

**Minutes** of the Annual Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 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); Cllr C Woodford; Cllr R Clark (SBC); Cllr M Whiting and 8 members of the public.

**1. Apologies**

None.

**2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest**

None

**3. Public Session**

An issue was raised regarding the path running alongside the Boathouse as the tree roots have made it very uneven. Cllr Whiting will find out who is responsible for the upkeep of that footpath.

A resident requested that the Parish Council look seriously at creating a "Quiet Lane" from the bottom of Basser Hill through to the bottom of Chapel Hill, to raise awareness to motorists of walkers, cyclists and horses.

The Parish Council were thanked for the Christmas Tree lighting event.

**4. Visitors reports or comments**

a) KCC Councillor.

Cllr Whiting wished everyone a Happy New Year and also thanked the Parish Council for everything they do during the year. There is a little money left in the Members' Grant pot for community projects. Regarding the "Quiet Lane" Munsgore Lane, Borden is the only one in Swale. There are some difficulties with maintenance with a "Quiet Lane" as you cannot cut the hedges back. There are no speed limit implications but signs indicating it is a "Quiet Lane". It may be preferable to cut the hedges and create a 20 mph zone. Councillor Whiting suggested that a Parish Highway Plan to collate and demonstrate any public support and funding might be beneficial and to invite an officer from KCC to a meeting to explain the scheme. The KCC Budget is now out for consultation at [kent.gov.uk](http://kent.gov.uk). An update regarding the buses; there was quite a lot of response to their consultation. They are still in discussions with SGN, the gas works company who have resumed the works in Newington, which will continue until October. With the roadworks in place, Chalkwell are unable to maintain the schedules published on their timetable. As a result, they can have their licence revoked by Office of the Traffic Commissioner, who regulate buses. To enable Chalkwell to meet the timetables they need one extra bus and one extra driver, without extra funding they cannot do that and is in discussion with SGN and KCC regarding extra funding. However, SGN say that they are not required by law to provide the funding needed. KCC currently subsidise the Saturday service for £90,000.00.

b) SBC Councillors

Cllr Clark wished everyone a Happy New Year and brought the planning application for Ridgedale Riding School to the Parish Council's attention. Cllr Smith explained that the Parish Council were aware and that they have objected to this application.

c) PCSO

During December a house in Breach Lane had some superficial damage by a vehicle and a vehicle was stolen from Breach Lane, which has been found.

d) Friends of the Brickfields

No report.

**5. To agree Minutes of the Meetings held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December**

It was resolved to agree the Minutes for the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019 and they were duly signed.

**6. Correspondence**

a) Kent Minerals and Waste Plan 2013-30 consultation. The Chair will look at this.

**Action: Chair**

- b) Request for shingle around the muddy areas at Westfield Car Park. A quote will be sought to improve those areas.
- c) Request to plant trees to South side of recreation area. There was concern that the sight line across the recreation should be kept clear and that there would be additional cost to the grass cutting. Apart from those considerations it was thought to be a good idea. The Clerk will ask for some advice regarding the types of tree that will be suitable.

**Action: Clerk**

## **7. Matters Arising**

- a) Dates for interviews regarding the vacancies for Parish Councillors. The Chair will let the Clerk know when the hall is available to hold the interviews and the Clerk will then contact the applicants.
- b) The Defibrillator in the Three Tuns is due for an annual check. The Clerk will seek advice as to who should do this.

**Action: Clerk**

- c) Roman Coin found on Parish Council owned land. It was agreed that the Parish Council would like it to go to the Sittingbourne Archaeological Society. The Clerk will contact KCC to let them know.

**Action: Clerk**

## **8. Finance**

- a) Following the approval of the Precept request to Swale Borough Council and of the budget for 2020/21 at December's meeting, Tax Band D Council Tax will be £81.90.

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

- a) Planning Committee meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> January regarding application 17/505019/FULL Ridgedale Riding School, Halstow Lane, Upchurch.  
Noted.

