

HIGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting followed by a Parish Council Meeting held at the Memorial Hall, School Lane on Monday, 13th May 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllr.J. Grey (Chairman)
Councillors : P. Allinson, A. Carroll, R. Gilby, A. Howard,
E. Jeffery, S. Mackie, A. Mendzil, and L. Pearton (also
Borough)
In attendance: 2 Parishioners.
PCSO Rebekah Bruce
Apologies for absence: KCC Cllr. Bryan Sweetland,.
Cllrs..Holmes and Sparks.
Parish Adviser – Vikki Brooke
Clive Stanley

**PRIOR TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE MEETING THE SIGNED
DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE AND DISCLOSURE OF
PECUNIARY INTERESTS FORMS WERE RECEIVED FROM ALL
COUNCILLORS PRESENT.**

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

Cllr. Craske called for nominations for the position of Chairman by secret ballot.
Cllr. Allinson was proposed by Cllr. Howard and seconded by Cllr. Carroll.
Cllr. Grey was proposed by Cllr. Pearton and seconded by Cllr. Mendzil.
Cllr. Grey was elected as Chairman by a majority vote.

2. THE CHAIRMAN SIGNED HIS DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE FORM.

3. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.

The Chairman asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chairman by secret ballot.
Cllr Mendzil was proposed by Cllr. Pearton and seconded by Cllr. Grey
Cllr. Allinson was proposed by Cllr. Carroll and seconded by Cllr. Mendzil but declined
the nomination and Cllr. Mendzil was elected unopposed.

4. THE VICE CHAIRMAN SIGNED HER DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE FORM.

4. ELECTION OF COMMITTEES.

It was proposed by Cllr. Carroll, seconded by Cllr. Mendzil and agreed by all
Members present that the following committees should continue to be evaluated over the
next year with the following officers elected:-

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CDC)

Chairman Cllr. Allinson
Vice Chairman Cllr. Pearton

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE (IFC)

Chairman Cllr. Sparks
Vice Chairman Cllr. Howard

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (EMC)

Chairman Cllr. Jeffery
Vice Chairman Cllr. Howard

5. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES.

These were agreed as follows:-

- a. K.A.L.C. - Cllrs Grey and Howard.
- b. Memorial Hall - Cllr. Mackie
- c. Village Transport - Cllrs. Howard, Grey and Jeffery.
- d. Merston Court - Cllr. Carroll
- e. G.R.O.W.C. - Cllrs. Howard and Sparks (substitute Cllr. Jeffery)

- f. Governing Body of Higham Primary School - Cllr. Pearton
 - g. Police Advisory - Cllrs. Grey and Howard.
 - h. Chalk Liaison Group and Lower Thames Crossing – Cllrs. Pearton and Jeffery
 - i. Rural Housing - Cllrs. Grey and Gilby.
 - j. Village Roads, Pavements and Lighting – Cllrs Sparks, Carroll, Grey and Peter Leakey.
 - k. Higham Gardens for Pleasure Competition – ALL MEMBERS
 - l. Press Officer – Cllr. Jeffery.
6. The Chairman thanked Liz Jeffery for continuing to act as the Parish Council Press Officer in addition to her roles as the Village Press Correspondent and Parish Councillor.
7. The Clerk proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr. Anne Carroll for her help in serving refreshments at Meetings.

The Meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING.

It was proposed by Cllr .Howard, seconded by Cllr. Mendzil, and agreed unanimously by all Members present that Standing Orders, including amendments for the Annual Parish Assembly, Financial Regulations, and Delegated Powers for the Planning Committee, should be adopted.

The Chairman accepted apologies for absence.

There were no alterations to the Register of Members Interests.

Other than the weekly inspections by the GBC Park Ranger of the Recreation Ground for insurance purposes no other inspection reports for Parish property and amenities had been received.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on Monday, 8th April 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. 1332. Matters Arising. Members agreed to arrange a meeting with Nigel Cronin, representing RS Skips, once the new movement figures for skip lorries were to hand.
- b. P. 1333. The Borough Council had confirmed that the WBP would be litter picked when the next whole road closure was in place.
- c. P. 1334. Street name sign - Ash Crescent. GBC would inspect the sign with a view to replacing it in the Autumn.
- d. Website Report. Recent updates had included reference to the approved Higham Village Plan, Wainscott By Pass resurfacing dates and footway renewal works in addition to the usual PC Minutes and Agendas.

Parishioners' Matters.

