

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 7th January 2025.

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

In attendance: 3 Members of the public:

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

Cllr Groves

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**

The stretch of road between Church Path and the Yacht Club floods at times and there is always water on the road and at this time of year black ice, which is a contributing factor to accidents that occur at this spot. When the occasion arises could there be a sign to say "Danger - black ice and to slow down"? Similarly at the bottom of Basser Hill where water lies.

It was asked if as this year is the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War would there be any events.

A concern was expressed regarding the amount of caravans around the village.

There was an enquiry as to whether the Council had heard anything from the MP regarding the 20 mph scheme and thanks was given for the Christmas tree.

There was a general discussion around all of these points.

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

a) KCC Councillor

None

b) SBC Councillor

None

c) Police Officer

None

d) Friends of the Brickfields

Cllr Portman reported that fence by the stream has been repaired and put back. It is assumed that this had been done by Southern Water. A ditch has been dug by the reed bed and it is hoped that this will help to keep the reed bed hydrated and to stop flooding behind it. The next meeting is going to be held next week, where there will be an update on the finances. The work parties are continuing.

5. **To resolve the Minutes**

a) It was resolved that the Minutes of the Monthly Parish meeting held on 3rd December 2024 are a correct record and were signed accordingly.

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

There was none.

7. **Correspondence**

a) There was a report of unauthorised parking and littering at Westfield Car Park. The Clerk will report it to the local police officer and ask Mr Tidy to check this area on his rounds.

Action: Clerk

b) The Parish Council received a request for SugarMae's Horsebox Café to park at the Brickfield site in the spring and summer months. Although, this was thought to be a good idea in general, sadly the covenant on the land does not allow it. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Smith that the request is denied. Agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk

8. Finance

- a) The Parish Council approved to keep the precept requirement the same as last year. The proposed council tax base for the Parish for 2025/26 is 462.26. Parish Band D Council tax 2025/26 is £82.72, which is slightly less than last year. This is due to the change in the tax base.

b) To receive reports on the following:

a) Parks & Leisure and Planning

The Christmas tree decoration will be coming down tomorrow. When the time is right, the tree will need to have about 1.5 metres taken off of the top, so that scaffolding is not required to decorate it next year.

b) Footpaths and Burial Ground

Cllr Portman is concerned about the cracks in the bridge at Church Path. The Clerk will report it again to KCC Highways, Rights of Way. It was discussed that the crack should be measured to record any movement.

Action: Clerk

There is a fence down, on a footpath, between two farms. Cllr Portman will provide the Clerk with the What Three Words so that it can be brought the attention of the correct landowner.

Action: Clerk

Two street signs are still askew, one by the bus stop "The Street" and the other at Church Path. The Church Path sign has been reported to Swale Borough Council, previously. The Clerk will report both of these.

Action: Clerk

c) Hedgerow Maintenance

No real issues, just a few brambles that need a clip back.

d) Allotments

No report

e) Parish Highways Plan

No response regarding the 20mph scheme from any of the agencies involved.

f) Brickfields and Seawall

Cllr Szabo has provided a photo of the damage at the dock. Cllr Portman reports that the wood has been removed but not replaced. It was discussed that it needs replacing. The Clerk will contact Mr Gransden.

Action: Clerk

c) Clerk's Report

Payments received during December totalled £542.78. These were the payments from the barges.

I have tried to contact emooove Estate Agents regarding the entry they have on Right Move for Old Mill stating that there is direct access to Gibbs Amenity Area, which is erroneous. I have not had any success unfortunately, but I will keep trying. The owner of Old Mill was copied in.

The purchase of the gov.uk website domain is ongoing. The funding has been approved and the registration process has been started by the registrar, Freethought. They have offered the Silver package of 10GB for £65.00 per year.

The bank balance as of 31st December 2024 is: £74,795.73

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

d) Items for information only:

- a) Items for Website and Village News
None.
- b) To receive agenda items for the next meeting:
To discuss a request from the editor of the Village News for funding
To discuss pay regarding Mr Tidy, the Village Litter Picker

The meeting closed at: 19.30

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 4th February 2025

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Payments January 2025

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Mrs A I Smith	Clerk's Expenses and Salary	1302.99		513632903
Mr M Tidy	Village Cleaning	228.80		93837043
Intelligent Facility Services Ltd	CCTV SIM Service Invoice: 10467	30.00	5.00	343946261
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust	Hall Hire Invoice: 1013837	22.50		995588956
D Pascoe Garden Services	Grounds Maintenance Invoice: 081	2860		371350425
HMRC	Paye October – December 2024	761.92		92844197
KALC	Training: Clerk - Rights of Way Paths Invoice 10532723759	84.00	14.00	211379855
Forvis Mazars	Limited Assurance Audit 31 March 2024 Invoice: 2460579	378.00	63.00	874985580
Cllr T Portman	Reimbursement for tree supports and ties	32.46		965435259

Lloyds Multipay: 10 January 2025

Bank Charge

£3.00

Total

£3.00

Standing Order 1st January 2025 Crescent Digital Marketing

£25.00

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**