

**HIGH HALDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**  
**held on the 13 February 2023 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall**

**154/22 Present and Apologies**

**Present:** Cllr. Sargent (Chairman for this meeting). Cllrs: Ms. Dawes, Mr. Drury, Mrs. Pickering, Mrs. Wheeler

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

**Apologies:**

An apology for absence was received from Cllrs. Robinson and Harris and their reasons for absence were accepted.

**155/22 Declarations of Interest**

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

**156/22 Minutes of the meeting of the 9 January 2023**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 9 January 2023 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

**157/22 Report from the Clerk (information purposes only)**

The Clerk advised that the Speedwatch team are back out and have noticed an increase in traffic. However, speeds recorded on the A28 do seem to be slower since the 30mph zone has been extended to the east. The electrician has fixed the electrical supply to the power supply on the green.

**158/22 Open Session:**

*The Chairman suspended the meeting to allow members of the public to raise items with the Council.* A member of the public reported that the road name sign for Martens Lane needs to be reinstated.

**159/22 PCSO/Community Warden Report:**

It was noted that Inspector Sarah Rivett is the new District Commander for Ashford.

**160/22 Highway**

**a) Highways Improvement Plan**

Cllrs. Robinson, Sargent and the Clerk met virtually with the new Community Engagement Officer at KCC on the 23 January 2023 to discuss and review the Highways Improvement Plan. The Clerk has since updated the Plan. The Community Engagement Officer is going to review the signage in the vicinity of the school to check what should have been installed and explore the option of installing SLOW markings on the approach to the school. KCC is also going to investigate the feasibility and cost of Moveable Vehicle activated signs for the A28 which would be managed by the Parish Council. KCC were also reminded that the Parish Council want to pursue extending the 30mph speed limit throughout the whole village and install a pelican crossing by the shop.

**b) Parking restrictions in bus layby on the A28**

Members discussed their disappointment with the fact that the whole bus layby opposite the shop has been yellow lined. A request for part of the layby to be removed from these restrictions so that it can be used for short term parking has been added to the Highways Improvement Plan. Members agreed that the availability of parking is vital to the future of the shop.

**c) Proposal to replace steps on the green with a ramp**

The Clerk reported that the long established footpath on the edge of the village green which has steps cannot be changed. The Parish Council were hoping to install a ramp to make it more accessible for all disabilities and obtained quotes and appointed a contractor. However, the contractor has since advised that to get the correct gradient for the ramp the path would have to be taken back a lot further, which then creates a trip hazard to the phone box and would also interfere with the cabling. BT has advised that the phone box cannot be removed as it is a listed kiosk so it is protected under English Heritage. In addition, the area does not have full mobile signal from all four suppliers so it could not be considered for removal. Creating a footpath

Initials: .....

elsewhere on the village green would contravene the Commons Act 1876. The Clerk was advised that repairs are needed to the slats on the benches on the village green.

#### **161/22 Proposal to improve the drainage at Jubilee Park**

Members noted that Cllr. Sargent and the Clerk have had various site meetings with contractors and the football clubs. There is evidence of a drainage system on the lower part of the recreation ground and the Clerk is in the process of obtaining quotes for this to be unblocked. It has also been suggested that all the ditches around the recreation ground need to be cleared of vegetation. This work will need to take place in the dryer weather and the Clerk will obtain quotes. It has been suggested that a drainage system is not required on the main football pitch and that a programme of scarification, verti-draining, sand spreading and fertilisers would improve the conditions. One quote has been obtained for these works but it was agreed that the Clerk should strive to obtain more quotes.

#### **162/22 Allotments**

##### **a) Draft Lease**

Whitehead Monckton has sent a copy of the draft lease to the landowner. The landowner has now appointed a solicitor, Nelson McLean.

##### **b) Next Steps**

ABC has suggested that it would be advisable for the Parish Council to apply for a Certificate of Lawfulness for the proposed parking area. It was agreed that the Clerk should arrange a further site visit with the landowner to discuss the car parking arrangements and plot sizes and then submit a planning application to ABC. It was noted that the Clerk recently attended a KALC training course on Allotment Management. The standard size of a full plot is 250 square metres. Members were in agreement that half plots of 125 square metres would suffice and that 10 plots might be a good starting point.

##### **c) Landowners Legal Fees**

**Resolved: To pay the landowners legal fees at an estimated cost of £1,152.00 (including VAT).**

#### **163/22 Elections 2023**

##### **a) Timetable**

The Clerk has circulated information about the elections to Members. The notice of the election is to be issued no later than the 27 March 2023 and nomination papers need to be delivered to ABC by 4pm on the 3 April 2023. Elections will take place on the 4 May 2023 and the newly elected Councillors will take office on the 9 May 2023. It was also noted that KALC is running two free virtual workshops on the 21 February and 21 March 2023 for members of the public, thinking about becoming a Councillor, to find out more about the role. The Clerk has publicised these dates on social media and the noticeboards.

##### **b) Photo ID**

It was noted that for the first time people will need to show photo ID before voting at polling stations in Mays local elections. The full list of accepted ID is available on the Electoral Commission Website.

