

HALLING PARISH COUNCIL

The Community Centre, High Street, Lower Halling, Rochester, Kent. ME2 1BS



MINUTES

Monday 3rd June 2019

The Jubilee Hall ~ 7.30pm

Attendees: Cllr G. Wenham Cllr R. Thorne
Cllr T. Dolby Cllr C. Buckwell
Mrs J. Allen ~ Clerk

Members of the public: 7

The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

1. Apologies for Absences

JA133:19 None.

2. Disclosure of other business

JA134:19 None.

3. Declarations of any Pecuniary and/or Prejudicial Interests

JA135:19 Cllr C. Buckwell spoke to confirm of an interest for himself and Cllr R. Thorne having both been recently appointed onto the Planning Committee at Medway Council following their election as Ward Councillors for Strood South earlier last month.

4. Adjourn meeting for Public Questions

The meeting was adjourned for public question time – a total of 9 questions were raised:

- I. *A complaint was raised in regards to the graffiti on the bridge and surrounding areas. It was requested the Parish Council apply significant pressure to the relevant parties to arrange for its immediate removal.*
- II. *A complaint was raised in relation to the poor state of repair to the track/roadway at the local cemetery.*
- III. *A complaint was also received regarding the abandonment of some garden waste within the cemetery grounds alongside a considerable number of expired funeral tributes that needed disposing of.*
- IV. *Concerns were raised in regards to the small number of Parish Councillors presently, with pressure for the Parish Council to co-opt new members as soon as possible.*
- V. *A request was made for the Parish Council to install an additional 'slow' sign along The Street in Upper Halling (half way up near the Ash path on the bend) amidst reports one side of the road has a 'slow' sign in place whilst the other side does not.*
- VI. *A further request was made for double yellow lines to be installed along The Street in Upper Halling, near to the Ash path entrance, to prevent other residents from parking here and obstructing the pavement from being used via mobility scooters and prams.*
- VII. *A complaint was received in regards to positioning of the dropped kerb crossing on the bend coming into Upper Halling onto The Street, amidst fears that both sides of the road cannot be seen from this vantage point. It was suggested that perhaps a bollard could be installed to prevent cars from mounting the pavement.*
- VIII. *A request was received for the Parish Council to support a reduction of the speed limit in the village to a 20mph zone.*
- IX. *A complaint was received suggesting Council members had received no briefs regarding the undertakings of the current Parish Council committees and portfolios. A recommendation was made that when co-options take place that the relevant committees and portfolios are allocated proportionately and appropriate details passed on.*

5. Reconvene meeting

Public question time closed at 8.05pm and the meeting reconvened.

6. Minutes of Parish Council meetings

JA136:19 The revised minutes of the HPC meeting held on 1st April 2019 were submitted by the Clerk. It was proposed by Cllr R. Thorne and seconded by Cllr C. Buckwell, that they be approved as a correct record and signed by Chairman. The motion was RESOLVED with all four Councillors voting in favour.

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JA137:19 The minutes of the HPC meeting held on 13th May 2019 were submitted by the Clerk. It was proposed by Cllr R. Thorne and seconded by Cllr C. Buckwell, that they be approved as a correct record and signed by Chairman. The motion was RESOLVED with all four Councillors voting in favour.

JA138:19 The minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 26th May 2018 were submitted by the Clerk. It was proposed by Cllr R. Thorne and seconded by the Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, that they be approved as a correct record. It was noted that both Cllr T. Dolby and Cllr C. Buckwell abstained from voting, having both been newly appointed in May 2019 to stand for Halling Parish Council following the local elections.

7. Information arising from the minutes not on the agenda

JA139:19 None.

8. Vacancies

JA140:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to verify that following the discussion surrounding this item at the last meeting ref Min **JA116:19** that the relevant co-option notices had now been published. He urged any interested Parishioners to apply by sending their details into the Clerk in writing alongside any additional credentials potentially advising of their association with the village and clarification if they were currently registered against the Halling Parish electoral role.

The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke further to advise that once this information had been received by the Clerk then this correspondence would be forwarded onto the members for consideration and if deemed suitable then a one to one meeting would be arranged.

