

Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 2 October 2018 in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

Present: Cllr Smith (Chair); Cllr Howard-Challis (Vice-Chair); Cllr Beerstecher; Cllr Gates; Cllr Parker; Cllr Dadson Cllr Stiles Mrs A Smith (Clerk) and 20 members of the public.

1. Apologies

The Chairman welcomed everyone and introduced and welcomed the new councillor Eddie Stiles. Apologies were received from Cllr Whiting.

2. Declarations of Interest

a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

b) Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interests

None

3. Public Session

A resident from Burntwick Drive commented on the notice to quit to her neighbouring allotment holder at Westfield Cottages and that residents there were concerned that they would be looking out onto a car park. Cllr Smith replied that the council are intending to expand the car park. Planning permission still has to be sought.

A resident from Burntwick Drive raised the subject of parking on the grass verge in The Street. Cllr Gates informed the resident that the land belongs to KCC, not the Parish Council, who have no enforcement powers.

A resident from Cumberland Drive informed the council that the board had been removed from the trampoline which had been placed there to take it out of action, as the trampoline has been damaged. His employer, a large company like to get involved with community projects and could be approached in regard to finance for something like the play area. Also, a Horse Chestnut tree on Parish Council land is blocking light to his property. He requested that he be allowed to remove the tree at his own expense. The Chairman replied that a healthy tree would not be cut down, it would only be considered if it was unsafe. The annual tree survey is carried out for the Parish Council by an independent company.

A resident from The Street informed the council that the concrete blocks in School Lane have been removed and a post and rail fence will be put up to prevent unauthorised access. Also, in respect of the dredging of the stream a proper ecological survey should be undertaken and become part of any work plan in the dredging process. The sluice has caused the silting and he offered his services to the Parish Council with information in this respect. This will be passed on to the flood wardens who are working on this, with the different authorities.

4. Visitors reports or comments

a) SBC Councillors. No report.

b) KCC Councillor.

Please find below a summary of my work on behalf of the residents since my last report. Surgery. Though outside the Parish, I was delighted to attend the official opening of the new surgery in. Newington. Dr Adigwe has created an asset of real value to the residents, and he tells me he has 500 people registered. Comments from members of the public to me have been very supportive and encouraging. This was clearly something a lot of people in both Newington and Lower Halstow have wanted for a very long time, and I am pleased to have been able to assist Dr Adigwe in making it a reality.

School transport

I have successfully assisted a couple of families in their home to school transport appeals. A number of families have been unhappy they have not been given the free transport they were expecting. I have checked and there has been no change in the policy for the past seven years, and where claims are valid then I have been able to help.

Big Conversation

KCC is working up a number of pilot schemes as a result of the Big Conversation on supported transport for isolated areas. These will be announced at a bus summit at County Hall on 30 October. There are limited spaces and these will be by invite only.

Anyone wishing to attend can express an interest via email to bigconversation@kent.gov.uk. KALC will be represented.

Grants

I am pleased to have been able to offer some of my Member Grant a number of projects in Swale West. If any other local groups need financial assistance, then they can contact me and I will help where I can.

Potholes

Hopefully Members will have noticed a considerable amount of patching along the A2 and other roads, which has improved matters considerably. The 2018 Pothole Blitz is coming to an end and tenders for the coming winter's blitz are being prepared. That's not to say potholes won't get fixed in the meantime and residents should continue to report them, and any other fault with the highway or footways, via the KCC website - "report a fault". 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. No report.

d) Friends of the Brickfields.

The Tommies have now been placed at the Memorial Wood site, at the approaching end of the line of trees ready for the Remembrance Day service. The area has been generally tidied up.

The firebreak levelling is a substantial piece of work which will involve heavy machinery. Several quotes are being sought.

5. To agree Minutes of the September meeting.

The Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on 4th September 2018 were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Beerstecher. Agreed with 4 votes and 3 abstentions. The minutes were duly signed.

6. To discuss and agree action on the following:

a) Formation of a Planning sub-committee

After some discussion it was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting, so councillors can give it thought.

Action: All Cllrs

b) Devolved Parish agreement with KCC for verge cutting.

There has been some dissatisfaction with the service received and that the daffodils complicated the issue, but it was felt that once this has been devolved there is no going back. There would be a significant cost implication to devolvment because Parish Council contractors would not be able to compete with KCC. It was proposed by Cllr Gates that Lower Halstow do not devolve verge cutting. It was seconded by Cllr Beerstecher. Agreed unanimously.

c) Preparations for turning on the Christmas Lights.

It was proposed that the event will take place on Saturday 1st December 2018 at 18.00. Mulled wine and mince pies to be served with Christmas Carols. Father Christmas cannot attend the event, this year. The Christmas Truck will be in attendance as last year.

Action: Cllr Gates and Howard-Challis

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

a) Textile Bank – email 6/9/18.

It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Beerstecher not to allow textile banks to be placed on Parish Council land. Agreed unanimously.

b) Consultation from Swale Borough Council – Swale Cycling and Walking and Policy. Framework 2018-2022 – email 28/8/18. It was proposed by Cllr Gates and seconded by Cllr Beerstecher that the Parish Council will reply that they are in favour of off-road, direct, dedicated cycle paths to railway stations.

Action: Clerk

- c) Parish Map – email 6/9/18.
It was proposed by Cllr Gates not to proceed with this particular map and to request the replacement of the Parish Boundary Map by the Public Rights of Way Officer at KCC. Seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis.

Action: Clerk

8. Finance

- a) To replace the entire street lights to LED type SL8 all at once and that we would include an item on our financial budget, increasing the precept to cover.
It was proposed by Cllr Gates to replace all of the street lights at a cost of £11724.37 plus VAT and seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis. Carried unanimously.
- b) To replace Street Light at Westfield Cottages immediately as it is failing.
To be replaced as per item 8a.

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

- a) 18/504461/FULL 1 School Lane, Lower Halstow, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 7ET.
Comments due by 3rd October.
No comments.
- b) 18/504110/FULL. Demolition of existing buildings and structures and erection and erection of 35 dwellings together with associated infrastructure, open space, landscaping and access works. Funton Brickworks Sheerness Road, Lower Halstow, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 7EG.
It was proposed by Cllr Gates and seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis to object for the following reasons:
- The site lies in an area of high landscape value which would be lost if there was any development in this area.
 - Increase in traffic.
 - The estate would have no connection with the village of Lower Halstow but would have a major negative impact on the village, increased noise and traffic.
 - The appeal decision dated 17 February 2017 drew attention to some of the negative impacts of such a development, in particular sections 25 and 61.
- Carried unanimously.

10. To discuss and agree action on the following:

- a) **BRICKFIELDS & PLANNING**
No report.
- b) **PARKS & LEISURE & PLANNING**
Previous avenues of repair for the trampoline have not been successful. The board covering it has been removed by unauthorised persons on several occasions. Councillors have put the board back again to take it out of action. Quotes will be sought for repairs.

Action: Clerk

- c) **DOCKS & BARGES and CAR PARKS**
Information regarding the gauge of steel used on a previous dock repair will be looked for in the clerk's records.

Action: Clerk

Cllr Gates queried whether the Parish Council has agreed to go ahead with an extension to the car park at Westfield Cottages. The Clerk will check the Minutes.

Action: Clerk

- d) **FOOTPATHS HIGHWAYS LIGHTING and HEDGEROW MAINTENANCE.**
The burial ground fence has rotted away from the gate back towards Church House. It was proposed to get quotes to replace it by Cllr Gates and seconded by Cllr Stiles. Agreed unanimously.

Action: Cllr Smith

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

The Emergency Plan will be reviewed in mid-November.

Action: Cllr Gates

f) **VILLAGE INVENTORY and HANDYMAN LIAISON**

No report.

g) **GENERAL/MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS.**

The steering group for the WW1 Battle's Over has been extremely busy. The programme of events for the weekend were advised by Cllr Gates to the meeting. Parish Council has received £600 for the events from Cllr Dewar-Whalley's Swale Borough Council's members allowance. The basket for the beacon has been manufactured and is ready for collection, the pole is also on its way. A risk assessment has been done and it is covered by the insurance policy.

Cllr Smith and Cllr Parker will arrange a date to meet with Mr Gransden in respect of the renewal of the Edith May Licence.

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

a) **KALC Rep**

The next meeting is being held in December.

b) **Memorial Hall Rep**

No report.

12. Clerks Report:

The Clerk has distributed the invoices in respect of the allotments rents, which were due on 1st October and has received £250.00 so far in rents. The Clerk has also received £400 in respect of a burial to take place at the end of October. These will be paid in tomorrow.

The clerk has reported to KCC via their online tool about overgrown hedges between Vicarage Lane and Neptune Bungalow and added the Parish Council details to a previous report of maintenance required to Church Path. The bank balance is £63181.13.

It was proposed by Cllr Beerstecher and seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis that the invoices are authorised for payment (Cheque List below). Agreed 4 votes for, 1 against and 1 abstention.

13. Items for information only:

Cllr Stiles volunteered to present the poppy wreath at the Remembrance service at the Church.

Items for Village News:

Christmas Tree Lighting event

To receive agenda items

Task List

Dock fees

Speeding through the Village

Formation of Planning Committee/Finance Working Group

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th November 2018

The meeting closed at 21.25 hrs.

Cheques September 2018

100	Description	Amount £	Cheque No.
Mr J Knott	Village Cleaning and Playground check July – Sept 2018	320.00	100390
PKF Littlejohn LLP	Limited Assurance Review of Annual Governance & Accountability Return for year ended 31 March 2018 Invoice: SB201801147	240.00	100391
DCK Accounting Solutions	Payroll Services Invoice: P1079	48.00	100392
Came & Company	Local Council Scheme Insurance Payment Reference:1605607	1067.90	100393
Lower Halstow Over 60's	Donation to Christmas Party	100.00	100394
Mr R Dadson	Councillor Allowances	204.76	100395
Mr E Stiles	Councillor Allowances	119.39	100396
Mrs A I Smith	Salary and Expenses July – Sept 2018	497.36	100397
HMRC	PAYE Tax	100.40	100398
Mrs S Hartfree	Councillor Allowance	255.76	100399
Ockenden Engineering Ltd	Bespoke Beacon Basket Invoice: 1788	1440.00	100400

Date:

Signed:

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