

**HIGH HALDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**  
**held on Monday 11 March 2024 at 7pm in the Memorial Hall**

**213/23] Administration:** Fire Exits, Fire Meeting Point, Mobile Phones. The Clerk confirmed that there has been no requests to record the meeting.

**214/23 Present and Apologies:**

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

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

**Apologies:** An apology for absence was received from Cllr. Wheeler and the reason for absence was accepted.

**215/23 Declarations of Interest:**

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

**216/23 Minutes of the meeting of the 12 February 2024:**

**Resolved:** That the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 12 February 2024 be approved and confirmed as a true record.

**217/23 Report from the Clerk (information purposes only):**

The Clerk advised that all the submissions as part of the Call for Sites exercise will be made publicly available on Monday 18 March 2024. The Planning Teams will now be undertaking a detailed assessment of all the sites submitted to determine their potential suitability for inclusion in the next Local Plan. A consultation exercise will then commence.

ABC has opened the application process for parishes to apply for trees to form a community orchard. The process closes on the 24 May 2024.

The Clerk advised that Hoad's Wood, a Site of Special Scientific Interest in Bethersden is currently facing a severe environmental crisis due to industrial-scale illegal waste dumping. At least 4 acres by over 12 feet deep of this vibrant woodland, cherished for its biodiversity and natural beauty, has been transformed into a wasteland, significantly impacting the local ecosystem and community well-being. Bethersden is hosting a public meeting due to be held at 5pm on the 15 March 2024 in Bethersden village hall. Damien Green, MP, has agreed to attend as a neutral chair along with ABC, KCC, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Kent Police. The aim is to determine what steps are being taken for an immediate clear up and to establish lessons learned to avoid a repeat situation.

The internal auditor will carry out the annual audit on the 12 April 2024.

**218/23 Open Session:**

No comments.

**219/23 Highways**

**a) Highways Improvement Plan:**

The Clerk advised that the site meeting with the Community Engagement Officer at KCC to discuss the Highways Improvement Plan objectives for this year which was due to take place on Wednesday 20 March 2024 has been postponed. The Clerk is in the process of arranging a new date.

**220/23 Allotments**

**a) To receive an update on the the allotments:**

The Clerk and Cllr. Drury met with the contractor on Tuesday 20 February 2024 to agree the exact location of each shed. The information has been shared with the allotment holders and an order has now been placed for 10 sheds and a £2000 deposit has been paid. The sheds are due to be installed on the 4 and 5 April 2024. It was noted that ABC is now in receipt of S106 funding from the Sicklefield development for the allotments and the Clerk has submitted a claim for the outstanding sum of £3814.85. The Clerk advised that the landowner has turned on the water supply to the tap and hopes to resurface the footpath when the weather improves. Cllr. Drury reported that some of the saplings have been nibbled by the sheep. The Clerk will monitor the situation.

Initials: .....

**221/23 Section 106: Proposal for the lower recreation ground area:**

The Clerk reported that just 37 responses have been received to the online survey. The face-to-face consultations which took place in the village hall on Sunday 18 February and at the school on Tuesday 20 February 2024 were quite well attended. The working group will now meet to consider the responses and discuss the next steps. It was agreed to not visit any further playground venues at this stage.

**222/23 Anti-social behaviour:**

Cllr. Robinson reported that a meeting with the agencies has been arranged for Friday 22 March 2024. It was noted that there has been further sighting of the use of catapults on the recreation ground.

**223/23 Footpaths:**

**Proposal for a footpath on the recreation ground**

Cllrs. Sargent, Drury, Robinson and the Clerk met with another contractor to discuss alternative surfaces for a footpath around the lower recreation ground and the top recreation ground. This contractor recommended a self-binding gravel path. However, Members agreed that the quote for both areas which was over £43,000 (excluding VAT) is prohibitive. The Clerk and Cllr. Sargent reported that some of the issues with the stone footpath at Biddenden were due to the gradient of the path and have been resolved. It was noted that gradients would not be an issue on the recreation ground.

**Resolved: The Clerk to obtain a further quote for a stone footpath.**

**Footpath from Ransley Field to the churchyard.**

It was agreed that the Clerk should investigate again the possibility of improving the footpath from Ransley Field to the school. It crosses a number of areas and is in parts almost impassable. The Clerk will walk the footpath and will send photographs of any areas requiring remedial works to KCC and the Church.

**224/23 Annual Parish Meeting 2024:**

Members discussed the possible format of the Annual Parish Meeting due to be held on the 8 April 2024.

**Resolved: To invite all the local organisations to the Annual Parish Meeting to either give or submit their annual reports.**

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

**225/23 Planning**

**To discuss any planning applications received:**

**PA/2024/0298: Land East of Hope House, Ashford Road, High Halden**

Variation of condition 6 (approved plans) of planning permission 19/01769/AS (Reserved Matters application for details of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale for the erection of 28 dwellings).

**Resolved: No objection.**

**PA/2024/0307: Old Place Farm, Woodchurch Road, High Halden**

Provision of new garage outbuilding and parking hardstanding.

**Resolved: No objection.**

**PA/2024/0329: Old Place Farm, Woodchurch Road, High Halden**

Provision of new garage outbuilding and parking hardstanding.

**Resolved: No objection.**

**PA/2024/0337: The Haybarn, 3 Beulah Cottages, Harris Lane, High Halden**

Single storey and rear extensions.

**Resolved: Support.**

**PA/2024/0299: The Stables, Redbrook Street, High Halden**

Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed agricultural building.

**Resolved: Strongly object and fully support the comments made by the neighbouring property. We would also like to highlight that the pillars for the proposed building should not have been installed in the first place and that enforcement advised that they should only remain as it would be environmentally unfriendly to remove them.**

Initials: .....

**PA/2024/0208: Duxbury, Church Hill, High Halden**

Tiled roof sunroom in replacement of existing conservatory.

**Resolved: Support.**

**PA/2024/0244: Duxbury, Church Hill, High Halden**

Internal alterations including removal of partition walls; two new first floor dormer windows; erection of rear porch canopy; amendments to doors and window openings; removal of chimney flue; and beam strengthening plus vaulting of (new) kitchen ceiling; and new tiled roof sunroom in replacement of existing conservatory.

**Resolved: No comment and leave to Planning Officer to decide.**

**Planning applications received after the distribution of the agenda:**

**Approvals:**

**PA/2023/2263: Egerden Farm, Martens Lane, High Halden**

Demolition of existing agricultural buildings and conversion of an agricultural building into two residential dwellings with associated landscaping, amenity land, parking and access.

**Refusal:** None to consider.

**Withdrawn:**

**21/01488/AS– Little Bedgebury Farm, High Halden**

New side porch and alteration of external steps; window & door alterations (revision to planning permission 21/00388/AS).

**21/01489/AS– Little Bedgebury Farm, High Halden**

Alterations to stair hall layout and landing including new door openings. New side porch to kitchen and alteration of external steps. New stair from kitchen to first floor and alterations to bedroom 3 & 4 layouts. Alteration to bed 1 layout (revision to listed building consent 21/00389/AS).

**Other Planning Matters**

ENF/2023/0258: Ward Member Alan Pickering met with Simon Cole, Assistant Director Planning and Development at ABC, who agreed to instruct enforcement to request that the gateway feature at the development at Hopes Grove is moved to the position agreed in planning proposal 17/00952/CONB/AS. However, it was noted that just the signage on the gateways has since been moved. The Clerk was asked to contact Ward Member Alan Pickering and request again that the gateways are moved.

**226/23 Financial Report:**

**/23-1 Annual Review of the Asset Register.**

**Resolved to adopt the updated Asset Register.**

**/23-2 Annual Review of the Risk Assessment**

**Resolved to adopt the updated Risk Assessment.**

**/23-3 To agree payments in accordance with the Budget:**

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

**Payments**

Cheque/Transfer	Details	£
Transfer	Skinner's Sheds (Deposit for Allotment Sheds)	2000.00
Transfer	L Goldsmith (Expenses)	90.52
Transfer	L Goldsmith (Salary)	807.52
Transfer	HMRC (L Goldsmith)	201.80
Transfer	B Croucher (Caretaking Services)	83.36
Transfer	Ashford Borough Council (Annual Grounds Maintenance)	5599.66
Transfer	Capel Groundcare (Allotment works)	456.00
Transfer	Mint Fresh (Bus Stop Cleaning)	128.70
Transfer	D Ball (Removal of two benches and install 2 new benches)	324.57
Transfer	Ashford Borough Council (Playground repairs)	2203.74
DD	Google Cloud	84.40

Initials: .....

