

**Minutes** of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held outside of the Memorial Hall due to Coronavirus Covid19 restrictions at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

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

In attendance: Cllr Mike Baldock (KCC) and 7 members of the public.

**1. Apologies**

Cllrs Clark (SBC) and Woodford (SBC) and the PCSO Lee Fennell

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

Cllr Miller declared a pecuniary interest in item 10d and a non-pecuniary interest in item 13e.

**3. Public Session**

A resident suggested that it would be reasonable to ask Open Reach for a share in the substantial savings that will be made regarding the re-routing of the ducting on the Recreation Ground.

**4. Visitors:** Reports from:

a. KCC Councillor Mike Baldock:

Cllr Baldock said that it was nice to be representing Lower Halstow. The KCC member grants have been cut down to £10,000.00. He would be fully supporting the 20 mph limit campaign and he is hoping to hold twice yearly meetings with all the parishes in Swale West Division and is planning the first one in the Autumn.

b. SBC Councillors

No reports.

c. PCSO

The PCSO submitted the following report:

Following the attack on a farmer and two shoplifting incidents at the beginning of May, I am happy to report that there have been no further reports since then.

**Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:**

Nothing of note.

I will be holding a police surgery at Mews Brewhouse, Iwade, on Saturday 17th July at 2pm.

**ASB Awareness Week**

The UK's first ever ASB Awareness Week is now confirmed for 19th – 25th July 2021. The week of action is bringing together people and organisations from across the country to take a stand and work together to make communities safer. Organised by Resolve, ASB Awareness Week is being backed by the Home Office, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), Local Government Association (LGA), National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) and the National Fire Chiefs' Council (NFCC). Housing providers, councils, police forces, fire services and community groups from across the country are being asked to showcase the projects and partnerships they are running to keep communities safe.

Swale police are planning an event in Sittingbourne High Street on Saturday 17th July. For further details, please contact [csu.swale@kent.police.uk](mailto:csu.swale@kent.police.uk)

d. Friends of the Brickfields

No report.

**5. To consider application received regarding the Casual Vacancy for Lower Halstow Parish Council**

No applications were received.

**6. To resolve the Minutes**

It was resolved that both the Minutes of the annual meeting and monthly meeting held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2021 are correct records.

**7. Correspondence**

- a. Email regarding cancellation of the June Parish Council meeting.  
The meeting was cancelled due to Covid19 restrictions and the numbers allowed inside.
- b. Email regarding the Poetry Festival saying that the donation was very much appreciated. A film maker has offered their time free of charge. The money will be used for another project at a later date.
- c. Email regarding the tap at the Memorial Hall site allotments.  
The tap has been replaced.
- d. Two emails regarding the kissing gate at the Brickfields.  
The gate purchased was bought as a gate that could be accessed by disabled users of the brickfields, installed with extra dimensions. However, this was still not large enough and the gate was therefore removed until a better option is found. This is in hand.
- e. Email regarding the padlock combination for the Brickfields outer gate.  
A brass padlock had been fitted within the chain, which has now been removed. The padlock and combination have been changed. The policy regarding access to the Brickfields has not changed.
- f. Email regarding the shabby state of the railings in School Lane.  
The railings do not belong to the Parish Council. Cllr Smith will try to find out who the landowner is.

**Action: Cllr Smith**

- g. Email regarding overgrown allotments.  
Cllr Portman has written letters to the tenants. The response has been favourable. Cllr Portman has also cut some pathways at Tutt's allotments.
- h. Email regarding the cutting of the verge opposite Burntwick Drive.  
This is the responsibility of KCC and has now been cut.
- i. 2 emails regarding the planning application at Old Mill.  
To be discussed at item 10d
- j. Email regarding the planning application for 9 bungalows at School Lane missing from the Planning Tracker on the Parish Council website.  
The planning tracker was a free service provided by HugoFox for which they are now making a charge for access. All the planning application information is available at Swale Borough Council's planning portal for no cost. The planning tracker will be removed from the Parish Council website and a link provided to Swale Borough Council's portal instead.

**Action: Clerk**

- k. This was not discussed, as access was commented on above.
- l. Email requesting use of Recreation Ground to provide a duct route for full fibre broadband.  
There is a concern over future access, the route is not an issue. Questions have been put to Open Reach, but they have not replied as yet.
- m. There have been 62 positive responses and 0 negative responses to 20 mph speed limit. Cllr Smith is awaiting an update from KCC and this will be chased.