Cllr G. Wenham stressed that Halling Parish Council were following their agreed protocol and in line with this legislation the closing date for interested parties to apply was Friday 14th June. He emphasized for new parties to come forward to allow the Parish Council to function at full capacity.

With invitation from the Chairman a question from a member of the public was raised as to how many applications the Parish Council had received from interested parties so far. The Chairman spoke to verify a total number of six (6).

An additional question from this Parishioner was raised to ask how long this process was likely to take. Cllr G. Wenham responded to confirm that he hoped any new members would be co-opted onto the Council at the next meeting in July, allowing for the recess period of the Parish Council in August.

9. Annual Parish Meeting 2019

JA141:19 Cllr R. Thorne spoke to verify that Halling Parish Council had hosted a very successful Annual Parish Meeting, which took place on Saturday 18th of June 2019. He advised of various stalls which ranged from the Baptist Church, the Halling Historical Society, the Community Centre and Halling Primary School alongside the presentation of the plans for the refurbishment of the Upper Recreation Ground and the Blue Lake development (supplied via St Andrew's Leisure). He verified that over 40 Parishioners had attended this event with delicious homemade refreshments kindly supplied via Halling Sapphires WI.

Cllr R. Thorne advised that Halling's local MP, Kelly Tolhurst, had also attend and had stayed for over an hour talking with the various stall holders, Councillors and Parishioners present.

Cllr C. Buckwell also spoke to advise how impressed he was by this event, having been a Parish Councillor within the Medway area for almost 30 years, he confirmed that this meeting had been one of the best, well run and most innovate meetings he had attended in a long time.

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10. Planning Applications & Development Report

JA142:19 Cllr T. Dolby spoke to confirm receipt of one planning application received since the last meeting.

- **MC/19/1362 - Land at St Andrews Lake Halling Kent**

Cllr T. Dolby corrected himself confirming that although this application had been allocated a planning reference number that this correspondence was in fact a formal request via St Andrew's Leisure for Medway Council's opinion on their development of St Andrew's Lake.

Cllr T. Dolby confirmed that he was not aware of this application until a few hours prior to the meeting and that he had subsequently printed the 80-page document (available on the Medway Council planning portal) to read through, he advised of a closing date for objections for the 12th June 2019.

With invitation from the Chairman a member of the public spoke to ask how the forest school was able to function at St Andrew's Lake already without the appropriate permissions in place. Cllr T. Dolby responded to confirm that he would be raising this matter further with Ward Councillor Matt Fearn to investigate.

11. Footpaths Report

JA143:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to confirm that due to the recent uncontested Parish Council elections in May there was currently no footpaths portfolio holder and as such this item would carry over to the next meeting.

With invitation from the Chairman the ex-footpaths officer, Mr B. Barnes, spoke to express concerns of various Halling Parish Council owned footpaths that were growing out of control. He referred to an in-depth report he had prepared for Adam Taylor of Medway Council following the 'Rights of Way Improvement Plan' meeting in September 2018, where despite posting a hard copy of this report to Mr. Taylor, he advised that he was yet to hear back as to when some of the suggested improvements would take place.

Mr B. Barnes also highlighted the point that despite various volunteers offering their assistance with the upkeep of the footpaths last year that he was concerned that none of these individuals had been properly trained and certificated to operate the machinery and equipment required to maintain these rights of way. He urged the Parish Council to employ an accredited contractor to cut back the foliage/greenery at least twice a year.

Mr B. Barnes ended his report in advising that he would be happy to personally chase Adam Taylor for an update on the repairs as he appreciated the Parish Councils resources were limited with such few members presently.

12. Marsh Report

JA144:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to confirm that he had last attended the Marsh on the 2nd June to assess the sink hole that had been reported alongside Mr B. Barnes and Mr S. Holdstock of Boundary Fencing.

He advised that upon further inspection of the condition of the grass that the whole area would now benefit from its first cut of 2019 and accordingly he had spoken to the local farmer, Mr G. Hazemore. He reported that Mr Hazemore was regrettably unable to assist due to ill health therefore he was speaking with alternative contacts to arrange for further assistance.

With invitation from the Chairman Mr B. Barnes spoke and advised that the sink hole was of grave concern and needed to be addressed as soon as possible. He highlighted that the temporary fencing in place around the area was already starting to sink and requested that the Parish Council look to instruct Mr S. Holdstock of Boundary fencing as a matter of urgency to cordon off this area.

