

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 5th October 2021

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

In attendance: 3 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Groves and the PCSO. Cllr Woodford also tendered apologies.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

Cllr Miller declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 11a.

3. Public Session

A resident of Vicarage Lane asked about the traffic monitor cables and putting the poppies on lamp posts. The cables are for the speed monitoring in regard to the Parish Council's bid to introduce a 20 mph limit in the village and the Parish Council have agreed to the placing of the poppies.

4. Visitors: Reports from:

a. KCC Councillor

No report.

b. SBC Councillor

No report

c. PCSO

Nothing of note.

d. Friends of the Brickfields

There was a work party last Saturday and there will be other work parties organised throughout the year.

Cllr Howard-Challis thanked Cllr Portman for her hard work in respect of the sea wall.

A meeting was held last month with Gordon Henderson MP who has written to the Environment Agency.

5. To resolve the Minutes

It was resolved that the Minutes of the 7th September meeting are a correct record and were signed accordingly. Proposed by Cllr Szabo and seconded by Cllr Smith.

6. Correspondence

- a. A letter had been received about the damaged tree on the Recreation Ground and a damaged footpath. Cllr Portman had challenged a group of teenagers about picking the leaves off this particular tree and a week later it had been snapped in half. It is not known if the damage was caused by vandalism or if it had been done by the wind. Cllr Portman does have a replacement tree, but it will be planted in a different position. Damage has been done to the pavement in The Street, by the Three Tuns caused by Southern Water. This will be brought up with the KCC Councillor at the next meeting.

7. Matters arising

- a) There has been some thoughtless parking on pavements on the junction of Crouch Hill Court and Vicarage Lane, so that pedestrians have to walk in the road. The cobbles in that area are the responsibility of KCC Highways, and is to provide a line of sight when exiting Crouch Hill Court.

8. Finance

- a. Two quotes have been received; one to repair the roundabout and the second to replace the roundabout. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Miller it was agreed, unanimously, to accept the quote of £2760.21 to repair it.

- b. Two quotes were received to cut the hedge in the Burial Ground. It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Smith and agreed unanimously to accept the quote for £350.00 to cut the hedge right back as soon as possible.

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

None received.

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

None received.

11. To receive reports on the following:

a) Parks, Leisure and Planning:

Cllr Szabo reported on the orchard planned regarding Gibbs Amenity area. A diagram and aerial shot was shown to the councillors regarding the position and size of the orchard. The orchard will potentially be where there are brambles currently. The trees are fairly small and will be planted not too far apart a metre away from the owner's fence. There will be a 3 metre gap to allow a tractor to cut the edge along the side of the plot. Cllr Howard-Challis made it clear that there will not be any form of road at all. Cllr Portman said there are many residents who are very worried about the proposed orchard and this area being used as a vehicular access point. Cllr Portman said that we cannot vote on the proposed orchard because it is not on our agenda for tonight.

b) Footpaths, hedges, Burial Ground and allotments:

Cllr Portman is looking at overgrown hedges around the village and will send letters at the end of the month if they have not been trimmed. The Clerk has ordered two eco dog stations and they should arrive shortly. A meeting has been held with the Head teacher at the School regarding the young gardener competition, Cllr Portman will be attending their Gardening Club. It was thought that it might be an idea to write to the school to see if they would like a Parish Council member on the Board of Governors.

Action: Clerk

c) Parish Highways Plan:

The double yellow lines have not been repainted, as yet, on Breach Lane outside of Club Cottages. The Clerk will ask Cllr Woodford regarding progress.

Action: Clerk

d) The Dock

The Terms and Conditions are still being worked on and contractors are being chased

Action: Cllr Szabo.

e) Brickfields and Seawall:

Five trees need attention, but there has been no response from the contractor. A further contractor will be sought. KCC Councillor Mike Baldock, Parish Councillors Howard-Challis and Portman and a member of the Friends of the Brickfield met with Gordon Henderson MP at the Brickfields. The outcome was that Mr Henderson allocated a case-worker and has written to the Environment Agency. Cllr Portman will follow this up.

Action: Clerk, Cllrs Portman and Smith

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

a) KALC Rep

Cllr Howard-Challis was due to go to a meeting last week which has been cancelled. There is a new date which he will attend with Cllr Smith.

b) Memorial Hall Rep

The Hall is fully booked until next year and is very busy.

13. To receive the Clerk's report:

Swale Borough Council have paid the second half of the Precept into the Parish Council's bank account.

In the last month the Parish council have arranged to erect a Heras fence at the dock after receiving a safety report for the area. The Clerk has informed all the relevant authorities of the change of address in respect of Parish Council business. A report was received regarding what appeared to be vandalism of plants and flowers at the Burial Ground and Neighbourhood Watch and the PCSO was informed. Poppies are being arranged for display on the lamp posts in respect of Remembrance Day. Two dog waste bag dispensing stations have been ordered to be erected at Gibbs Amenity area and the Recreation Ground. The external auditors report for the financial year 2020/21 has been received and there were no concerns raised. The invoices for the allotments and Westfield car park have been sent out. The Friends of the Brickfields Chair, Mrs Telford, has some concerns regarding trees at the Brickfields that need professional surgery, the Clerk has emailed Mr Branchett asking for his help with this matter.

The Parish Council's handyman, street cleaner and playground checker, Mr Knott will be retiring at the end of this year.

The bank balance at 30th September was £126,812.37

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

14. Items for information only:

- a) Items for website and Village News
Cllr Portman would like to ask if anyone has any garden materials that they do not want, such as trowels, forks, small watering cans to donate them to the school for their gardening club.
Speed surveys are being done regarding the bid for a 20 mph zone in Lower Halstow.
- b) To receive agenda items for next meeting:
To make a decision regarding the Planning application for the Community Orchard at Gibbs Amenity Area.

The meeting ended at: 19.45 pm.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 2nd November 2021

Payments October 2021

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Mr K Howard-Challis	Chair Allowance and travel Expenses	561.59		Cheque 300013
Mr M Szabo	Councillor Allowance	222.24		921267798
Mr P Miller	Councillor Allowance	222.24		500398569
Mr A Smith	Councillor Allowance	276.04		Cheque 300014
Mrs A I Smith	Expenses and Salary	730.12		790581100
Mr J Knott	Village Cleaning, Handyman and Play Area Check	345.00		552492288
ATS	Fitting New Noticeboard and Herras Fencing Invoice 270901 – £150.00 Invoice 270902 - £260.00	410.00		Cheque 300015
DCK Accounting	Payroll Period July – September 2021 Invoice: P2658	42.00	7.00	748037068
PKF Littlejohn LLP	Limited assurance of Annual Governance & Accountability Return (External Audit) Invoice: SB20212375	360.00	60.00	310864836
HMRC	PAYE	352.96		837503152

Other payments:

25th October 2021 Standing Order

Clerk's Salary - £644.60

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**