

# HARTLIP PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES of the Meeting held at Hartlip Village Hall on Wednesday 8 February 2023 from 8pm until 9.30pm

### Present:

Chairman: Cllr Graham Addicott OBE  
Cllr Paul White  
Cllr Sharon Black  
Cllr Peter Boundy  
Cllr John Davies  
Cllr Melanie Rose  
Cllr John Wright

Parish Clerk: Tracy Still

### Also Present:

Borough Cllr Richard Palmer

### 23/17 Apologies for Absence

Absent with Apologies: NONE

Absent without Apology: NONE

External Absence with Apologies: Borough Cllr Alan Horton  
PCSO Kirsty Linge

External Absence without Apologies: County Cllr Mike Baldock

### 23/18 Co-option of Councillors

Cllr Sharon Black and Cllr Melanie Rose were welcomed as new Parish Councillors. A 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office of Parish Councillor' was signed by both Councillors. The Chair countersigned these documents as is a requirement. The Chair welcomed the new councillors. The Chair informed the newly appointed councillors that, in terms of duties, all Hartlip Parish Councillors took part in commenting on planning applications. In addition, Cllr Black was asked to take on some responsibility for Environmental Matters and Cllr Rose was nominated as HPC Representative on HVHMC. The Clerk was requested to write to HVHMC Chair to advise of the nomination.

**Action: Clerk**

### 23/19 Declarations of Interest

The Chairman remind Councillors of their duty to declare any interests. Cllr John Wright declared an interest in Planning Application 22/503654/EIOUT because a relative owned land affected by the application.

### 23/20 Confirmation of the Minutes

The minutes of the monthly Parish Council Meeting of 11 January 2023 were proposed by Cllr Paul White and seconded by Cllr John Wright. All Councillors in attendance at the January meeting were in agreement that the minutes were a true and accurate record. The Chairman signed the minutes as required under the Local Government Act 1972 (sch. 12).

## **23/21 Matters arising from the Minutes**

23/4

Cllr Wright reported that the quotation for hedge cutting on the road side at The Recreation Ground and The Parkland for the upcoming year is still outstanding. Cllr Rose will provide the Clerk with the contact details of an alternative contractor.

**Action: Cllr Wright/Cllr Rose**

23/9 iii: The Allotments

The Chairman had contacted the contractors, Graham, to accept their offer to remove the hard-standing which had been inappropriately compounded onto an allotment and to provide top soil for the area. A response is awaited.

**Action: Chair**

23/10 ii: Highways

Cllr Davies had provided a plan to support his proposal for the possible location of a new salt bin at the junction of Place Lane and Dane Lane.

The matter was discussed with attention drawn to the range of street furniture and signage in the suggested area and the regulation that nothing may be positioned within 6 feet of a fire hydrant. The fact that the field and hedge are in private ownership and so cannot be commandeered by HPC was raised together with the narrowness of the verge which bears the scars of wheel marks and skidding. It was felt to be an inappropriate site which also had Health and Safety implications.

A vote was taken with the majority of councillors opposed to the proposal which it was agreed should be abandoned.

**Action: None**

Cllr Davies had reported empty salt bins for refilling and would follow up the matter.

**Action: Cllr Davies**

## **23/22 Public Questions**

No members of the public were in attendance.

## **23/23 Police and Neighbourhood Watch Matters**

PCSO Linge was unable to attend the meeting.

Residents are asked to contact the police on 101 or on the Kent Police website using live chat or online reporting.

**Action: Chair**

## **23/24 Report of Chair**

The Chair reported that he had attended a meeting of Swale Borough Council's Standards Committee, of which he is a member, on 1 February 2023 representing the Swale Branch of the Kent Association of Local Councils.

At that meeting the main item for consideration was a draft Social Media Policy for Councillors.

The policy suggests that Social Media can be used to disseminate information to a wider audience and it can enable Councillors to link more closely with communities.

The policy also suggests that Social Media can cause significant levels of distress and anxiety for users if it is used in a way which intends to cause harm.

It was therefore agreed by Swale Borough Councillors that it was important for policy guidelines to be produced to assist members in understanding the legal obligations of a Councillor when using social media, but also where and how to access help if they are a victim to online bullying.

The draft policy is being considered further by Borough Councillors and it is hoped that it will be ready to go before the Full Council on 15 April 2023 in time for introduction after the Local Elections in May 2023.

The policy will not form part of the Code of Conduct for Members but should be read alongside it.

For the benefit of the new members in particular, the Chairman went through the Code of Conduct of Hartlip Parish Council highlighting in particular the Nolan Principles of Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.

He reminded new Councillors of the requirement to notify the monitoring officer within 28 days of taking office of any disclosable pecuniary interest which they or their partners may have.

## **23/25 HPC Amenities: Councillor Reports**

### **i. Recreation Ground**

HPC had received a quotation of £105.00 for the replacement of 5 posts and re-tightening of the fence left of the kissing gate.

Councillors agreed to accept the quotation.

**Action: Clerk**

### **ii The Parkland**

Cllr Wright had met with Peter Rayfield to survey the area under consideration for fencing replacement.

In addition, Cllr Wright had requested a quotation for extra roadside posts to be installed alongside the existing posts.

A quotation would be submitted to the Clerk by the contractor in due course.

Peter Rayfield had been requested to repair a water leak on the water trough pipe.

Cllr Wright reported that rabbits had eaten the bark off the newly planted oak trees and advised that the Parish Council may need to replace the trees which were planted as part of the Queen's Green Canopy to provide a lasting memorial in Hartlip to the long reign of Queen Elizabeth the Second upon her Platinum Jubilee.

The Chair advised that the incorrect tree guards had been provided at the time of delivery resulting in insufficient protection from wildlife. The condition of the oak trees will be monitored and they will be replaced by the Parish Council if necessary.

Additional guards will be added in the interim to prevent further damage.

**Action: Chair**

iii The Allotments

The Chair had attended the KALC 'Allotment Law and Management Workshop'. The Chair confirmed that HPC's Allotment Agreement complies with the current requirements for the provision of Allotment Gardens.

Proposals for an Allotment Association were discussed but as Hartlip has less than 50 allotments, an Allotment Association may not be suitable.

HPC Allotments are currently measured in rods as is commonplace. The workshop suggested that the Metrication Act, being now in place, may mean that plot measurement may need to conform to that at some point in the future if the Act is retained now that Brexit has occurred.

The Chair had contacted HPC's Solicitor to request an update on the current status of the purchase of the Allotments. A response is awaited.

**Action: Chair**

**23/26 Other HPC Responsibilities: Councillor Reports**

i. Hartlip Village Hall

Nothing to report.

ii. Highways

Cllr Davies reported that a water leak at the entrance to Dane Close on The Street had been reported to Southern Water.

A number of reports have been received of huge vehicles passing through Lower Hartlip by using the Lower Hartlip Road and Old House Lane.

This has been taken up with Borough Councillor Richard Palmer who, in turn, has raised it with the police and with KCC Highways Department. Responses are awaited.

Following reports of the amount of mud on the road in Old House Lane, Lower Hartlip, it was agreed to ask the Highways Authority to look into the situation.

The additional use of the roads through the Parish and the use by larger vehicles has worsened the number of potholes appearing.

Cllr Wright reported that the M2 Junction 5/A249 Improvement Project and the resulting implications to roads in the local areas was on the agenda of the next Joint Transport Board Meeting.

The Chairman reported that the PCSO had arranged for a speed check to be carried out on the Lower Hartlip Road at 10.30 am on a Sunday morning. Due to the unsuitable time period the speed check failed to give an accurate and true representation of speeds in the area.

iii. Footpaths

Footpath ZR68 required clearing. Cllr Boundy was asked to report this to KCC.

Councillors were reminded to report any concerns relating to footpaths to KCC.

**Action: Cllr Boundy**

iv. The War Memorial

Toby Daley continued to investigate funding options for required repairs.

An update is awaited.

**Action: Chair**

**23/27 Coronation of King Charles III**

Councillors discussed proposals for celebrations to mark the event of the Coronation of His Majesty the King. The Coronation will take place on Saturday 6 May 2023.

Clarification will be sought as to whether the Church intends to arrange an event.

Councillors agreed to consider making a donation towards the celebrations subject to arrangements. Members were reminded that the King has requested that the whole event should be lower profile than in the past, with emphasis on family time with street party type events being usually self-funding.

Further discussions will take place at the next meeting.

**23/28 County and Borough Councillor's Reports**

Borough Cllr Horton had been unable to attend the meeting and had provided a report. He reported on the impact of the cost of living situation and the implications for residents and families across the income spectrum.

Swale Borough Council has a significant budget deficit. The measures being proposed to address the short fall are severe with the likelihood that most discretionary spend by the Council will go and the prospect that all but the statutory core services may need to be cut.

Borough Cllr Richard Palmer reported that he had raised the matter of the number of huge vehicles passing through Lower Hartlip with the police. A response is awaited.

Cllr Palmer encouraged HPC to submit ideas for walking and cycling routes within the Parish to Adrian Oliver, SBC Active Travel Coordinator.

**23/29 Clerk and Finance Report**

The Chairman had received the draft documents prior to the meeting for checking and correction as per normal practice.

The Bank Reconciliation and Finance Report for January were presented to the Parish Council.

These were approved by the Parish Council and signed and dated by the Chairman.

January BACS payments were presented for signing.

T Still	IT Expenses	£ 41.04
KALC	Cllr Addicott Training – Allotment Workshop	£ 72.00
Hartlip Village Hall	Hire/12.04.23/HPC Audit	£ 33.00
Business Stream	Water/The Parkland/11.10.22-18.01.23	£ 26.02
Commercial Services	Grounds Maintenance	<u>£ 253.48</u>
		<u>£ 425.54</u>

The finance documents were proposed by Cllr John Wright and seconded by Cllr Paul White.

Cllr Black and Cllr Rose were presented with a copy of the 2023/24 budget.

## **23/30 Planning Matters**

### **Applications received since the January 2023 meeting.**

Application Ref: 22/505911/FULL

Erection of a detached outbuilding and installation of a roof light to front slope of dwelling at 1 The Barn, Old House Lane, Lower Hartlip.

**(No objection)**

The process of commenting on Planning Applications was explained to Cllr Black and Cllr Rose.

They were advised that further information was available as required.

They were advised to refer to the Planning section of SBC Website where much helpful information may be found.

Cllr White had attended a meeting on 23.01.23 at Bobbing Village Hall as HPC Representative to discuss application 22/503654/EIOUT.

All representatives in attendance expressed their objections, on behalf of their own Parish Council, to the planning application.

SBC Planning Department had advised by email that the planning office contact hours were now restricted to Wednesday between the hours of 9.30am and 12.30pm.

### **Enforcement**

The Chair had attended a KALC Meeting at which the senior enforcement officer for SBC had spoken. He reported that in excess of 400 planning enforcement matters had been brought to the attention of SBC during 2022.

### **Local Green Spaces**

HPC Chair had written to SBC regarding the currently suspended Future Swale Local Plan preparation and the position regarding Local Green Spaces as he had been advised to do at the January 2023 HPC meeting.

HPC had submitted its response in November 2021 to the call from SBC for sites for Local Green Spaces and the Chair's recent letter made clear that HPC wished all aspects of its submission of 2021 to hold and be carried forward when work on this matter recommences.

The Chair had also requested an update on Swale's current position in this matter. A response is awaited.

**Action: Chair**

## **23/31 Correspondence**

None.

## 23/32 Information Items

Reference was made to the ancient arch in the churchyard which has been in need of repair for very many years. A recent quotation for repairs was £16,000.

Members were reminded that the churchyard is a closed churchyard and that, as is their prerogative, Hartlip Parish Council had declined to take on responsibility for its maintenance upon its closure about 35 years ago as it would be too costly a project for a small parish council. When that decision is taken, the Borough Council becomes responsible for general maintenance of the churchyard.

The Parochial Church Council is therefore wholly responsible for the management of the Church and churchyard.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

The next meeting of Hartlip Parish Council will be held at Hartlip Village Hall on Wednesday 8 March 2023 at 8pm.

Signed .....

Date .....