

**Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting  
held on Wednesday 11 September 2019 at 7.30 p.m.  
Memorial Hall, The Street, High Halstow**

C/09/19/1-9

**Present :** Cllr George Crozer Chairman  
Cllr Chris Watson Vice Chair  
Cllr Adrian Catchpole  
Cllr Linda Atkinson Minute taking in place of Clerk  
Cllr Brian Williams  
Cllr Tim Munday  
Cllr Ray Collins  
Cllr Gary Jerreat  
Cllr Marilyn Stone

**Members of the public** 3

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**1 Apologies for absence**

No apologies necessary as all members were present. Congratulations were however recommended to our Clerk, Mrs Allen on her confinement.

**2 Disclosure of any pecuniary interests**

There were none. Cllr Crozer had questioned the issue of pecuniary interest with the legal department at Medway Council and would be asking the Clerk, Mrs Jenny Allen to provide a more detailed explanation for members on her return from maternity leave.

**3 Minutes of the last meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14 August will be submitted to members for approval in time for the next meeting. Mrs Allen, Parish Clerk had given birth to her second child since the last meeting and was therefore unable to produce minutes.

There was also discussion on the missing minutes for previous months when the previous Clerk had responsibility. Due to volume of work catching up with Finance matters, Mrs Allen had been unable to update any previous notes that had been made. Cllr Atkinson confirmed that she would liaise with Mrs Allen and obtain the notes made by the previous Clerk. Cllr Atkinson would then update draft minutes from memory with the help of other members where possible.

**4 Matters arising from the minutes (not otherwise on the Agenda)**

There were no other matters arising from the minutes.

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<b>5</b>	<b>Planning - Appendix A</b>
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**Applications**

There were no objections to any of the applications showing on the Agenda.

Having checked planning applications on the day of the meeting Cllr Collins confirmed that there was an additional application:

MC/19/2360 - 22 Northwood Avenue High Halstow Rochester Medway ME3 8SX for the Installation of 1.7m high double gate to front.

This application was discussed with members but there were no objections

**Decisions**

These were discussed with members and noted.

**Appeals and other matters**

Cllr Crozer confirmed that he had spoken to Dave Harris of Medway Council Planning Department during the course of the day regarding the signs for traffic to the Redrow Development site.

Cllr Crozer also confirmed that he had discussed the issue of the large signage advertising a Bake-Off due to take place at the Memorial Hall. Cllr Crozer was concerned that this may lead to open season for all businesses to leave signage all over the village.

Cllr Crozer then discussed the advertising regarding the new Redrow homes even though the signage is on their property. It may be that the advertising must be a particular size. Members are requested to keep an eye on these issues.

**Neighbourhood Plan**

The Committee had met the week before and were considering relevant policies.

**Local Plan**

There had been no news on the Local Plan other than there has been a stop on the plan to wait for the outcome of the prospective HIF bid.

**Section 106 monies**

Cllr Collins confirmed that he was waiting to be called to the next meeting with Medway Council.

<b>6</b>	<b>Grant applications</b>
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There had been no grant applications

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**Finance – Appendix B****Bank balances**

There were several months of bank reconciliations due to the fact that the Clerk, Mrs Allen had not had access to the bank account. Cllr Crozer confirmed that it was good to see the accounts up to date.

Cllr Collins commented that the payment into the account of £6,000 for the Neighbourhood Plan Grant had not been shown in the accounts anywhere. However, this amount had been received from Groundwork UK.

**Cheques signed since the last meeting**

Cllr Crozer read aloud the payments to be made.

**Accounts for payment**

Cllr Collins proposed that the payments be made and Cllr Stone seconded the proposal. The vote was unanimous.

**Finance Policy**

To be discussed at the next meeting.

**Online Banking**

It was confirmed that the Clerk, Mrs Allen now had full access to the bank account.

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**Management of the Council's land and property Appendix C****Recreation Ground**

Discussion on what type of lock should be purchased regarding the lock for the gate to the Recreation Ground. It was decided that 3 combination locks be purchased to cover each of the gates. A memorable number was decided on in which to provide to the Emergency Services. Cllr Williams proposed that 3 locks be purchased and this was seconded by Cllr Munday.

**Play Park**

Cllr Williams confirmed that emergency repairs were needed to the play park. The work had now been carried out to the agreed specification and Cllr Williams proposed that the invoice for £295.00 from V Sinclair Ltd be paid and this proposal was seconded by Cllr Munday.

There was discussion on the gates to the play park. An amount of between £60-£70 was required to repair the gate. This was proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr Catchpole.

