

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held virtually due to Coronavirus Covid-19 restrictions on Tuesday 2nd June 2020.

Present: Cllrs: K Howard-Challis (Chair), R Smith (Vice-chair), A Groves, T Portman, M Szabo, A Smith, E Stiles and Ann Smith (Clerk) and two members of the public.

1. Apologies for absence

There were none.

2. Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest

Cllr A Smith declared interests in items 6b and 7d.

3. To agree Minutes of the Meetings held on 5th May 2020

It was resolved to agree the Minutes for the meeting held on 5th May 2020. They will be signed within social distancing rules. Proposed by Cllr R Smith and seconded by Cllr A Smith. Agreed unanimously.

4. Matters Arising

a) Revision to Friends of Brickfields Constitution. It was agreed that the original wording in section 11 of the constitution should stand.

b) Burial Ground Maintenance.

Cllr Portman has cut down the vegetation around the graves in the Burial Ground. Quotes will be sought regarding cutting the hedge at the back.

Action: Clerk

c) To resolve addition of the Ramblers Association link to new web site. It was agreed to ask our local representative regarding this.

Action: Clerk

5. Finance

a) To agree quote received regarding Landscaping Planning Application for the new part of Westfield Car Park.

Two quotes were received. It was proposed by Cllr A Smith and seconded by Cllr Portman to accept the quote from Woodstock Associates for £300 plus VAT. Agreed unanimously.

b) Review of Clerk's contract and pay.

It was proposed by Cllr Szabo and seconded by Cllr A Smith to amend the Clerk's contract to 15 hours per week on a permanent basis. Agreed unanimously.

6. Correspondence:

a) Sea Wall

On behalf of the Parish Council a member of Friends of the Brickfields will approach the Environment Agency regarding the recent erosion under the sea wall by some very high tides and report back.

b) Repair of steps by Reed bed

The steps are now in a very dangerous state and it was agreed to get the whole set of steps replaced as a matter of urgency. Proposed by Cllr Szabo, seconded by Cllr Groves. All agreed.

c) Maintenance of trees in Landrail Road.

There is currently a dispute regarding responsibility which has been lodged with Swale Borough Council's Legal Services. No action at this time.

d) Wedding photo shoot.

The idea was supported by the Council to allow the photo shoot at some time in the Autumn or Spring once the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. Cllr R Smith suggested that a small donation to St Margaret's Church would be appreciated in return. Cllr Groves recommended that they be advised that the area is open to the public and they should be aware that members of the public may be in the area.

Action: Clerk

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

- a) None at the time of producing the agenda
- b) Home Farm, Breach Lane, Lower Halstow. Planning Application 20/502218/OUT. The Councillors felt that they have not had enough time to look at the application in detail and the Clerk will ask for an extension in respect of making comments to the planning portal.
Action: Clerk

8. Clerks Report:

The Clerk has emailed Bridger's Law regarding the purchase of land between Heron Close and the Brickfields Amenity Site, who in turn have contacted the vendor's solicitors to chase up the matter. The Parish Council solicitor's promised to keep them updated.

A third letter was sent out to the residents at Westfield Cottages that had not replied previously regarding their car parking requirements in preparation for the expansion.

A letter of complaint was sent to Barclays Bank and to inform them that the matter will be referred to the Finance Ombudsman.

Outline planning permission has been granted for nine, two bedroom bungalows in School Lane. This can be found on the new Parish Council website Planning Tracker:

<https://www.hugofox.com/community/lower-halstow-parish-council-17855/planning-tracker/>

The Clerk has been in contact with the Parish Council's Internal Auditor trying to arrange the internal audit in lockdown conditions. This usually takes place with a face to face meeting at the home of the Clerk, but it may have to be done electronically. It has been pencilled in to take place on 30th June 2020.

A meeting will be arranged shortly between members of the Parish Council and the new owners of The Old Mill regarding restoration of the stream to its original position passing through the garden.

The first instalment of the precept and lighting grant from Swale Borough Council for £20120.00 has been received.

The bank balance as at 31st May 2020 is £91158.84

Authorisation to make the payments was proposed by Cllr Groves and seconded by Cllr Szabo. Agreed unanimously.

9. To consider questions received from Lower Halstow Residents

There were none.

10. Items for information only:

- a) **To receive items for Village News and the Website:**
None
- b) **To receive agenda items for next meeting and agree date of next meeting.**
Agenda item: To discuss the new policy and fees for Westfield Car Park.

The next meeting will be held via Zoom on Tuesday 7th July.

The meeting closed at 19.46 pm.

Payments – May 2020

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Mr K Howard-Challis	Mileage Claim 40 miles @ 0.45p per mile Meeting at Dunkirk, Faversham	18.00		300095460
Edwin Ward	Repair of fence Heron Close Invoice: 09/05/2020	180.00	30.00	160691486
Swale Borough Council- Portal Plan Quest Ltd	Planning Application PP-08765265v1	141.00		703542994

Other payments:

25 June 2020 Standing Order

Clerk's Salary - £448.66

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**