

Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 4 February 2014 at 7.00pm in Lower Halstow Memorial Hall.

Present: Cllr Mick Drury, (Chair); Cllr John Knight (Vice Chair); Cllr Chris Mayes; Cllr Steve Gates; Cllr Steve Parker; Cllr Robert Smith; Cllr Barry Tucker and Parish Clerk Mrs C Fordham.

*Action*

Borough Councillor Burgess and 12 members of the public.

1. **Apologies** Cllr Ben Stokes
2. **Open Time**

Two residents raised concerns about parking on the grass verges in The Street. The verges were planted with daffodils and these were being ruined as well as the verges being churned up. The Chair advised that the Council would investigate whether suitable notices could be fixed to offending cars.

One of the Church Wardens asked if there would be any objection to putting a notice at the east end of Church Path about the location of the Church. The Chair advised this issue had been raised before with the Borough Councillor. The Parish would have no objection.

A residents asked if it would be possible to hold a fund raising event on the Recreation Ground (See item 7 t)

Specific points were raised about the use of the Brickfields and dock area. The resident felt that the covenants indicated that only amenity use was allowed and that barge restoration was not consistent with these.. The Vice Chair advised that the Westmoreland Trust will have to ensure that they comply with any covenants on the land, as well as holding appropriate insurance and licences for any movements of the barge. The same resident also expressed concerns about the Edith May and whether the mooring of the barge was consistent with existing covenants and planning rules. The Vice Chair advised this was the responsibility of the owners of the barge to meet the conditions. The resident had contacted the Heritage Lottery Fund direct and had been advised that the Council could apply for their own funding of up to £10,000 to restore the dock themselves. The Vice Chair advised that the cost of refurbishing the dock area would be considerably more than this. It would be much more cost effective to include refurbishment in any possible future agreement with the Westmoreland Trust .

The Council's attention was drawn to the fact that Davis Commission had still identified the Thames Estuary as a possible site for an airport hub.

Another resident asked if there was a current report on the condition of the dock, as repairs had been carried out about 1 year ago. There was no recent report. Concern was expressed that the whole dock would be in use if the Westmoreland came in and was it possible to put the dry dock on the barge blocks. It was advised that the barge blocks were shaped and would not therefore be appropriate for the dry dock without alteration.

On enquiry, a resident was assured that all boats using the draw dock or dock needed to have an agreement with the Council.

**Cllr Burgess** apologised that he had been unable to attend the last meeting. He advised that the was pursuing the road improvement issues in Breach Lane. He had a small amount of Community Engagement funding available and asked if the Council would like any new litter bins. It was suggested that a bin could be installed at the play

area and the Brickfields; these would be emptied free of charge by SBC. He intended to hold bi monthly surgeries in the village and would advertise these in the Newsletter. There would be a significant reduction in Community Funding available to KCC Councillors in the next financial year. The Council raised the issue of getting the drainage ditches in the village cleared. Clerk

### **3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Gates declared a Non Pecuniary Interest in item 11bi).

Cllr Smith declared a Non Pecuniary Interest in item 11b)

Cllr Drury declared a Pecuniary Interest in matters relating to the Brickfields Car park and Dock.

*It was agreed that item 6a) Affordable Housing update would be taken at this point to allow the visitor to speak to the Council.*

### **4.Minutes of the January Meeting**

It was proposed by Cllr Gates, seconded by Cllr Knight that the minutes of the January meeting of the Council be accepted as a true record; all were in favour and the minutes were duly signed.

### **5.Matters Arising from the January meeting**

Mrs Clarke had kindly donated a 15' conifer tree, which had been transplanted onto the Village Green. Mr Branchett and Cllr Knight and Mayes were thanked for their hard work. The Council would investigate the cost of providing an electrical connection for the Christmas lights. Clerk

### **6. Decisions /Actions/Proposals**

#### **a) Affordable Housing Scheme Update** *(Taken after item 3).*

Tessa O'Sullivan advised that she worked for Action with Rural Communities in Kent, and acted as independent adviser/liaison officer for Parishes wishing to consider affordable housing schemes. There had been a 32% response rate to the survey with 11 expressions of interest in the scheme, 1 single person, 4 couples and 6 families, 5 of these were renting privately, 6 living with parents. 3 respondents were able to afford shared ownership properties. Ms O'Sullivan would follow up with SBC which of the identified sites were the most suitable. The Chair suggested, should the Council decided to pursue the scheme, that a maximum of 6 units be considered. Ms O' Sullivan advised that a minimum of 5 units would be required to make any scheme viable.

#### **b) Signature of Preliminary Agreement with Westmoreland Trust CIC**

*It was agreed that this item would be taken at the end of the meeting*

See confidential minutes

### **7.Correspondence**

- a) KALC email of 8.1.14 – consultation on outpatient Services. It was agreed that the Council would register to be included in the consultation. Clerk
- b) SBC email of 8.1.14 – Swale Volunteer awards.
- c) Young Kent email of 16.1.14 – launch of new Youth Clinic.
- d) KALC email of 16.1.14 – KCC road safety consultation. There were proposals to increase fixed penalties, a post test qualification and speed reductions.
- e) KALC email of 17.1.14 and 23.1.14, 28.1.14 – invitation to register on SE Ambulance consultation site. It was agreed that the Council would register. Clerk
- f) KALC email of 17.1.14 – consultation on update on Police and Crime Plan.
- g) Swale Area Committee email of 21.1.14 – Questionnaire of the future of the Swale Area Committee. Representative to answer appropriate section. Cllr Smith
- h) KALC email of 23.1.14 – Parish News no 374. An increase in Section 137 expenditure limits and planning training was noted.

- i) KALC email of 23.1.14 – KCC safe and sensible street lighting.
- j) KALC email of 27.1.14 – SE Ambulance Service consultation events.
- k) N Randall email of 27.1.14 – Support for the idea of a Memorial wood on the Brickfields. See item x below.
- l) KALC email of 30.1.14 - Community Awards scheme.
- m) KALC email of 30.1.14 – Draft minutes of KALC AGM.
- n) KALC email of 30.1.14 – Kent and Medway Safety Partnership free seminars.
- o) Chair Cllr Drury of 30.1.14 – informal complaint from resident *This item was taken after the Chair left the meeting at 9.35pm* Cllr Knight advised that he did not have a disclosable interest in the Westmoreland or Edith May. The Council confirmed that they had agreed that the car park could be used for special occasions and the users were to be informed accordingly. **Clerk**
- p) SBC email of 30.1.14 – consultation on removal of disabled bays.
- q) Resident email of 30.1.14- complaint about parking at Westfield Cottages It was advised that parking permits were specific to individual residents, and not to properties and could not therefore be passed from one tenant to the next in rented properties. **Clerk**
- r) Wisdom Hospice email of 30.1.14 – Publicity request.
- s) KALC email of 31.1.14 – Men of Trees Competition.
- t) Resident of 19.1.14 – complaint about parking on grass verge and parking around the Three Tuns. The Council would consult PCSO and consider fixing notices to offending vehicles **Clerk**
- u) Resident email of 12.1.14 – questions about the car park at the Brickfields and suggestions about village fete and memorial wood. The request to hold a fete on Recreation Ground was approved. **Clerk**
- v) Resident email of 13.1.14 – questions about the covenants on the Brickfields. *This item was taken after the Chair left the meeting at 9.35pm* Initial advice from solicitor had been received about covenants on the land and this would be passed to the resident. It was re-iterated that the Council did not have any plans for buildings on the Brickfields. **Clerk**
- w) Resident email of 1.2.14 – suggestions and support for a Memorial Wood.
- x) Friends of the Brickfields email of 2.2.14 – request to hold a village fete on the Recreation Ground and suggestions about Memorial Wood. The Council approved the request to hold a fete on the Recreation Ground. The Friends would be asked to prepare a plan to present to the Council about a Memorial Wood. **Clerk**
- y) R Shaw email of 3.2.14 – request to place a memorial bench on the Brickfields. It was proposed by Cllr Knight, seconded by Cllr Tucker that the application would be allowed, all were in favour. Cllr Knight would contact the applicants to discuss the location and the type of bench required. It was noted that a second tree had been planted in the Brickfields. The Clerk had received a call expressing concern about the second tree. The Council considered that It would be more appropriate for trees to be planted in or moved to the Memorial wood once the plans had been finalised. **Cllr Knight**
- z) UK Power Networks email of 3.2.14 – Power advice and information if another storm hits.
- aa) Email of 4.2.14 – request to hold dog show on Recreation Ground on 31 May. Request was approved. **Clerk**

**8.Planning**

- a) SBC email of 9.1.14 – G&T documents following up training.
- b) KCC email of 30.1.14 – Kent Minerals and Waste Plan consultation open.
- c) Summaries dated 20.1., 27.1

