

Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on Tuesday 3 April 2018 at 7.00 pm in the Memorial Hall, Lower Halstow.

Present: Cllr Rob Smith (Chair); Cllr Allyson Beerstecher; Cllr Keith Howard-Challis; Cllr Sue Hartfree; Cllr Steve Gates; Cllr Rod Dadson and 4 members of the public were in attendance.

The Chair welcomed everyone and stated that the meeting was being recorded for the purposes of the Minutes, and also stated that there would be a 15-minute Public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Cllr Stokes. Cllr Parker also sent apologies due to work commitments which were received after the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None.

b) Disclosable Non-Pecuniary Interests

Councillor Hartfree declared a Non-Pecuniary interest in Agenda item 7(a) Stream clearance.

3. Public Session

There were no comments.

4. Visitors reports or comments

a) Report from KCC Councillor Mike Whiting:

Please find below a summary of my work on behalf of the residents of Lower Halstow since my last report.

Some good news to start - last year KCC spent around £5.1m on repairing potholes. I managed to get that figure raised to £7.1m this year, and last week Government agree to give a further £3m grant - which gives a total in excess of £11m this year. The official pothole blitz commences this month and will run through to October, with the aim of getting every pothole repaired, and repaired properly. Meanwhile, emergency repairs will continue, and everyone is asked to report any pothole or other damage via the website, <http://webapps.kent.gov.uk/KCC.KHSFaultsGIS.Web.Sites.Public/ReportAFault.aspx>.

More good news, though expected this time. I wrote to your clerk last month, reassuring her that Swale Council was not, at its meeting last month, going to consider any changes to the rules about Parish Councils calling in planning application. The whole thing was an unfortunate bit of misinformation, sadly repeated in the local paper. As per my assurances, no such proposal was made at the meeting and there will be no changes to the rules.

At last, I have had a note back from Highways regarding the retaining wall in Sheerness Road. This was following up and enquiry by the Parish Council via the KCC website on 18/7/17 - reference 291690. I am told KCC would likely have no objection to the Parish carrying out any works, as long as the schedule and traffic management had been agreed first. The Parish needs to write to Highways, explaining the exact nature of the works to be undertaken and the specific location and when it wants to carry out the work. Highways can then work out what traffic management might be required, check insurances, etc, as they would with any other enquiry relating to work on the public highway. That letter can be sent to me in the first instance and I will pass to the relevant person for a response. Finally, to end on more good news, I have agreed KCC will not be making any changes to the bus subsidy it gives Chalkwell to run the evening and Saturday 326 and 327 bus services.

Members may recall that in January KCC had proposed to cut these and other services to save money. Since then, the required savings have been reduced from £2.2m to £0.45m and, as a result, the funding for the 326 and 327 has been secured.

I am hoping we can find ways to improve bus services locally, and KCC will start a "Big Conversation" shortly, with a range of public meetings, to help it understand how it might do that. Details will be published in due course.

I hope this is helpful, please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance in these or any other matters.

In respect of the Housing Infrastructure Fund - £40m was awarded to the fund. KCC and Swale Borough Council will now go to stage 2 of the competitive process. This will include plans to improve the Key Street junction.

There will also be a new scheme proposed in the next few months in respect of junction 5 of the M2. There will be a formal consultation.

5. To agree Minutes of March meeting.

The Minutes of the meeting of Lower Halstow Parish Council held on 6th March were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Dadson. The minutes were duly signed.

6. Planning Applications

a) 18/501164/TPO. TPO Application to deadwood and crown reduce one Oak Tree by approximately 5 to 6ft, crown raise to 3 to 4m and remove epicormic growth. 77 School Lane, Lower Halstow. Comments by 10th April 2018.

No comments.

b) 18/501046/FULL: Proposed portal framed agricultural grain and machinery store. Great Barksore Farm, Sheerness Road, Lower Halstow. Comments by 13 April 2018.

No comments.

7. To discuss and agree action on the following:

a) Stream bank clearance behind garages – Burntwick Drive

There is a lot of rubbish next to the stream, which needs to be cleared before it slips into the stream and causes problems. A letter will be written to the resident at the end of Spice Cottages.

Action: Chair and Clerk

b) WW1 Memorial Beacon;

Full planning permission is required for the beacon. The fee is currently unknown. The Clerk will apply to Swale Borough Council. A pilot hole has been dug. The steering group met on 24th March. Proceedings for 11th November will centre on the Memorial Hall and St Margaret's Church and a program of the events will be produced. Other groups in the village will be approached for their plans. Another meeting is planned for the end of April.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Gates

c) Streetlights;

The LED street lights in Upchurch seem to give a softer better spread of light. The chair suggested a rolling 5 year plan to replace the sodium lanterns. The contractor has said that they could do a trial for different streetlights and Cllr Gates suggested that the trial takes place on the lights that are currently not working. The insurance company will be contacted again in respect of the light missing in Burntwick Drive and UK Power Networks for advice.

Action: Clerk

d) Pathway/slab replacement, west dockside;

Discussed at 8 c) below.

e) Hi-vis paint for Recreation Ground barrier;

Cllr Dadson has kindly agreed to supply paint for the barrier and Mr Knott will be approached to paint it.

Action: Cllr Dadson

f) FIT deed/contract;

Discussed at 8 a) below.

g) Housing Infrastructure Fund – email 20/2/18

It was discussed that the infrastructure is lacking for the amount of people in the area.

h) Quote to dig out culvert.

No action to be taken in the current wet conditions.

i) Calor heaters for hall as back up heating in case of loss of power.

In relation to the Emergency Plan if power failed there is no back up heating for the hall. The Chair suggested that one calor gas heater with one 56lb bottle would be sufficient. It was agreed to split the cost of £100 including VAT with the Village Hall Committee. Proposed by Cllr Beerstecher, seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis. Carried unanimously. Cllr Howard-Challis will collect.

Action: Clerk and Cllr Howard-Challis

8. Review of Action List items and reports from members on the following: Please see attached "Action List"

a) Brickfields;

There was a site meeting on 13th March regarding the firebreak. It will be weed treated until July/August.

Fields in Trust Deed – It was agreed to ask for a quote from our solicitor for advice to find out if there is any benefit in signing the deed?

It was proposed by Cllr Gates and seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis to request to extend the lease of the strip of land between Heron Close and The Brickfield Amenity Site.

Carried unanimously.

Action: Clerk

The Friends of the Brickfield constitution is not yet ready.

b) Parks & Leisure (including Playground);

The roundabout is now fully functioning.

There is a flood risk at the stream that runs through Gibbs amenity area. In consultation with LMIDB and permission from a neighbouring landowner, a solution is possible. It was proposed by Cllr Beerstecher and seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis to approach the landowner to begin negotiations. Unanimously agreed.

c) Dock & Barges;

It was proposed by Cllr Dadson and seconded by Cllr Howard-Challis that quotes are sought for the repair and make safe the slabs along the top of the dock wall.

Unanimously agreed.

d) Burial Ground & Allotments;

Quotes are being obtained for a wall around the Burial Ground. It is a work in progress. Swale Borough Council have changed the refuse lorries to "narrow access" to prevent any more damage to the bank.

e) Footpaths, Highways, Lighting;

Discussed at 7 c).

The Parish Council are now registered with the Police in relation to introducing a 20 mph limit in School Lane, Lower Halstow.

f) Emergency Planning

Discussed at 7 i)

9. To acknowledge Reports on meetings attended on behalf of the Parish Council:

a) KALC Rep;

It was discussed that the planning applications do not give the parish councils enough time to respond with their comments in a lot of cases. UK Power Networks had a speaker there and passed on some good information. GDPR: it is possible that although the Clerk cannot be the Data Protection Officer, councillors may be able to fulfil the role, but this is not totally clear at this time. Next meeting is 11th June 2018

b) Memorial Hall Rep;

No report.

c) Finance Working Group

The group recommend that the rents for Westfield car park and the allotments be raised. It was proposed by Cllr Beerstecher and seconded by Cllr Hartfree that this will be discussed and voted on at the next full Council meeting. Agreed unanimously.

10. Clerks Report:

The Clerk has received 8 reply slips, to date, in respect of Westfield Car Park letter sent this month. So far, they are all in favour of more parking being made available.

The Burial Ground is subject to small business rate relief and there is nothing to pay for the year 2018/19.

The planning application to fell a holly tree at the Old Vicarage has been withdrawn. The Clerk has received a reply from Invicta Law in respect of the Fields In Trust application. They require more information, which the Clerk will supply.

To Authorise Invoices-see cheque list below. Proposed by Cllr Howard-Challis and seconded by Cllr Beerstecher.

11. Items for information only:

A member of the Friends of the Brickfields has asked for permission to put "Tommy Silhouettes" at the war memorial. This will be put on the agenda for next month.

Some Thames Barges will tie up alongside the dock between barge matches.

12. Items for Village News/Website.

Cllr Hartfree will put an item in the Village News for the Best Front Garden Competition. To place a correction in the Village News that the gentleman who cleared the roads of snow was Shaun Bearup.

13. Date of next meeting; 1st May 2018

The meeting closed at 21.20 hrs.

Cheque List

Payee	Description	Amount £	Cheque No.
Mr J Knott	Checking Play Area - £75.00 Litter Picking - £150.00	225.00	100355
Lower Halstow Memorial Hall Trust Fund	Hall Hire 6 February 2018	24.00	100356
JRB Enterprise Ltd	Dog Glove (waste bag) Dispenser and Standard Dog Gloves (Dispenser refill waste bags) x 2 cases	261.00	100357
DCK Accounting	Payroll Year End Annual Return 2016-17 Invoice P0513	30.00	100358
Mrs A I Smith	Salary and Expenses January – March 2018	£253.80	100359

Date:

Signed:

**Cllr. R. Smith.
Chair.**