

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held virtually due to Coronavirus Covid19 restrictions following the Annual Meeting at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 4th May 2021

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

In attendance: Cllr Whiting and 4 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Swale Borough Council: Cllrs Woodford and Clark.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

Cllr Miller declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 11(e) and Cllr Smith declared a pecuniary interest in item 8(b).

3. Public Session

Mr Drury advised that the retirement bungalows scheme has been sold to a local builder. There is a discrepancy in terms of what was approved regarding the red line around the application site and what has been built. At the time of the application the road nor the boundary to the nearby houses (Stable Mews) had been built. An application has been made to recognise the change of boundaries, as suggested by Swale Planners.

A resident from Sheerness Road was asking regarding an update to the 20 mph zone. The Chair said that knowing the resident had an interest that she will be kept informed of any progress.

4. Visitors: Reports from:

a. KCC Highways officer – Sarah-Jayne Ellcock.

Ms Ellcock did not join the meeting.

Cllr Szabo gave an update from Southern Water:

Southern Water are very conscious of the impact on the village including the hole left at the Brickfields. Southern Water are offering a “no strings attached” £7500.00 donation towards the dock repair. Together with the donation there is also a grant scheme that the Parish Council could apply for. There was a majority agreement to accept the donation and to apply for the grant, with two abstentions.

b. KCC Councillor, Mike Whiting:

A positive meeting had been held regarding the 20 mph zone proposal. Cllr Whiting commended Cllr Portman to the Director of Highways for the professional and positive way she dealt with the meeting.

Cllr Whiting said that it had been a privilege to work with a “can do” Parish Council and that the Council is blessed with a good cross section of people in the community that are willing to give up their time and to say thank you, on behalf of the residents, to the Chairman and all the Councillors, for the service given and work that has been done, over the last four years.

c. SBC Councillors.

Swale Borough Councillors submitted their apologies.

d. PCSO

The PCSO submitted the following report:

Crimes of note:

- A male was attacked by other young males when he confronted them about catapults being aimed at livestock. Police attended and a crime report has been submitted. It is currently being investigated.

Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:

- There was one report concerning the tankers in the village, but a patrol did not have to attend as it was soon solved.

e. Friends of the Brickfields

No members from the Friends were present. A report from the Chair had been circulated to the Councillors.

5. To resolve the Minutes

It was resolved that the Minutes of Tuesday 6th April 2021 are a correct record. They will be signed within social distancing rules.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. Matters arising

- a. To consider a return to face to face meetings: The legislation allowing Parish Councils to meet remotely comes to an end on 7th May and the Government is not extending it. Currently the Memorial Hall is only open to the Pre-School and no-one else. The Church is now open which could be a possible venue. It was agreed to make a decision regarding the June meeting nearer the time and after the Memorial Hall Committee have a meeting.
- b. Highways Improvement Plan:
It was decided not to discuss at this point as the Highways Officer had not joined the meeting.
- c. The Dock Repair Brief was approved unanimously.

8. Finance

- a. To approved Section 2 of the Annual Governance Accounting Statement: Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Szabo the accounting statement was approved, unanimously.
- b. A second quote had been sought regarding the kissing gate at the Lapwing Drive entrance to the Brickfields, but it has not been forthcoming. It was agreed to go ahead with the quote received for £1550.00. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Portman. Cllr Howard-Challis and Cllr Smith will investigate installing further kissing gates at Heron Close.

Action: Cllrs Howard-Challis and Smith

- c. The Westfield Car Park charges were reviewed. Currently they are £50 annually and £25.00 for a Visitor Space. It was agreed to leave it at that rate.

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

- a. 21/501670/FULL PROPOSAL: Erection of a single storey front extension to form bay window, replacement of rear ground floor window with French doors and installation of Juliet balcony and doors to first floor rear elevation. 3 Seaview Terrace, Breach Lane, Lower Halstow, Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7DG.
It was agreed to support this application in line with the Village Planning Strategy.
- b. 21/501847/FULL PROPOSAL: Single storey rear extension together with part conversion of the garage to a habitable space. 44 School Lane, Lower Halstow, Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7ET.
It was agreed to support this application in line with the Village Planning Strategy.
- c. It was noted that the response sent to Swale Borough Council for the Local Plan review had been submitted.

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

None received.

11. To receive reports on the following:

a. Parks and Leisure:

The goal post nets are now up. There is also a spare set being stored at the Memorial Hall. Cllr Szabo has tried to do some maintenance on the roundabout. Unfortunately, it is rubbing on the ground and it appears that the bearings are worn out. The company that installed it no longer exist. Cllr Szabo and Cllr Smith will investigate getting a quote to repair it.

Action: Cllrs Szabo and Smith

b. Planning:

Cllr Szabo pointed out that there is a proposed plan for erection of a nurse accommodation building, car park and outdoor event space for Demelza, together

with 30 private residential dwellings, and associated access, parking, highway works, drainage and landscaping at Hill Farm Rock Lane Keycol Hill Bobbing Kent.

c. **Footpaths, Burial Ground, Hedgerow Maintenance and Allotments:**

Cllr Portman has sent a letter to the allotment holders regarding a possible competition with good positive responses. An idea put forward was to do something for our children, being the future generation of gardeners and this will be explored further. A seed swap was also suggested; upcycled cupboards may be suitable located near each site of the allotments. In respect of dog waste bags; Cllr Portman researched eco dog waste holders, but these are very expensive. Dog waste bags have been tied near the bins at Elm Farm, Gibbs Amenity area and the Recreation Ground. The Burial Ground has had a general tidy up and all the supplement hedges have taken and the rear hedge has also been cut. We are awaiting quotes regarding the autumn cut. The fence has a gap in it, which will need to be looked at.

d. **Parish Highways Plan:**

Cllr Smith suggested that the 20 mph zone should start at The Chapel going onto The Street and ending at Neptune Bungalow; Vicarage Lane up to Wardwell and round into School Lane. The 30 mph zone moved from the bend at Westfield Cottages back to the Sun In the Wood, as a buffer zone, so the limits would go from 60 mph, 30 mph to 20 mph. This would be phase 1 and would be marked by posts and road markings. Basser Hill down into the Village would be a different case to slow the traffic and may need speed bumps in the road, although councillors did not think this is good idea. There is a fee to pay to set it up, but there could be some help towards it from KCC. It was proposed by Cllr Howard-challis and seconded by Cllr Portman to go forward with this plan. Agreed unanimously.

e. **Docks, Barges and Sea Wall:**

Cllr Miller thanked the councillors for their approval of the Dock Repair Brief. He proposed that he would approach the same number of tenderers for the previous larger scheme. Cllrs Miller and Szabo have tried to engage with the owners of the Edith May in respect of the Heads of Terms and what they might be. Work will continue on those. Regarding the sea wall; there are a number of bodies who are not acknowledging their responsibilities for maintenance of the sea wall and are saying if the Parish Council wants to do work on it they need a licence from them. Cllr Miller and Mr Van der Straaten have put together a campaign and there will be an awareness video being launched shortly.

Cllr Miller has made an application to KCC for electric charging points; one for the Three Tuns and the other for the B&B, they have both been provisionally approved and awarded a grant of £8000.00. The next stage is make a formal application and a site survey which will tell us the exact cost of the installation. If the cost comes to more than £4000.00 the council will have to decide whether they are happy to fund the rest of the cost and what the split of the revenues are. Some further suggestions for points are outside the shop and one is Westfield Car Park, which Cllr Miller will apply for. The closing date for applications is October and there won't be a final decision until the Winter.

f. **Car Parks and Brickfields:**

There is concern regarding the cutting of the bund, which should have taken place in April due to hemlock growth and control, as nationally scarce red shanked carder bee queens are now emerging.

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

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

13. To receive the Clerk's report

The bank balance as of 30th April 2021 is £109544.19.

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.

14. Items for information only:

The Maritime Volunteer Service training vessel "Londinium 1" will be coming into the dock for routine maintenance and will vacate before the end of May.

The meeting ended at: 20.14pm.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 1st June 2021

Payments May 2021

| Payee | Description | Gross Amount £ | VAT £ | Cheque No/Bank Payment |
|-------------------|--|---------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| KALC | Subscription: Invoice: 8111 | 463.70 | 77.28 | 887860950 |
| DCK Accounting | Payroll Services | 45.60 | 7.60 | 902463306 |
| Mr M Szabo | Reimbursement for Goal Nets | 91.95 | | 599245464 |
| Mr M Szabo | Reimbursement for Zoom meeting Invoice: 83338524 | 14.36 | 2.40 | 592632222 |

Other payments:

2021 Standing Order

Clerk's Salary - £644.60

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**