Ian Rolfe asked for support from the Parish Council to promoter the formation of the Higham Station Passengers Group which he hoped to set up on Facebook. The group was being set up to access money that Govia Thameslink had put in a fund to be spent on the station in compensation for the disruption, but it needed a passenger group to push it forward. Mr Rolfe highlighted the need for Higham Station to be made more accessible and particularly the need to make it step-free on the “down” platform. He agreed to write a short article to be placed on the Parish Council Facebook page

Matters Arising from this year's Annual Parish Assembly.

The Clerk reported that items raised by Parishioners at this year's Annual Parish Assembly included the size of the reserves, Local Plan Review, fly tipping, CCTV to shops, and the condition of the wall and pavement outside the parade of shops.

To finalise arrangements for the 2019 Higham Gardens for Pleasure Competition.

The Clerk reported that Tammy Woodhouse from Millbrook Garden Centre had agreed to arrange for a judge for the Higham Gardens for Pleasure Competition this year. Parish Councillors signed up for roads to view to produce the short list for this year's competition. The short list would need to be submitted by the end of July and the Clerk asked Members to bring nominated gardens to the July Meeting. It was hoped that in future years the competition could be expanded to include a junior section.

To arrange dates for Parish Council Meetings in 2020.

The Clerk had circulated details of dates for Meetings in 2020 prior to the Meeting and the following were agreed:-

Mondays:- 13th January, 24th February, 6th April, 18th May (Annual Parish Council Meeting with Parish Council Meeting), 6th July, 7th September, 19th October, 23rd November (Budget and Finance only) , and 30th November (Christmas Meeting with the Mayor of Gravesham).

The Annual Parish Assembly would take place on Thursday, 9th April 2020.

The remaining dates for Meetings in 2019 were as follows:-

Mondays:- 9th September, 14th October, 18th November (Budget and Finance only) and 25th November (Christmas Meeting with the Mayor of Gravesham).

Councillors' Matters.

County.

As Cllr. Sweetland did not attend the meeting no report was given.

Borough.

Cllr. Craske reported that he and Cllr. Pearton had been re-elected to serve as Borough Representatives for Higham but this time as Independent Councillors and he thanked everyone for their support. They felt that this arrangement would serve the residents of Higham well as they did not have to follow a party line. Cllr. Craske confirmed that all Borough Councillors would have to undergo planning training and that he would be pleased to use these resources for the benefit of the Parish Councillors at a later date. He also confirmed that the PLA had just reported that Benny the Beluga Whale had now left the Thames.

Parish.

Cllr. Mendzil reported that from 2/6/19 only Medway residents would be able to use the refuse tip at Cuxton as ID would be checked by the officials on duty. The Clerk was asked to contact Cllr. Sweetland to see if Higham residents could be exempted from these new arrangements.

The Chairman reported that he had visited Mr Thomas and viewed the problems with parking which had led him to request that the current CPZ be extended to include Martins Close. Cllr. Grey had confirmed to him that this initiative was dealt with by the Borough Council.

REFRESHMENT BREAK

Reports

a. Planning

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

Appln. no. 20190338 13, Dombey Close

Application for a Lawful Development Certificate in respect of the proposed erection of single storey side extension.

Appln. no. 20190358 Gable End, Watling Street

Erection of two storey side extension, single storey rear extension and construction of four dormer windows in the rear roof slope and conversion of the roof space into habitable rooms.

Appln. no. 20190361 13, Dombey Close

Retention of front porch.

Appln. no. 20190385 Little Mockbeggar, Town Road

Use of the land for the storage of X 20 seasonal agricultural workers caravans all year round.

Appln. no. 20190419 24, Villa Road

Erection of a two storey side extension and first floor rear extension.

Appln. no. 20190392 Rear Garden Of, Malt Shovel Cottage, Canal Road

Erection of 2 no. two bedroom dwellings.

Application no. 20190405 Mid Higham Post Office, 2, Hermitage Road

Demolition of the existing single storey shop and the development of a new ground floor shop with two residential units at first floor level, the extension of the ground and first floor to the Post Master's flat, development of a new garage to the front of the shop and a new wall to the east side of the Post Office, alterations to the pedestrian access to the Post Master's flat and associated works.

b. Community Development Committee

Cllr. Allinson reported that the additional lancework lettering for the firework display would cost an extra £650 and it had been decided not to proceed. A CDC Meeting would be held to discuss the event on the Recreation Ground which had been planned for July.

c. Infrastructure Committee

Cllr. Sparks had circulated a written report to Members prior to the Meeting. Illegal turns and lorry monitoring continued at the Gardeners junction. KCC were unable to install the traffic island at the Villa Road junction as the turning circle would not be wide enough. The wooden bollards outside the Gardeners PH would be re-located to free up the dropped kerb access and those which had been knocked down in Forge Lane had been reported., but those in School Lane by the Station would not be replaced due to the double height kerb. Members gave approval for the payment of £1385 for the initial consultation costs for the yellow lines outside the Gardeners and the top of Forge Lane. Drainage works to Hermitage Road, outside St. Johns church, were behind schedule but due to commence soon. A site meeting had taken place in Crutches Lane regarding ongoing fly tipping problems, CCTV signs for the Gads Hill layby had been ordered, and a new design for the hardstanding for the bus stop and for the junction of the lay by were being considered. The feasibility of installing CCTV at the parade of shops would be explored. A response was currently awaited from EIS regarding the new website. The Village Plan display was being moved around the village, and the new Environment Group would meet in mid June, An electrician would visit the three new sites for the defibrillators prior to the equipment being ordered. A further donation of £150 had been received from the Masons.

d. Executive Management Committee

There was nothing to report.

e. Higham Speedwatch

Peter Leakey reported that a total of 5 Speedwatch sessions had been held over a period of 7 hours. Details of a total of 42 vehicles, which had exceeded the speed limit, had been forwarded to the Police. The highest speed observed was 45mph at Buckland Farm

f. Kent Community Warden.

Paul Hassell reported that a car, which had been parked to the lay by at Gads Hill with the engine running, had been found to have someone sleeping rough in it . He was currently mounting a crackdown on illegal turns at the Gardeners Arms junction and had reported one offender.

g. Kent Police

Rebekah Bruce (PCSO) reminded Members that the local PCSOs planned to attend Parish Council Meetings on a quarterly basis. The Police Special Volunteers had offered to conduct a Speedwatch session within the village and wanted to know the best location and times. Members were in agreement that this should take place. Cllr. Mackie reported an increase in discarded silver laughing gas containers within the village. Rebekah confirmed that these should be reported by calling 101 or Jo Hartley direct.

Finance.

The Clerk asked for approval for the items shown below, this being proposed by Cllr. Howard., seconded by Cllr.Allinson and agreed by all Members:-

Clerks salary (April net)	1150.95
HMRC (PAYE/NI April)	212.62
KCC (LGPS April)	433.52
GBC (monthly rent for garage at revised rate by D/D)	60.35
GBC (rates for Pavilion 1)	274.68
GBC (rates for Pavilion 2)	277.00
Clerk (printer cartridges, copier paper, stationery)	336.84
Clerk (donation for late Peter Hart)	50.00
Salvation Army (donation for late Dick Barltrop)	50.00
KCPFA (2019 subscription)	20.00
BHIB Ltd (insurance renewal premium 2019)	1660.65
R. West (allotment tap repair)	60.00
Gravesham Trophy Centre (retirement gifts x 2)	90.00
Phoenix Fireworks Ltd (deposit for fireworks display)	945.00
Jan Morriss (flowers X 2 for APA)	60.00
Mrs E. Jeffery (drinks for APA under Sec. 150(2) LGA 72)	26.70
British Telecommunications plc (broadband)	181.47
EDF Energy (Pavilion electricity)	355.36
Business Stream (water for toilets)	24.91
KALC (Good Councillors Guide)	49.47
Clerk (annual storage rental)	100.00
Memorial Hall (grant for salt spreader S. 137/139)	189.00
St. Johns College (quarter year rent for RG due 25/6/19)	750.00
Age Concern (S137/139 grant)	400.00
KCC (TRO Gardeners – part)	1385.00

Update on part-time finance position.

The Clerk reported that following information provided by KALC that local Parish Councils were now outsourcing Payroll and other functions, this would enable the Parish Council to advertise for a self-employed, home-based contractor to undertake this work. The 2019 audit of accounts would need to be completed before this could take place.

Update on 2019 Audit

The Clerk reminded Members that an Internal Audit would again need to take place before the end of year accounts and Annual Return could be submitted to PKF Littlejohn.

Correspondence.

The correspondence folder had been available for perusal by all Members from 7.00 p.m. on that evening, but the Clerk drew Members attention to the following items:-

1. Members noted that the Operator's Licence for RS Skips had been approved
2. Members gave permission for the use of the Recreation Ground for GBC to hold a Parklife Event on 6/8.
3. Members noted the Annual Visit by Savills to the Recreation Ground would take place on 17/6.
4. Members noted a request for grant aid from Higham Age Concern and awarded a grant of £400 as in previous years.

To note the date of the next Parish Council Meetings.

These were given as being Monday, 15th July 2019 at 7.30 p.m.

Monday, 10th September 2019 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 10.20 p.m. by the Chairman.