**Allotments**

An amount of £557.80 had been spent by a villager in materials to reinstate the triangular piece on the allotment that had become unworkable. He had looked on it as a project to help the community. The money had been spent on shingle

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to cover most of the land but also fruit trees and strawberries for the villagers to enjoy. This piece of land had been full of weeds and spirit bottles and had taken many hours to remove the offending bottles and weeds. There was a discussion on whether payment should be made to the villager as a specific amount had not been agreed with the Parish Council. There was some discussion as to whether it had been agreed at all that the villager would have been recompensed for his costs. The previous minutes were unclear.

After some discussion the matter was put to the vote to pay the villager in full. It was proposed by Cllr Watson and seconded by Cllr Atkinson to pay the expenses in full. There were 5 votes for and 2 against.

A letter will accompany the cheque with thanks but any future works must be confirmed by the members.

#### **Forge Common**

The original management plan created by an Expert for Forge Common was a 10 year plan to take as much of the nutrients away so that a meadow could be created. We are now coming to the end of the 10 year plan which it is apparent was not successful. The intention is to now strip some of the grass back and seed for meadow. It was suggested that the soil needs to be tested for a way forward.

#### **Village grounds maintenance**

Nothing to report on this.

#### **Nurture Grounds Maintenance Contract**

It was confirmed that the contract with Nurture does not end until May 2020. Cllr Catchpole suggested processing a specific outline – a map – of what exactly needs to be cut and where. He will be drawing up a specific contract for this to be discussed with members.

Some members were unhappy with the erratic cutting of the grass in different areas.

The bushes in Topley drive

#### **All weather path**

An amount of £8,400 had been agreed by members to repair the path but as the quotation was now more than 6 months old then Cllr Williams would now have to revert back to the Contractor to confirm the price for the work. There was a proposal for Cllr Williams to go ahead with instructing the Contractor for the work on condition the new estimate of £8,400 plus a 5% addition (approximately £500), excluding VAT. Cllr Atkinson proposed the payment and Cllr Munday seconded the proposal. The vote was unanimous in favour.

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#### **Holmes Close ditch clearance**

There was some discussion on who the ditch may belong to. Medway Council are taking over this issue and will get it done but they will seek out who that part of the land owns it. Cllr Crozer to follow up on the clearance issue with Ward Cllr Phil Filmer or Ruth Daloo at Medway Council.

The top of Valentine Drive has been cleared by Medway Council in any event.

#### **Hérons Bank Storm drains**

It is not owned by the Parish Council. It is not MC responsibility. It is responsibility of the owner which is Wilcon Homes but may have been transferred to Taylor Wimpey.

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#### **Highways and Transport**

##### **Public Rights of Way**

Cllr Collins reported that the landowner farmer of Christmas lane has erected wild life cameras on the top field due to trespassers ruining his crop. The police have been informed.

Cllr Collins has also reported to Medway Council that public footpath from Forge Lane is badly overgrown.

##### **Street Cleaning**

There is an outstanding amount of money to pay one of the Street Cleaners for overtime. The Street Cleaners required new black sacks. Cllr Crozer would organise these.

##### **Tree Warden Report**

There was nothing to report

##### **Bus Shelters**

Cllr Williams still had the situation under control but needed to liaise with the Clerk, Mrs Allen. Cllr Williams confirmed that this issue would be concluded swiftly once Mrs Allen returns from Maternity Leave.

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#### **Redrow Development**

Cllr Watson raised the issue of the ditches at the forefront of the Redrow Development as she had received many complaints as to it being dangerous. Cllr Catchpole responded that this type of frontage is now common place with development and in fact ditches were either side of the fields in Britannia road.

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<b>11</b>		<p><b>Halls</b></p> <p><b>Recreation Hall</b></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p> <p><b>Memorial Hall</b></p> <p>Nothing to report</p>
<b>12</b>		<p><b>Rural Liaison Committee</b></p> <p>Nothing to report.</p>
<b>13</b>		<p><b>Police matters</b></p> <p>There was no meeting.</p>
<b>14</b>		<p><b>KALC</b></p> <p>There had been no meeting.</p>
<b>15</b>		<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>Surgery</b></p> <p>A resident who is disabled had an issue with her neighbours trees at the end of her garden as they are invasive into her garden. She is not in a financial position to employ a Contractor to cut down. The issue was passed to Relief in Need representative present at the meeting and Ward Cllr Ron Sands expressed an interest helping the resident with the issue. He asked that his telephone number be given to the resident.</p> <p><b>Hight Halstow Times</b></p> <p>The Editor of the High Halstow Times has requested that someone be appointed to provide him with a short resume of the Parish Council meeting each month. Cllr Atkinson volunteered for the next edition due to the Clerk, Mrs Allen taking maternity leave. It was confirmed that the Mrs Allen would provide the Editor with a resume going forward from November.</p> <p><b>Parish Council website</b></p> <p>Cllr Crozer queried why the accounts had not been updated on the website as yet but it was pointed out that we were still waiting for Mrs Allen to return from maternity leave to finalise this issue.</p>