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Mr B Barnes spoke further to praise Mr S. Holdstock's work surrounding the installation of the new kissing gates, which he noted were already drawing more Parishioners down to the Marsh, including his own great grandson, who he was now able to push around the Marsh in his buggy.

Cllr C. Buckwell spoke to agree that under the interests of health and safety it was imperative that the Parish Council address the sink hole urgently. It was therefore unanimously agreed that the Clerk, Mrs J Allen, could utilise her £500 allowance to arrange for the relevant works without bringing this matter back to the Parish Council's attention for prior acceptance.

13. Estates Report

JA145:19 Cllr T. Dolby spoke to advise that following an extraordinary meeting on the 1st of June that Ms M. Cook had been re-elected onto the Upper Recreation ground working party.

He reported that under the direction of Ms Cook's the contractors had now finished the improvement works to the access and upon inspection earlier today this area looked significantly better having been levelled off and seeded. He thanked Ms Cook for all her assistance in overseeing these works.

Ms M. Cook spoke to advise that following the improvement works to the access that she was now in conversation with Medway Norse for their tractor (used for cutting the grass in the Upper Recreation Ground) to gain access via specially commissioned track. She also advised that with permission from the Parish Council she had instructed a tree surgeon to carry out the necessary works in trimming back the trees in the surrounding area and that these works were due to take place on Friday 14th June. Ms M Cook reported that in line with the tree surgeon's visit that she had arranged for the installation of the new play equipment to take place on Monday 17th June, with the anticipated closure of the whole site for approximately 2/3 weeks.

She confirmed that she was already in discussions with the Clerk to arrange for a closure notice to make the residents aware of these plans and that she would also circulate a draft copy of the new playground sign for the members approval prior to the order being placed.

JA146:19 Cllr T. Dolby spoke to confirm that a nearby resident had stopped him whilst on site to request an update on the installation of a bench near to the bus stop, as previously agreed via the Council. Cllr C. Buckwell spoke to advise that in the interests of good practice that any previous decisions made over 6 months would need to be reapproved and accordingly he requested the Clerk to include this item on the agenda for next Parish Council meeting.

JA147:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to advise that following complaints that the goal posts in the Lower Recreation Ground were now permanently lying on the grass, that the Parish Council were also looking into arranging for the repair and or replacement on these posts. He asked the Clerk, Mrs J Allen, to liaise further with Ms M. Cook to identify the current goal posts in situ and to arrange for some like for like quotes.

14. Litter Management Health & Safety Equipment

JA148:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to advise that following an inventory of the garage he had undertaken alongside the assistant to the Clerk Ms M. Pease, that he had identified a few items that the Litter management coordinator, Ms L Murphy could use. Following the extensive list of health and safety equipment list previously provided via the Clerk Ref: **JA081:19** it was agreed that the Clerk could arrange for the purchase some new equipment which included some brand-new safety gloves, safety glasses and a personalised high-vis jacket.

With invitation from the Chairman Ms M. Cook spoke to verify that no dogs were allow in either of the play areas in both of the recreation grounds following reports that residents with dogs had been spotted.

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15. Parking Permits at the Old Fire Station

JA149:19 Cllr T. Dolby spoke to advise that had personally visited the site at the Old Fire Station site to look at the proposed plans, suggested via Pastor Kevin Felix Hollington, to provide the nearby residents with parking permits to ease the parking congestion on the road and to utilise the parking spaces at the back of the building.

Cllr T. Dolby expressed his concerns that the gates to access the Lower Recreation ground in the event of an emergency could be blocked with the installation of these permits and that he thought a one to one meeting with the church would be beneficial, with a proposed arrangement of a hatched area to be installed to prevent any residents from parking there.

Cllr C. Buckwell also spoke to confirm that inline with his profession that he would be happy to look at the contract and transfer deed set up via the solicitors at time of sale to verify the Parish Council's position.

It was arranged that the Clerk would obtain these details, pass them onto Cllr C. Buckwell and that this issue would hopefully be discussed further resolved at the next meeting.

16. Community Centre Grant

JA150:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to advise in response to a request received from the Community Centre's treasurer, Chris Sousa-Phipps, for a grant from the Parish Council towards the works and associated repairs following the rupture of the cold water tank earlier in the year that he was not in support of this idea.

He advised that he though this issue should be addressed directly via the Community Centre's committee and that any insurance held on the building should have contributed towards the replacement of the cold water tank and related repairs.

Cllr G. Wenham proposed not to issue the Community Centre with a grant at this stage, which was seconded via Cllr T. Dolby and unanimously agreed.

17. Parishioner request

JA151:19 The Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, presented the members with a hand written request received from a Parishioner asking the Parish Council to consider donating some of the money received from the sale of the Fire Station towards both the Youth Club and updating the Jubilee Hall alongside reducing the speed limit along Pilgrims Road.

Cllr R. Thorne spoke to advise Halling Association would be best placed to help the Youth Club with any requests for equipment/sponsorship and that the Parish Council did assist via contributing towards the replacement windows at the Jubilee Hall back in 2018.

Cllr R. Thorne advised that any requests submitted via the Jubilee Hall for assistance would of course be considered however a formal letter from the Committee would be needed in the first instance for serious consideration.

It was also unanimously agreed that the Parish Council were unable to reduce the speed limit along Pilgrims Way as this was a highways matter, however a formal request for an assessment of the whole of the village of Halling via a highways officer would be sought following complaints received during public question time of other areas of concern too.

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18. Payments & Receipts

Payee	Reference	Payment Method	Amount	Notes
MHS Homes	-	SO	£41.16	(Garage rent May 2019)
Halling Community Centre	-	DD	£275.00	(Rent for Parish Office May 2019)
MHS Homes	-	DD	£50.00	(Garage rent June 2019)
Halling Community Centre	-	DD	£275.00	(Rent for Parish Office June 2019)
Wages	-	BACS	£1188.38	(Staff wages April 2019)
Wages	-	BACS	£1247.36	(Staff wages May 2019)
MHS Homes	-	BACS	£35.00	(Clearance of arrears from increase in rent for Garage)
You First Partnership	-	BACS	£1136.56	(Service Agreement & Prints from Jan 19 - April 19)
Halling WI	-	BACS	£50.00	Refreshments for APM 18/05/2019
Barge Group Ltd	-	BACS	£45.00	Urgent repairs to Lower Recreation Ground climbing equipment
KPS Office Supplies	-	BACS	£44.82	Paper for printing of Halling View June 2019
Mrs J. Allen	-	BACS	£38.95	Chairman Expenses
Boundary Fencing UK (Kent) Ltd	-	CHQ ~ 1203	£1920.00	(Labour for upgrading works to the Marsh in March 2019)
Mr C. Stanley	-	CHQ ~ 1204	£61.95	(April webmaster fees + 4 years renewal of domain name)
Medway Council	-	CREDIT	£59,507.00	(2019 / 2020 Precept)
Natwest Bank	-	CREDIT	£5.48	(Interest from April 2019)
UK Power Networks	-	CREDIT	£40.51	Rent of land for use of overhead power lines
Ms M. Pease	-	CREDIT	£73.60	Claw back following adjustment in tax code
Sashdoddcom	-	CREDIT	£150.00	Payment for advertising in Halling View
TOTAL DEBITS			£6339.18	
TOTAL CREDITS			£59,776.59	

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JA152:19 It was highlighted via Cllr R. Thorne that the proposed payment to Boundary Fencing seemed higher than the original quote received. It was requested that the Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, forward the original quote onto the members along with a copy of the most recent invoice for an internal review.

With the exception of this payment it was proposed via the Cllr R. Thorne, seconded via the Chairman Cllr G. Wenham and unanimously agreed that the tables above be noted, and the payments confirmed.

19. Any other business

JA153:19 Cllr C. Buckwell spoke to verify the points raised during the public question time had been noted and that the relevant actions would be taken.

20. Next Parish Council meeting date

JA154:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham spoke to confirmed that the next ordinary Parish Council meeting would be held on Monday 1st July at the Jubilee Hall.

The meeting finished at 9.17pm

The next ordinary Parish Council meeting will be held on:

Monday 1st July	7.30pm	Jubilee Hall
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