

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 3rd December 2019 in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

Present: Cllr K Howard-Challis (Chair); Cllr R Smith (Vice-Chair); Cllr A Beerstecher; Cllr T Portman; Cllr A Smith; Cllr M Szabo; Mrs A Smith (Clerk); Cllr R Clark (SBC) and 5 members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr M Whiting (KCC) and PCSO Lee Fennell.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

Cllr Szabo declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6a.

3. Public Session

A resident asked if the Council were going to construct a letter, on behalf of residents, to Swale, KCC and Chalkwell Buses about their proposed changes whilst the gas works are in progress. The consultation closes on 15th December. The resident was concerned that the changes are not a temporary measure. Residents of Upchurch will also be affected.

A resident attended Swale Borough Council's Local Development Panel Framework meeting and they were presented with the final flood report for the Borough. It concludes for Lower Halstow that there is a 0.5% chance in 100 years of a tidal flooding event. There are three main areas of the Parish which are liable to flood; extensive areas of Barksore Marsh, The Stray and the Cricket Ground. The report was undertaken by consultants on behalf of Swale Borough Council to inform them where not to allocate new housing developments and to take account of flood risk when formulating their new local plan. A copy of the report was passed to the Chair.

4. Visitors reports or comments

a) KCC Councillor Whiting:

Apologies for missing your meeting this evening, please find my update below.

The road works along the A2 at Newington should finish this week until after the New Year, which is very good news.

Members may have seen the consultation by Chalkwell buses regarding their 326/7/8 services. They are consulting on how to cut the frequency of those services, which they say they need to do as a result of the road works. I have spoken with the company and they say the subsidised elements paid for directly by KCC will continue as will those used by children to get to school and back. I would urge everyone who uses the buses to complete the questionnaire on the Chalkwell web-site and I will continue my dialogue with the company.

The apparently abandoned car as you leave Lower Halstow in the direction of Upchurch, down the hill and by the football/cricket ground metal gates, has been reported by a resident to the police and I await news of what action the police are proposing to take.

I hope this is helpful, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance in any of the matters above or in anything that may arise at your meeting.

Finally, may I wish you a very Merry Christmas and I look forward to working with you in the New Year

b) SBC Councillors

No report

c) PCSO

Apologies for not being able to attend this month's meeting. I will do everything possible be there for January.

Reports of poaching on fields around Basser Hill area – patrol attended and a vehicle was stopped. Enquiries by the Rural Task Force are ongoing

Report of part of animals nailed to a tree and candles put around, which sounded like some kind of 'ritual'. This was in the Brickfields. Enquiries by officers, including searches and talking to dog walkers, etc., led us to believe that this is more to do with sporadic pieces of 'artwork', involving feathers, twine, etc., that have been a feature in the area for a while now.

Leaflets were put on certain vehicles in Breach Lane during the month, reminding people of their responsibilities when it comes to parking in the area.

I would like to wish all the councillors, the clerk and everyone present a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

d) Friends of the Brickfields

There will be a work party taking place on Saturday 7th December.

5. To agree Minutes of the Meetings held

It was resolved to agree the Minutes for the meeting held on 5th November 2019 and they were duly signed.

6. Correspondence

a) Transfer of Parish Council website to a new provider:

Quotes have been received. It was decided to defer a decision to enable Councillors to consider the information.

Action: All Councillors

b) Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013-30

There were no comments at this time. Deferred until the January meeting.

7. Matters Arising

a) Review of Donations:

It was decided to match the donation from the previous year to the Over 60's, totalling £100.00. It was agreed to donate £600 to the Village News. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis, seconded by Cllr R Smith. Unanimous.

b) New noticeboard at Britannia Green:

It was agreed to obtain some quotes to replace the noticeboard.

Action: Clerk

c) Finalisation of Tree Lighting Event

The event will take place at 6:15. Cllrs Szabo and A Smith are arranging the mulled wine and mince pies.

8. Finance

a) Westfield Car Park topographical survey. It was agreed to accept the quote of £375.00. Proposed by Cllr Szabo, seconded by Cllr R Smith. Agreed unanimously.

b) Ground Management quotes. It was agreed to accept the quotes totalling £930.00 regarding the tractor and flail work, the burial ground and the split Willow tree at the Brickfields amenity site. Proposed by Cllr Portman, seconded by Cllr A Smith and agreed unanimously.

c) Walkie-Talkies. It was agreed to purchase a set of 4 walkie-talkies for use during an emergency, in the event that communications are cut-off. They will be held by Cllr Howard-Challis, Cllr A Smith, the Clerk and Mr M Drury. They will be 16 channel and do not require a licence. Proposed by Cllr Beerstecher, seconded by Cllr Portman. All agreed.

d) It was proposed by Cllr Szabo, seconded by Cllr R Smith to agree the quotes, totalling £123.75 provided by Streetlights to adjust the three street lights that residents had complained about. Agreed unanimously.

e) The Parish Council could apply to Swale Borough Council for an Environmental Grant in respect of the interpretation boards for the Brickfields and a Heritage Grant towards the VE75 event. The Clerk will ask the organisers to supply any quotes they may have to build a case towards these.

Action: Clerk

f) To agree the budget and precept request to Swale Borough Council for 2020/19

g) The precept request to be sent to Swale Borough Council was approved. The precept request will be £37740.00 and the budget for 2020/21 was formally approved. Band D Council Tax will be reported in January 2020 Minutes. Proposed by Cllr R Smith, seconded by Cllr Beerstecher. Agreed unanimously.

h) The letter to close the Barclays Bank account was duly signed. This will be sent to Barclays for closure of the account as soon as the balance is zero.

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

- a) APPLICATION REF: 19/505618/FULL PROPOSAL: Erection of a front porch, part two storey part single storey side extension with external flue, a single storey side and a single storey rear extension. ADDRESS: 1 Seaview Terrace Breach Lane Lower Halstow Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7DG COMMENTS DUE BY: 9 December 2019 DECISION DUE DATE: 9 January 2020.
No comments.
- b) APPLICATION REF: 19/505648/FULL PROPOSAL: Conversion of existing integral garage to a habitable space. Creation of additional parking to the front. ADDRESS: 4 Cumberland Drive Lower Halstow Sittingbourne Kent ME9 7JA COMMENTS DUE BY: 10 December 2019 DECISION DUE DATE: 7 January 2020.
No comments.
- c) 18/506225/OUT Land to The South of School Lane Lower Halstow Kent.
The Parish Council had received a letter informing them that the above planning application will be reported to the Planning Committee of Swale Borough Council on 5 December 2019.

10. To discuss and agree action on the following:

a) **BRICKFIELDS & PLANNING**

Nothing to report. Cllr Beerstecher will be leaving the Council after the meeting and on behalf of the Council Cllr R Smith thanked Cllr Beerstecher for all her efforts and hard work. Cllr Tina Portman will be the councillor responsible for Brickfields and Planning in the future.

b) **PARKS & LEISURE**

The netting and basketball board will be renewed in the New Year. The handyman will also be repairing the shelter on the recreation ground.

c) **DOCKS & BARGES and CAR PARKS**

Flyers will be sent to the residents at Westfield Cottages to update them when there is anything to report on the expansion of Westfield car park.

d) **FOOTPATHS HIGHWAYS LIGHTING and HEDGEROW MAINTENANCE**

A notice will be put up in the Burial Ground to alert visitors regarding when cutting of the overgrown graves will take place.

The B& B hedge needs cutting, Cllr Portman has sent a letter to the owner and spoken to Mr Branchett from Treecraft for an update.

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

a) **KALC Rep**

Cllr R Smith attended the KALC AGM on Saturday 30th November. Kent Association of Local Councils offer legal and administration advice and help on procedures. The guest speakers were John Weller regarding IMAGO counselling services and social prescribing offering support to supplement the NHS. Mr David Astley, Chairman of South East Coast Ambulance Service was also a speaker who acknowledged problems with the ambulance service and set out points to say what they will do about them. Swale Area Committee raised a motion to KCC to say that the housing targets are too high in Kent and that they should be shared out across the country as Kent is reaching saturation point. They asked KALC to call on central government to reduce the Kent targets. The motion was carried.

At the quarterly Swale Area Committee, attended by Cllr Howard-Challis and Cllr R Smith, Professor Stephen Peckham from Canterbury University spoke regarding air pollution. The concern is with health problems caused by the air quality and that the way it is assessed and measured is haphazard. KALC will call on central government and local planning authorities to ensure that there is a robust air quality assessment included in planning applications.

b) **Memorial Hall Rep**

Nothing to report.

12. Clerks Report:

The Clerk has contacted Mrs Kingsley-Smith regarding the purchase of the land adjacent to the Brickfields as the Parish Council's solicitors had not had a response to their request for

draft contracts. Mrs Kingsley-Smith has replied and apologised for the delay, some information has now been supplied that was being waited for.

Mr Stiles has repaid his councillor allowances.

Barclays balance is £3319.36 and a cheque is on this month's list to transfer that balance to Unity Trust Bank.

As of 30th November 2019 Unity Trust Bank balance is £84332.79.

13. Items for information only:

The Parish Council will meet for a social event in January.

Cllr A Smith generously offered to pay for the walkie-talkies, discussed at item 8 (c)

14. To receive items for Village News and the Website:

None at this time.

Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 7th January 2020.

The meeting closed at 8.00 pm

Bank Payment and Cheques December 2019

Payee	Description	Amount £	Cheque No/Transaction No
Ransley Projects Ltd	Replacement of fencing at Burial Ground	630.00	B/P 153594461
EDF Energy	Unmetered supply of energy March to September 2019 Invoice: 000006742533 - £211.03 Invoice: 000006742546 - £195.95	406.98	B/P 40825933
L Stevens & Sons	Westfield Allotments Invoice: INV-0107	40.00	B/P 427728068
KALC	2 x Burial Law and Management Workshop Invoice: 1161603125 £72.00 and Invoice: 1161871467 £72.00	144.00	Cheque 300002
Lower Halstow Parish Council	Cheque to transfer and clear funds from Barclays Bank	3319.36	Cheque 100473
Treecraft: Branchett Ltd	Grounds Maintenance 2019 Invoice: 191127	4315.00	B/P 586046275

Other Payments:

Standing Order 25 December 2019 Clerk's Salary £448.66

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**