

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held virtually due to Coronavirus Covid-19 restrictions on Tuesday 5th May 2020.

Present: Cllrs: K Howard-Challis (Chair), R Smith (Vice-chair), A Groves, M Szabo, A Smith, E Stiles and Ann Smith (Clerk).

1. Election of

a) Chair

Cllr Keith Howard-Challis was proposed for Chair by Cllr Szabo and seconded by Cllr A Smith. Agreed unanimously.

b) Vice-Chair

Cllr Robert Smith was proposed for Vice-Chair by Cllr A Smith and seconded by Cllr Szabo. Agreed unanimously.

The declarations of office will be signed within social distancing rules.

2. Apologies for absence

Apology received from Cllr Portman, due to electronic problems.

3. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

There were none.

4. To agree Minutes of the Meetings held

It was resolved to agree the Minutes for the meeting held on 3rd March 2020. They will be signed within social distancing rules.

5. Matters Arising

a) Revision to Friends of Brickfields Constitution. Proposed by Cllr A Smith and seconded by Cllr Groves, it was agreed unanimously for a change to be made to paragraph 11 to read:

"The friends will be represented at the monthly Parish Council meetings to update on recent activities and Annually to discuss issues and future plans."

b) Cllr R Smith asked for the following to be Minuted which was agreed:

The statement made by the Borough Council Planners & KCC Highways, does not give sufficient argument to the REAL concerns of LHPC., concerning 19/500764/OUT.

Parking was not our main concern, although the "Lay Bys" (road widening), instead of helping may actually exacerbate parking problems.

Of principal concern is the proposed access/egress from the site, which is considered to be unsuitable and dangerous.

6. Finance

a) To approve Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2019/20 Part 3 Section 1. The Clerk read out each of the assertions and it will be duly signed within social distancing rules.

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

a) None at the time of producing the agenda

Amendment to add the following: – Agreed at meeting held on 7th July 2020.

Application 20/501002/OUT Callum Park, Basser Hill, Lower Halstow, ME9 7TY
Lower Halstow Parish Council have agreed by majority decision to support this application and comment as follows:

It replaces existing buildings on a brownfield site, retaining, albeit a much smaller, riding school with its associated employment. The house designs are controlled and tasteful and includes subsidised plots in the proposal for the benefit of villagers.

- b) Application 20/501670/FULL was received between producing the agenda and this meeting. It was agreed that the Parish Council would not comment.

8. Clerks Report:

The Emergency plan was implemented at the beginning of the lockdown that occurred because of the outbreak of Coronavirus Covid-19. There was a wonderful response from the residents of Lower Halstow coming forward to offer their services as volunteers ranging from picking up urgent supplies and medicine to dog walking and offering to speak to anyone who just needed a chat. The Parish Council also received a donation of dust masks to distribute to those who would like them. They are not of the kind that would have been suitable for NHS use.

Instructions regarding the 2019/20 audit, were received from PKF Littlejohn, the external auditors for smaller authorities on 22 April. These had been delayed because of changes to legislation that impact the 2019/20 reporting season. The deadline by which the Annual Governance Statement and Statement of Accounts of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) together with any certificate or opinion issued by the local auditor must be published from 30 September 2020 to 30 November 2020. Under the new regulations there is no requirement for a common period for the exercise of public rights. Smaller authorities are still required to set a period for this purpose, but the only requirement is that the 30-working day period for the exercise of public rights should start on or before the first working day of September, i.e. on or before 1 September 2020.

The Clerk is continuing to work on the new web site which is up and running. It can be accessed here: <https://www.hugofox.com/community/lower-halstow-parish-council-17855/home>

Planning permission for the extension to Westfield Car Park has been approved.

A payment of £5.20 has been received as a pro rata payment for a half plot allotment at the Memorial Hall. All allotments are now taken.

The bank balance as at 30th April is £71572.26

9. To consider questions received from Lower Halstow Residents

There were none.

10. Items for information only:

a) To receive items for Village News and the Website:

None

b) To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of next meeting

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 2nd June 2020. A decision nearer the time will be taken as to whether it will need to be held virtually. If that is the case a link will be published for members of the public to join the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.28 pm.

Payments – May 2020

It was agreed that Cllrs Howard-Challis and Szabo will authorise the bank payments.

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust Fund	Hall Hire 3/3/2020 Invoice:40	25.50	0	47671649
DCK Accounting	Payroll Year End Return 2019-20 Invoice P1791	30.00	5.00	947395296
Mrs A I Smith	Reimbursement for 24 x 2 nd Class stamps - £15.60 Purchase of Webcam - £13.66	29.26	0	98012681

Other payments:

25 May 2020 Standing Order

Clerk's Salary - £448.66

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**