

Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st October 2019 in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

Present: Cllr K Howard-Challis (Chair); Cllr R Smith (Vice-Chair); Cllr M Szabo; Cllr A Smith; Cllr T Portman; Mrs A Smith ((Clerk); and 5 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Whiting, Clark, Woodford and Beerstecher and the PCSO.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

Cllr A Smith declared a pecuniary interest in item 7b.

3. Public Session

A celebration of VE Day 75 will be held over the bank holiday weekend of 8th May 2020.

There is a provisional programme to include an exhibition, a Nations Toast to the Heroes, ringing of church bells, a dance in the Memorial Hall, a sing-a-long, Last Post at the Memorial Wood and the lighting of the beacon. On the Sunday there will be a VE/VJ day service at the Church. The Parish Council will be kept informed.

The Parish Council agreed to the lighting of the beacon.

The Friends of the Brickfields has organised a work party to cut the reed bed on Saturday 12th October. A memorial service on Monday 11th November will be held at the Memorial Wood.

Two wreaths will be ordered for the services being held.

Weeds are growing in the kerbs all around the village and the grass verges are not being cut on The Street.

4. Visitors reports or comments

a) KCC Councillor Mike Whiting sent the following report:

Apologies but I am at the Conservative Party Conference in Manchester and won't be at your meeting tonight.

As Brexit is the main issue here in Manchester, there's one big concern in Lower Halstow for those who are contacting me, the A2 gas main repairs.

I have, on residents' behalf, been able to get a number of assurances from SGN and Kent Highways:

There is a ban on HGVs (vehicles weighing more than 7.5 tons) from using the A2 or any of the village lanes as through routes during the 42 weeks of the works. They can use the lanes or the A2 to access properties in those areas, however, it is illegal for them to use them as cut throughs.

KCC has also, at my request, made the whole of the A2 a 30mph section from the Medway Border to Key Street, again for the duration of the works. Signage is being addressed.

While KCC can make something illegal, it has no powers of enforcement. These lie directly with the police and the police only can direct traffic and prosecute.

I have met with the Police and Crime Commissioner Mather Scott, to reiterate this point with him and ask him for his help in ensuring the police do work with SGN and KCC Highways to make this work for everyone for the next 42 weeks. He has committed to help. If you think an HGV is breaking the law or causing an obstruction then call the police on 101.

After representations, SGN and KCC have agreed to a one way system at the top of Oak Lane Upchurch during the next four weeks while work takes place there. We've already had some non-compliance and this has been reported to the police, SGN and KCC. My view is we need some quick prosecutions to lay down a marker for others.

Some farmers and businesses have raise concerns with me and I have been able to get answers for them from SGN, which have been helpful at what is a busy fruit harvest time for many of the farmers locally.

As ever, if you have any questions or observations then please email me

at mike.whiting@kent.gov.uk or call 842631. While I post updates on Facebook and to

your clerk, I do not usually monitor comments on Facebook, so if you or parishioners need a reply, or want to raise any other matter, then please email or call me.

- b) SBC Councillors
No report.

- c) PCSO sent the following report:
House burgled in Burntwick Drive – crime report taken
Nuisance youths reported around the school in the evening – damage to one of the school's sheds and equipment was later found. A crime report was taken for this. The next day a call came in reporting nuisance youths in Burntwick Drive damaging cars. Crime reports taken. A pair of glasses were stolen from the church when they were put down – some cyclists were seen in the church at the time and one disappeared quickly. Crime report taken. Report of an orange van moving slowly through the village, the driver acting suspiciously – patrol attended, but no van was found.

- d) Friends of the Brickfields
As discussed above in Public session.

5. To agree Minutes of the Meetings held

It was resolved to agree the Minutes for the meeting held on 3rd September 2019 and they were duly signed.

6. Correspondence

No correspondence received at the time of producing the agenda.

7. Finance

a) To consider the external auditors report for the year ending March 2018/19

The report was duly considered the Parish Councillors.

b) Quotes for Westfield Car Park Extension

Cllr R Smith suggested that the quotes are agreed on a provisional basis, until planning permission is granted.

It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis, seconded by Cllr Szabo to accept the quote from ATS of £10850.00 subject to planning permission being granted. Agreed, one abstention. Cllr R Smith proposed to accept the quote from Adam Woodbridge for £450.00 regarding plans to submit for planning permission. Seconded by Cllr A Smith. Agreed unanimously.

c) Quotes for Conveyancing Solicitor regarding purchase of land at Brickfield site.

It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Cllr Portman to accept the conveyancing quote from Bridgers Solicitors for £500.00. Agreed unanimously.

d) To agree donation for Over 60's Christmas Party

It was proposed by Cllr R Smith, seconded by Cllr A Smith to donate £50.00 to the Over 60's Christmas party. Agreed unanimously.

e) To agree donation for Village News

It was agreed to defer the decision.

f) To agree extra hours for Clerk

It was agreed to pay the Clerk for an extra 5 hours per week, on a temporary basis.

Proposed by Cllr R Smith, seconded by Cllr Portman. Unanimous.

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

- a) Ref: 18/504110/Full.** Notification of Appeal lodged with the Planning Inspectorate
Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and structures and erection of 35 dwellings together with associated infrastructure, open space, landscaping and access works.
Location: Funton Brickworks, Sheerness Rd, Lower Halstow.

It was agreed to continue to object for the same reasons as before. Proposed by Cllr R Smith, seconded by Cllr Portman. Unanimous.

Action: Clerk

- b) Ref: 19/504375/FULL.** Bell Grove Stud Farm, Halstow Lane, Upchurch. Erection of building to house laboratory, equine stock and welfare unit and the erection of 3 birthing stables.

It was agreed to object on the grounds of increased traffic in a narrow country lane where the access and egress from the site is particularly difficult and that the separation between Upchurch and Lower Halstow is being eroded to the detriment of the countryside. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis, seconded by Cllr R Smith. Unanimous.

Action: Clerk

- c) **Ref: 19/503974/HYBRID** Land East of Iwade, Iwade, Kent. ME9 8ST. Hybrid application comprising of – Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) for up to 466 dwellings and a community hall. Full planning application for access from Grovehurst Road and The Street and for a country park.

It was agreed to object on the grounds of increased traffic through the local roads, particularly when there are incidents on the A249 and A2. It will add to the existing problems and the current infrastructure will not support this development. Proposed by Cll Howard-Challis, seconded by Cllr R Smith. Unanimous.

Action: Clerk

9. To allocate responsibilities to Councillors:

It was agreed to defer this item.

10. To discuss and agree action on the following:

a) **BRICKFIELDS & PLANNING**

Nothing to report. The next meeting is 3rd October 2019.

b) **PARKS & LEISURE**

Cllr Szabo will generate of list of work to do on the Recreation Ground and play area.

c) **DOCKS & BARGES and CAR PARKS**

The Parish Council have received a grant from Queenborough Fishery Trust for £4500.00 towards the dock repairs.

d) **FOOTPATHS HIGHWAYS LIGHTING and HEDGEROW MAINTENANCE**

The hedgerow in Breach Lane has been cut. The owners of Green Farm House have been asked to cut their hedge and this will be followed up. The hedgerow in Vicarage Lane is also a bit overgrown, the resident will be approached and asked to arrange for it to be trimmed.

Cllr Portman

Cllr A Smith asked if yellow lines could be put on the bend at Westfield Cottages. There is also a dropped manhole at the top of Chapel Hill.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Portman has arranged a litter pick for 20th October 2019 at 10.00 am, meeting at the Three Tuns, targeting the areas from the Three Tuns to Vicarage Lane and Breach Lane to Westfield Cottages. Cones and signs will be supplied. Cllr Mike Whiting will be informed.

There will be a one-way system in place through Upchurch connected with the roadworks taking place on the A2 for the gas mains replacement.

e) **FLOOD PLAN, EMERGENCY PLAN, TOTAL QUALITY ITEMS (POLICY, SAFETY, AUDITS).**

The contacts on the Emergency Plan need to be updated.

Action: Clerk

f) **VILLAGE INVENTORY, PARKING and HANDYMAN LIAISON**

There has been an enquiry regarding tidying up the unkempt graves.

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

a) **KALC Rep**

The quarterly meeting was held on 9th September 2019. Professor Stephen Peckham spoke at the meeting regarding air quality pollution. Air monitoring is haphazard, not definitive and not government funded. Emma Mainwaring spoke on Community led housing, similar to that at Egret Court. There was also an update from Kent Police. The AGM is being held on 30th November 2019.

b) **Memorial Hall Rep**

No report.

12. Clerks Report:

The Clerk attended the Clerk's conference earlier this month where it was brought to our attention that the EIS website, which a lot of Parish Council's in Kent use, including Lower Halstow is not compliant with accessibility legislation. Parish councils have until September 2020 to comply. KALC are recommending that £600 to £1000 is put into budgets for next year to plan for new websites. Currently the EIS format is free, through Kent County Council, but it appears that this will be withdrawn.

The Clerk has sent out the invoices for the allotments and some payments have been received.

The Clerk is still currently working towards transferring Lower Halstow Parish Council funds from Barclays Bank to Unity Trust Bank. All payments received are paid into Unity Trust Bank.

Barclays Bank balance is £64309.33

Unity Trust Bank balance is £1075.33

13. Items for information only:

The car park at Westfield Cottages will be closed all day on Tuesday 8th October in order that the inside of the hedge may be cut.

14. To receive items for Village News and the Website:

The Christmas Tree Lighting event to be put in Village News for the first Saturday in December.

Date of next meeting: 5th November 2019

The meeting closed at: 8.02 pm.

Cheques –October2019

Payee	Description	Amount £	Cheque No.
Mrs A I Smith	Claim for Salary and Expenses July – Sept 2019	£261.06	100462
Mr A Smith	Councillor Allowance	£208.88	100463
HMRC	PAYE Tax	52.00	100464
DCK Accounting Solutions	Payroll Services Invoice: P1537	49.80	100465
PKF Littlejohn LLP	Annual Governance & Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2019 Invoice: SB20193686	240.00	100466
Came & Company	3 Year Agreement Local Council Insurance	1105.09	100467
Lander Planning Ltd	Payment on account for submission of planning application Invoice: 201911	1806.84	100468
Port of Sheerness Ltd	River Licence Invoice: MRI023438	1.20	100469
Mr J Knott	Checking Play Area - £75.00 Village Cleaning – £150.00 Handyman - £165	390.00	100470
Lower Halstow Parish Council	Transfer of funds to Unity Trust Bank	55000.00	100471

Other Payments:
Standing Order

Clerk's Salary

£300.00

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**