

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 3rd December 2024.

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

In attendance: 2 Members of the public:

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

Cllr Lawrence

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.)

3. **Public session**

A resident would like the Parish Council to thank Mr Steve Gates for the work he did in getting the beacon repaired and back up. He has done a good job and it is appreciated by the residents.

Councillor Howard-Challis took this opportunity to thank Mrs Mouland for supporting the Parish Council in relation to a letter sent regarding the issues surrounding the 20 mph limit.

It was raised that the address given for planning application in Wardwell Lane as Lower Halstow, when it should be Newington. The Clerk will put a comment on the planning portal to let Swale Borough Council know.

Action: Clerk

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

a) KCC Councillor

None

b) SBC Councillor

None

c) Police Officer

What's going on in your area

Unfortunately, I am still unable to be actively involved in the community due to injury. May I ask that crime enquiries are still forwarded in my direction and I will assist where possible.

Whilst I am office-bound if there are urgent enquiries that need looking into please don't be discouraged into not informing me; I will look for my colleagues for assistance in the meantime.

Drop-in surgery

TBC. Your local officer is Police Officer

Phil Clemens

Local Stories

There have been several reported instances of poaching and hare coursing in the rural areas of Iwade. It is often too late by the time officers arrive on scene or the offenders are spooked by the lights and sirens. In these two instances reported a registration was taken by the attending officers and have been passed to the Rural Task Force for their awareness, who are the best team suited to tackle rural crime. Details surrounding rural crime can be found at:

<https://www.police.uk/pu/services-information/rural-and-wildlife-crime>.

d) Friends of the Brickfields

Cllr Portman reported that Taylors are commencing to dig a new ditch by the reed bed. This is to help it keep hydrated and the work should take 3 to 4 days. A digger will enter the Brickfields each morning and leave each night. The Public need to be mindful when out walking near the reed bed and to keep children and dogs under control.

None.

5. **To resolve the Minutes**

a) It was resolved that the Minutes of the Monthly Parish meeting held on 5th November 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) A letter was received from Neil Baker, Cabinet Minister for Highways and Transport in response to the Parish Council's complaint regarding the work done on the 20 mph project. It was discussed and decided that the letter should be sent on to the MP. Some of the re-painting has been completed and 18 defects had been found on the roundels, but no apology has been received.

Action: Clerk

- b) An email was received from a resident regarding the temporary access to Old Mill. The owner of Old Mill has inserted a five bar gate where one off **temporary** access was given so that work could be undertaken to repair the fence and the stream to be put back to its original course. The fence should have been reinstated as this area is protected under a conservation area. The property has been advertised for sale with "Direct access provided directly the Gibbs recreation area" where there is no public right of way. The Clerk will write to the Estate Agent to make it clear that there is not direct access to the Gibbs Amenity area from the Old Mill.

Action: Clerk

8. Finance

- a) It was agreed to purchase a brush cutter from B&Q for £315 with battery. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Szabo.

Action: Clerk

- b) It was agreed to authorise Direct Debit payments to Business Stream. Proposed by Cllr Howard Challis and seconded by Cllr Szabo.
- c) Cllr Howard-Challis proposed to approve the budget, previously circulated to the councillors. Cllr Szabo seconded it. Agreed unanimously.
- d) Cllr Howard-Challis proposed to approve the Registrar Free Thought for the move to a uk.gov domain for the website and emails and it was seconded by Cllr Portman. Agreed unanimously.

Action: Clerk

9. To receive reports on the following:

a) Parks & Leisure and Planning

Cllr Szabo thanked Emma and her team for decorating the Christmas tree. It looks amazing. The lighting event will be held on Saturday 7th December and 6.00 pm.

b) Footpaths and Burial Ground

A post has been knocked over next to the Queen Elizabeth tree. Cllr Smith will have a look at it.

Action: Cllr Smith

c) Hedgerow Maintenance

No report

d) Allotments

The Clerk has contacted a tenant regarding an allotment that needed clearing of some equipment and sundry items and received a reply in the affirmative. It was agreed not to go ahead with clearance of the vacant allotments now as everything is dying down. The Clerk will let the contractors know that have provided quotes.

Action: Clerk

e) Parish Highways Plan

Cllr Smith reported that it was stated on the local news that you are three times more likely to be killed on a country lane than on a main road. One Hundred and Forty people have been killed so far this year. Cllr Smith and Cllr Szabo will do some more research into the 20 mph signage.

Action: Cllr Smith and Cllr Szabo

f) Brickfields and Seawall

Cllr Portman had a meeting with the Friends of the Brickfields on 7th November. Their bank balance is £5670.00; some of that money is going to pay Taylors for the work at the reed bed. Mr Branchett has been asked to clear some spindly trees near The Avenue to

encourage orchids to grow there, which will cost in the region of £1000. There are two or three fallen trees and quotes will be requested for that. They are looking at purchasing an oak sign to display information about wildlife, plants and trees. If there is a shortfall, they may ask the Parish Council for some funds. The new sign for Heron Close has arrived, Cllr Portman has cut the foliage behind the post, and it should be in position within the next week.

Cllr Szabo will circulate a photo of the repairs carried out at the Dock on the electrics.

10. Clerk's Report

Payments received during November totalled £851.05. These were the payments from the barges and one payment of £24.27 from the website.

An email was sent to the solicitors to clarify from the maps and plans, which piece of land it is that the Parish Council want to purchase.

Permission was sought and given to put an entry onto the Village Facebook page regarding the Christmas tree lighting event, which is taking place on Saturday 7th December at 6.00 pm

The bank balance as of 30th November 2024 is: £76,162.63

Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

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

11. Items for information only:

- a) Items for Website and Village News
Item to advertise allotments.
- b) To receive agenda items for the next meeting
Review payments for street cleaning.

The meeting closed at 19.47 hours

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 7th January 2025

Payments December 2024

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Mrs A I Smith	Clerk's Expenses and Salary	968.41		75247578
Mr M Tidy	Village Cleaning	183.04		739962521
Intelligent Facility Services Ltd	CCTV SIM Service Invoice: 10349	30.00	5.00	413641579
DCK Payroll Solutions	Payroll Services Invoice: 24688 (Sept) Invoice: 24911 (Nov)	72.00	12.00	27043045
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust	Hall Hire Invoice: 1013825	22.50		292462042
Seton	Heron Close Signage Invoice: 9303819966	347.24	57.87	962787527
DCK Payroll Solutions	Payroll Service Invoice: 24934 (Dec)	36.00	6.00	617343136

Lloyds Multipay: 10 December 2024

Amazon Batteries for Defibrillator	£33.49
SLCC Subscription	£183.00
Bank Charge	£3.00
Total	£219.49

Standing Order 1st November Crescent Digital Marketing £25.00

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**