

HIGH HALDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Monday 11 December 2023 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall

157/23] Administration: Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. The Clerk confirmed that there has been no requests to record the meeting.

158/23 Present and Apologies:

Present: Cllr. Robinson (Chairman), Cllrs: Mrs. Amsler, Mr. Drury, Mrs. Pickering, Mr. Sargent and Mrs. Wheeler.

In Attendance: Mrs L Goldsmith (Clerk), Ward Member Alan Pickering, 1 member of the public.

Apologies: Cllr. Ms. Dawes and the reason for absence was accepted.

159/23 Declarations of Interest:

Cllr Mrs Pickering: Voluntary Declaration as the spouse of the ward member.

160/23 Minutes of the meeting of the 13 November 2023:

Resolved: That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 13 November 2023 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

161/23 Report from the Clerk (information purposes only):

Defibrillator: The new defibrillator on the side of the village hall is now registered and fully operational.

Layby: The Managing Director of Stagecoach has been in touch and will investigate what he can do to deregister part of the bus layby.

Speedwatch: The Clerk explained that the recent poor weather conditions have affected the holding of sessions and that these will hopefully restart in the new year.

Sports pavilion: The pavilion has also been targeted by catapults.

162/23 Open Session:

The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow members of the public to raise items with the Council.

A resident of Redbrook Street submitted a petition containing 86 signatures to request a speed reduction for Redbrook Street.

A member of the public reported that in June this year tree works were due to take place in Redbrook Street which were organised by UKPN to protect the power lines. Apparently, someone objected and the works were cancelled. However, the works are now due to take place on the 25 March 2024.

The meeting resumed.

163/23 Highways

a) Highways Improvement Plan:

KCC has finally sent the Clerk a copy of the raw speed data collected on the A28 opposite the barbers but have advised that KCC would need to approve any installation in this location and without the evidence of data that shows the installation of a vehicle activated sign (VAS) would be of benefit KCC will not give permission. It was agreed that the Clerk should analyse the data in detail and challenge this decision and state that the Parish Council strongly support a proposal to install an additional VAS on the A28 and is willing to fund this initiative. Data collected from speedwatch sessions suggest that there is an issue with speed at this location.

b) Request for a reduction of the speed limit on Redbrook Street

Members acknowledged the receipt of the petition from residents of Redbrook Street who would like to get the speed limit reduced. The Clerk has spoken to the Clerk at Woodchurch who had advised that traffic surveys have been requested and approved by KCC. Woodchurch Parish Council has agreed to share the results of the surveys once received and have also agreed that it would be beneficial for the two Parish Councils to work together and request a speed reduction through the Highways Improvement Plan process.

164/23 Allotments

a) To ratify a decision between meetings to sign and complete the lease

Members noted that after a difficult period of chasing solicitors and documents that the lease between the Parish Council and the landowner for the land south of New Barn Farm to be used as allotments has been signed and completed.

Resolved: To ratify a decision between meetings for the lease to be signed.

Initials:

b) To receive an update on the parking area and fencing

It was noted that the works to install the car parking area and water supply at the allotments have been completed. The fencing contractor is currently on site and hopes to complete the works this week.

c) To agree the wording of the tenancy agreement for tenancies to start on the 1 January 2024

Members considered a draft copy of the tenancy agreement for the allotments prepared by the Clerk.

Resolved: To agree the wording of the tenancy agreement and for tenancies to commence on the 1 January 2024.

d) To receive an update on interest in the allotments

It was noted that the Clerk has commenced viewings of the allotments with residents on the waiting list. Four allotments have now been reserved and a further three viewings are taking place this week. The Clerk will send the tenancy agreement out next week to applicants that have reserved a plot. Members discussed whether to provide sheds for each plot. The Clerk reported that most of the applicants so far had expressed an interest in having a shed. The Clerk will aim to get a consensus about whether sheds are needed and what size would work best.

165/23 Section 106: Proposal to install a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)

a) To discuss the reasons and to agree to postpone the tendering process

Cllr. Robinson explained that the tender process and site visits had been a very positive process and that alternatives to a traditional MUGA had been suggested. It was therefore suggested and agreed to postpone the tendering process to explore some of these suggestions and consult all potential user groups.

