

HALLING PARISH COUNCIL

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



MINUTES

Monday 13th May 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: 11

Before the meeting commenced all four members of the Council signed their 'Declarations of Acceptance of Office' before the Proper Officer.

1. To elect the Chair for the ensuing year

JA107:19 Following the resignation of the previous Chairman, Cllr P. Crispe, before the election of the new council the former Vice-Chair, Cllr R. Thorne, opened the meeting.

Cllr R. Thorne called for nominations for the position of Chair and subsequently nominated Cllr G. Wenham, this nomination was seconded via Cllr T. Dolby and with no objections Cllr G. Wenham duly signed the declaration of acceptance of office and read the statement out loud.

2. Apologies for Absences

JA108:19 None.

3. To elect a Vice-Chair for the ensuing year

JA109:19 Owing to the recent uncontested Parish Council election it was recommended via Cllr R. Thorne to postpone an election of a Vice-Chair until more members had been co-opted onto Halling Parish Council.

4. Disclosure of other business

JA110:19 None.

5. Declarations of any Pecuniary and/or Prejudicial Interests

JA111:19 None.

6. Adjourn meeting for Public Questions

The meeting was adjourned for public question time – a total of 8 points were raised:

- I. Enquiry rose concerning the possible relocation of the non-heavy goods vehicle signs at Vicarage Close, following a recent incident with HGV lorry spotted trying to manoeuvre out of the close.
- II. Complaint received regarding the remnants of a discarded rear-end of a truck which seemed to be permanently situated amongst the bushes within the foliage circle at Vicarage Close.
- III. Complaint received regarding the condition of the 'Plough Path', where it had been reported that the overgrown greenery needed cutting back.
- IV. A concern was voiced surrounding the money from the sale of the Fire station that needed urgently placing into a separate savings account.
- V. Complaint was voiced concerning the 'Declarations of any interests' item listed on the recent agenda had been non descriptive in detail.
- VI. Concerns rose surrounding the low number of members on the Parish Council with a plea to co-opt new members as soon as possible.
- VII. Concerns were raised surrounding the next meeting of the 'Doctors Practice Patient Group', with new rumors circulating about the potential closure of the village pharmacy. An urgent plea was made for a representative of Halling Parish Council to attend.
- VIII. A further complaint was received surrounding the graffiti on the bridge which was still present.

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7. Reconvene meeting

Public question time closed at 7.47pm and the meeting reconvened.

8. To elect Committee, Portfolio Holders for the ensuing year

JA112:19 Cllr C. Buckwell spoke to request consideration for election as the KALC representative for Halling Parish Council, this request was seconded via Cllr R. Thorne and unanimously agreed.

Cllr T. Dolby also expressed an interest in being elected as the second representative for KALC; again this request was seconded via Cllr R. Thorne and unanimously agreed.

9. To appoint Members of the Committees and representatives to other bodies

JA113:19 Cllr R. Thorne spoke to request appointment as the Halling Association representative (alongside the Chairman); this request was seconded via Cllr T. Dolby and unanimously agreed.

The members of the Parish Council also unanimously agreed to postpone any further elections of committee members, portfolio holders and representatives to other bodies until more members had been co-opted onto the council.

10. Minutes of Previous Parish Council meeting

JA114:19 Cllr R. Thorne spoke to request the minutes be reviewed in full at the next meeting, owing to the appointment of the new Council that evening, following the recent uncontested Parish Council elections earlier that month.

11. Information arising from the minutes not on the agenda

JA115:19 None.

12. Vacancies

JA116:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to confirm that since the results of the uncontested Parish Council elections had been published there had several applicants apply expressing an interest in being co-opted onto the Parish Council.

Cllr R. Thorne spoke to advise of the correct procedure for any further applicants who wish to apply, confirming that any interested parties would need to write into the Clerk with their credentials, these details then in turn would be forwarded onto the members and once assessed a one to one meeting to talk to the relevant party would be arranged. Once this meeting had taken place this matter would then officially be brought back to Council to vote upon the co-option of the relevant candidate(s). Cllr R. Thorne also advised that there should be a specific period of advertisement for these vacancies along with a cut off date.

A member of the public spoke to express concerns at the length of time this process would take, stating that having looked on the KALC website he understood co-options could even take place as early as this evening if the Parish Council agreed.

Cllr C. Buckwell spoke in response to this query and advised that a period of advertisement for Parish Councillor Vacancies was not unusual and this practice was widely adopted via many of the other local Parish Councils as good governance.

Another member of the public also spoke and pointed out that vacancies had already been advertised locally in the back of the Halling View and based on this advertisement she urged the Parish Council to reconsider.

Cllr R. Thorne responded to confirm the Parish Council were still able to call an extraordinary meeting in advance of the next Parish Council meeting to co-opt new members once the above procedure had been followed. He confirmed in doing this the Parish Council would be intra-vires and this period would still adhere with the 'Local Government Act' to freely co-opt new members within the statutory 35 day period after an

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election. Cllr R. Thorne also voiced concerns that the term to elect new members onto the Parish Council had only just lapsed 11 days ago and any interested parties were freely able to apply within this time.

