

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 3rd October 2023.

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

In attendance: 3 members of the public.

1. To receive **Apologies for absence.**

Cllrs Keith Howard-Challis and Lloyd Chapman sent their apologies.

2. To receive any **Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest**, and any Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items. (Requirement of the Localism Act 2011.)
None.

3. **Public session**

A resident of Burntwick Drive has reported the blockage of a drain behind their property and a fellow resident has kindly attended this meeting to assist the councillors regarding their experience of this problem. The residents were contacted some time ago regarding maintenance of this particular area and a few got together to make some repairs to the roadway. Most of the residents contacted had no interest in either helping practically or financially. This particular drain is however, close to a lamppost and a proper made up footpath. The Clerk will contact KCC Highways and Footpaths to report the problem.

A member of the Friends of the brickfields informed the council that a work party will take place on Saturday 14th October cutting back the reed beds, the volunteers will burn the waste on the beach, and all safety precautions will be put in place.

The Remembrance memorial service will take place at the Memorial Wood on Saturday 11th November, as usual. Poppies will be placed on the lampposts and wreaths ordered for the services.

4. **Visitors.** Reports or comments from:

a) KCC Councillors;

None.

b) SBC Councillors;

None

c) Police Officer Jez Chittim supplied the following report:

Crimes of note:

- 09/09/2023 – Poaching – Fields behind Neptune Terrace – One male seen with a lamp and dog, appeared to be hare coursing.

Anti-social behaviour and other incidents of note:

- Nuisance vehicle – Brickfields – Reports from two separate members of public naming a local resident using an off-road dirt bike on the Brickfields with no helmet, no registration on display and using the footpath as a track. Individual has now been spoken with and advised that I have asked those that have named him to try and take photographs of him should he do this again and I would then look to prosecute him for dangerous driving. This was early September and I have had nothing reported since.
- Continue to challenge anyone I feel maybe about to, has been or is in the act of bottle digging. I am yet to see any repeat offenders, however I will look to prosecute for theft, should I witness anyone doing this I have already warned.
- Continue to support Lower Halstow Primary school with any parking issues they have with parents parking on the private access road leading up to the school. The issues have reduced since police intervention.
- I am currently in the process of setting up police surgeries in primary schools whereby the focus will be on engagement with parents, children and staff at school drop

off time, followed by the opportunity for parents to see me afterwards to discuss any issues they may have in their local area. This will be advertised by the school newsletter and whilst open to all parents, staff and children, I would hope it may encourage sufferers of domestic abuse to take an opportunity to engage with me whilst on the school run and fit in with our aim of education and reduction around violence against women and girls (VAWG). This coming month, I will be liaising with Lower Halstow primary school to try and have this up and running by the end of this year. Owing to the focus around VAWG, I am formulating a direct partnership with SATEDA; the domestic abuse charity for Swale to aid me with this.

- I wish to also host a police surgery for the wider members of public once a month, however I would like to tie this in with an existing event so that it encourages people to come and speak with me. If you have any events and venues, you feel this would be suitable for me to do, please can I have some suggestions.

d) **Friends of the Brickfields**

A meeting took place last week. There may be some walks and talks regarding plants, shrubs and wildlife possibly in December. The Memorial Wood and firebreak needs a cut, which is usually undertaken by one of the Parish Council's contractors in January. The Raft Race and Festival donated £200.00 to the Friends of the Brickfields. Work parties are continuing and volunteers would be welcome. Interestingly, evidence of Harvest mice have been found.

5. To resolve Minutes

It was resolved that the Minutes of the Monthly Parish meeting held on Tuesday 19th September 2023 are a correct record and signed accordingly.

6. To discuss planning applications received:

None.

7. To discuss any planning applications received between producing the agenda and this meeting.

None received.

8. Matters arising:

a) Overgrown areas around the Burial Ground perimeter. The Clerk will request quotes for one cut along the main road, the bank and Church Path to the gate.

9. Policies:

To review the Emergency Plan. Deferred to the next meeting.

10. Finance:

a) Scarecrow Trail. Proposed by Cllr Szabo and seconded by Cllr Portman to sponsor the Scarecrow trail for £50.00 and to use it to try to recruit new Parish Councillors. Unanimously agreed.

11. Correspondence:

a) Overhanging trees and vegetation obscuring the resident car park sign. The Clerk has contacted the contractor. This will be dealt with under his usual arrangements and he will let the council know when that will be, so that the car park can be cleared of vehicles to eliminate any damage to them.

12. To receive reports on the following:

a) Parks & Leisure & Planning (MS).

No report.

b) Footpaths and Hedgerow maintenance, Burial Ground

There is no news on the cracked bridge over the sluice. Cllr Portman has drafted out several letters to residents about overgrown shrubs, hedges and trees, there is a lot in the village at the moment. Cllr Portman has an agreement from the conservation manager at Swale Borough Council for the repair to the Burial Ground fence and the steps at Church Path. The Clerk will order the angle iron required for the fence.

Action: Clerk

c) Allotments

The invoices have been sent out and the deadline for payment is 21st October. Allocation to anyone on the waiting list will be done after that date.

d) Parish Highways Plan

The 20 mph limit has been agreed and paid for. The Parish Council is still awaiting for KCC to action the plan. They have 90 days to do this.

e) Brickfields and Seawall

No update for the sea wall. Plans to update the signage for the Brickfields is ongoing.

13. Clerk's Report

Payments received during September totalled £1675.28. This includes £357.50 received for the allotments and £775.00 received for Westfield Car Park, so far. The permits are being sent out when payment and notice of the relevant registrations are received.

To date, I have not had any notification from Swale Borough Council when the second half of the precept is going to be paid this year. Last year it was received on 30th September.

The bank balance as of 30th September 2023 is £53,744.79

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

14. Items for information only:

- a) Items for Website and Village News. Cllr Portman will draft items for the Village News regarding overgrown shrubs and not digging or camping on the Brickfields.
- b) Cllr Groves volunteered to paint the posts of the Village Sign, so that they all match.

The meeting closed at 19.34

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 7th November 2023

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Mrs A I Smith	Clerk's Expenses and Salary 25/9/2023	1074.69		737411986
Mr M Tidy	Village Cleaning	166.72		835659602
Intelligent Facility Services	CCTV SIM Service Invoice: 08500	30.00	5.00	757874407
DCK Payroll Solutions	Payroll Process Invoice: P4535	36.00	6.00	759783559
Hugofox Ltd	Yearly Bronze Subscription Invoice 2881	122.28	20.38	866536440
HMRC PAYE	July – September 2023	278.77		86326921

Other Payments:

Multipay - Direct Debit 09/10/23

£77.00

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**