Resolved: To ratify a decision between meetings to postpone the tendering process for the MUGA.

b) To agree to carry out further consultation on the possible design and layout of the lower recreation ground area

Members noted that Proludic, one of the contractors has offered to carry out further consultation, free of charge and with no obligation, which could lead to a better design brief. The contractor has advised that they accept that they may not win any subsequent tender should this approach be adopted. Cllrs. Sargent, Robinson, Drury and the Clerk met virtually with the representative from Proludic to discuss possible designs and the format of the consultation. It was suggested and agreed that the Clerk checks that the S106 allocation for this project can be used to support an alternative design.

Resolved: To carry out further consultation utilising the services of Proludic on the possible design and layout of the lower recreation ground area.

c) To form a working group to carry the consultation exercise forward.

Resolved: To form a working group comprising of Cllrs. Robinson, Sargent, Drury, Amsler and the Clerk to carry the consultation exercise forward.

166/23 Anti-social behaviour:

Cllrs. Robinson, Drury, Sargent and the Clerk advised that the Parish Council attended a virtual follow up meeting with representatives from Southern Housing and the Community Safety Unit on the 24 November 2023 for an update on what has been done to tackle the recent incidents of anti-social behaviour in the village. At the meeting Cllr. Robinson had suggested that Southern Housing reach out to the landlady at The Chequers Inn for further information on some of the recent incidents. Southern Housing stated that the level of reporting had reduced and that they would encourage residents on their next visit to the site to report incidents. Southern Housing advised that this lack of reporting limits the amount and type of action they can take. Cllr. Robinson advised that parishioners should continue to report any incidents to Kent Police with photographic evidence where possible.

167/23 Jubilee Park

The Clerk had obtained the details of the contractor that has recently installed an all-purpose footpath in Biddenden. Members agreed that it would be beneficial to install a similar footpath on the lower recreation ground. Cllrs. Sargent, Robinson and Drury and the Clerk agreed to meet with the contractor on the 12 January to discuss this proposal further.

Initials:

168/23 Dates of Meetings 2024

Resolved: To adopt the dates of the meetings for 2024 suggested by the Clerk.

The Chair invited Cllr. Pickering to lead on the planning proposals.

169/23 Planning

To discuss any planning applications received:

PA/2023/2104: Dragon House, Ashford Road, High Halden

Construction of a new wooden garden shed.

Resolved: Refer to Planning Officer.

PA/2023/2058: Oakleigh Farm, High Halden Road, High Halden

Proposed two storey dwelling with detached garage and change of use of land from paddock to residential following demolition of existing dwelling, garage/stable, hay store and removal of sand school.

Resolved: Support

OTH/2023/2126: Proposed Water Pipe 100m South East of Barn B New Barn Farm, Ashford Road, High Halden

Removal of 4m section of hedgerow for site access, to be replanted like for like.

Resolved: No comment.

Planning applications received after the distribution of the agenda: None to consider.

Approvals:

NOT/2023/1864: Hathewolden Grange, Ashford Road, High Halden

T9 Oak. Lift where overhangs Woodgates Close to 5m. Excessive shading. T10 Oak. Lift where overhangs Woodgates Close to 5m. Excessive shading. Lift over paddock area to 3m - Access for grass mowers. G1 Maples. Lift where overhangs Woodgates Close to 5m. Excessive shading. Lift over paddock area to 3m - Access for grass mowers

PA/2023/1847: Oakleigh Farm, High Halden Road, High Halden

Proposed stables.

PA/2023/1862: Sabah House, Harbourne Lane, High Halden

Lawful Development Certificate: Existing occupation of dwelling in breach of agricultural occupancy condition.

Refusal: None to consider.

Withdrawn: None to consider.

Appeals: 22/00085/AS – 1 Durrants Green, Ashford Road, High Halden

New detached dwelling and detached garage

Other Planning Matters

ENF/2023/0258: Gateway feature at the development at Hopes Grove has not been sited in accordance with the agreed plans under 17/00952/CONB/AS. Enforcement have undertaken a site visit and their informal view is that the gates do not cause any significant detrimental harm to the visual amenity and do not think it would be expedient to pursue them being moved. The Clerk has advised the Enforcement Officer that the Parish Council do not share this view and would like the gates to be moved to the location that was approved as part of the planning process. A decision is awaited.