13. HR Team

JA117:19 The members of the Parish Council unanimously agreed to postpone any further discussions surrounding the HR team until more members had been co-opted onto the council.

14. Planning Applications & Developments Report

JA118:19 Ward Councillor M. Fearn stood up, and with invitation from the Chairman, spoke to confirm receipt of six further planning applications received since the last meeting.

- **MC/19/0890 ~ 80 Pilgrims Road**

W/ Cllr M. Fearn spoke to advise that he had delivered letters to the two neighbouring properties. He reported that he had received one objection via email expressing concerns that the construction of this property would be built further forward than other neighbouring houses. He reported that he had responded to this email and asked the neighbours to lodge any concerns they had via formal objection on the Medway Council Planning Portal. Looking online earlier he confirmed that he could see this objection had now been recorded and based on his own findings he made a personal recommendation to the Parish Council that they do not object to this proposal.

- **MC/19/0946 ~ 12 Hostier Close**

W/ Cllr M. Fearn advised that he had delivered letters to the neighbouring properties. He reported that he had subsequently received no objections and he noted there were no comments made on the Medway Council Planning Portal.

- **MC/19/0994 ~ Land Adjacent To Balancing Pond St Andrews Park Halling Kent**

W/ Cllr M. Fearn spoke to express his own concerns in regards to this application relating to 'over-development' of the site. He reported that he was currently in the midst of delivering letters to the whole of the St Andrews Park estate to make the residents aware of this planning application, to urge them to object and to direct them to the most legitimate points to record in their own objections.

Looking online he reported that to date Medway Council had received 18 letters of objection and 2 letters of support. He advised that based on the level of complaints received it was very likely that this application would be passed to a committee at Medway Council to be discussed in further detail.

Both Cllr R. Thorne and Cllr T. Dolby spoke to voice their concerns that some of the contents of the complaints already lodged might not sufficient in testimony to be taken seriously and that the closing date for objections was fast approaching on the 22nd of May.

Cllr T. Dolby also advised that he was aware that the associated reports showing on the Medway Planning portal via Redrow were factually incorrect and were solely based on findings as the planning application stood now and not once the St Andrew's Lake development had been passed with the additional increase of vehicles using the A228 and the combined escalated pollution levels etc.

Cllr T. Dolby proposed that the Parish Council lodge their objection to this planning application which was seconded via Cllr R. Thorne and unanimously agreed.

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- **MC/19/1032 ~ 94 Essex Road**

W/ Cllr M. Fearn presented the Parish Council the proposed plans for this development expressing concerns of 'over development' and parking constraints.

W/ Cllr M. Fearn reported that he had delivered letters to the neighbouring properties and subsequently received no objections to date. He suggested arranging a site meeting for the members to look at the proposed area of land on the 25th of May.

Having looked at the plans in great detail Cllr R. Thorne spoke to confirm that the Parish Council had objected to a very similar planning application previously. The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham also spoke and expressed concerns of this building being a potential fire hazard due to the narrow width of the property being 'crammed in' in-between no. 94 & 96 Essex Road.

It was proposed via Cllr R. Thorne and seconded via the Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, that the Parish Council submit an object to this application. This motion was unanimously agreed with all members voting in favour.

- **MC/19/1086 & MC/19/1175 ~ 4 Vicarage Close**

W/ Cllr M. Fearn advised that there had been two separate planning applications submitted for this property in short succession to construct a single storey rear extension. He reported that he had delivered letters to the neighbouring properties and had subsequently received no objections. He also noted there were no comments made on the Medway Council Planning Portal.

15. Footpaths Report

JA119:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to confirm that due to the recent uncontested Parish Council elections there was currently no footpaths officer and this report would carry over to the next meeting.

16. Marsh Report

JA120:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to confirm that the installation of the six new kissing gates along the Marsh had now taken place and that at least two of these kissing gates were wheelchair friendly.

He reported that he was still looking into the installation of the new benches along the Marsh following his report last month, which had sadly now been held up due to the Environment Agency's strict rules and regulations where these benches could ideally be situated.

He proposed that with the ongoing/ pending improvements to the Marsh and considering that the Marsh was left uncut and neglected last year that the Halling Marshland not be put out to tender this year to allow the ground time to recover. This proposal was seconded via Cllr T. Dolby and unanimously agreed.

With permission from the Chairman, a member of the public spoke to ask the Council to consider re-forming a 'Marsh Working Group'.

Cllr T. Dolby spoke to agree that this was a good idea and with consent from Mr B. Barnes and ex Parish Councillor Mr C. Herbert (both sat in the public gallery) a new working party was formed containing both Cllr T. Dolby and the Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham.