#### **164/22 KALC Community Awards 2023**

**Resolved: For the Clerk to advise KALC of the details of the nominated person.**

#### **165/22 Annual Parish Meeting**

Members discussed the possible format of the Annual Parish Meeting due to be held on the 17 April 2023 and whether to combine this with a residents information evening.

**Resolved: To invite all the local organisations to the Annual Parish Meeting to give their annual reports as in the past and to hold a separate information event for residents later in the year.**

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

#### **166/22 Planning**

**Planning applications:** None to consider.

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

Initials: .....

**Approvals:** None to consider.

**Refusal:**

**PA/2022/3131 – Land adjacent Moat Farm House, Oak Grove Lane, High Halden**

Demolition of existing domestic garage and erection of single dwelling, garden along with landscape and associated biodiversity enhancements (along with part change of use of land from agricultural to residential).

**Withdrawn:** None to consider.

**Appeal Dismissed:** None to consider.

**Other Planning Matters:**

**Planning Application Clearance Week:** It was noted that Planning Officers at ABC were not contactable last week so that they could spend all their time on shifting a larger number of planning applications than they would normally be able to determine in a week with the aim of clearing some of the backlog that has accumulated again. No planning applications have been processed for Members to consider this month so it is expected that there will be an influx in the coming week. The Clerk will obtain extensions to respond to proposals if required.

**PA/2022/3071 – 1 Linden Business Centre, High Halden:** It was noted that Cllrs. Sargent, Pickering and the Clerk will meet with the Chairman and Clerk from Bethersden Parish Council and the Ward Members on the 20 February 2023 to discuss the S106 contributions that could be available to both parishes if this proposal is approved. It was **resolved** to request that Ward Member Alan Pickering calls in this proposal so that it is considered by the Planning Committee if the Planning Officer is mindful to refuse it.

## 167/22 Financial Report

**/22-1 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget**

**Resolved:** That the payments listed below for February 2023 are authorised online by Cllrs. Harris and Dawes.

Cheque/Transfer	Details	£
Transfer	L Goldsmith (Expenses)	67.57
Transfer	L Goldsmith (Salary)	554.00
Transfer	HMRC (L Goldsmith)	130.00
Transfer	Mint Fresh (Bus stop cleaning)	71.82
Transfer	Npower (Electricity pavilion)	560.97
Transfer	Bowdan (Pavilion electrics)	1392.00
Transfer	Barrie Croucher (Caretaker services)	61.04
Transfer	Ashford Borough Council (Grounds Maintenance 2022-2023)	5068.92
Transfer	Bowdan (Bus stop power point)	197.40
Transfer	Helping Hands Group (Donation)	250.00
DD	ICO (Annual Fee)	35.00
DD	Google Cloud	73.60

**Receipts:** None

**Balances as at 13 February 2023**

**Unity Trust Account: £71,603.60**

**/22-2 Annual Review of the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

**Resolved:** To adopt the Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

**/22-3 Proposal to donate £250.00 to the High Halden Helping Hands lunch club.**

**Resolved:** To donate £250.00 to the High Halden Helping Hands lunch club.

## 168/22 Reports

**/22-1 Ward member:** Ward Members Alan Pickering advised that the waste collection contractor, Biffa may also experience issues with staff going on strike over pay but reassured Members that ABC has plans in place to maintain rubbish collections. Staff redundancies are being considered by ABC to address a shortfall in the budget as ABC remains committed to having the lowest council tax in the County. Ward Member Alan Pickering reassured Members that the Overview Scrutiny Committee at ABC has been charged with addressing

Initials: .....

the issues with the new planning portal and in particular ensuring that it is user friendly for members of the public.

**/22-2 Highways:** See section 160/22.

**/22-3 Marketing/projects:** The Clerk and Cllr. Dawes have prepared another edition of the newsletter and will arrange for it to be posted on the website and social media. Cllr. Dawes has printed off 250 copies to be hand delivered and the Clerk will send copies out to the distribution list. The Clerk will also investigate the feasibility of QR codes for the next edition which will hopefully increase the number of residents requesting the newsletter to be sent electronically.

**/22-4 KALC:** There has been no meeting

**169/22 Information items:**

**/22-1 HHVEC Update:** Cllr. Sargent reported that the Committee met last week and are in the process of booking entertainment, food and beverage for the Coronation event 'A Right Royal Revel on the Green' due to be held on Monday 8 May 2023. The Committee would like to order a commemorative gift for the children at the school which could also be sold locally and will send some suggestions to the Clerk.

**/22/2 High Halden Helping Hand Group:** The Church has advised that attendance at the lunch club in the memorial hall every other Wednesday from 12.15pm to 2.15pm is increasing each time and is being very well received.

**/22/3 Consultations:**

a) KCC Consultation on new draft Home to School Transport Policy: Noted.

b) KCC Consultation on Community Engagement: Noted.

**170/22 Items for the next Parish Council meeting**

Commemorative gift for the Coronation.

**171/22 Date of the next meeting**

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 13 March 2023 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall**

The meeting closed at 8.26pm.

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Initials: .....