

Minutes of the Monthly Council Meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held in the Memorial Hall at 7.00 pm on Tuesday 4th June 2024.

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

In attendance: Members of the public: 5 and Cllr Baldock (KCC)

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

Apologies were received from Cllr Groves and PC Phil Clemens.

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**

Cllr Howard-Challis invited members of the public to speak. He reminded them that this is the opportunity to do so and not to interrupt the meeting after this session.

A resident from Sheerness Road reported his family's unhappiness regarding an appeal to planning application 23/503336/OUT. He gave the Parish Council copies of a letter written to Mr Neil Devereux of the Planning Inspectorate. He said that that he, as an adjoining landowner and near neighbour had not received any letters regarding the application, including the appeal and neither did any of the other residents in the same road. He also reported that Swale Borough Council had not fulfilled their obligation in advising them of the application, that there was not enough information for residents to respond and in addition that the Parish Council should also have let them know. Cllr Szabo responded inasmuch as that the Parish Council are not responsible regarding informing residents about planning applications and Cllr Baldock will raise the issue of lack of information with Swale Borough Council. He also commented on a number of plots that have been sold in Wardwell Lane on the border with another Parish.

It was reported by a resident from Wardwell Lane that Swale Borough Council have said that brown bins cannot be emptied because of access issues, which is strange, as they have always been emptied previously by full sized refuse trucks.

It was requested that the undergrowth be cut under The Street road sign.

Mr Gates reminded everyone about the events being staged for D Day 80, that all the arrangements are in place and with big thanks to Cllr Portman. Cllr Howard-Challis wished the event every success.

The visibility splay on the corner opposite Vicarage Lane has undergrowth that has intruded onto it.

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

a) KCC Councillors;

In response to the comment about undergrowth being cut back, it is seen that where it is not cut back there is a reduction in vehicle speeds. The waste bin problems are ongoing and it is being dealt with on a daily basis. The issue regarding Wardwell Lane has been raised and councillors are awaiting a response from the team. KCC will be able to issue fines from 24th June 2024 for every day that they do not complete their collection. The contract cannot be broken within the first 3 months and not without agreement of the other two councils (Maidstone and Ashford). Suez were the only company to tender.

b) SBC Councillor

None;

c) Police Officer

What's changed

Swale Beat Team have opened a Problem Solving Package for all of Swale that aims to tackle nuisance vehicles. The aim is to log, categorise and work collaboratively with outside agencies to tackle this issue as Swale goes through the summer period.

What's going on in your area

I attended Lower Halstow Primary School to engage with pupils, parents and staff as the relatively new officer for the area. I was well received and will look to visit the school on a regular basis.

I have been made aware of some damage caused to the new sea wall along the Brickfields suggesting that someone had pushed the stones into the sea.

I have not yet attended the area to assess the damage and come up with preventive measures.

I am working with another colleague and the ERT to come up with a fast solution for the fly tipping occurring within this parish and neighbouring ones.

d) **Friends of the Brickfields**

The Friends of the Brickfields met last week, which was delayed due to Mr Telford's funeral. There will be some changes to the group as some members are possibly moving from the village. They are looking for volunteers. They are looking to purchase a brush cutter. There is some concern about the reed bed drying out and some consideration is being given to a bund wall, for which the EA have given permission, but this will affect the wildlife. The next meeting is 25th July 2024.

5. **To resolve the Minutes**

- a) It was resolved that the Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 7th May 2024 are a correct record and were signed accordingly.
- b) It was resolved that the Minutes of the Monthly Parish meeting held on Tuesday 7th May 2024 are a correct record and were signed accordingly.

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

There were none received.

7. **Finance**

- a) To discuss and agree action regarding two quotes received for a new website provider. It was proposed by Keith Howard-Challis to accept the quote for £924.00, and the ongoing cost for the domain name, seconded by Cllr Lawrence. Agreed unanimously.

8. **Correspondence**

An email was received requesting an update to the play area to compliment the new goal posts. Overall, the reception for the goal posts has been very well received. Cllr Portman would like to see something for children with special needs. It was discussed that metal equipment is easier to maintain. A mini gym from the Sunshine group is £1004. The inspection is due next month, which might dictate where funds are placed.

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

a) **Parks & Leisure and Planning:**

Covered above.

b) **Footpaths and Burial Ground**

There have been several reports of inconsiderate parking in Vicarage Lane; Cllr Portman has reported this to our Police Beat Officer. The cracked bridge was reported to KCC, Public Rights of Way, last year, but nothing has happened, although the report was acknowledged. The Clerk will follow up. There are two brown bins for the Burial Ground for which the Parish Council pay for two subscriptions and only one is being emptied.

c) **Hedgerow Maintenance**

Nothing to report currently.

d) **Allotments**

No report

e) **Parish Highways Plan**

Cllr Smith has contacted Highways. We are waiting for a date from the contractor, not sure what that is for, whether it is for The Street, or the bollards. There is a meeting planned to discuss the buffer zone.

f) **Brickfields and Seawall**

There have been reports that unknown teenagers are pushing the rocks from the seawall down to the beach. Cllr Portman has reported it to the Police Beat Officer who will look into the problem.

10. Clerk's Report

Payments received during May totalled £1,110.78. These were the payments from the three barges.

An updated 60 page information pack for the Highways Improvement Plan has been received and circulated

The Parish Council solicitors have received a draft contract and overage agreement regarding the purchase of land at the Brickfields. They are raising some further queries. When they receive the replies to these, they should be in a position to send the contracts and agreement for signing.

I have contacted Unity Trust to ask why the pdf version of the 31st May 2024 bank statement is not available to download today (4th June 2024). This has happened two months in a row.

Currently there is one outstanding payment of £83.89, which is being addressed at this meeting. The bank balance as of 31st May 2024 is £64,926.60.

11. Items for information only:

- a) Items for Website and Village News – Request for Volunteers for Friends of the Brickfields
- b) To receive agenda items for the next meeting - None

The meeting closed at 7.50pm

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 2nd July 2024

Payments June 2024

Payee	Description	Gross Amount £	VAT £	Cheque No/Bank Payment
Mrs A I Smith	Clerk's Expenses and Salary	968.21		92175149
Mr M Tidy	Village Cleaning	137.28		460335897
Intelligent Facility Services Ltd	CCTV SIM Service Invoice: 09449	30.00	5.00	908528118
DCK Payroll Accounting Solutions	Payroll Process Invoice: P24214	36.00	6.00	882958609 (£30) 960488044 (6)
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust	Hall Hire Invoice 92 April	22.50		793483931
Cllr T Portman	Reimbursement Various items re: Tree Planting (not authorised in April)	83.89		346618971
St Margaret's Church, Lower Halstow	Donation for East Window Project	200.00		Awaiting bank details

Lloyds Multipay DD

11/06/24

£3.00

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. K Howard-Challis
Chair**