

## HIGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Memorial Hall, School Lane, on Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllr. J. Grey (Chairman)  
Kent County Councillor: Cllr. Bryan Sweetland  
Borough Councillor: Cllr. Harold Craske  
Councillors: A. Carroll, R. Gilby, A. Howard, P. Holmes,  
E. Jeffery, S. Mackie, A. Mendzil, L. Pearton (also Borough)  
and S. Sparks.

In attendance: 2 Parishioners  
Peter Leakey (Parish Advisor)

Apologies for absence: Cllr. P. Allinson  
Vikki Brooke (Parish Advisor)  
Clive Stanley (webmaster)

The Chairman accepted apologies for absence.  
There were no alterations to the Register of Members Interests or declarations for the gifts and hospitality register.  
Confirmation of weekly inspections of the Recreation Ground by the GBC Park Ranger for insurance purposes had been received.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019, were confirmed and signed .

### Matters arising from the Minutes.

Including an update of actions from the last Minutes, the Clerk reported that:-

- a. P. 1351. Matters Arising. Planning Tutorial. It was agreed that Cllr. Harold Craske would hold this session on 4/11/19.
- b. P. 1351. Parishioners Matters. Renewal of bus stop markings. Cllr. Sweetland had asked Kent Highways to refresh the old bus stop markings at Brookers Place.
- c. P. 1351. Joint Working Groups Meeting. The Clerk confirmed that all allotment rents had now been collected.
- d. P. 1352. Letters to volunteers. Letters to volunteers for pond vegetation clearance had been hand delivered to local residents.

In addition the following agenda items were raised by Cllr. Sparks:-

P. 1351. Poppy Project. The launch date was now to be 1/11/19.

P. 1351. Defibrillators. Members agreed to Cllr. Sparks applying for listed building consent for the installation at The Three Crutches PH.

P. 1351. Parishioners Matters. The large pothole had now been repaired. No repainting of the yellow lines at Brookers Place would take place until the current review of parking restrictions by GBC had been concluded in the New Year.

P. 1352. Recreation Ground and Landway. The pot holes had now been filled in. Cllr. Sparks pressed for a small group visit to look at the layout of the car park, play equipment, tables and chairs. Cllr Mendzil advised that she had met with two playground providers who were currently preparing plans and estimates for new playground equipment outside the Pavilion and taking into account its configuration, safety surfacing and fencing and that these should be explored first. Cllr. Gilby saw no need for the site meeting to take place at this time although Cllr. Sparks disagreed. Members agreed that works during the winter period to the trees and shrubs at the Recreation Ground should be given priority. Approval was given for either an application for a Lawful Development Certificate (cost £117) or a full planning application (cost £234) to progress the improvements to the Sports Courts.

The Chairman reminded Members that following the completion of the 2019 Audit the new finance arrangements could be put into place.

#### Parishioners' Matters.

Barry Ford, a Parishioner of the village for the last 20 years, was keen to see pre-school provision re-established within the village and asked if the Parish Council could help find a suitable location. He was particularly interested in renting the Pavilion building as it could provide a permanent self-contained setting and his wife was a registered Nursery School provider. Cllr. Sparks confirmed that the current lack of pre-school provision had been acknowledged in the Village Plan but that the Pavilion building still required completion at the present time. It was proposed by Cllr. Pearton that the viability of this request should be explored before the next meeting when further discussion would take place and a decision would be made and this was seconded by Cllr. Mackie and agreed by a majority of members. Mr Ford was asked to make contact with the Clerk direct to register this expression of interest in writing.

#### To receive an update on the Nuralite planning application

The Clerk reported that as a result of a substantial number of comments having been received by the Borough Council in support of the Nuralite application, banners had now been placed around the village reminding people to object. KMTV had visited the village and filmed a short feature about the Nuralite application. Letters had now been sent to all parents at Higham Primary School by the Headteacher urging them to send in letters of objection and the Parish Council had been invited to attend two forthcoming Parent's Evenings at the school to display the maps and drawings and answer any questions.

#### To further discuss the Parish Council website development.

Cllr. Gilby reported that he was currently populating the website pages and hoped to be in a position to show Members the almost complete website at the November Meeting and be ready to launch before Christmas. It was agreed that in future the Love Higham website would be accessed via a page on the new Parish Council website but that the domain and hosting charges, which were currently due for renewal, should be paid by the Parish Council for this year only. The new website would be included in the 2020 Annual Parish Newsletter and a demonstration given at the 2020 Annual Parish Assembly.

#### To discuss the need for the Rural Nomination criteria for Rural Housing to be upheld.

It was agreed that the Clerk would request a copy of the up to date Rural Nomination Criteria document and then a meeting would be arranged with Sharon Donald to discuss this further before a letter of complaint was sent to Moat Housing by the Parish Council.

#### Bonfire Night Firework Display update.

Members approved the printing of flyers promoting the event (which would be delivered throughout the village and also distributed by the Primary School) and reusable banners. It was agreed to ask Phoenix Fireworks to provide a generator at an additional cost of £200 (plus VAT) as a back up for this event. Instead of an entry fee of £1 per head donation buckets would be positioned at entrances.

#### Councillors' Matters.

#### County.

Cllr. Sweetland reported that the new leader of Kent County Council to succeed Paul Carter was Roger Gough who was well known to him. He expressed regret that Cantium Business Solutions had been unable to help with the setting up of the new parish council website and offered a grant of up to £1000 to offset the website building costs incurred by Cllr. Gilby for which Members expressed their thanks.

### Borough.

Cllr. Craske reported that the figures on the GBC Planning Portal showed that at the date of the Meeting there had been 58 comments of support and 129 comments of objection for the Nuralite planning application. He reiterated that each comment would be carefully examined by the Case Officer and those which did not include any planning grounds would carry little weight. He apologised that there had been a problem which had not allowed the consultation process to take place through the Planning Portal but that GBC had now provided alternative ways to submit comments on-line. It was unlikely that the closing date for comments on this application would be before the end of the year.

### Parish.

Cllr. Pearton reported that Canal Road had been cleared up with fly tipping removed and potholes repaired. Two wooden bollards in the vicinity of the school had been knocked over again. Cllr. Sparks agreed to explore additional double height kerbs and concrete planters with Kent Highways to possibly alleviate this problem.

Cllr. Mendzil confirmed that grants for bee friendly bus shelters would not be available until April 2020.

Cllr. Sparks reported comments on Facebook from residents of Gravesend Road who had expressed concerns regarding excessive vibration to their properties from lorry movements.

Cllr. Sweetland felt that this should be tracked and advised Cllr. Sparks to contact him to set this up if it was felt that it was needed.

Cllr. Jeffery reported that she believed that she had located the landlord of the parade of shops regarding the state of the low brick wall to the front, but still needed to speak to a couple of the shopkeepers. As a result of the recent letter drop by the Clerk one resident in Church Street had come forward to volunteer his services for the tidying up of the area around the pond. A complaint had been received regarding the poor state of the Charles Dickens sign ahead of the Dickens 150 celebrations in 2020. The Clerk reported that a quotation to repaint this had been requested from the sign writer who had installed the original sign and was currently awaited. Cllr. Jeffery reported that she was honoured to have been asked to again assist the Charity Fundraising Committee for the Mayor of Gravesham.

## **BREAK FOR REFRESHMENTS**

### Reports.

#### a. Planning.

Plans were available for the following planning applications which had been received and reviewed by the Planning Committee:-

#### Appln. no. 20190969 Stonycroft, Telegraph Hill

Erection of a two storey front and side extension and single storey rear and front extension.

#### Appln. no. 20190994 12, Norah Lane

Erection of single storey front and side extensions.

#### Appln. no. 20190996 Whitegates, Old Watling Street

Demolition of an existing dwelling and workshop-building and the erection of a replacement five bedroom dwelling, garage and associated landscaping.