ENF/2023/0359: Old Place Farm, High Halden: An alleged breach of the erection of an outbuilding in the curtilage of a listed building is being investigated by Enforcement.

WK202206704: Land East of Hope House: Disturbances and noise from site. Members discussed the recent incidents of disturbances from the site which involved alarms going off all night. The neighbouring residents had asked ABC for an out of hours contact number for the site team. However, ABC suggested, and the Clerk has agreed to have the mobile number for the site manager to report any future disturbances.

170/23 Financial Report

/23-1 Budget 2024-2025

A copy of the draft budget, prepared by the Clerk, has been circulated to all Members. Members discussed the budget and noted that Section 106 monies are due which will fund a number of projects such as the provision of facilities at the allotments and additional recreation facilities. Excluding these project the expenditure for

Initials:

2024-2025 is therefore estimated to be £50,000.00 and the forecasted income is £43,384.00.

Resolved: That the draft Budget for 2024-2025 be accepted

/23-2 To set the Precept for 2024-2025

Members discussed the level of reserves and budget requirements for 2024-2025 and agreed that reserves could be used, if needed, to support the budget. The Council Tax base calculation was discussed and noted.

Resolved: That the Precept be held at £33,054.00, representing a 6.8% decrease for a Band D property.

/23-3 S106: Reimbursement of the Drainage Improvement Project

It was noted that the Clerk has submitted a claim to ABC for £20,568.44 of S106 funding for the drainage works undertaken on the recreation ground. The claim has been approved and funding agreement has been signed by both parties and the payment should be made this week.

/23-4 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget:

Cllr. Robinson checked the invoices against the payment schedule and it was and it was **resolved** for Cllr. Drury and Robinson to authorise the payments online.

Payments

Cheque/Transfer	Details	£
Transfer	L Goldsmith (Expenses)	93.86
Transfer	L Goldsmith (Salary)	807.52
Transfer	HMRC (L Goldsmith)	201.80
Transfer	Aquavale Properties (Allotments Works)	10,239.60
Transfer	Mint Fresh (Bus stop cleaning)	51.48
Transfer	B Croucher (Caretaking Services)	41.68
Transfer	N Power (Pavilion electricity)	125.63
Transfer	The National Allotment Society (Annual Subscription)	66.00
DD	Google Cloud	73.60

Receipts

Details	£
HHVEC (Poppy Wreath Reimbursement)	25.00

Balances as at 11 December 2023

Unity Trust Account: £50,052.05

171/23 Reports

/23-1 Ward member: Ward Member Alan Pickering

Ward Member Alan Pickering reported that ABC propose to increase Council Tax by 2.99%. This proposal is due to be reviewed and confirmed by Cabinet. The move from the Civic Centre to International House has been approved by Full Council and it looks as if a combination of home working and days in the office will continue. Ward Member Alan Pickering has questioned the effectiveness of home working and has requested statistics to prove home working is productive. ABC is looking to reduce the amount of CCTV monitoring in the borough.

/23-2 Highways:

It was suggested and agreed that the Clerk asks KCC Highways to clear the blocked gullies on the A28 in the vicinity of Hopes Grove and Hookstead. The Clerk was asked to report that there is only one 30mph speed limit sign on the approach up Church Hill and that there should be two.

/23-3 Marketing/projects: The Clerk will start drafting articles for the next edition of the newsletter which will also contain details of the consultation for the recreation ground.

/23-4 KALC: It was noted that the next meeting will be held on the 4 January 2023. ABC is in the process of organising a virtual presentation, which is likely to be held on the 25 January 2024, on the new waste services contract which comes into play in April 2024.

Initials:

172/23 Information items:

/23-1 HHVEC Update: Cllr. Sargent reported that the Christmas tree has been installed on the village green and that the lighting ceremony held on Saturday 2 December 2023 was well attended. The Clerk will thank the owners of The Chequers for their support in installing the tree and organising the lighting ceremony.

173/23 Items for the next Parish Council meeting:

Greenluck Farm update.

174/23 Date of the next meeting

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 8 January 2024 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall.

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 8.03pm

Signed:

Date:

Initials: