

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 2nd April 2024.

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

In attendance: Cllrs Mike Baldock and Chapman. Members of the public: 7

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

Apologies were received from Cllr Szabo and PC Phil Clemens

2. **Welcome to New Councillor**

Cllr Howard-Challis welcomed Lower Halstow Parish Council's newest councillor Peter Lawrence, who has been co-opted.

3. To receive any **Declarations of Pecuniary or Non Pecuniary Interest**, and any Applications for Dispensation on Agenda Items. (Requirement of the Localism Act 2011.)

Cllr Smith declared 9 (c).

4. **Public session**

Mr Gates advised that the D-Day event organisation was going to plan and he gave thanks to Cllr Portman for her contribution.

It was reported that an individual, in camouflage clothing was seen very early on Easter Sunday morning and was hunting on the sea wall in the dark with a torch and a bag.

It was asked if the road markings could be re-done outside the school. The Chair mentioned that this is in hand.

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

a) KCC Councillors;

Cllr Baldock stated that he is currently dealing with school appeals, but that also a common theme is complaints about potholes and road chaos. The budget has been passed by KCC. Although the youth budget has been cut Cllr Baldock is also trying to organise some Youth provision for the summer holidays to include the "outer" villages such as Lower Halstow and Hartlip, not just Iwade and Newington.

b) SBC Councillor;

Cllr Chapman acknowledged that there has been some difficulty with the collection of bins. The contractors have been two drivers down and they have been playing catch-up. Cllr Howard-Challis said that there is a broken green bin at the Memorial Hall. It has been reported twice, but has not been replaced, yet.

c) Police Officer.

PC Phil Clemens sent the following report:

New Police Constable for Lower Halstow

I'd like to thank you all for your warm welcome as your new beat officer for Lower Halstow. Jez has left some large shoes to fill and I am still finding my feet and acclimating within the role to provide the best service possible. It has been a busy few weeks for me and I have a lot more to learn.

Good work story/stories

I attended the last Warm Space event at the beginning of the month and was pleased to see the good turnout. Numerous crime prevention tools were provided which I am sure will be of great aid to combat crime.

I am pleased to report that the 30MPH speed limit sign that was incorrectly displayed has been taken down. I received an email from Highway Improvement on 20/03/2024 noting the correction. It does however mention a caveat, in that, as far as I am aware, the road surface still displays a circular 30MPH limit. The email from Highway Improvement finalises by explaining that this is due to be rectified as part of a road resurface but does not give a timeframe unfortunately.

Kent Police has placed a heavy focus on pubs, bars and clubs' awareness of drink spiking including prevention, signs and symptoms, and what to do if staff believe a

spiking has occurred. I attended The Three Tuns to ensure staff had the correct knowledge surrounding this subject and was pleased to see all were knowledgeable.

d) Friends of the Brickfields

The AGM will be held on 13th April at 7.30 pm on the Edith May. Tickets are £5.00, which will include wine, light refreshments and a talk.

Currently, it is very muddy at the Brickfields and the fence taken down by Southern Water has not been replaced.

6. **To resolve the Minutes**

It was resolved that the Minutes of the Monthly Parish meeting held on Tuesday 5th March 2024 are a correct record and were signed accordingly

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

None received.

8. **Matters arising:**

a) Inconsiderate parking. Cllr Portman has contacted the school and they confirmed that they are having real issues with parking. The Head teacher has bought some specialised bollards to place on school grounds because drivers are parking in front of drives, causing problems. Residents have contacted her about this too. Cllr Portman will keep her updated.

b) To commission a Tree Inspection. It was suggested to contact Upchurch Clerk to see if they could recommend someone. Cllr Portman volunteered to show the appointed contractor where to go.

Action: Clerk

9. **Finance to Consider:**

a) It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Portman to donate £50 to Citizens Advice, as last year. Agreed unanimously.

b) Cllr Portman has received three quotes for the Brickfields Signage and Cllr Portman proposed to accept the quote received from Setons for £309.77, seconded by Cllr Groves. Agreed unanimously.

c) Cllr Howard-Challis proposed to accept the quote received for £3150.00 to replace the goal posts and re-turfing. Seconded by Cllr Lawrence and agreed unanimously. It was also agreed to accept the quote for £750.00 to position the benches at the Gibbs Amenity area. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Portman. Agreed unanimously.

10. **Correspondence**

a) Donation to St Margaret's Church for the East Window Project. It was agreed to defer to next month.

11. **To receive reports on the following:**

a) Parks & Leisure and Planning:
No report

b) Footpaths and Hedgerow maintenance, Burial Ground.

At the very top of Basser Hill there is still part of the hedge that needs cutting back off the road. Cllr Howard-Challis said that KCC have this in hand. A brick wall has been knocked down on the corner of Breach Lane and Westfield car park. Cllr Groves and Cllr Portman will see if they can speak to the resident where this has happened. Some of the shrubs have been trimmed at the Burial Ground and a few more bulbs planted.

Action: Cllrs Portman and Groves

c) Allotments

The taps were not working at the Memorial Hall Site. A plumber has been contacted, but it appears that they have not been able to look at this job yet.

d) Parish Highways Plan

Cllrs Smith, Howard-Challis and Szabo attended a site meeting regarding the problems with the 20 mph zone. The issues pointed out are being looked at. Awaiting progress. Yet another accident happened outside of Neptune Bungalow. The Parish Council noted that there have been three accidents in the same place in the last six months.

e) Brickfields and Seawall

Nothing further to report.

12. Clerk's Report

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

Jackie Swift has confirmed that Treecraft cuts St Margaret's Churchyard six times a year. It was arranged some years ago by Dr Woollacott that this was paid for by the Parish Council, if any further cuts are required, this is paid by the Church.

The festive lights and dog glove refills have been ordered and received.

The documentation for the external audit from Mazars has been received.

The overgrown hedge and problems with the drains at Basser Hill were reported to KCC and they have informed me that this is in hand.

A few enquiries have been made regarding allotments but as these were not from Lower Halstow residents and have therefore been turned away. Currently, there is only one whole plot and a half plot available at the Memorial Hall Site and a waiting list particularly for the Westfield site.

The bank balance as of 31st March 2024 is £51,591.59

13. Items for information only:

- a) Items for Website and Village News. None currently.
- b) To receive agenda items for the next meeting
Donation to St Margaret's Church.

Cllr Groves reported that she has painted the posts underneath the Noticeboard at The Green.

The meeting closed at 7.29 pm

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 7th May 2024

Payments April 2024

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Mrs A I Smith	Clerk's Expenses and Salary	960.81		42759554
Mr M Tidy	Village Cleaning	183.04		7111911
Intelligent Facility Services Ltd	CCTV SIM Service Invoice: 01979	30.00	5.00	532802346
DCK Payroll Accounting Solutions	Payroll Process Invoice: P5132	36.00	6.00	44264707
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust	Hall Hire Invoice 79 6/2/24	22.50		393127624
Cllr T Portman	Reimbursement Various items re: Tree Planting	83.89		
JRB Enterprise Ltd	Dispenser Dog Gloves refill waste bags: Inv 26677	133.62	22.27	484077088

Other Payments:

Lloyds Multipay (Festive Tree Lights + fee) DD	09/04/24	£132.55
ICO (Data Protection Fee) DD	06/04/24	£35.00

Date:

Signed:

Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair