

HIGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Memorial Hall, School Lane, on Monday, 15th October 2018 at 7.30 p.m

Present: Cllr. P. Allinson (Chairman)
Councillors: A. Carroll, J. Grey, P. Holmes, E. Jeffery,
P. Oakeshott, L. Pearton (also Borough) and S. Sparks.
In attendance: 3 Parishioners
Peter Leakey and Vikki Brooke (Parish Advisors)
Paul Hassell (Kent Community Warden)
Apologies for absence: Cllrs Sweetland, Craske, Papadopulos, Mendzil and Howard.
Clive Stanley.

Prior to the commencement of the Parish Council Meeting there was Defibrillator Awareness Training in connection with the forthcoming Restart a Heart Day on 16th October. Several other training sessions would be taking place throughout the village in the next few weeks. Although a defibrillator was fixed to the railings around the Pavilion Building on the Recreation Ground, fund raising had already begun to purchase another to be placed elsewhere in the village.

The Chairman accepted apologies for absence.
There were no alterations to the Register of Members Interests.
The Clerk reported that no reports regarding parish property and amenities had been received.

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on Monday, 10th September 2018, were confirmed and signed.

Matters arising from the Minutes.

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

- a. P. 1307. Higham Gardens for Pleasure Competition 2018. Details of the prizewinners had now been notified to the Parish Council.
- b. P. 1307. Garage – Villa Road. The tenancy had commenced on 1/10/18 but a cheque for the first month's rent needed to be taken to the Civic Centre in order that the keys could be released. Cllr. Pearton agreed to deal with this matter on behalf of the Parish Council. It was agreed that the feasibility of purchasing a pallet truck to keep inside the garage would be investigated. The Chairman agreed to contact Stuart Wright once access to the garage had been obtained to arrange for the transport of the one tonne bag of salt from Buckland Farm to the new store.
- c. P. 1307. Amenity land. The Parish Council had been asked how much land was required and what it would be used for. The CDC agreed to discuss this further and provide a response.
- d. P. 1309. Street lighting - School Lane. The new street lighting columns were now on order.
- e. Website report. Clive Stanley reported that recent additions to the website had included the inclusion of the HIKIDEAS website, the Community Warden Drop In poster, request for Parishioners' comments on the train service, LTC update and statutory consultation information, Relaxation and Fun evening poster, Library News and Events, photoshoot of the GFP 2018 winners garden, and details of the Nuralite Industrial Estate redevelopment information evening, as well as the usual Minutes and Agenda.

Cllr. Sparks reported that she had reported the overgrown grass verge to Chilton Drive (p. 1308 of the minutes refers) through the Parish Portal.

She also confirmed that only the words "bus" and "stop" needed to be refreshed to the Forge Lane bus bay. Paul Hassell agreed to monitor the vehicle which had been observed regularly parking in this space.

Cllr. Sparks confirmed that she would speak to Clive Stanley to agree the format of the evening to give out the new Councillor email addresses and to also write a draft correspondence policy.

Parishioners' Matters.

The Clerk reported that Clive Stanley wished to draw Members attention to the slippery state of the footpath from The Knowle down School Lane which was caused by a combination of trees and vegetation growth, excess earth being washed down onto the footway and leaf fall. Cllr. Sparks had photographed the section of footpath and it was agreed to report it through the Parish Portal.

Barry Sutherland reported that existing lines to the carriageway needed to be refreshed outside Meadows Stores to Forge Lane (for 20 minute parking bay) and outside the old Railway Tavern, where cars now regularly parked making the bend dangerous.

To discuss the forthcoming Nuralite Public Meeting to be held on Thursday, 25th October.

Cllrs Pearton and Sparks reported on a recent meeting which had taken place at the Nuralite Industrial Estate to inspect the drawings which would be submitted to the Borough Council. The site management was currently monitoring Colas vehicle movements to and from the site and were happy to share this information with the Parish Council. It appeared that there were both Colas Road and Colas Rail vehicles accessing Canal Road. The Colas Road vehicles were based at the Nuralite Site and were transit sized vans, not requiring an Operator's licence, and which carried road signs and cones. The Colas Rail vehicles appeared to be accessing the Hoo Junction site and were HGVs. Cllr. Pearton reported that the site management at Nuralite had stated that once they had received planning permission for the re-development works they would impose a strict one way system to stop the estimated 100 vehicle movements per day travelling up through the village. For the expected 3 to 5 year duration of the works vehicles leaving the site would use Gore Green Road to exit the village and those coming to the site would do so along the Lower Rochester Road. Members expressed concern regarding the traffic management along this route with the need for passing places and extra vigilance for walkers, bikers and horses. The Nuralite Management Team had called a Public Meeting at the Memorial Hall on 25/10 between 18.00 and 20.00 hours when drawings would be available to view and the consultants for LEJ Properties Ltd. would be on hand to answer any questions posed by Parishioners.

Councillors' Matters.

County.

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

Borough.

Cllr. Pearton reported that a Ceremony entitled "Battle's Over" would commemorate 100 years since the end of World War 1 and be held at Community Square on 11/11/18 at 18.45 hours.

Parish.

Cllr. Jeffery reported that she had reported the fly tipping to Canal Road but as yet it remained uncollected. She asked if the birthday banner could be taken down from the railings of Wildacre on the corner of Forge Lane.

Cllr. Oakeshott reported a large pothole to School Lane near to the Hairdressers which Cllr. Sparks agreed to enter on the Parish Portal. Cllr. Oakeshott reported that the CCTV at the Hairdressers had been disabled prior to a break in.

Cllr. Holmes highlighted current scams involving HMRC and TV Licensing.

Cllr. Grey asked if an access route could be created from 43, School Lane down to the pathway below as the occupant used a wheelchair. Someone had tried to remove the dog bin from the post to the bottom of Lake Drive. Cllr. Grey reported that overgrown trees in Church

Street were causing concerns to residents and it was hoped that problem areas could be identified so that landowners could be contacted accordingly.

Cllr. Pearton reported that Higham School had also been broken into but the culprits had been captured on the CCTV system and images handed over to the police. The new Landlord at the Gardeners Arms PH had now taken over.

Cllr. Sparks highlighted a new fundraising campaign for repairs to the spire at St. Marys Church.

The Chairman outlined the content of the next few meetings. It was agreed to invite Martin Fielder-White to discuss budget setting with Members on 3/12.

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. 20180850 88, Forge Lane

Erection of a two storey rear and side extension and construction of a wider vehicular access.

Appln. no 20171035 14, Highwoods Close

** AMENDED APPLICATION** Erection of a single storey rear extension and first floor side extension over existing garage.

b. Community Development Committee

The Chairman reported that the arrangements for the forthcoming Firework Display were being finalised. The theme was the commemoration of the end of World War 1 and entry would be free. First aid cover was currently being sought. Banners and posters advertising the event would be displayed throughout the village. Charity status needed to be obtained before the Pavilion Sub Lease could be set up. Members gave permission for the funding of a skip to clear the remainder of the rubbish at the Pavilion.

c. Infrastructure Committee

The Clerk had circulated a report from Cllr. Sparks to all Members prior to the start of the Meeting. Cllr. Sparks updated Members regarding outstanding Highways Issues involving the Gardeners Junction, the laybys off Gads Hill and Crutches Lane and the Recreation Ground. Briefings and site meeting arrangements were currently in hand. The Borough Council had now taken delivery of the new waste bins which were due to be installed soon and it had carried out a litter pick of the lay by on Gads Hill. Quotations were being obtained for the repairs to the playground equipment and further tree management works to the Recreation Ground. The wooden sleepers were in a poor condition and might need to be replaced. Further discussion would take place at the next Meeting. User guidelines for the use of the field area would also have to be drawn up. Very lengthy consultation documents and a questionnaire had now been published for the Lower Thames Crossing which LTCA members were now looking at in great detail. Upcoming information sessions were planned by HE and the mobile information van would visit the village in November.

d. Executive Management Committee

Cllr. Jeffery reported that the EMC had met in September with KCC Resilience Officer, Steve Scully. A report of the Meeting had been circulated to all Members. In addition Cllr. Sparks had attended a Community Resilience Workshop in October which had provided the Parish Council with further information. An audit of the winter salt bins was currently underway so that details could be forwarded to Kent Highways in preparation for the cold weather.

- e. Higham Speedwatch
Peter Leakey reported that a total of 11 Speedwatch sessions had been held. Details of a total of 75 vehicles which had exceeded the speed limit had been forwarded to the Police. The highest speed observed was 46 mph outside Buckland Farm. Details of dates of forthcoming Speedwatch sessions would be given to the Clerk to forward on to Members.
- f. Kent Community Warden
Paul Hassell reported that some of the street lights to Villa Road in the vicinity of Higham Library were not working at present. Cllr. Sparks agreed to check on this and report on the Parish Portal as necessary. The Librarian had had to remove the painted stones from the Library Courtyard. Youngsters had been cycling through the Courtyard and an instance of mooning outside the Library window had been reported. It was agreed that perhaps one gate might be locked to stop the nuisance with cycles. The Clerk was asked to ascertain if Jo Hartley was still the named PCSO for the village.

Finance.

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

Clerks salary (September net)	1110.22
HMRC (PAYE/NI September)	208.18
KCC (LGPS September)	419.43
Expenses (use of room as office 1/7/18 to 30/9/18)	227.50
Gravesham Borough Council (Pavilion rates to end of financial year – amended)	1384.00
British Telecommunications plc (broadband)	184.27
KCC (street lighting columns)	4180.60
Mrs E. Jeffery (VSO expenses)	50.00
Sue Sparks (expenses Volunteer thank you evening)	70.83
Clerk (printer cartridges)	190.88
Clive Stanley (webmaster services 26/6/18 to 30/9/18)	126.75
G. Knight (repairs to Speedwatch cable)	10.00
PKF Littlejohn (2018 audit)	360.00
Sue Sparks (travel expenses)	25.30
Sue Sparks (Love Higham hosting/domain renewal)	82.68
Phoenix Fireworks Ltd. (balance for firework display)	2880.00
Gravesham Borough Council (first month rent for garage)	49.31
KCPFA (2018 subscription)	20.00

The Clerk reported that water bills were still being received for the allotments showing an estimated reading on the old meter which had been removed in May 2017. Business Stream had never obtained an actual meter reading themselves and refused to accept that provided by the Clerk. It was understood that two other Gravesham Rural Parishes were having the same problem with this company when their meters had been replaced. Members asked the Clerk to obtain an up to date photograph of the meter showing both the meter number and reading and ask that the company then carry out a meter reading themselves to verify that this was in fact correct.

The Clerk advised Members that in spite of Martin Fielder-White phoning Littlejohn to confirm that he was carrying out an Internal Audit of our accounts they had issued a notice of conclusion of audit with an exception regarding the fact that such an audit had not taken place. Members expressed their concern and the Clerk was asked to bring this matter to the attention of Littlejohn.

To receive a report from the Internal Auditor.

A report from the Internal Auditor, Martin Fielder-White, had been circulated to Members prior to the Meeting. It was proposed by Cllr. Carroll, seconded by Cllr. Jeffery and agreed by all Members that the proposals contained in this report be adopted and comments noted.

Correspondence.

The correspondence folder had been available for perusal by all Members from 19.00 hours on that evening, but the Clerk drew Members' attention to the following items:-

1. Members noted the conclusion of the 2018 Audit.
2. Cllr. Grey agreed to attend the KALC AGM on 17/11.
3. Members noted two emails from Mr Thomas regarding the forthcoming Nuralite Public Meeting.
4. Cllr. Grey agreed to attend the Parish Seminar on 5/11.

To note the dates of the next Parish Council Meetings.

These were given as follows:-

Monday, 19th November – Parish Council Meeting.

Monday, 26th November – Presentation Meeting with the Mayor of Gravesham for the prizewinners of the Higham Gardens for Pleasure Competition 2018.

Monday, 7th January 2019 – Budget and Finance Meeting

Monday, 14th January – Parish Council Meeting.

Any Other Business.

Cllr. Grey urged Members to offer support to Cllr. Wenban who was campaigning against the closure of the Gravesend Met. Office weather station.

There being no other business, the Meeting closed at 11.05 p.m.