#### Appln. no. 20191007 Little Mockbeggar, Town Road

Application for Certificate of Lawful Development in respect of retention of polytunnels.

#### Appln. no. 20191042 2, High View.

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed enlargement of the existing roof structure over the side extension and construction of a dormer extension in the existing and proposed rear roof slope, providing increased floor space for the proposed attic conversion.

- b. Community Development Working Group  
Cllr. Mackie reported that he was exploring the possibility of an outdoor cinema for an event in 2020.
- c. Infrastructure Working Group  
An update was circulated by Cllr. Sparks to Members at the start of the Meeting.
1. Allotments Members agreed to the clearance of plots 25-38 at a cost of £1280, and plots 51 and 64 at a cost of £1500 (which would then be covered by the weed suppressant material already approved and estimated at £300)
  2. Highways Issues. The new route sign for the Gardeners Junction would be paid for by KCC and was on order. KCC would proceed to the next stage of the formal consultation for the yellow lines. Police approval would be needed for a weight restriction for Forge Lane, Villa Road and School Lane and KCC would not fund the signage.
  3. Village Plan – Safer Higham Group Meeting. Areas covered at the meeting included fly tipping, parking, speeding and reporting crimes. Options for consideration were disabled parking bays, additional facilities for the mobile Speed Indicator Device and Information Drop In sessions.
  4. Tree Works and Furniture Removal. Three quotations had been received from contractors but as the cost of one of these was considerably less than the others it was agreed to meet on site with this contractor before a final decision was made.
  5. Litter Picking and Garden Volunteers. It was agreed to purchase additional equipment of high viz jackets, hoops and pickers at an estimated cost of £150.
- A further Infrastructure Working Group Meeting would be planned towards the end of the year following the next Parish Council Meeting.
- d. Executive Management Working Group  
There was nothing additional to report which had not already been reported elsewhere in the Meeting.
- e. Higham Speedwatch  
Peter Leakey reported that a total of 6 Speedwatch sessions had been held over a period of 5 hours 30 minutes. Details of a total of 46 vehicles which had exceeded the speed limit had been forwarded to the Police. The highest speed observed was 46 mph. outside Buckland Farm.
- f. Kent Community Warden  
Paul Hassell appealed for help in locating a Black Corsa car which had been seen in both Cobham and Higham and a grey Transit pick up both of which were of interest at the present time.

#### Finance.

The Clerk asked for approval for the items shown below, this being proposed by Cllr. Gilby seconded by Cllr.Mackie and agreed by all Members.

Clerks salary (September)	1150.95
HMRC (PAYE/NI September)	212.62
KCC (LGPS September)	433.52
Clerk (exps use of room as office 1/7/19 to 30/9/19)	227.50
Clive Stanley (webmaster services 1/7/19 to 26/9/19)	199.88
EDF Energy (Pavilion electricity)	121.12
PKF Littlejohn (2019 audit)	360.00
Singlewell Stationery & Print (Nuralite reminder banners)	309.60
Singlewell Stationery & Print (maps of roundabout – Nuralite)	25.08
Tech. Medical Services Ltd. (first aid for fireworks)	157.00

Netwise UK (new website costs)	899.00
Stopped cheque	12.00
GBC (rent for garage September by D/D)	60.33
GBC (rent for garage October by D/D new rate)	76.85

Correspondence.

The correspondence folder had been available for perusal by all Members during the Meeting on that evening, but the Clerk drew Members' attention to the following item:-

1. A response had been received from Savills regarding obtaining permission for the improvements to the sports courts. Cllr. Sparks agreed to provide answers to all questions raised by them in this document.

To note the date of the next Parish Council Meetings

This was given as being Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> November with the Mayor of Gravesham and garden competition prizegiving at Higham Library at 7.30 p.m.

Any Other Business.

None was brought to the notice of the Meeting.

It was resolved that:-

“Pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public be excluded from the following item because it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted that if members of the public are present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act”.

There being no other business, the Meeting was closed to members of the public at 10.35 p.m. by the Chairman.