

**DRAFT**

**Minutes of Halling Parish Council held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2015 at the Jubilee Hall**

Present: Chair George Wenham (Upper Ward) GW; Chris Herbert (Lower Ward) CH ;  
Bob Morton (Lower Ward) BM; Trevor Reynolds ( Upper Ward) TR;  
Mark Joy (North Ward) MJ; Matt Fearn (Upper Ward) MF; Richard Thorne (Lower Ward)  
RT and Andy Simpson (Lower Ward) AS.

Bill Swan – Clerk (WS) and 15 members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Les Hitchcock – reason accepted.

2. **Disclosure of any other Business**

MJ – 1 item; TR – 1 item and WS – 2 items

3. **Declaration of Pecuniary and Prejudicial Interests** - none

4. **Adjourn meeting for Parishioners' Questions**

Among the points raised were the following:

Circle in Vicarage Close; sewage problems from St Andrews park; sight lines at Stake lane; cost of cutting Cemetery grass and formation of a Sub Committee to oversee this; speeding in village; goal posts; notice board at St Andrews Park.

It was proposed by RT, seconded by CH, that item 17 be held in private – all agreed.

5. **Statement by the Chairman**

George Wenham apologised to the residents of Upper Ward for not being able to attend the Ward Surgery. He accepted the response from the Monitoring Officer that the four Councillors who had complaints against them had not broken the Code of Conduct)

GW said that a meeting has been arranged with the Monitoring Officer, the full Parish Council and the Clerks to see how the Parish Council can move forward. .

TR asked if the letter from the Monitoring Officer could go in the Minutes.(as follows

Your ref:  
Our ref: CCC/2015/003  
Date: 20 August 2015



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**PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL**

Mr W R Swan – Clerk to Halling Parish Council



Dear ~~Mr~~ Swan

**Councillor Conduct Committee: Complaint CCC/003/2015**

The Councillor Conduct Committee met on 19 August 2015 to consider the complaints made against Parish Councillors Fearn, Joy, Reynolds, Simpson and Thorne, from 15-18 July 2015, that they have failed or may have failed to comply with the Council's Code of Conduct.

The Committee discussion and decision was as follows:

**Discussion:**

The Monitoring Officer introduced the report which updated Members on a complaint from four members of the public relating to five Parish Councillors. The committee considered the content of the four letters and discussed whether or not the issues related to the relevant Code of Conduct and if so, whether there was a potential breach by any of the Parish Councillors.

The Committee considered that the majority of the content did not relate to councillor conduct issues. Specifically, the Committee could not envisage any circumstances where voting at a parish council meeting could ever be a conduct matter. Likewise, the venue of a parish council meeting was also not a councillor conduct issue.

In relation to the issue regarding one of the Parish Councillors about potential bias due to a possible friendship, the Committee considered that there was no substantial evidence to suggest that this was the case, and therefore, it did not consider that any breach to the Code may have occurred.

**Decision:**

The Committee agreed that no further action be taken in relation to complaint CCC/2015/003.



**Reasons:**

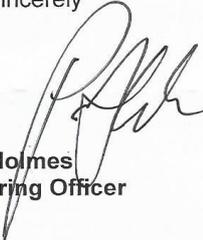
There was no substantial evidence to demonstrate a potential breach of the Code of Conduct.

A copy of the draft minutes will be made available on the Council's website within ten working days of the meeting and can be viewed here: <http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=404&MId=3216&Ver=4>. The minutes will be a summary of the meeting and will not name the complainants or the subject members of the complaint.

There is no right of appeal to the Council against this decision. If the complainants believe there has been any maladministration in the way Medway Council has dealt with these complaints then they may contact the Local Government Ombudsman.

I would like to suggest a meeting with all members of the Parish Council, along with yourself and Trudie, in private. Would you please ask the Parish Council Chairman whether he feels this might be helpful in offering an opportunity to receive advice from me regarding appropriate behaviour for Councillors and Clerks at parish council meetings.

Yours sincerely



**Perry Holmes**  
Monitoring Officer

6. **Reconvene meeting and Minutes of Parish Council meetings.**  
It was proposed by TR, seconded by RT, that the minutes of the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015 meeting were a true record. All agreed and the Chairman duly signed them.
7. **Matters arising from the Minutes**  
Item 16(3) – MJ has spoken to the teams who will be using the Upper rec. For Mini Soccer. There will no matches before 10 am and finishing after 2.00pm. There will a fair fee of £6.50 for each game and Nomads will mark out pitches. This will mean no outlay by the Parish Council on maintenance.  
Item 11 – Chapel Lane - M F said that the application was refused.  
Item 15 – Surgery in Upper Ward – TR said that this was well attended and the Councillors were working through the points raised by residents.
8. **To fill vacancy for Vice-Chair.**  
GW asked if this could wait until after the meeting with the Monitoring Officer but it was agreed that he ask for volunteers. MJ was the only volunteer and TR proposed, seconded by RT, that MJ be duly appointed. 4 voted for with 3 abstentions.
9. **Halling Funday and Sunday – report and accounts**  
The Clerk passed round the statement of accounts for Funday and it was noted that these came within £320.67 of the Halling Association donation of £2000 to cover the event and no money from the Parish Council allocated budget would be needed. It was proposed by MJ, seconded by BM that the accounts be accepted. All agreed apart from AS who abstained.  
RT moved a vote of thanks to all those involved.
10. **Footpaths.**  
Barry Barnes, the footpaths officer, reminded the meeting that maintenance of footpaths is down to the land owner. The paths on the Marsh have been cleared with the help of volunteers and the bottom of the Plough path where it runs next to Sylvestre Close is closed for work on the rail bridge.  
As regards the permissive path, Lafarge’s contractor has quoted £1395 plus Vat for work necessary before the path can be opened. MJ thought it a great idea but felt that HPC should get a long term agreement to justify the expenditure. It was proposed by TR, seconded by CH, that HPC pay for this. All agreed apart from 2 abstentions.
11. **Halling Association**  
MF said that he will report after the next meeting.
12. **John May Charity**  
The Clerk had already circulated details to Members and it was proposed by CH, seconded by MJ, that the Chair of HPC and the Clerk should be Trustees of this Charity. All agreed.
13. **Planning.**  
MF referred to the applications for extensions to 29 Howlsmere Close and 43 Pilgrims Road. It was agreed that HPC has no comment to make on these.
14. **Halling Fire Station**  
CH said that only one tender has been received and this was circulated to Members before the meeting. It is from Halling Baptist Church in the sum of £150,000 and is conditional on the sale of property. MF said that HPC should look further afield and perhaps involve the commercial market. CH said that the Church should make it a