**Action: Cllr Smith**

**8. Matters arising**

- a. Gardening Competition for the children. The School has been supportive of this idea, but this will now be for next year. Cllr Portman will meet with the Head Teacher in the autumn. It will be open to all children in the village, not just those at Lower Halstow Primary School, divided into age categories.

- b. Queen's Platinum Jubilee. There is an initiative called the "Green Canopy", which is an invitation for groups, businesses and individuals to plant trees for the Jubilee. Cllr Miller thought this was something the Parish Council could get involved with. Beacons will be lit across the Country on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2022.
- c. Eco Stations for dogs. Cllr Portman has been tying dog waste bags to points near the waste bins at the Recreation Ground and Gibbs Amenity area and these are being well used. However, it would be better to have a safer method of supplying the bags. It was proposed by Cllr Szabo, seconded by Cllr Groves and agreed unanimously to purchase proper stations.

**Actions: Cllr Portman and Clerk**

- d. Brickfields Gate access and security. Will be discussed later in the meeting.

**9. Finance**

- a. To consider the internal audit report, which had been circulated to councillors. Noted.
- b. It was resolved that the allowance for the Chair of Lower Halstow Parish Council would be £555.29 for the year 2021/22, as set by Swale Borough Council.
- c. It was resolved that the allowance for the members of Lower Halstow Parish Council would be £277.64 for the year 2021/22, as set by Swale Borough Council. Both items b and c were proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Miller and unanimously agreed.

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

- a. 21/502659/LDCEX Land Development Certificate (Existing) to establish the lawful equestrian use of the land and buildings and the existing buildings on the site. Neptune Orchard, Vicarage Lane, Lower Halstow.  
No comments.
- b. 21/502607/OUT PROPOSAL: Outline application for residential development comprising of nine 2 bedroom bungalows together with provision of a community orchard (revised scheme) Land to the South of Stable Mews School Lane, Lower Halstow.  
No comments.
- c. 21/502910/FULL PROPOSAL: Demolition of shed and erection of single storey side and rear extension. 1 Westmoreland Drive, Lower Halstow.  
No comments.
- d. 21/501772/FULL PROPOSAL: Reinstatement of old mill stream and creation of new community orchard. The Old Mill, The Street, Lower Halstow.  
Cllr Szabo wanted to clarify that when Mr Miller originally applied for the above he was not a councillor. An email was received by Lower Halstow Parish Council asking if he would be allowed to plant an orchard where there are currently brambles to encourage wildlife and wild flowers. Any trees planted on Parish Council land and upkeep would be of no cost to the council. It was pointed out by Cllr Portman that the area is boggy and that any trees planted there may drown. A resident has written to say that they would not be able to get access to prune their hedge with a tractor. The Parish Council asked Cllr Miller if he could he re-arrange the planting so that there will be 3 metres to give a tractor the appropriate access and he agreed. The Clerk will reply to the resident.

**Action: Clerk**

- e. 21/503242/PNQCLA: Little Barksore Farm, Sheerness Road, Lower Halstow.  
No comments.

**11. To discuss any applications received between producing the agenda and this meeting**

- a. 21/503326/FULL: 1 & 2 Home Place, Church Path, Lower Halstow.  
It was agreed to support this application in line with the Village Planning Strategy.

**Action: Clerk**

**12. Policies**

It was resolved to adopt:

- a) Code of Conduct

- b) Health & Safety Policy
  - c) Complaints Procedure
- Proposed by Cllr Szabo, seconded by Cllr Miller. Agreed unanimously.

**Action: Clerk**

- d) The policy for requests to use the wharf and dock remains unchanged.