**9. Clerk’s Report**

- a) The Clerk had reported two faulty lights, one in Cumberland Drive, and one in Westmoreland.
- b) The Clerk had received a phone call from a resident asking for details of the final agreement with the Westmoreland CIC. Concern was also expressed about the process being followed with regard to the Westmoreland. The Chair had received similar concerns. The Clerk advised the enquirer that the onus would be on the Trust to meet any covenants on the land.
- c) The Clerk had identified the person dealing with the School extension plans, *Clerk* but was awaiting a return call.
- d) The Clerk had spoken to KCC about reducing the number of cuts on the Recreation Ground, but was still awaiting a reply. KCC advised that the most cost effective way to arrange cutting in the play area was to ask for a cut as and when required. The Clerk would try to source other quotes for the cutting of other grass areas in the village to ensure value for money *Clerk*
- e) The Clerk had reported the problems with the bridge to the Environment Agency as an urgent matter, but had not received any feedback *Clerk*

**10. Finance**

a) **Cheques**

Payee	Description	Amount	Cheque No.
Commercial Services Trading Ltd <b>NB this is no longer able to be paid by direct debit The first payment for the year was not taken.</b>	2 Half Yearly invoices for grounds maintenance	940.36	100073
	VAT	940.36	
		376.14	
		<b>Total 2256.86</b>	
Street Lights	Repairs to Lamp in Cumberland Drive	47.85	100074
	Repairs to assorted lamps	518.55	
	VAT	113.28	
		<b>Total 679.68</b>	
Lower Halstow Parish Council	Transfer of funds between Santander and Barclays	<b>Total 2000.00</b>	001675

Under the Local Government Act 1972 (Sch 2) the signing of the cheques was proposed by Cllr Mayes seconded by Cllr Parker; all councilors were in favour and the cheques were duly signed.

b) **Bank Reconciliation and Budget**

There was approximately £8398 in the Council bank accounts. Letters were signed to Barclays and Santander changing address details.

**11. Reports from Members :**

**a) Brickfields Car Park** *It was agreed this item would be deferred to the end of the meeting. Cllr Drury left the meeting before this item was taken and the matter was chaired by the Vice Chair.*

The Vice Chair advised that he had photographic evidence to prove the site had been used for parking cars for more than 10 years. He would liaise with the Clerk to submit an application to SBC for lawful use. The Vice Chair advised that there had been no complaints to SBC about the site being used for parking, as far as he was aware.

The Clerk was asked to track down the current owner of the land to inform them of the proposal and to initiate discussion about extending the lease. **Clerk**

**b) Footpaths, Highways and Lighting**

i) **Vegetation Encroaching onto Tuns Hill** The Clerk was asked to report the problem to KCC. **Clerk**

ii) Cllr Lee Burgess advised that KCC would be undertaking repairs to the edge of the carriageway in Breach Lane at the corner by Home Farm. The Clerk was asked to advise residents of the problems at the corner. Cllr Burgess also advised that the KCC would be repairing the barrier on the northern edge of the bend.

iii) The Clerk was asked to report the following :the leylandii near Booker Packs encroaching onto the carriageway; potholes on Basser Hill, drainage problems; the bank at Green Farm. The Chair had reported the pothole under the railway bridge in Breach Lane. **Clerk**

iv) Three quotes had been received to cut back the overhanging tree at Heron Close It was proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Mayes that the quote from Mr Branchett for £75 be accepted; all were in favour. **Cllr Smith**

v) The slopping path from Lapwing Drive down to Church path was very slippery. The Chair would ask the street sweeper to deal with the matter. **Chair**

**b) Burial Ground**

**c) Allotments**

**d) KALC**

**e) School Governor** A meeting was scheduled for 6 February.

**f) Play Area** the official opening on 16 January had been very successful. It was proposed by the Chair, seconded by Cllr Knight that a vote of thanks be recorded to the Friends of the Park for all the hard work; all were in favour.

**g) Policy Updates** It was agreed that priority be given to drafting and implementing a Data Protection Policy. **Clerk**

**h) Newsletter/website** the following items would be included in the Newsletter: UK Power network refund; Breach lane; Memorial Wood; Sunday Bus Service, Diary of Village Events, parking on verges, date of Annual Assembly. **Clerk**

**12 Any Other Business**

a) Cllr Gates advised that the Sunday Bus Service was to be withdrawn. A letter would be written to KCC. **Clerk**

b) Cllr Tucker advised that he would probably stand down at the next elections and the Chair advised that he would be suggesting that someone else takes over as Chair at the next Annual Meeting of the Council. **All Cllrs**

**13. Date of Next Meeting** The next meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 4 March at 7.00pm in the Memorial Hall. The Annual Assembly of the Parish will be held on Tuesday 6 May.

The chair left the meeting at 9.35pm and the meeting closed at 10.20pm

Date:

Signed:

Cllr J Knight  
Vice Chair