firm offer. He would not support any proposal that the Fire Station be sold for commercial purposes.

It was then proposed by TR that HPC does not accept the offer as the Baptist Church is not in a position to proceed and that £150,000 falls short of HPC's estimate but this will be revisited by HPC if a further offer is forthcoming.

CH suggested Friday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2015 as a cut off date for Hicks to obtain any further Tenders. These motions were seconded by MF and all agreed apart from MJ who abstained.

**15. KCC legal scheme renewal.**

It was agreed to hold this over until after the meeting with the Monitoring Officer.

**16. Jubilee Hall report**

TR said that he attended the recent meeting and reported that income was exceeding expenditure. There is a quiz night on 3<sup>rd</sup> October – details in Halling View.

**17. Complaint – to consider a framework for dealing with a recent complaint submitted by a member of the public. (recommended for consideration in private)**

**18. Halling Association – to nominate a Councillor to fill the vacancy caused by a recent resignation.**

MJ nominated TR and there being no other nominations, TR was duly accepted.

**19. Redrow Homes – progress report for update on decision to actively seek direct contact with them (Minutes 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015 item 11 refers)**

A contact is to be made with the Lands Director to ascertain future plans.

**20. Upper recreation ground – proposal by Mark Joy to ban team football.**

MJ said there have been complaints about behaviour of players and goal posts have been cut . He proposed that HPC bans adult team football and put up signs to thasi effect. This was seconded by TR and all agreed.

**21. The return of SID (Speed Indication Device) to the village.**

The Assistant Clerk said that SID was back as a temporary measure as he only has a 14day battery life. If HPC wanted its own SID, there are 3 options. 1. Purchase our own but this will need permanent electric connection which limits its position or a battery operated one which needs regular charging. 2. Lease from Medway Council with a 10 year maintenance/warranty lease. 3. Train villagers to use the speed guns with help of Kent Police.

**22/3. Receipts and payments**

<u>Date</u>			Head			<u>Total</u>
<u>Needing ratification</u>						
10/06/2015	Total Property	Fire Station/Estates	G/A/EST	196.00		196.00
10/06/2015	Ben Cook	Work on Recs	EST	130.00		130.00
19/06/2015	SLCC	Rnl of membership	G/A	180.00		180.00
26/06/2015	Tom Bailey	Work on Upper rec	EST	97.50		97.50
29/06/2015	Trudi Smith	Duck Race items	HVF15	118.60		118.60
01/07/2015	BT	Phone and broadband	G/A	171.51	34.30	205.81
01/07/2015	Clive Stanley	Web fees for June	G/A	54.00		54.00
01/07/2015	Staples	Office consumables	G/A	234.28	46.86	281.14
01/07/2015	KALC	Training	G/A	194.00		194.00
04/07/2015	Events Co	Funfair	HVF15	3900.00	780.00	4680.00
04/07/2015	C A Grant	Tokens	HVF15	55.00	11.00	66.00
08/07/2015	Jubilee Hall	Hire of hall	G/A	12.00		12.00
10/07/2015	Ben Cook	Work on recs	EST	155.00		155.00
13/07/2015	Count Campbell	Internal audit	G/A	80.00		80.00
13/07/2015	John Martin	Work on Marsh	EST	19.85		19.85
15/07/2015	Bo Peeps	Payment from Ray's WIF	Section 137	400.00		400.00
17/07/2015	Cash	Cash for Funday	HVF15	500.00		500.00
20/07/2015	J Cook	Purchase for recs	EST	17.50		17.50
27/07/2015	Castle Marquees	Funday toilets	HVF15	200.00	40.00	240.00
04/08/2015	Tom Bailey	Work on Upper rec	EST	104.00		104.00
04/08/2015	Clive Stanley	Web fees for July	G/A	48.00		48.00
05/08/2015	Medway Council	Rates for Fire stn	G/A	5527.00		5527.00
05/08/2015	Total Property		EST	761.00		761.00
10/08/2015	Ben Cook	Work on recs	EST	165.00		165.00
21/08/2015	Crossroads Kent	Donation from Duck Race	HVF15	350.00		350.00
				13670.24	912.16	14582.40

There had been income of £1400 from The Ward Fund and it was then proposed by CH., seconded by MJ, that the above payments be ratified. All agreed.

#### **24. Dates of forthcoming meetings.**

Full Council meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at the Community Centre at 7.30 pm.

#### **25. Any Other Business**

The Clerk reminded Councillors that he will be on leave from 14<sup>th</sup> September for a week and that the Assistant will come in on Monday as well as Wednesday but will be unable to cover on Friday morning. Also the Office will require help for the Poppy Collection starting at the end of October. MJ reported that there has been flytipping in Cemetery Road.

#### **Closed item no 17**

It was agreed that the Standards Committee should be set up to deal with the complaint and it will comprise RT, MJ and BM.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.