

**Minutes** of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

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

In attendance: Cllrs Baldock and Woodford and 9 members of the public.

**1. Apologies**

None received by the Clerk, however Mr McGee and the PCSO sent apologies via a member of the public.

**2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest**

None.

**3. Public Session**

A resident asked if the 20 mph zone will be discussed at the meeting and also the lorries that have been going through the village, both of which are on the agenda for this meeting. It is hoped to form a Friends of St Margaret Association as a social club, which will meet monthly, to raise funds for the church.

A resident wanted to report that KCC Highways have made a magnificent job of repairing the footpath at Church Path.

It was discussed that a tree on Sheerness Road had been hit by one of the large lorries, but it is still hanging. KCC has notified the landowner, but the road will need to be closed for it to be dealt with.

**4. Visitors:**

**a. KCC**

The full council meeting is later this month. There is a very small team that covers Swale area for Highways, which is shared with several other districts. There are well over a 100 parishes and they all need Highway Improvement Plans. There is also a new person dealing with the transport works, who was really quick to respond with some of the road closure issues in Lower Halstow. The bus cuts were taken to scrutiny and it was agreed to send it back to Full Council, so there will be another discussion about the bus subsidy cuts, for which there has been strong opposition. Plan Bee is progressing well. There will be a new version in November. Cllr Baldock does have some funding left should any help be required. There has been a suggestion that Christmas lights are hung between the street lights and there are some possible sources of funding available. It was agreed that Cllr Baldock look into the costings.

**b. SBC**

There is a Household Support Fund Service for fuel support for residents who are having difficulty with their fuel payments. Cllr Woodford has the information; it will also be on Swale's Borough Council's website and on the Parish Council website. A larger dog waste bin has requested for Vicarage Lane, this has been funded by Cllr Woodford and she is chasing the officers to get it installed.

**c. PCSO**

None received.

**d. Friends of the Brickfields**

Apologies received by Cllr Portman.

**5. To resolve the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> July**

- a) It was resolved that the Minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Parish Council meeting are a correct record and were signed accordingly.

**6. Correspondence**

- a) Email from SAAA regarding opting out of the External Auditor arrangement. It was agreed not to opt out of the arrangement.  
b) Email from solicitor regarding ownership of Gibbs amenity land

E L Gibbs Ltd was registered as the owner at Land Registry, however, because the company was dissolved on 15 February 2000 and it is now classed as unregistered the land passes to the Crown. It was agreed to approach a solicitor to investigate the possibility of purchasing the land or obtaining a lease.

**Action: Clerk**

- c) Telephone call regarding large lorries. An email has been received from the building contractors at the land south of School Lane and they have explained that there was a considerable amount of heavy soil removal lorries both entering and leaving the site and they wanted to take advantage of the fact that the children had not yet returned to the school from their summer break. They were also aware there was resurfacing works due on The Street that week. There were also large high sided lorries working at a separate site at Callum Park. The Parish Council understand that particular work has now finished but should it happen again it was suggested that the better route was either Stickfast Lane or Raspberry Hill Lane.

## **7. Matters arising**

- a) Plans for stalled purchase of land at the Brickfields  
The Clerk will contact Magdalene Haywood of Excello Law for advice.

**Action: Clerk**

- b) Noticeboards  
There are two noticeboards that are in a poor state, one by Britannia Green with a faded map in it. This will be discussed again at the next meeting. The other noticeboard is by The Green and is in a terrible state. Cllr Smith will obtain a quote for a new noticeboard. The Clerk will let the Church Warden know.

**Action: Cllr Smith and Clerk**

- c) The Parish Council have had an enquiry regarding mooring another boat at the dock.

## **8. Policies**

- a) Equal Opportunity Policy  
The Parish Council resolved to adopt this policy and it will be uploaded to the website.

**Action: Clerk**

- b) Review of policy regarding access to the Brickfields and Dock.  
It was proposed by Cllr Smith that the combinations to the locks at the Brickfields would be restricted to residents of Lower Halstow only, seconded by Cllr Szabo and agreed unanimously.

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

- a) 22/503257/FULL PROPOSAL: Erection of single storey front and rear extensions, and second floor infill extension including alterations to roof, installation of 5no. new dormer windows in lieu of existing roof lights, insertion of new first floor windows to side and rear, and internal alterations. Creation of additional hardstanding parking area. ADDRESS: The Pantries Vicarage Lane Lower Halstow Kent ME9 7EW COMMENTS DUE BY: 24 August 2022, DECISION DUE DATE: 22 September 2022 CASE OFFICER: Emily Clark 01795 417469

This application was noted.

- b) 22/503669/SUB | Submission of details pursuant to Conditions 7 (details of roads, footways, footpaths, verges, junctions, street lighting, sewers, drains, retaining walls, service routes, surface water outfall, vehicle overhang margins, embankments, visibility splays, accesses, carriageway gradients, driveway gradients, car parking and street furniture), 18 (scheme to prevent discharge of

surface water onto the highway), and 20 (details of external lighting) of application 21/502607/OUT. | Land to The South of Stable Mews School Lane Lower Halstow Kent ME9 7FN

This application was noted.

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

None received.

**11. To receive reports on the following:**

a) Parks, Leisure and Planning:

With reference to Lower Halstow's planning strategy, Cllr Szabo has contacted all interested parties including Swale Borough Council with regard to the Village Planning Strategy as all knowledge had been denied and there was no response. The Clerk is unable to upload PDF documents to Swale's planning portal, directly. PDF documents were also emailed to planning support and they had not been uploaded to the portal. Cllr Baldock will look into this.

The assessment for the playground has been done and quotes are being sought for the remedial work.

b) Footpaths, hedges, Burial Ground and allotments:

Work has been completed at Church Path and is looking very good. The brown bin at the Burial Ground has not been collected for 9 weeks and last week the blue bin was also not collected. A quote has been requested for crown lifting the Holly trees in the Burial Ground. Cllr Portman asked if there were any more thoughts for repairing the fencing, Cllr Howard-Challis thought that there was a solution and will continue to look at this. Cllr Portman will investigate the hedge by the kissing gate.

The tap is still leaking at the Memorial Hall allotments. Southern Water have visited twice, but it is not yet resolved. The Clerk will contact a contractor.

**Action: Clerk**

c) Parish Highways Plan:

A meeting was held on zoom on 5<sup>th</sup> September regarding the 20mph zone. There is still no agreement to the requirements. The Parish Council will need to pay for the instigation of a survey and production of a detailed plan, but as there has been some frustration with the plan KCC has reduced the cost from £3000.00 to £1750.00.

It was agreed to pay the invoice. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Smith.

d) Brickfields and the Seawall.

Cllr Portman emailed the Environment Agency for an update on the seawall. The reply has been received which re-iterated the EA policy and Medway Estuary and Sale Strategy. It was acknowledged that the section of the brick wall is at imminent risk of collapse. A short term rip-rap armour stone repair to the brickfields frontage will be carried out to give them time to carry out investigations. The work will start in November. A further investigation of the whole frontage will be carried out again in 2025. Cllr Portman will reply to the EA to enquire about the rip-rap repairs and how long they last. There is also concern about the Southern Water sewage pipe.

**12. Finance**

a) Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR):

- i) To consider the external auditor's report  
Noted.
- ii) To authorise the amendments to AGAR  
The amendments were duly signed.
- iii) To decide how long to publish the notice of conclusion for.  
It was resolved to publish it for two weeks.

b) Insurance Renewal.

Cllr Szabo asked that the playground equipment be flagged on the pre-renewal form. Cllr Portman asked whether some equipment used by the Friends of the Brickfield is covered.

**Action: Clerk**

**13. To receive the Clerk's report:**

Permission was given to the Three Tuns to use the car park at the Brickfields for their beer festival and a donation of £20 was passed to the Church treasurer. The invoices for Westfield car park have been prepared and will go out this week and the invoices for the allotments have also been prepared and will be sent out before the end of September. The VAT refund for the financial year 2021/22 has been sent to HMRC.

The bank balance as at 31 August 2022 was £61,284.34

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

**14. Items for information only:**

Cllr Howard-Challis asked permission to hold the annual dog show on the recreation ground, which was agreed.

- a) Item for the Village News:  
Updates for 20mph zone and the seawall.
- b) To receive agenda items for next meeting:  
Noticeboards.

The meeting ended at 8.12pm

**Date of next meeting:** Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022

## Payments September 2022

<b>Payee</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Gross Amount £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>	<b>Cheque No/Bank Payment</b>
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust Fund	Hall Hire: 7 <sup>th</sup> June and 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2022 Invoices: 69 and 71	42.50		355010621
DCK Payroll	Payroll Services July 2022 Invoice:P3297	36.00	6.00	44502334
Cllr T Portman	Reimbursement Strimmer spool line and fruit for the jubilee	63.36		447170338
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit (Annual Governance and Accountability Return)	360.00	60.00	49534657
Business Stream	Water services Invoice2761986/17	34.02		305630710
ATS	Supply and fit new posts, rails and gate for Brickfields	500.00		Cheque 300026
Vibe Community	Deliver detached work session in partnership with PSCO Invoice: PCSOJULY222	60.00		937795070
Playsafety Ltd (RoSPA)	Annual Inspection of Recreation Ground Play Area	96.60	16.10	934844662
Mr M Tidy	Village Cleaning July and August and reimbursement for Allen key and self-tapping screws for play area	287.98		801636981
Mrs A I Smith	Clerk's Salary and Expenses 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2022	970.76		107855542
Mr M Szabo	Reimbursement for CCTV Signs	29.62		796650864
The Rev Daniel Corcoran	Deliver and collect Gem trailer and football cage for 27 July and 8 August 2022	91.70		441233294
Mr K Howard-Challis	Mileage Expenses for meeting held on 9 August 2022	8.10		817092668

Multipay Direct Debit -	Padlocks	
	Car park stickers	
	Service charge	£155.76

Date:

Signed:

Cllr. K Howard-Challis  
Chair