

Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 6th December 2016 at 7.00 pm in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

Present: Cllr Steve Gates (Chair); Cllr Rob Smith; Cllr Allyson Beerstecher; Cllr Sue Hartfree; Cllr Keith Howard-Challis; Chairman Friends of the Brickfields Peter Froggatt; Parish Clerk Mrs A Smith, and 6 members of the public was also in attendance.

The Chair welcomed everyone and informed those present that the meeting will be recorded for the purposes of the minutes. **Action**

1. Apologies

Cllr Dewar-Whalley and Cllr Stokes sent their apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary Interests

Cllr Smith declared a non-pecuniary interest the item relating the lease on the Brickfields.

3. Public Session

A resident of Westfield Cottages addressed the meeting in respect of the car park at Westfield Cottages. He had been allocated a space four years ago and had completed a form and paid for the space initially, but had not received a request for payment after the first two years and had not been given a permit. He had recently been informed that the space had been re-allocated to another resident, but would like assurance that as parking was at a premium in the area that he still had a space in the car park.

The Church Warden asked that the Parish Council could work with the Church in respect of putting the bins out at the Church and Burial Ground.

A resident stated the street light at the bus stop was not working and was informed that it had already been reported. He also went on to say that the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony went well. Thanks and appreciation was given to all that helped. Next year Father Christmas will be provided with a chair.

A resident asked if there were plans for the Parish Council to make representation at the Funton Brickworks Appeal later this month and was informed that there were no current plans. Cllr Beerstecher will be attending and will speak, but cannot go on all three days.

4. Visitors

There were no reports.

Peter Froggatt, Chairman of Friends of the Brickfields gave a presentation on improving the path for all round year use by raising the bund to keep the water in, between the double bend by the reed bed. There is evidence of water voles in the area and they are protected.

The project may require a Natural England Water Vole Mitigation Licence. The next Kent Wildlife Trust grant meeting is in January 2017 and it is a competitive process.

It was put forward by Cllr Smith that the Probation Service might be able to provide help in doing the work.

5. Minutes of the November Meeting

It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Beerstecher that the draft minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on 1st November be accepted as a true record. All Councillors were in favour and the minutes were duly signed.

6. Planning Applications

It has been reported that at the development in School Lane that there was a lot of mud all over the road.

Funton Brickworks

Cllr Beerstecher is of the opinion that Swale Borough Council and Highways have good and thorough reasons with their objections. There will be a site visit during the appeal process.

It was agreed to write to the Planning Inspector to say that Lower Halstow Parish Council support Swale Borough Council in their objections. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Hartfree. **Clerk**

7. Previous months list of planning decisions

None.

8. Brickfields

General

Thanks was given to all involved in getting the Firebreak done – and before Christmas. It was suggested that a sign be put up for dog walkers that there are sharp objects in the area. The terms of reference for the Friends of the Brickfields (FOB) needs to be revised at the next FOB meeting, in the New Year. The point has been raised with the local Headmaster that the School could use the Brickfields for educational purposes.

Lease for Part of Brickfields

There is a ransom strip that had a 21 year lease originally now has less than 5 years to run. Cllr Smith suggested that the Parish Council employ specialist solicitors to give a report on the lease, giving detail of the covenants and restrictions and asking for confirmation that the land can or cannot be developed. The Chair informed the meeting that ASB Law has previously looked at the Titles. The lease can be terminated with 6 months notice; otherwise the lease finishes on 23 July 2020. There is a benefit of right of way across the land to the land owned outright by the Parish Council. It was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Beerstecher that the Parish Council write to the owners of the leased land that the council are applying to register their land with Fields in Trust and would they like to apply to Fields in Trust in their own right.

Clerk

9. Reports from members:

a) Parks & Leisure (including Playground)

b) Docks and Barges

Engineers Report on Condition of the Dock

To re-new the dock would be in the region of £650000. In the engineer's opinion this is not necessary. His recommendation was to re-lay the hard standing and improve power and lighting. A budget of £50000 would be sufficient to make the dock good. Mr Bunce, the chartered surveyor, has waived his fees of £450.00. A letter of thanks will be sent to him.

Clerk

Burial Ground & Allotments

The dead trees have been removed. The area will be weeded, a weed suppressing membrane laid, new trees planted and laying bark and the "leaky pipe" put down at the same time. The total cost will be £106.00. Proposed by Cllr Hartfree and seconded by Cllr Smith.

Cllr Hartfree

c) Footpaths, Highways, Lighting

KCC Highways have replied to the Parish Council's letter. They did not recommend that bollards be put in and permission is required. It would be too expensive to remove the white lines in The Street, but they are happy for them to wear away and not be re-marked.

d) Emergency Planning

The letter regarding vulnerable persons will be published in January's Village News. It was agreed that an abridged version of the Emergency Plan will be put on the website.

Flood Wardens

The wardens completed an extensive walk of the village and identified all the vulnerable areas to flooding. Cllr Howard-challis will check with the wardens as to whether they require an ordnance survey map of Lower Halstow.

**Cllr Howard
Challis**

10. Reports on meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council

a) KALC

There have been two meetings since the last Parish Council meeting. There was a talk on tourism in Swale to improve the impression of Swale, but has a low budget. There is an option for Parish Councils to take over soft landscaping, but KCC would get better rates from the contractors. The Police and Crime Commissioner spoke on cracking down on driving and using mobile phones. The meeting informed him that the 101 telephone number is not working for the communities. A member of DCLG offered the

	B&Q: No Nails - Barriers Direct invoice 081161 -	£7.82 £146.36		
Mr R Smith	Photocopies Brickfield Deeds - Travelling Expenses KALC AGM: 36 miles x 0.45p	£8.00 £16.20	£24.20	100256
Mrs S Hartfree	Christmas presents and wrapping paper for Christmas lighting ceremony.		£29.15	100257

Under the Local Government Act 1972 (Sch 2) the signing of the cheques was proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis seconded by Cllr Beerstecher, all Councillors were in favour.

c) Discuss the council's view on the Precept for 2017/18

A general discussion followed in respect of percentages and how that would affect each household. A decision will be made at the January meeting.

Any Other Business

Spring Clean. The Council will consider areas that they would like tidied up for discussion at the next meeting.

In respect of the construction in School Lane, the number of houses being built is the correct amount as per the plans.

Broken glass is being dropped by the dustmen. Complaint to be made to Swale Borough council. Cllr Hartfree has not been able to contact the volunteer warden in respect of the working party for the Burial Ground.

Item for newsletter - three children have been reported playing in the middle of the road and will not move for the traffic, in the dark with no lights on their bicycles.

14. Date of Next meeting

The next meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 3rd January 2017 at 7 pm in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

Date

Signed:

Cllr S Gates
Chair