

Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 8th January 2019 in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

Present: Cllr R Smith (Chair); Cllr K Howard-Challis (Vice-Chair); Cllr A Beerstecher; Cllr S Gates; Cllr Parker; Cllr Dadson; Cllr Stiles; Mrs A Smith (Clerk) and 18 members of the public.

1. Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone. Apologies were received from KCC Councillor Mike Whiting, Cllr Dewar-Whalley and PCSO Cork.

2. Declarations of Interest

a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

b) Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interests

Cllr Gates declared an interest in item 11.

3. Public Session

A resident of School Lane spoke in support of the planning application to be discussed at item 11. A review of housing held 10 years ago identified the lack of social housing for the younger population and a scheme to provide it was successful. It also mentioned that the senior population living in three and four bedroom houses had nowhere to go, within the village.

Although there are bungalows in Lower Halstow, they are difficult to come by and entreated that the Parish Council support the application in writing.

A resident from Burntwick Drive spoke in support. The younger generation need the houses that would be freed up and would be able to move up the housing ladder.

A resident from The Street re-iterated the details of the application and also spoke in support, that the older generation, already living in Lower Halstow do not want to move from the village, even knowing the downsides.

A resident of Cumberland Drive spoke in support and suggested that another piece of land adjacent to the site could provide a medical centre. He also reported a near accident with a parent running out from the School entrance across the road in front of his car and suggested a no parking zone at certain times in front of the School.

A resident of the Street spoke in support of the planning application inasmuch that the older generation that had lived in Lower Halstow most of their lives would like to move to one of the bungalows.

A resident from Burntwick agreed that a medical centre in the village would be beneficial for all villagers, particularly for those that don't drive.

The Chair ascertained from the members of the public that everyone in attendance was in favour of the planning application.

4. Presentation Outline Planning Application for land at Westfield – Mr K Tress

Mr Tress circulated drawings concerning his proposed planning application for 10 (2, 3 and 4 bedroomed) houses opposite Westfield Cottages, Breach Lane. The problems from the previous application regarding the re-siting of reptiles has now been overcome. He will be challenging the statement on the previous application that it is an isolated development within the open countryside, supported by the fact that approximately 6% of all residential development in Lower Halstow is currently in Westfield. Swale Borough Council have identified in their Local Plan that they have insufficient land available to meet future housing needs. There is a shortage of brown field sites, within Swale, and it could be potentially argued that the site is brown field, has no environmental value and could be best used for residential development. There are two reasons that the application will be for 10 houses; that there is sufficient land available on the site and for each plot for parking for visitors and residents, so that there will be no overspill onto the road compounding the problems there; secondly to make sure that the application is commercially viable to allow funding to widen the road. All the issues identified by the Parish council for the last application has been acted on in this proposal. There would be two passing areas to enable passing on the straight

section as opposed to the bends either end. The land in front of Westfield House, not part of this proposal, could be classified as a natural traffic calming measure. The facilities available in the village are easily accessible within walking distance.

It was clarified that the road widening is part of the proposal and not something KCC will be undertaking and ideally there would be one car parking space per bedroom.

5. Presentation on Lower Halstow Flood Prevention – Mrs Kay Howard-Challis

Since 2017 I have been collecting information about the stream, that is who owns what part of the stream and who is responsible for the upkeep and flow of the stream and I have learnt a lot.

The flow of the stream currently is not as it should be because it has been over 12 to 13 years collecting too much silt and the reeds have got a foothold, so clogging the stream. In particular, unfortunately, behind the decking of the Three Tuns pub where the stream flows past, there are silt hollows deep enough to drown a child or an adult. Children do play in the stream behind the pubs decking, as children from the public house have been known to be playing at the bottom of some of Crouch Hill's gardens. Children will be children and where there is water it seems a great place to play. Unfortunately, it is so dangerous for any child to play in the stream at this present time. To deal with this serious situation it has to start at the point where the stream goes into the estuary. In January of this year the Environment Agency will be putting in a new steel sluice gate, all land owners adjacent to this sluice gate will be informed if they have not been informed already. The stream's bed from the sluice gate to the Gibbs ground is owned by Peel Ports, who are refusing to pay for the removal of the excess silt and reeds. Mr Max Tant, KCC's head flood controller is, via their solicitors, asking Peel Ports to pay for the removal of the silt and reed problem, but unfortunately, up to now they have refused to pay, due to the present rubber sluice gate being unsuitable. Medway Inland Drainage Board have control of the stream from the Gibbs ground back to Newington and they are willing to do all they can to assist us. This is an ongoing programme so I will give you further details when I can. Please be aware of these dangerous silt hollows and make sure children do not play anywhere near the stream at this time.

6. Visitors reports or comments

- a) SBC Councillors.
No reports received.
- b) KCC Councillor

Report from KCC Mike Whiting:

KCC report, Lower Halstow Parish Council meeting, 8 January 2019. May I start by wishing you a very Happy New Year. I had hoped to be with you this evening, but I have another meeting at Swale House to attend. I was particularly interested to hear about the proposed development in Breach Lane, but I have been sent all the paperwork and am up to speed on this. I have attached to this report a copy of my latest Member Grant funding report, which I hope you find useful. There have been a couple of new grants since, and there is about £9,000 left in the pot. Please let me know if the Parish or local groups need any financial assistance. I am grateful to the Parish for agreeing to host a Coffee Morning following a request by the Police and Crime Commissioner Matthew Scott. He will be contacting the Clerk direct to sort this out and has offered to meet all the costs. He will bring rural policing officers with him, and inviting the surrounding parishes to come along. I have asked KCC officers to set up a programme of footway clearance. Many footways, particularly those adjacent to earth banks, suffer when soil and weeds start to encroach, narrowing the path and making it hazardous, particularly for those with pushchairs, wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Work has started along the A2 in Boyces Hill and Keycol Hill, and more is being done in Bobbing. If you have particular example, then please report them on line, or let me have an email with the details. I hope this is helpful, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance in these or any other matters.

c) PCSO.

Report from PCSO John Cork:

One report of criminal damage to a vehicle in Breach Lane.

No reports of any Anti-Social behaviour.

No reports of any nuisance vehicles.

The wards have changed and from the end of January I will no longer be the PCSO for the area.

You will be getting a new PCSO who is very good and has done the area before. I myself will still be patrolling the area and can still be contacted to help you with any issues.

d) Friends of the Brickfields

Work parties have been taking place clearing the reed beds and saplings and there are further work parties planned. Some quotes have been received regarding the interpretation board and signage. Further options are being explored. An outline concept plan was shown to the councillors. The Friends are about to embark on a fund raising mission.

7. To agree Minutes of the December 2018 meeting.

The Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on 4th December 2018 were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Gates and seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis. Agreed with one abstention. The minutes were duly signed.

8. Matters Arising:

- a) The proposal by Cllr Gates to adopt Lower Halstow Parish Council Open Spaces Policy second draft was seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis. Agreed unanimously.
- b) Fly tipping and parking on visibility splay at junction Crouch Hill Court and Vicarage Lane. This has been an ongoing problem with fly tipping and vehicles parking on the visibility splay. It was agreed that Councillor Parker would speak to the residents before contacting KCC again.

Action: Cllr Parker

9. Correspondence - To discuss and agree action on the following:

- a) Coffee with Commissioner – Friday 15th February, 10 – 12pm Memorial Hall.
Noted.

10. Finance

- a) To agree the budget and precept request to Swale Borough Council for 2019/20
The precept request to be sent to Swale Borough Council was approved. The precept would be £37,000.00 and the budget for 2019/20 was formally approved. Band D Council Tax will be £81.87. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis, seconded by Cllr Beerstecher. Agreed unanimously.
- b) Quotes regarding grounds maintenance.
It was agreed to accept the first three items of Landscape Services quote, but to remove The Street Amenity Area (Britannia Green) and to accept the quote for this item from Treecraft. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis, seconded by Cllr Beerstecher, approved with one abstention.

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

- a) Application No: 18/506225/OUT Land to South of School Lane, Lower Halstow ME9 7ES
It was proposed by Cllr Gates that the Parish Council's previous comments that this is outside the built up area of the village and on a green field site, were still valid. Seconded by Cllr Beerstecher. Two in favour, none against and five abstentions.

12. To discuss and agree action on the following:

a) **BRICKFIELDS & PLANNING**

The Bell Grove Stud planning application has been approved.
Additional work needs to be done on the firebreak to open up areas for wildlife, together with a maintenance plan, to be discussed at the next Friends of the Brickfields meeting.

b) **PARKS & LEISURE & PLANNING**

- Awaiting a quote to install the bench.
- c) **DOCKS & BARGES and CAR PARKS**
Awaiting response regarding the renewal of the licence for the Edith May.
 - d) **FOOTPATHS HIGHWAYS LIGHTING and HEDGEROW MAINTENANCE.**
All the street lights are working. KCC Highways have marked the potholes in Lower Halstow.
 - e) **FLOOD PLAN, EMERGENCY PLAN, TOTAL QUALITY ITEMS (POLICY, SAFETY, AUDITS)**
Thanks were given to Mrs Howard-Challis for her work on the flood plan.
 - f) **VILLAGE INVENTORY, PARKING and HANDYMAN LIAISON**
By-law notices regarding preservation of road margins and verges will be looked into.
 - g) **GENERAL/MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.**
Nothing reported.

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

- a) **KALC Rep**
No report
- b) **Memorial Hall Rep**
No report.

14. Clerks Report:

The Clerk has paid in £45.00 in allotment rents.

The bank balance is £72216.76 as at the 31st December 2018.

It was proposed to accept the cheques for payment by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Stiles. Agreed unanimously.

15. Items for information only:

- a) Items for newsletter and website: Coffee with the Commissioner and advertise two allotments available for rent. Update for newsletter regarding trampoline.

16. To receive agenda items

Correspondence item – letter regarding proposed extension of Westfield Car Park

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 5th February 2019

The meeting closed at 21.05 hrs.

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. R. Smith.
Chair.**

Cheques January 2019

Payee	Description	Amount £	Cheque No.
Mrs A Beerstecher	Reimbursement of First aid Kit	47.99	100420
Commercial Services	Grounds Maintenance -2 nd Half yearly invoice LS191284	1252.01	100421
DCK Accounting Solutions	Quarterly Payroll fee: Invoice P1178	42.00	100422
Mr J Knott	Village Cleaning Oct – Dec 2018	235.00	100423
Mrs A I Smith	Salary and Expenses Oct – Dec 2018	490.80	100424
HMRC	PAYE Tax	19.80	100425
Land Registry	For copy of Title and plan number TT11548	7.00	100426
LexisNexis	Supply of Arnold Baker Local Council Administration 11 edition	110.99	100427
Treecraft	Grounds Maintenance 2018 Invoice: 190107	4340.00	100428