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16	<b>Youth Club</b>	The Youth Club is still well attended. Unfortunately, two of the helpers will not be attending as their children had now outgrown the Youth Club. Any volunteers would be greatly appreciated.
17	<b>High Halstow Primary School</b>	There had not been a meeting.
18	<b>Friends of St Margarets</b>	The first of the two windows had commenced. Two heritage days had started.
19	<b>Relief in Need</b>	<p>The representative reported that their Clerk had resigned in August. They do have a replacement Clerk but they are in the process of a handover.</p> <p>Bursary applications have been going well and the closing date is not until the end of September. The method of payment had been changed and had worked much better this year. It had provided more work admin wise but it had been worth it.</p>
20	<b>Consultation</b>	None.
21	<b>Correspondence</b>	<p><b>Ward Cllr Ron Sands</b> was present to speak to the members about an application for the Peninsula to be classed as a National Park. He confirmed that he had met with the South Downs representatives and confirmed that it would be a long process. It would take at least 5 years.</p> <p>Mr Sands confirmed that wanted to preserve the peninsula as is for the sake of our children. Not for the peninsula villagers alone but also the bring to the rest of Medway and Kent what a fabulous place the peninsula is to enjoy.</p> <p>It was proposed by Cllr Crozer that High Halstow Parish Council support Cllr Sands proposal for the Peninsula to become a National Park and this was seconded by Cllr Watson.</p> <p>It was concluded that Cllr Sands would write a piece for the High Halstow Times on the subject.</p> <p>Cllr Sands then spoke of the planning application that had been submitted to Medway Council for industrial use as a Transport Yard. He felt it was an afront</p>

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to the villagers of the peninsula. Trees have already been cut down and the land destroyed. It was not an industrial site but it is fast becoming one already.

Councillors and public were urged to object the application.

22	<b>Councillor Training</b>
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Cllr Stone confirmed that she wanted to go to the training planned in Frindsbury. No other Councillors were available to attend.

23	<b>Reports and Circulars</b>
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None to report

24	<b>Any other urgent business</b>
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**Cllr Jerreat** was keen to push forward to purchase the Accounts Package. This issue will be resolved once the Clerk, Mrs Allen is back from maternity leave.

**Cllr Catchpole** brought to the Council's attention that Mr Khatkar had responded to Mr Thomas article in the High Halstow Times. He felt that as a Parish Council we needed to provide a response. Cllr Crozer confirmed that Mr Thomas was willing to provide a presentation to the Council on the history of what had happened with funding for the village hall in view of the fact that present Councillors needed clarification. It was decided that the Village Hall Committee would invite the Parish Council to hear how the funding had been spent. This would bring the Council up to date on matters.

**Cllr Crozer** explained that there had been a census in the village some years ago on what resident wanted for the village and villagers overwhelmingly voted that they wanted a village hall. It had been a long journey and the story needs to be told.

Cllr Munday reported that the Charity Fun Day had gone exceptionally well and it was looking like the funds raised for Charity was well in excess of £6,000. Cllr Munday also confirmed that he had been asked by the Laphorne family to place this issue in the budget for subsequent years.

**Public session**

Member of the public confirmed that he had received comments on how great the Charity Day was.

He also commented on the speed of the vehicles driving through the village in the early hours of the morning to get to work.

It was confirmed that the Construction Traffic should go out and come back through Britannia road. It was felt that Construction works should do the same but it had been obvious that this was not the case.

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Another member of the public suggested that the Deangate planning issue should be mentioned in the High Halstow Times. Cllr Sands confirmed that he would write to the Editor of the The High Halstow Times requesting support on objections.

**25**                      **Section 100A**

It was resolved to exclude the public by a unanimous vote.

**26**                      **Personnel**

**Cllr Watson** expressed concern at the health and welfare of the Clerk, Mrs Allen and wanted Councillors to be aware that she is doing her best in the circumstances post confinement.

**Cllr Crozer** suggested that we not meet in October to give Mrs Allen a breathing space to get herself well and then get the work up to date. It was proposed by Cllr Munday and seconded by Cllr Stone that the next meeting should be in November. The vote was unanimous.

**Cllr Jerreat** confirmed that he had produced a contract for Mrs Allen to sign and once she is back at work at the next Council meeting then she will be able to sign the contract.

**27**                      **Date of the next meeting**

As members had agreed not to hold a meeting during October the next meeting to be held will be on 13 November 2019.

The Chairman thanked members for attending and closed the meeting at 9.20 pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairman**

Date \_\_\_\_\_