A conversation ensued surrounding a previous quote obtained via Mr C. Herbert for a new pathway along the 'Four Dogs' path with all the members of the new 'Marsh Working Group' arranging to meet at a later date to discuss various matters in more detail.

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17. Estates Report

JA121:19 With permission from the Chairman, Ms M. Cook stood up and advised the Council that the refurbishment project at the Upper Recreation ground was now in full swing.

Having checked with the Clerk, she confirmed that all the orders for the relevant works and equipment had been sent off and that it was anticipated that works to the play area itself would take place in early/mid June.

Ms M Cook confirmed that she would be happy to continue in her current role as 'Recreation Equipment Facilitator' and asked the Parish Councillors to consider what they would like to name the new play area. She advised that the Upper Recreation Ground is named the Queen Elizabeth II but the area itself has always been known as the 'Upper Recreation Ground'. She asked if the members were happy to call the new play park via this name or perhaps consider naming it the 'Jubilee Recreation Ground'. She circulated a paper copy of the proposed new sign for the refurbished playground. Chairman Cllr G. Wenham requested if an emailed copy of this document could also be distributed to all members.

Cllr T. Dolby spoke to express his interest in being considered as a member of the 'Upper Recreation Ground Working Party', this request was seconded via the Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, and unanimously agreed.

Ms M. Cook continued her report and asked the Parish Council to consider the siting of the new goal posts. She also reported that notices had been placed on the entrances to the recreation ground and the car park to confirm of its closure with the anticipated re-opening in mid-July.

It was arranged that the Clerk, Mrs J. Allen, would contact the local football team to ask them for their preference on the installation of the new goal posts, which could be installed from either left to right across the pitch or fixed in the opposite direction.

18. Easter 2019 Event

JA122:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, read out loud the following report from Halling Sapphires WI, following their very successful Easter event that had taken place in mid April.

He commended the WI on such a wonderful community event which raised just under £700.

On Saturday 20th April, the Halling Sapphires WI in partnership with HPC and the Halling Association hosted the second village Easter Extravaganza at the Community Centre.

The Easter Bunny hosted over 90 children in a sold out afternoon tea in a magical Easter setting. The main hall saw stalls from local craftspeople selling handmade items, games and raffles and plenty of homemade goodies and cakes from the WI at our refreshment stand. For the children, we had a fantastic face painter, art and craft stalls and local entertainer Magic Mark with his very obliging bunny! There were also prizes for the Easter bonnet competition and an egg raffle. People also got to enjoy the fabulous weather with an Easter trail around our beautiful village. Overall, we raised just over £700 and this goes straight back into the kitty for next year's event. This enables us to pay for the little extras to keep costs down for everyone that comes along, so this year we were able to pay for the face painter so that children could get their faces done for free. Our ethos is very much for the benefit of the village, with pocket money prices so that as many people can enjoy the day as much possible.

Caroline

19. Litter Management Health & Safety Equipment

JA123:19 With the appointment of the new Council that evening, following the recent uncontested Parish Council elections, it was unanimously agreed to carry this item over to the next meeting.

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20. Parking Permits at the Old Fire Station

JA124:19 With the appointment of the new Council that evening, following the recent uncontested Parish Council elections, it was unanimously agreed to carry this item over to the next meeting.

21. Community Centre Grant

JA125:19 With the appointment of the new Council that evening, following the recent uncontested Parish Council elections, it was unanimously agreed to carry this item over to the next meeting.

22. Parishioner request

JA126:19 With the appointment of the new Council that evening, following the recent uncontested Parish Council elections, it was unanimously agreed to carry this item over to the next meeting.

23. Payments & Receipts

JA127:19 With the appointment of the new Council that evening, following the recent uncontested Parish Council elections, it was unanimously agreed to carry this item over to the next meeting.

24. Any other business

JA128:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, spoke to remind both the members and the Parishioners of the upcoming 'Annual Parish meeting' being held on Saturday 18th May at the Community Centre between 11.00 am & 1.00 pm. He advised that upon invitation from the Parish Council that the local MP Kelly Tolhurst had accepted and that there would be various stalls and refreshments provided via the WI.

The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, also confirmed that an extraordinary meeting would be held after the 'Annual Parish Meeting' to finalise decisions in regards to the funding of the refurbishment project of the 'Upper Recreation Ground' which would be in closed session via Section 100A(4) on the agenda.

Ms M. Cook also spoke and asked the Council to add to the agenda an item relating to tree surgery following reports of overgrown trees that need cutting back at the 'Upper Recreation Ground'.

25. Next Parish Council meeting date

JA129:19 The Chairman, Cllr G. Wenham, confirmed that the next ordinary Parish Council meeting would held on Monday 3rd June 2019 at the Jubilee Hall.

The meeting finished at 8.40pm

The next ordinary Parish Council meeting will be held on:

Monday 3rd June 2019	7.30pm	Jubilee Hall
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