

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 5th July 2022

Present: Cllrs: K Howard-Challis (Chair); M Szabo (Vice-chair); T Portman; A Smith and Mrs A I Smith (Clerk.)

In attendance: 10 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Groves, Baldock and Woodford

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Public Session

A resident of Crouch Hill Court wanted to bring some points to the attention of the Parish Council regarding the planning application for the installation and operation of a renewable energy generating station. It is being proposed that the industrial development is planned for the Iwade and Lower Halstow ridge which is an area of high landscape value, it will almost certainly join Lower Halstow to Iwade, and is grade 2 arable land. It is a good excuse to build on that land.

A resident of Sheerness Road was uneasy about the extraordinary meeting held on 20th June, as was not aware of it and does not make a point of looking at the website for that information. It was noted that two members of the public did attend. A suggestion was that the Parish Council use the Village Facebook site to advertise meetings, although not everyone uses this, it does however, have 1600 members and it would be a useful tool as well as the Parish Council website.

It was queried that one of the suppliers for the Jubilee event was still awaiting payment. The clerk said that the payment was in for authorisation at this meeting.

A resident of Cumberland Drive strongly objected to the proposed application for the solar farm taking agriculture land when there are umpteen units on industrial sites in Sittingbourne plus all the new houses that are being built with solar panels on them, when there is no more room to put solar panels on top of buildings, only then should it be considered to put them on agricultural land.

4. Visitors:

a. **KCC**

No report.

b. **SBC**

Cllr Woodford supplied the following report which was read out to the meeting:

- I have requested the replacement of the bin on Vicarage Lane and to fund this from my members grant when this is released (this should be anytime now so hopefully the replacement can be organised over the summer).
- The Solar Farm at Raspberry Hill application. I have seen this is on your agenda, having read carefully the pre application advice from SBC officers it clearly states that development in the area of high landscape value would not be viewed as acceptable and although some solar panels on the land identified could potentially be supported the officers view was that the current plan and allocation's harm outweighed the benefits. I am going to seek further information from the officer assigned as to their current views on the application but would encourage the Parish Council and residents to look at the pre application document on the portal to help frame any objections if they wished to object.
- You may have been asked to feedback into this already but the following has been shared with us;
- Kent Police are currently undertaking a force wide review of neighbourhood policing. As part of the review, Kent Police are consulting with key partners and Community Leaders on what is important to them in any future neighbourhood policing model. Swale Borough Council, through the Community Safety Unit, are collating a response to this. Please can you send any comments on the below questions by Friday 15th July to stephaniecurtis@swale.gov.uk

1. What are the most important factors for you in any future neighbourhood policing model?
2. As part of a new model, how do you feel Kent Police should best engage with you and/or the public? E.g. dedicated local officer for each ward; single point of contact for the Borough
3. Which of the below do you think should be the main priority for the neighbourhood policing model?
 - a) Working with partners to tackle local crime and anti-social behaviour
 - b) Targeted activity against offenders
 - c) Engaging with the public to better understand their local concerns
 - d) Feeding back to the public regarding action taken
 - e) Other
4. Are there any other areas of improvement you would like to identify?

a) **PCSO**

There have been a lot of reports of bikes on the brickfields so the Rural Tasks Force has been asked to do some work around this. A couple of the bikes did have plates on which is rare, but these have been identified and they have been issued with warning letters with the promise that they will be prosecuted should they be seen on the brickfields again.

There have been reports of males driving along and shooting at wildlife (presumably with air rifles) along Breach Lane and Sheerness Road. Please be vigilant and if seen, and if possible, please try to get the registrations and let the PCSO know.

b) Friends of the Brickfields.

No report.

5. **To resolve the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3rd May**

- a) It was resolved that the Minutes of the 7th June 2022 Parish Council meeting are a correct record and were signed accordingly.
- b) It was resolved that the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of 25th June 2022 are a correct record and were signed accordingly.

6. **Correspondence**

- a) Request for hedge to be cut between Egret Court and Westfield Cottages
The hedge has been cut.
- b) Email regarding Raspberry Hill Solar Farm – meeting with developers.
To be discussed at 9b.

7. **Matters arising**

- a) Extra Storage for Village Events
Cllr Howard-Challis is making enquiries regarding some garages in the village.
- b) Bench for Gibbs Amenity Area
As the land does not belong to the Parish Council and the covenant may be open to interpretation it was agreed that the Clerk will ask the solicitor if a bench would be within those terms.

Action: Clerk

- c) CCTV for Brickfields. There was discussion around possible solar powered CCTV and linking it to Swale Borough Council for round the clock monitoring. It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis that the Parish Council fit CCTV at the Brickfields, seconded by Cllr Szabo. It was agreed unanimously, with a cost of up to £1500.00.

Action: Cllr Howard-Challis

- d) To move concrete block currently used as seating at the Brickfields, to draw dock. It was discussed that the block is part of building foundations and it may not be possible to move. Cllr Portman will investigate further.

Action: Cllr Portman

8. Policies

- a) Review Village Planning Strategy regarding Greener Technologies. Lower Halstow Parish Council would like to encourage developers to use greener technologies when applying for planning permission for new builds, as this is better than retrofit. It appears that the higher levels of government are not doing this currently and it would not be enforceable. Cllr Szabo will research into this further.

Action: Cllr Szabo

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

- a) 22/502725/FULL PROPOSAL: Demolition of front porch and existing garage. Erection of a part single, part 2 storey side extension including changes to fenestration and insertion of 2no. roof lights (Revised scheme -21/500890/FULL). ADDRESS: 1 Crouch Hill Court Lower Halstow Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7EJ DECISION DUE DATE: 4 August 2022 CASE OFFICER: Emily Clark 01795 417469

Lower Halstow Parish Council agreed to support this application in line with the Village Planning Strategy.

Action: Clerk

- b) 22/502778/EIFUL PROPOSAL: Installation and operation of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with substation, switchgear container, inverter/transformer units, Site access, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements. ADDRESS: Land West of Iwade Kent ME9 8QG APPLICATION TYPE: Large Major Other COMMENTS DUE BY: 16 July 2022 DECISION DUE DATE: 3 October 2022 CASE OFFICER: Thomas Webster 01795 417017

The Parish Council will arrange a meeting and presentation with the developers to include members of the public as soon as is practically possible.

Action: Clerk

- c) 22/502518/OUT PROPOSAL: Outline application for the erection of 2no. detached dwellings and creation of new access from highway (All Matters Reserved). ADDRESS: Meophams Sheerness Road Lower Halstow Kent ME9 7EB COMMENTS DUE BY: 8 July 2022, DECISION DUE DATE: 10 August 2022 CASE OFFICER: Alexis Stanyer 01795 417784 Lower Halstow Parish Council agreed to support this application in line with the Village Planning Strategy.

Action: Clerk

10. Any applications received between producing the agenda and this meeting.

- a) 22/503119/FULL PROPOSAL: Conversion of existing garage into habitable space with roof light and changes to fenestration. ADDRESS: 12 Curlew Avenue Lower Halstow Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7DF COMMENTS DUE BY: 25 July 2022, DECISION DUE DATE: 22 August 2022 CASE OFFICER: Julia Marshall 01795 417465

Lower Halstow Parish Council agreed to support this application in line with the Village Planning Strategy.

Action: Clerk

11. To receive reports on the following:

- a) Parks, Leisure and Planning:
All is well.

- b) Footpaths, hedges, Burial Ground and allotments:
Cllr Portman has looked at Westfield Car Park hedge which is full of wildflowers, lots of biodiversity and wildlife. It does not need cutting at the moment, but in the autumn the plastic protection coverings from the trees will be removed and they will be trimmed down. Cllr Portman has recently cut around all the unkempt graves and removed the weeds from the perimeter of the Burial Ground. A solution is still required for the old railings. Cllrs Howard-Challis and Smith will have a look at this to

see what can be done to make it secure and safe until a permanent resolution is found.

Cllrs: Howard-Challis and Smith

It appears that an unknown person has taken over one of the allotments. Messages and letters have been left, with no response. Cllr Portman will continue to make enquiries.

Action: Cllr Portman

c) Parish Highways Plan:

The plan has been passed to Ashford and then to West Kent. KCC want to put in red patches with 20 mph in them and to charge anything from £3000 to £6000 per patch, which is extortionate, not appropriate and not wanted. Cllr Smith will request a meeting, to go through it all again. It had all been agreed with the previous team but the plan has now been passed from pillar to post, together with unacceptable changes and costs.

Action: Cllr Smith

d) Brickfields and the Seawall.

There was a message from the EA to say that the expected date for repair to the seawall is September or October.

12. To receive the Clerk's report:

A second lifebuoy and housing for the wharf has been ordered and is due for delivery tomorrow.

Yet another email has been sent to the solicitors trying to chase up the purchase of the strip of land at the Brickfields that was previously leased to the Parish Council, together with documentation of that lease.

Payment of £250 in total has been received in respect of an interment at the Burial Ground and the alteration to the memorial, together with the standing orders for the two Thames Sailing Barge berths in the dock.

The bank balance as at 30 June was £65465.66

It was agreed that Cllrs Howard-Challis and Szabo will authorise the payments, as per the payment list below, via internet banking.

13. Items for information only:

Item for the Village News: Games Trailer and proposed solar farm meeting
Picture of the new oak tree.

14. To receive agenda items for next meeting:

Noticeboards

The meeting ended at 7.48pm

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th September 2022

Payments July 2022

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust Fund	Hall Hire: 3 rd May 2022 Invoice: 66	21.25		941753621
Kent Scouts	Hire of Climbing Tower Invoice:2022231	165.00		486047685
DCK Payroll	Payroll Services June 2022 Invoice:P3252	44.40	7.40	129550757
River's Rodents and Reptiles	Animal Handling Sessions Queen's Platinum Jubilee Invoice: 0196	90.00		588288841
Cllr K Howard-Challis	Chair's Allowance 2022/23	566.39		300023
Cllr T Portman	Councillor Allowance 2022/23	226.60		141926701
Cllr A Smith	Councillor Allowance 2022/23	282.60		300024
Cllr Szabo	Councillor Allowance 2022/23	226.60		369748619
HMRC	PAYE	579.44		2185573020
Mr M Tidy	Village Cleaning	190.00		581123336
Mrs A I Smith	Clerk's Salary and Expenses 25 th July 2022 and 25 th August 2022 (Provisional TBC by payroll)	1816.48		TBC
Glasdon UK Ltd	Lifebuoy and Housing Invoice: SI842661	465.97	77.66	849045335

Other payments:

Lloyds Multipay Direct Debit £3.00

Date:**Signed:**

Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair