

## HIGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at the Memorial Hall, School Lane, on Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018 at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllr. P. Allinson (Chairman)  
Councillors: J. Grey, A. Howard, E. Jeffery, A. Mendzil,  
L. Pearton (also Borough) and S. Sparks.

In attendance: 7 Parishioners  
Peter Leakey and Vikki Brooke (Parish advisors)  
PCSO Faye Flood and colleague from Gravesend area.  
Steve Taylor – Warden Manager – Dartford and Gravesend.

Apologies for absence: Cllrs Sweetland, Craske, Carroll, Holmes, Oakeshott, and  
Papadopulos.  
PCSOs Lowe and Stack. Clive Stanley.

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

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting followed by a Parish Council Meeting, held on Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> May 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. 1296 GDPR New email accounts for all Parish Councillors had now been set up and Clive Stanley would carry out the necessary training after the summer break.
- b. P. 1298 CDC Sub Lease. A response had been received from our solicitor regarding the setting up of the sub lease.
- c. P. 1298 A donation of £25 had been sent to the Memorial Hall for the recent Public Meeting.
- d. P.1294. It was agreed that Cllr. Mendzil would be a substitute for Cllr. Howard in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the IFC.
- e. Members noted the reports of recent Meetings with the CPRE and GGGR attended by Cllrs Grey and Howard.
- f. Web site report. Clive Stanley had reported that recent additions to the website had included Councillor and Warden drop in posters for May and June, changed Chair and Vice Chair to the Parish Council, Local Plan questionnaire response, information regarding Green Belt petition, photos of 30<sup>th</sup> May Public Meeting, set up of 12 new email accounts for Councillors for GDPR, LTC update and aerial survey of route, Summer Sounds poster for concert, information about garden bonfires and overgrown vegetation, as well as the normal PC Minutes and Agenda.

### Parishioners' Matters.

Barry Sutherland, of St Johns Road, warned Members that planted flower pots and containers were being stolen from front gardens within the village. Cllr Mendzil reported that advice was currently being displayed on Facebook for people to security mark these and for hanging baskets to be attached to wall brackets with luggage ties. Paul Hassell reminded those present that the theft of garden pots and containers should always be reported to the Police in the usual way.

Jamie Fox, Manager of the Eagles FC, advised Members that the Borough Council only carried out two cuts a year to the playing field and the Club now had to carry out in the region of an additional 8 cuts to the pitch during the year. The Club currently had 12 teams, with a total of 150 players between the ages of 6 to 15 years and had been in existence for 40 years. A copy of the latest set of audited accounts for the Eagles FC had been sent to all Members

prior to the Meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Pearton, seconded by Cllr. Jeffery and agreed by all Members that a grant of £500 be awarded towards the cost of a new mower. Mr Fox indicated that the club would be willing to carry out any additional cuts for the Parish Council during the year, if given prior notice, as the new mower would be far more efficient than the old model.

To discuss possible solutions to the current problems of anti-social behaviour and lorry parking taking place to the lay by off Gads Hill

Although two PCSOs were in attendance at the Meeting to discuss this item a bad traffic accident outside the Memorial Hall, and the impending arrival of the Air Ambulance, necessitated them leaving the Meeting to attend the scene. Parish Councillors discussed the current problems in their absence with a couple of local residents who had especially attended the meeting to give their views. Ideas put forward included cutting down all the trees which shielded the lay by, to blocking up the top end of the road and making it into a bus stop. Members agreed that there was also a problem with anti-social behaviour to the Crutches Lane lay by. Cllr. Sparks reported that consideration was currently being given to the installation of CCTV at this location to deter fly tipping. It was agreed that an initial meeting would be held with Kent Highways Officers and PCSOs at both sites to explore options available before reporting back at the next meeting and arranging to meet with local residents.

To evaluate the success of the Public Meeting held to discuss the Local Plan Review and learn the views of the Parish Council regarding Green Belt land within the village.

Cllr. Sparks reported that the IFC was currently finalising its response to the Local Plan Review questionnaire which when completed would be placed on the website to confirm the views of the Parish Council. Members agreed that the most important message to get across was that the Green Belt should not be built on unless absolutely necessary. The finished response would be emailed out for approval before it was submitted. She urged individual councillors to also complete the questionnaire either on line or using the paper version before the deadline of 11/7.

To finalise arrangements for the 2018 Higham Gardens for Pleasure Competition.

The Clerk reminded Members to let her have any gardens for consideration by 20/7 to forward on to Martin Wates at Gravesham Borough Council.

Update on the setting up of a sub-lease for the Pavilion – Higham Community Leisure

The Clerk reported that paperwork which needed to be signed had been received from the solicitor and once completed the Chairman and the Clerk needed to visit the office with necessary identification documentation. The Chairman confirmed that the additional information required by the solicitor would be forwarded to him once it was to hand. Vikki Brooke agreed to become a Trustee for Higham Community Leisure.

Councillors' Matters.

County.

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

Borough.

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

Cllr. Pearton explained to Members that the Borough Council had to carry out a review of its Local Plan as failure to do so would mean that it would have no say where any new developments would be built.

Parish.

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Oakeshott had advised her that the Memorial Hall was to be completely redecorated over the summer holidays.

Cllr. Jeffery reported that she had approached The Villager mini bus service, which covered the Hoo Peninsula, and asked if it would be willing to pick up passengers from Higham. She was currently awaiting a reply.

Cllr. Pearton reported he had attended a meeting arranged by Adam Holloway in Westminster between representatives from the village and Thameslink regarding the poor train service currently being experienced in Higham. He also reported that brambles were again growing across the pavement in Chalk Road from the wire netting adjacent to the railway line.

Cllr. Grey highlighted poor visibility problems with high grass to the verges in Church Street and that the pavement width had been severely reduced outside Alexander Cottages due to the encroachment of grass from the verge. Cllr. Sparks agreed to report all of these vegetation problems on the Kent Highways Parish Portal.

Cllr. Mendzil highlighted a booklet from another rural Parish Council about a Flag Festival. It might be possible for the village knitting group to produce bunting.

Cllr. Sparks reported that the knitting group was currently saving the funds they collected each week for refreshments to go towards the next defibrillator for the village. Cllr. Sparks had also contacted the Borough Council for advice regarding both bonfires and smoke within the village and this was now displayed on the website and in The Bridge Magazine.

The Chairman felt that to make better use of the storage space within the toilet block it might be necessary to remove some internal walls. Members were in agreement for this to happen but stipulated that the self-contained disabled toilet on the end of the building should remain. He had been asked if it would be possible for a Speedwatch session to be held in Walmers Avenue. Peter Leakey felt it was unlikely as any new locations were assessed by the Police as no volunteers were allowed to stand on the footpath and there was a regulation distance required between the speedwatch equipment and the vehicles. The Chairman reported that the condition of the surfacing to the Landway had further deteriorated since the severe winter weather. The Clerk reported that Savills were due to attend the Recreation Ground for the annual inspection in September. Cllr. Sparks agreed that the IFC would liaise with the PROW Officer to obtain an estimate of the costs involved for the resurfacing.

## **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. 20180579 Land adjoining Wendover, Lower Rochester Road

Demolition of existing garage and erection of a detached two storey 4no. bedroom dwelling with construction of new access and gates.

#### Appln. no. 20180590 41, Forge Lane

Outline application with all matters reserved for the erection of 2no. two storey dwellings and 3no. three storey dwellings, with integral garages and parking for 2 cars per dwelling.

#### Appln. no. 20180520 21, High View

Erection of single storey front extension, front porch and conversion of existing garage into habitable rooms incorporating a new roof.

#### Appln. no. 20180646 14, Reynolds Fields

Erection of single storey front extension.

#### Appln. no. 20180635 Happylands, Watling Street

Application for the removal of conditions 2,3,4 and 7 attached to planning permission reference number 20131050 for the demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a detached two storey, seven bedroom dwelling with rooms in the roof space and basement area and associated re-landscaping and parking; to allow the substitution of approved drawings with drawings no. (13-19)-01 J, 02A, 03A, 04A, 05A, and drawing no. 13-19-15 should be removed.

- b. Community Development Committee  
 The Clerk had circulated a report from the Chairman to all Members prior to the Meeting .The Chairman reported that the GBC Business Rates Department had no objection to the Community Pavilion and the MUSA (Multi Use Sports Area) being amalgamated and as one entity applying for 100% Business Rate Relief once charity status had been achieved. He took Members through the arrangements made for the forthcoming Summer Sounds concert to be held on 20/7. Members ratified the proposed preliminary budget of £1646 for the event from the Community Events Budget agreed at the Budget Meeting in January. The Chairman hoped to meet with the firework contractor during the summer break to discuss the Firework Night event. The next meeting of the CDC would take place on 16/7 to finalise the arrangements for the event. Cllr. Sparks reported that under the terms of the current SLA between the Youth Club Committee and The Grand the cost of Youth Provision for the village from 12/9/18 to 27/3/19 would be £3750. Cllr Sparks therefore proposed that a grant of £3750 be made to the Youth Club Committee, being seconded by Cllr. Howard and agreed by all Members present.
- c. Infrastructure Committee  
 The Clerk had circulated a report from Cllr. Sparks to all Members prior to the start of the Meeting. Members approved the wording of the draft letter to residents regarding proposed improvements to the street lighting in School Lane and for the letter to residents/businesses local to the 2 potential improvement sites. Cllr. Sparks reported that the Village Plan display was moving to the Village Club in the next week. The Task and Finish Groups would be starting up over the next 2 months and a review of the progress on the actions in the Plan would take place in September so that an Update could be published in October. Potential locations for additional litter bins had been sent to Stuart Alford and a site visit would shortly take place. CCTV and Fly Tipping had been discussed with Shorne PC. A thanks and celebration event for all Volunteers would take place on 31/8 at the Pavilion. Members agreed that a budget figure of £150 be set aside for this event.
- d. Executive Management Committee  
 The Clerk had circulated a report from Cllr. Jeffery to all Members prior to the start of the Meeting. Cllr. Jeffery had held a meeting to consider Emergency Planning within the village to familiarise those present with past requirements and to update these for the future. It seemed that most information needed would be found at the forthcoming Community Resilience Workshop for which a date was currently awaited. The Clerk advised Members of a GBC garage currently available to rent on a monthly basis in Villa Road. This would enable the salt store to be moved to this central location for the forthcoming winter season. Cllr. Pearton agreed to view the garage and report back at the next meeting.
- e. Higham Speedwatch  
 Peter Leakey reported that since the last meeting a total of 16 Speedwatch sessions had been held. Details of a total of 39 vehicles which had exceeded the speed limit had been forwarded to the Police. The highest speed observed was 60 mph outside Buckland Farm.
- f. Kent Community Warden  
 Steve Taylor, Warden Manager for Dartford and Gravesend, introduced himself to Members. He liked to attend Parish Council Meetings twice a year to ensure that the valuable work of the Community Wardens was to the satisfaction of the villages and this was his first visit to Higham since Paul had taken up post. Paul Hassell reported that complaints had been received regarding a lorry with a refrigeration unit operating all

night which had been parked to the lay by off Gads Hill. It had also been discovered that the coach to the same lay by had had someone living in it. He urged Members to explore the possibility of securing a “no overnight parking” ban through Kent Highways for this road.

#### Finance.

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

Clerks salary (May)	1110.22
HMRC (PAYE/NI May)	208.18
KCC (LGPS May)	419.43
Clerks salary (June net)	1110.22
HMRC (PAYE/NI June)	208.18
KCC (LGPS June)	419.43
Clerk (exps for use of room as office 1/4/18 to 30/6/18)	227.50
Clive Stanley (webmaster services 1/4/18 to 28/6/18)	248.63
Gravesham Network Development CIC (youth services)	1989.00
Beverley Prankard (Peninsula Band)	600.00
Singlewell Stationery and Print Ltd. (event banners)	146.40
Elizabeth Hart (event flyer delivery)	250.00
Gravesham Borough Council (TENs licences)	63.00
Sue Sparks (litter picking sticks)	76.93
Gravesham Borough Council (instalment for Pavilion rates)	594.09
Sue Sparks (plants)	4.47
Sue Sparks (Speedwatch lap top cable)	3.99
Sue Sparks (local Plan Review – various)	38.09
Nexus Data Systems Ltd (GDPR email accounts)	228.00
Higham Memorial Hall (donation towards hire of hall for Public Meeting)	25.00

#### 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. It was agreed that changes needed to be made to the draft letter to accompany the response from the Parish Council to the Local Plan Review.
2. The Clerk was asked to make further enquiries regarding a plot of amenity land within the Parish which might be available.
3. Members noted emails from Parishioners regarding current operational problems with Thameslink services, following the revised timetable being implemented in May 2018, and which involved the use of rail replacement buses.
4. Members agreed to provide a £15 book token for the forthcoming Community Day at Higham Library.
5. Members unanimously approved a grant of £500 for the Higham Village History Group towards the purchase of archive storage furniture for use within Higham Library to store collections.
6. Members were undecided regarding providing the HIKIDEAS resource on the website which provided local walks. Cllr. Sparks agreed to look into the matter and report back at the next meeting.

Members noted that an anonymous letter had been received regarding the financing of the forthcoming firework display but were neither able nor willing to discuss this matter due to the manner in which the complaint had been received.

To note the date of the next Parish Council Meeting.

This was given as being Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2018 at 7.30 p.m.

Any Other Business.

None was brought to the notice of the Meeting.

There being no other business, the Meeting closed at 10.50 p.m.