefer to find out generally about the pros and cons of Solar farms and to give ideas of potential objection points beforehand. The Parish Council would prefer to wait until a planning application is submitted.

The drains in Heron Close were reported to KCC.

Cllr Woodford will be at the Planning Committee meeting regarding the Happy Pants Ranch to speak in favour of it.

c. PCSO

d. No report

e. Friends of the Brickfields

Cllr Portman reported that the FoB haven sent their apologies, but that their AGM is Friday 8th April, at the Church. There will be a talk by George Peters at 7.00 pm, £5.00 entry and refreshments are offered.

5. To resolve the Minutes

It was resolved that the Minutes of the 1st March 2022 meeting are a correct record and were signed accordingly.

6. Correspondence

- a. A request for a donation for the Village Newsletter. It was proposed to donate £700.00 by Cllr Howard-Challis, seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously agreed.
- b. Electric Vehicle Strategy Consultation from Swale Borough Council. It was considered and the only place suitable would be at the Village Hall.

7. Matters arising

- a. Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Cllr Portman reported that the Parish Council have been successful in obtaining two grants. There are still some things to iron out. Most of the events organised will be covered by the grants. Information will be put in the Village News. A post is required for the plaque regarding the oak tree that has already been planted. It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Szabo to purchase the plaque from the Royal British Legion. Agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk

- b. Fence at the Burial Ground. Cllr Portman suggested that it should be re-erected and made safe as opposed to being replaced. Cllrs Howard-Challis and Smith will take a look at it to assess its condition.

Action: Cllrs Howard-Challis and Smith

- c. Information Sign at the Brickfields. Planning permission will be required as it is in a conservation area.

Action: Clerk

8. Finance

- a) It was agreed to appoint Robin Goreham as the Internal Auditor for Lower Halstow Parish Council. Proposed by Cllr Szabo and seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis. Agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk

- b) Review of Westfield Car Park rents. It was agreed to leave them as they are.
- c) Review of Allotment rents. It was agreed to leave them as they are.
- d) Review of Burial Ground fees. It was agreed to leave them as they are.
- e) New quote from EDF. It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Szabo to agree the second quote received, which had been amended substantially. Agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk

- f) Review of the Clerk's salary. It was agreed to implement the national salary award for Clerk's as per the communication from National Association for Local Councils dated 2nd March 2022 and backdated to April 2021. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Smith. Agreed unanimously.

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

10. Any applications received between producing the agenda and this meeting.

Planning application 22/501396/REM Approval of Reserved Matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to 21/502607/OUT - Outline application for residential development comprising of nine 2 bed bungalows together with provision of a community orchard. Matters relating to access only to be determined, with all other reserved for future consideration. ADDRESS: Land to The South of Stable Mews School Lane Lower Halstow Kent ME9,7FN was noted. It was agreed to comment in support.

Action: Clerk

11. To receive reports on the following:

- a) Parks, Leisure and Planning:
The roundabout bearings are freeing up nicely.
- b) Footpaths, hedges, Burial Ground and allotments:
Cllr Portman has trimmed up the graves where they are not maintained.
- c) Parish Highways Plan:

Nothing further to report.

d) The Dock

The work is 99 per cent done, there is just some electrical work left to do. Levelling off to make it safer is being looked at now, as phase two. Quotes have been requested and this will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

e) Brickfields and the Seawall.

Cllr Portman has met with Michael Ellis, the Public Rights of Way officer to walk along the seawall. A temporary barrier has been erected in the area as further storms will take the bank away. The Environment Agency are doing a survey in April and news is awaited, in respect of a repair.

12. To receive the Clerk's report:

The Clerk attended the SLCC conference on 25th March. The agenda was tailored towards climate change and there were speakers on a variety of subjects including planting trees that will be sustainable for the future; a project undertaken by Huntingdon Town Council to provide a more sustainable crematorium; managed wild planting in ground maintenance schemes and Emergency Plans for which there was a focus on flooding.

A caravan that had been sited at Neptune Orchard was reported to Swale Borough Council and they have confirmed that it is not being used for residential use and the case is closed.

HMRC have refunded £982.59 that was paid in VAT for the financial year 2020/21.

The bank balance as at 28 February 2022 was £57,818.59

It was agreed that Cllrs Howard-Challis and Szabo will authorise the payments, as per the payment list below, via internet banking.

13. Items for information only:

a) Items for website and Village News

Planting of the Oak tree, an update on the seawall and the Jubilee celebrations.

14. To receive agenda items for next meeting:

Phase two of the dock repairs.

Age UK and Loneliness

Local Bus project

The meeting ended at: 19.51hrs

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 3rd May 2022

Payments April 2022

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust Fund	Hire of Hall Jan– March 2022 Invoice 53 - £21.25 Invoice 56 - £42.50	£63.75		350629162
Mr M Tidy	Village Cleaning 3 March – 1 April	£190.00		61032935
Mr D Pascoe	Grounds Maintenance Invoice 80 Hedge at Burial Ground	350.00		102038003
Mrs T Portman	Reimbursement for purchase of oak tree	£76.00		834254112
DCK Accounting	Quarterly Payroll Fee Invoice P2995	42.00	7.00	191303891
KALC	Audit Workshop 2022 Invoice 3066394149	60.00	10.00	71095010
Mrs A I Smith	Clerk's Salary and Expenses January – March 2022	602.84		234186666
HMRC	PAYE Tax	147.13		136546848

Other payments:

8th April 2022 Direct Debit ICO	£35.00
19th April 2022 Direct Debit EDF	£197.79
20th April 2022 Direct Debit EDF	£16.52
25th April 2022 Standing Order Clerk's Salary	£644.60

Date:

Signed:

Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair