

Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 7 January 2014 at 7.00pm in Lower Halstow Memorial Hall.

Present: Cllr Mick Drury, (Chair); Cllr John Knight (Vice Chair); Cllr Chris Mayes; Cllr Steve Gates; Cllr Steve Parker; Cllr Robert Smith; Cllr Barry Tucker and Parish Clerk Mrs C Fordham.

Borough Councillor Ben Stokes and 29 members of the public.

Before the meeting began all Councillors were granted dispensation to discuss the precept and budget. **Action**

1. **Apologies** Cllr Lee Burgess.
2. **Open Time**

The Chair advised that only residents of the parish would be allowed to speak. He gave an outline of the parameters he wished to apply to the open time. 7 residents indicated that they wished to speak in open time.

One resident was concerned that parishioners had not been kept fully informed of what was happening about the Westmoreland and that a decision should not be made until this had been rectified.

A question was also asked about whether a certificate of lawful development had been granted for the car parking facility on the brickfields. The Chair advised that he did not believe so. The resident believed that the enforcement officer had advised that the car park should not be used until planning permission had been granted.

Another resident reported that she had received a letter from the Parish Council advising that if the car park was used it was at the drivers own risk. A former Parish Councillor advised that the car park had originally been instigated at the residents' request and he felt it was important that the information about the site was consistent, as different stories seemed to be circulating. The Council advised that they were seeking regularisation for the car park and would be seeking a certificate of lawful development, provided they could provide evidence of use for more than 10 years. A member of the friends of Lower Halstow Park advised that she was seeking funding for CCTV to monitor the new play area and this would include the installation of Broadband which could also be used in the village hall.

A concern was expressed that the new village entry gates should not restrict access for farming vehicles.

A resident asked specific questions in relation to the lease of the land at the entry to the Brickfield site and was asked to put the questions in writing to allow for a more considered answer.

Concern was expressed that the brick wall on the landward side of the seawall on the bridge which crossed the stream was cracking.

A suggestion was made that the Edith May could lay alongside the Westmoreland, if permission is given for the new barge to come into the dock, to allow room for other users to moor. Clarity was also sought on who would determine "fit for purpose" in relation to potential dock improvements which were proposed to form part of the agreement with the Westmoreland Trust.

An enquiry was made as to whether someone would be appointed as a harbour master as indicated in the Newsletter. The Chair advised that this had not been finalised and would be a voluntary position to aid the operations in the dock.

Recent flooding had emphasised the importance of the maintenance of drainage ditches and a resident asked if the Council would be ensuring this was done.

Open time closed at 7.35pm

Cllr Stokes advised that he would be arranging a site meeting with KCC Highways to discuss the options for repair at the bend on Breach Lane, just to the north of Home Farm.

All Cllrs

3. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Smith declared a non pecuniary interest in item 9b) and the Chair declared a pecuniary interest in Item 6.

4. Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Mayes that the minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on 3 December be accepted as a true record; all were in favour and the minutes were duly signed.

It was proposed by Cllr Parker, seconded by Cllr Smith that the minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council on held on 17 December 2013 be accepted as a true record; all were in favour and the minutes were duly signed.

5. Matters Arising from previous meetings None.

6. Decisions/Actions/Proposals

a) Proposal from Cllr Knight that an agreement is granted for the Westmoreland Barge to use the dock/wharf for restoration and operation with a Heritage Lottery Fund grant

The Chair left the meeting and Cllr Knight, Vice Chair, chaired this item.

The Vice Chair advised that Peel Ports and The Environment agency had both advised that they would have no objection to the Westmoreland Trust using the dock for restoration work; Peel Ports would expect a licensed tow to move the dry dock and a Red licence from the Environment agency when on site for restoration. It would be the responsibility of the Trust to obtain these permits. The Vice Chair advised that the only covenant on Council owned land was that it should be for amenity use and heritage projects were considered as amenity use.

The Vice Chair read out the revised proposal (see annex A), indicating where changes had been made. It was proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Mayes that these revisions be accepted; all were in favour.

On discussion it was proposed by Cllr Gates, seconded by Cllr Smith that “and agreed by Lower Halstow Parish Council” be added at subsection 2 and “and legal restrictions” be added at subsection 3; these amendments were proposed to address questions about the final spec for the dock improvements and the need for the Westmoreland Trust to meet any covenants on the land. All were in favour.

It was proposed by Cllr Knight, seconded by Cllr Mayes that the revised agreement be approved by the Council all were in favour. A final document would be prepared for signature at the February meeting.

Clerk

b) Proposal from Cllr Knight to apply to Swale Borough Council Planning Department for a lawful certificate of Development of the Car Park in the Brickfields Amenity Area

Cllr Knight advised that a pre-planning application was not required if the Council were going to apply for lawful Certificate of Development; the application would cost £97.50. Evidence would be required to show the site had been used as such for more than 10 years. A note would be included in the Newsletter asking for photographic or written evidence of such use. Council documents would also be searched. The Clerk was asked to find out the owner of the land currently being leased by the Council.

Cllr Knight

Clerk

Cllr Drury (Chair) returned to the room 8.15pm.and chaired the rest of the meeting at

c) Decide which potential sites to put forward to English Rural Housing for the possible development of affordable housing

The adviser from English Rural Housing would attend the February meeting; in the interim the Chair would send details of the possible sites. There would be a village consultation about the suitable sites.

Chair

d) Consider whether to pay half the line rental with the hall for the installation and running of CCTV for the play area.

It was reported that the broad band costs would be in the region of £34 per month; County and Borough Councillors had agreed to cover the cost of fitting and the first six months line rental. It was proposed by Cllr Tucker, seconded by Cllr Mayes that subject to budgetary provision the Council would pay half the monthly rental costs for the broadband; all were in favour. The Clerk would research a suitable CCTV policy and Data Protection Policy for consideration by the Council, as these were required to operate a CCTV system in a public area.

Clerk

e) Letters regarding closure of the Brickfields car park

This item had been covered at 6b)

f) Correspondence

- i. Mrs E Moulard email of 9.12.13 – concerns about possible discontinuance of use of car park on Brickfields (Item 6b)
- ii. Mrs P Stevens emails of 9 and 10.12.13 – concerns about car park on the brickfields. The Vice Chair had visited Mrs Stevens to clarify the situation.
- iii. Medway Council of December 2013 – notification of withdrawal of Medway Council Core Strategy draft.
- iv. Kent Science Park News
- v. Action with Rural Communities Annual report
- vi. Oast to Coast
- vii. KALC Swale Area Committee minutes of 2.12.13
- viii. Lord Lieutenant of Kent of 19.12.13 – invitation to Annual Civic Service
- ix. Mr Robinson email of 31.12.13 – concerns about seawall adjacent to the Edith May. The Chair had a photograph on the crack in the wall on the bridge. The Clerk was asked to contact the Environment Agency and Public Rights of Way officer to report the matter.
- x. Ms J Reading email of 3.1.14 – request to include a memorial plaque on the Brickfields. The Chair proposed that the Council allow a plaque to be placed under a memorial tree, this was seconded by Cllr Mayes; there was one abstention and all other Councillors were in favour.
Cllr Tucker suggested that the Council might like to consider a Memorial Woodland on the Brickfields on the site of the former beanfield, to commemorate the century of WWI. It was agreed that an item would be included in the village Newsletter to gauge opinion on the proposal.
- xi. Cllr Drury of 5.1.14 – report of conversation with a resident expressing concerns about the development at the dock. The resident had spoken at the meeting.

Clerk

Clerk

Clerk

7. Planning Applications

- a) SBC Planning SW/13/1224 Case 13018 of 3.12.13 – permission and listed building consent for alterations at Stray Cottage.
- b) Attention was drawn to planning application SW/13/1563 Case 14838 for a development adjacent to the Parish Boundary to allow unrestricted use of a

All Cllrs

caravan/mobile home at Bell Grove Stud Farm. Cllrs would review the application.

8. **Finance**

a) **Cheques**

Balances; Current Account £4,948.86, Barclays Current Account £5297.32
Investment Account £5242.78 Total £15488.96

Payee	Expenditure	Amount £	Cheque No.
Park Leisure	Second and outstanding payment on Invoice No for play equipment	Total 6231.68	100071
Came and Company	Additional premium to cover new playground equipment	Total 162.86	100072
Mrs C Fahy	Salary for December 2013	Total 309.08	STO
Mrs Y Setters	Street Cleaning for December 2013	Total 130.00	STO

Under the Local Government Act 1972 (Sch 2) the signing of the cheques was proposed by Cllr Knight, seconded by Cllr Mayes; all councilors were in favour.

b) **Bank reconciliation and budget** Councillors had received an update on the budget.

c) **To agree precept request to go forward to Swale Borough Council**

On discussion it was proposed by Cllr Tucker, seconded by Cllr Mayes, that the precept for 2014/15 should be set at £21250, all were in favour. An increase was necessary to cover general increase in costs as well increased responsibilities with the provision of the play equipment, and the changes in the Clerk's salary. It was noted that there would also be an increase in the amount payable by parishioners due to the withdrawal of the Local Council Tax support grant by Swale Borough Council. The Clerk was asked to include an item in the Newsletter about the increase in the precept.

Clerk

9. **Reports from Members on the following**

a) **Brickfields – lease and deeds** See item 6 b).

b) **Footpaths, highways and lighting**

i. **Heron Close** The offer from residents at the end of Heron close to arrange for the trimming back of an overhanging tree, at their expense, was gratefully accepted by the Council.

*Cllr
Smith*

ii. **Plum Tree opposite 13 Heron Close** A quote would be obtained to trim back the overhanging tree.

iii. **Lighting** The Clerk was asked to ascertain the current position of the possibility of starting a new maintenance contract. The light outside 4 Cumberland Drive needed repairing. The electricity supply contract was also due for review.

Clerk

c) **Burial Ground and allotments** The hedge at the burial ground needed to be tidying.

d) **KALC** It was agreed that Cllr Mayes would attend the emergency planning training.

*Cllr
Mayes*

e) **School Governor** Concern was expressed about the expansion plans at the school as this would create increased traffic as it was expected that the additional pupils would be coming from outside of the village. The Clerk was asked to contact the Chair of the Governors and KCC about lack of consultation on the proposal

Clerk

f) **Newsletter/website** The new clerk's details would be included in the Newsletter and on the website, as well as the suggestion for a memorial woodland and the decision on the Westmoreland Trust agreement. A new

Clerk

photograph was required for the website. Thanks were recorded to Councillors for erecting the Christmas Tree.

- g) **Play Area** There would be an official opening ceremony on 19 January. Friends of the Park would produce some posters to advertise the event. The wet weather had meant the ground had been churned up; this would need monitoring.

All Cllrs

- h) **Christmas Tree** An offer of a free tree had been received. This would be transplanted onto the Green.

*Cllr
Knight*

10. **Any Other Business**

The Clerk was asked to contact the PCSO about attending the meetings.

Clerk

A stable had been blown onto the beanfield area. The Chair would contact the owner about removing it.

A tree had fallen in the main ride on the brickfields; this would be investigated.

11. **Next Meeting** The next meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 4 February at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

The meeting closed at 9.30pm.

Date:

Signed:

Cllr M Drury
Chair