

BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN BARHAM CHURCH HALL, ON MONDAY 4th DECEMBER 2023, 7.00pm.

PRESENT:

Chair Gail Cornish, Cllr Brenda Mitchell, Cllr Paul Fenn, Cllr Marilyn Lesley, Cllr Bonnie Head, Cllr Graham Head, Cllr Ian Woods, Cllr Julie Gregory & Vice Chairman Casey Wooltorton.

Also present: BMSDC John Whitehead, BMSDC David Penny, SCC Chris Chambers, the Clerk and 7 members of the public.

OPEN FORUM

ND Services is not happy that the Parish Council decided at the last PC meeting not to pay them for their work which had been carried out at the workshop at the picnic site. They had cleared the land around the workshop, cleared inside, fitted windows and made safe the building. They would like to be paid for time and materials. Change of use has been approved by BMSDC and noise assessments had been carried out on the building, all factors which lead them to believe they would be getting a lease and had been assured by the last Chairman that a lease for the workshop would be drawn up, a draft lease had been signed by ND Services.

Cllr Wooltorton explained that this promise had been made outside of the Parish Council meeting by the previous Chairman, nothing had been agreed within the council. The legal covenant for the workshop and picnic site is with SCC and it states to be used for leisure and not commercial use and would not be changed. Both SCC Chris Chambers and BMSDC Dave Penny confirm this.

Cllr Mitchell reminded ND Services that Cllr Wooltorton had given them a copy of the document containing the covenant including the contact details and phone number for SCC and had advised that they confirm everything with SCC. ND Services agreed that they had received this information.

The Chair suggests that the PC puts this back on the agenda for April to reconsider the invoice to ND Services, but in the meantime if the company has any proof in writing that approval was given by the previous PC to carry out the work, then payment may be considered.

Member of the public would like to know why Church Lane will not be closed until 2028. The Chair informed that Taylor Wimpey has advised that the top part of the new development will not be built until the end of the build, therefore the road will remain open, at least until 150 houses were built but expect it not to open until the development has been finished.

The same member of public asked if Church Lane would be used for lorries to site and Chair confirmed they would use the spine road of the new build not Church Lane.

Member of the public is not happy with how TW are dealing with ongoing road works and road closures.

SCC Chris Chambers stated that if utilities want to work on a road, then they can close the road. He will take this back to Highways and ask that minimal inconvenience is caused.

Report from BMSDC Dave Penny and John Whitehead.

Report has been received in advance of the meeting. Promoting the "Cosy Homes Scheme," £2 million is available to homeowners of EPC rating C and below to make homes more energy efficient.

Dave Penny is grateful to the volunteer who came forward to join the Rural Sustainable Transport Group and this is now moving forward.

The Council has been inundated with Solar Farm applications.

Report from SCC Chris Chambers.

Report has been received in advance of the meeting. Cabinet has agreed to £11 million funding to resurface residential roads and are drawing up plans on how to prioritise these roads in Suffolk.

Suffolk Library Service is open for consultation until 26 January 2024. Outlined the recovery works due to the recent storms and flooding in Suffolk, this will include clearing drains, ditches, gullies, and drainage water. SCC Adult Social Care has been rated as Good. Highways are preparing to keep roads safe and open during the winter months. He is trying to get a workplan underway for the overgrown pavements issues which Barham has and agrees that the state of the pavements and overgrowth is all in bad condition. SCC are looking at costs and priorities, expect to hear back what can be done in the Spring.

1. APOLOGIES

a. Apologies for absence. None.

b. Consent/non consent to absence. NA

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2. COUNCILLORS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.

The Chair reminded everyone that a dispensation is in place for councillors regarding the Barham Country Park agreed June 2024.

a. Declaration of interests with regards to any item on the agenda.

None.

3. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 30th OCTOBER 2023.

Approved correct, signed by the Chair, proposed Cllr Wooltorton seconded Cllr Woods.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, TO INCLUDE WORK PLAN

a. Workplan. The Chair noted that much of the items on the workplan are currently in the hands of SCC.

As the District and County Councillors need to leave early to attend another meeting it was agreed to bring item 8. forward for discussion.

8. TO RECEIVE QUOTES FOR HEDGE CUTTING ALONG NORWICH ROAD, CHURCH LANE AND KIRBY RISE ACCESS ROADS.

Cllrs B Head & G Head outlined how let down the PC has been by SCC & BMSDC, no plans as yet to help have come forward, therefore the PC has decided to carry out the work themselves and to apply to SCC for the "Self Help Scheme". Councillors have met with 8 companies and discussed the work needed and quotes have been received from 3. The work to include cutting back the hedges and take away the rubbish, clear back the footpath to make it wider. Once the initial work has been done it will be easier to maintain and keep on top of. Suggests going with the quote from NSK for £4,390.

The Chair reminded that at the last meeting the PC had agreed to put aside £2000 for the work. The District and County Councillors were asked if they help out with money out of their locality budget. They agree to come back ASAP with some figures. Cllr Wooltorton proposed that the PC increase its figure from £2000 to £4000, depending on how much locality budget is received. This was seconded by Cllr Lesley, and agreed by all unanimously and that the PC will now proceed.