## **10. To discuss and agree action on the following:**

### **a) BRICKFIELDS & PLANNING**

Cllr Portman walked around the Brickfields with members of the Friends of the Brickfields (FoB) and looked at plans they are proposing. It was agreed there needs to a step into the Brickfields on the edge of Heron Close and possibly a sign. Some trees have not taken in the Memorial Wood and there is an option to plant more trees. There is also a plan to plant wild flowers around the Memorial. The reed bed is under threat because it dries out in summer. One of the proposals is to dig out a dyke and fill it with water to rehydrate the reeds in summer which is important for wildlife. There is a prospect that an Environmental Grant could be applied for. There is some erosion of the sea wall, the Environment Agency have visited and will come up with a proposal of what they will do together with some advice regarding the replacement of the seat that was pushed into the river. The Birch trees are quite invasive and the FoB plan to remove some of the suckers. The next meeting is on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

### **b) PARKS & LEISURE**

Nothing to report.

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

Cllr R Smith anticipates receiving the surveyors report ready for the next meeting in February. Another vessel (a dry dock) will be coming into the dock for a short term which has been agreed with the Parish Council. A topographical survey has taken place at Westfield Car Park as part of the expansion plans.

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

The Burial Ground, the graves have been cut and tidied. Three street lights have successfully been adjusted. Vicarage Lane hedge has been cut and is looking neat. Unfortunately, Cllr Portman has not received a reply regarding the hedge at the B&B in The Street. This has now been referred to Kent Highways.

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

**a) KALC Rep**

Cllrs Howard-Challis and R Smith attended the Swale Area Committee. The next quarterly meeting is on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

**b) Memorial Hall Rep**

The Memorial Hall Committee are going through the process of installing solar panels on the hall roof.

**12. Clerks Report**

Barclays Bank has sent a statement showing a nil balance and the letter requesting that this account is closed has been mailed.

There has been some interest in the allotment vacancies and the Clerk believes that all plots will be rented shortly.

The Clerk met with a local carpenter yesterday who will be furnishing the Parish Council with a quote for a new noticeboard at Britannia Green.

The request to Swale Borough Council regarding the Precept for 2020/21 has been dispatched.

The Clerk has made enquiries with the Parish Council solicitors regarding progress on the purchase of the land adjacent to the Brickfield site. They have not had a reply to any of their correspondence from Deadwood's solicitors.

The bank balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 was £82863.34

**13. Items for information only:**

The Village News printer was out of action regarding the January newsletter.

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

None.

**Date of next meeting:** 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020

The meeting closed at 7.50 pm

**Payments – January 2020**

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount £</b>	<b>Cheque No/Bank Payment</b>
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust Fund	Hiring the Hall 5/11/19 Invoice 10 - £25.50 3/12/19 Invoice 16 - £25.50	<b>51.00</b>	Bank Payment
Mr J Knott	Checking Play Area - £75 Village Cleaning - £150.00 For the Quarter Oct – Dec 2019	<b>225.00</b>	Bank Payment
Mr R Smith	Re-imbursement of travelling Expenses 9/9/19 KALC SAC 30/11/19 KALC AGM 9/12/19 KALC SAC 62 miles @ 0.45p per mile	<b>27.90</b>	Bank Payment
Streetlights	Lighting Adjustments to 3 Columns Invoice: 11026	<b>179.10</b>	Bank Payment
Mrs A Smith	Salary and Expenses Quarterly Reconciliation Oct 2019 – December 2019	<b>979.33</b>	Bank Payment
Mr M Szabo	Expenses for Christmas Tree Lighting event	<b>54.43</b>	Bank Payment
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	Grounds Maintenance 2019 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	<b>451.94</b>	Bank Payment
Peter Froggatt	Re-imbursement for donation to British Legion for Poppy Wreath	<b>20.00</b>	300003
Lower Halstow Over 60's	Donation	<b>50.00</b>	Bank Payment

Other payments:

16 January 2020 Direct Debit – EDF Energy £219.28

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

**Date:****Signed:**

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis**  
Chair