## Receipts:

Details	£
HMRC (VAT Refund)	12030.87
Ashford Borough Council (S106 payment for allotments)	15917.63

## Balances as at 11 March 2024

Unity Trust Current Account: £11,315.46

Unity Trust Savings Account: £55,562.38

Total: £66,877.44

## 227/23 Reports:

### /23-1 Ward member:

Ward Member Alan Pickering advised that enforcement at ABC is investigating reports of illegal dumping of rubbish at Hatchentan. ABC will be deciding this week whether to take over the running of the Picturehouse at Elwick Place. ABC own the site and Picturehouse Cinemas Group will hand over the reins in Easter 2024. Ward Member Aan Pickering mentioned the Capital Grant process. ABC can offer grants of up to £10,000, (match funding required), for Parish Council projects. The next closing date for applications is the 31 May 2024. Members discussed whether this could be used for funding solar panels for the pavilion. The Clerk will investigate and report back at the next meeting.

### /23-2 Highways:

ABC has advised that dog waste bin on the footpath at the back of Woodgates Close has been removed because that they have removing the dog waste bin waste bins from across the borough for the last few years as there is no longer the requirement to collect dog waste separately and the cost to empty dog waste bins is higher than the cost to empty general litter bins. It was agreed that the Clerk should request that a general litter bin in installed in this area instead and that the Parish Council would consider funding this. KCC has inspected and carried out a risk assessment on the gullies on the A28 in the vicinity of Hopes Grove and Hookstead and have advised that they do not meet the intervention criteria for additional reactive works and that they will be cleansed during the next cleaning cycle which is due to take place in November 2024.

### 23-3 Marketing/projects:

Members discussed producing a Welcome Pack to include useful contacts and information for new residents. It was agreed that the Clerk should prepare a Welcome Pack. When complete details about the Welcome Pack, which could be available on request, will be placed on the noticeboards, website and social media and will also be delivered to all the new dwellings. It was also suggested and agreed that the Clerk and Members should periodically attend the coffee mornings held in the village hall and for this to also be publicised to encourage residents to attend and discuss any local issues.

### /23-4 KALC:

The Clerk reported back from the meeting held on the 7 March 2024.

*Community Orchard Scheme:* The application process is now open and ABC is inviting parish and community councils across the borough to apply. The proposed land for the creation of all orchards must be publicly accessible, with the community able to use the space at any time. There must be a minimum of 9 trees to be planted on any given site to qualify as an orchard and applications are to be for no more than a maximum of 18 trees. The applicant must have the labour to plant the trees in December 2024 and must be prepared to provide planting and post planting reports and maintenance reports to comply with the terms and conditions laid out by DEFRA. The application process closes on the 24 May 2024 and a Teams meeting will be held on the 26 April 2024 to answer any technical questions. It was agreed that the Clerk submits an application after the proposed briefing on the 26 April 2024.

*ABC Planning Parish 'subscription' for notifications:* It was noted the beta testing of the new system is now complete and that it is possible to now apply for parish level planning alerts.

## 228/23 Information items:

### /23-1 HHVEC Update:

It was noted that HHVEC will be meeting on Tuesday 19 February 2024 to discuss the preparations for marking the D-Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on the 6 June 2024 and for a summer event due to be held on Saturday 20 July 2024.

Initials: .....

**229/23 Items for the next Parish Council meeting:**

Capital Grants Application for Solar panels.

WhatsApp Parish Council emergency group.

**230/23 Date of the next meeting**

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 8 April 2024 after the Annual Parish Meeting due to be held at 7pm in the Memorial Hall.**

With no further business to transact the meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed: .....

Date: .....

Initials: .....