**13. To receive reports on the following:**

- a. Parks and Leisure:  
Cllr Szabo has contacted a company in Maidstone and he is trying to arrange a site visit to assess and fix the problem with the roundabout. It may need to be fenced off.
- b. Planning:  
Discussed above.
- c. Footpaths, Lighting, Hedgerow Maintenance, Burial Ground and Allotments:  
Cllr Portman has trimmed back some of the road signs and the Burial Ground has been tidied up.
- d. Parish Highways Plan:  
Discussed above.
- e. Docks, Barges and Sea Wall:  
Update on the dock repair. A site visit has been undertaken by one company, the Parish Council is still waiting to hear from a second company. The previous position, the "Gold Standard" which would last centuries is out of the reach of Parish Council funds. The method currently being looked at is to do temporary shuttering, large concrete cast blocks with tie backs and expansion gaps. An engineer is visiting in the coming week to see if that is a viable option.  
Heads of Terms: These have been put to the owners of the Edith May to get a customer's response. Unfortunately, they have not been able to agree with it, but with nothing specific. This has been taken to the Parish Council's solicitor and these will be turned into Terms and Conditions. The Parish Council are endeavouring to make the terms and conditions legal and fair and encouraging the owners of the Edith May to return when the work is completed. It is a work in progress.  
Seawall Repairs: The Parish Council do not have any jurisdiction over the sea wall. It is the responsibility of the Environment Agency. Cllr Miller will raise it again with the Environment Agency.

**Action: Cllr Miller**

The £7500 no strings attached donation for the dock repair from Southern Water: This was a donation to apologise for the inconvenience to the village regarding the problems earlier in the year with the pumping station and the sewer pipe to Motney Hill. Cllr Szabo is still waiting for updates concerning the replacement pipe and damage at the Brickfields. The road outside of the Three Tuns is in a terrible state of repair. Cllr Szabo will keep chasing.

The policy regarding access to the Brickfields will be reviewed at the next meeting.

- f. Car Parks and Brickfields:  
There has been nothing forthcoming since the acceptance of the Parish Council's offer regarding the purchase of the piece of land currently leased by the Parish Council. The Parish Council are still waiting for contracts from the vendor's solicitor.

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

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

**15. To receive the Clerk's report, include:**

Since the last meeting Lower Halstow Parish Council has received payments of £19370 precept and lighting grant from Swale Borough Council; £7500 from Southern Water and the Edith May continues to pay £230.00 per month.

A strimmer has been purchased for use on the allotments and burial ground; dog waste bags, a combination padlock and hazard warning signs were all purchased on the credit card.

A new tap has been fitted at the Memorial Hall site allotments. A kissing gate for the Brickfields entrance was fitted, but found to be unsuitable for large mobility scooters and this has been removed until a better option is found. Title deeds and plans have been ordered from Land Registry. A refund of £14.00 has been received for two deeds that could not be supplied.

The bank balance at 30th June was £113827.35

The accounts were sent to the Councillors by email and the payments have been noted by the Councillors. Cllrs Howard-Challis and Szabo will authorise the payments as per the list (attached below) by internet banking.

**16. Items for information only:**

a) Items for website and Village News:

Lower Halstow Parish Chair, Cllr Keith Howard-Challis presented the Kent Association Local Council Community Award Scheme certificate, to Mr John McGee, in recognition of the outstanding work done on behalf of the Parish Council for the Lower Halstow Gigabit Broadband Project, which was graciously accepted.

b) Agenda items for next meeting:

Correspondence regarding Bottle Digging in the Sea Wall (dated 4<sup>th</sup> July 2021)

The meeting ended at: 20.25 pm.

**Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021

## Payments July 2021

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Mr J Knott	Handyman and Village Cleaning	<b>345.00</b>		BACS
Mrs A I Smith	Salary and Expenses Reconciliation April to June 2021	<b>462.20</b>		362615414
HMRC	PAYE	<b>81.80</b>		965157711
Mr D Edwards	Finishing of Noticeboard Invoice 461	<b>190.00</b>		388571038
DCK Accounting Solutions	Payroll Services	<b>42.00</b>	<b>7.00</b>	632801414
Norris Carpentry Services	Village Noticeboard Invoice: Parish Council	<b>520.75</b>		507683872
Mr L Robbins	Internal Audit Invoice 2021/53	<b>120.00</b>		713970004
Seton	Hazard Warning Signs Invoice: 9303343208	<b>158.00</b>	<b>26.35</b>	421348332
Lower Halstow Poetry Group	Donation to Poetry Festival	<b>750.00</b>		388270774

## Other payments:

09 July 2021 Direct Debit Lloyds Bank  
25 July 2021 Standing Order Clerk's Salary

£126.18  
£644.60

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

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis**  
**Chair**