5. REVIEW OF PLANNING LIST & TO DISCUSS ANY NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.

a. DC/23/03569 Erection of 8 No. Dwellings Barham & Claydon Surgery, Kirby Rise, Barham.

Cllr Wooltorton informed that there appears to be little change from the previous 2 applications. He encouraged the public to put in their previous comments/objections to the district council, the PC will do the same. This was agreed by all.

b. DC/23/05136 - 1 Lower Farm Cottages, Norwich Road, Barham. Erection of two storey side and rear extension (following removal of site porch extension).

No objection by the PC.

c. DC/23/05333 Application for the Modification of a Section 106 Planning Obligation - Variation of S106 legal agreement dated 09.12.2021 relating to 1856/17 as per application form.

It was agreed that the PC do not need to comment on this application.

The District & County Councillors left the meeting at 8pm.

6. STREET CLEANERS – Working Party to report back including Contract for 2024.

The Chair reported that the working party has received the cleaner's public liability insurance and now receive monthly invoices. However, do not receive satisfactory timetables of the hours of work, where they are working and where they have taken the rubbish too.

The current grant which the PC receives from the district to pay the street cleaners is for 5 hours work a week, however the cleaners currently claim for 7 hours work. The Chair pointed out that the previous parish council Chairman had stated in the minutes that the cleaners could claim for the extra 2 hours if they put in the extra work clearing up to the Sorrell Horse. The cleaners have confirmed that they do not carry out this extra work.

The Chair proposes that as from the 1st January 2024 the Street Cleaners will be told to only carry out 5 hours work a week unless asked to do any extra by the Chair or Clerk. Will put the work out to tender and

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look at drawing up a new contract to start on 1st April 2024. This was seconded by Cllr Mitchell and all in agreement.

7. FINANCE

a. Monthly Payments – to agree the payments for October & November 2023.

October payments £8,314.53, receipts £106,715.59. November payments £2621.33, receipts £1007.30. Approved by all and signed by Cllr Mitchell.

b. Monthly reconciliation – to approve the bank reconciliation for November.

As at 30/11/23 the Current Account £138,192.52 this includes £108,496.48 CIL money and £3693.71 towards new play equipment, country park. Business Premium Account £4,748.01. Approved by all, Cllr Mitchell signed the bank reconciliations.

c. Annual Donation to the Good Neighbour Scheme. The Clerk reported that £300 remains in the budget for the current year for donations. The Chair advised that the Good Neighbours need some funds. It was agreed by all to give a donation of £100.

d. Annual Donation to Claydon & Barham Village Hall. Cllr Mitchell advised that the village hall committee has not asked the PC for any funding despite having work done on the roof. It was agreed by all that no donation to be given.

e. To Consider Payment of any other Annual Donations.

The Clerk informed that requests have been received from Headway and Claydon & Barham Young Families. It was agreed by all to give a donation of £100 to the Young Families.

The above donation requests were all approved, proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr Wooltorton.

The Chair reported that the Wombles have informed that they would not wish to receive a Christmas Hamper, these had cost the past PC a lot of money. The PC to thank the Wombles for their work, to put in the In Touch magazine and to send each a Christmas card.

f. Clerks Annual Pay Increase from April 2023

The Chair informed that the new pay agreement for Clerks has now been set by NALC, the new rates apply from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The Clerk is on SCP.21 and currently gets paid £15.02 an hour, £8,591.44 salary, the increase is up to £16.02 an hour, £9,163.44 salary. The increase was agreed by all. The Clerk thanked the Parish Council.

g. To Consider the Draft Precept Budget for the forthcoming financial year 2024-2025.

Copies of the draft were given to the Councillors for consideration and was looked at line by line. The Chair suggests including a figure of £2000 for the work to hedges and to get a quote for cutting twice a year. The aim is that the Precept could stay the same as the current year £31,249.00, but she will check with the district council how many new homes in Barham will be included in for the precept for the forthcoming year, to work out if an increase in precept could be justified. The precept budget will be finalised by the PC at the January meeting.

8. TO RECEIVE QUOTES FOR HEDGE CUTTING ALONG NORWICH ROAD, CHURCH LANE AND KIRBY RISE ACCESS ROADS.

See Above.

9. S106/CIL MATTER IN RESPECT OF TAYLOR WIMPEY'S RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ON LAND NORTH-WEST OF CHURCH LANE, BARHAM 1856/17.

The Chair advised that this is currently on going and that the PC has received the proposals. Will be having a meeting with planning this week.

Cllr Fenn highlighted the constant problem of mud coming off the Taylor Wimpey site. The Chair advised that they carry out regular road sweeping along the Norwich Road and are doing all they can to mitigate the problem.

10. REPORTS Councillors to report on any meetings that they have attended since the last Parish Council meeting.

The Chair informed that she had attended the recent meeting with the Taylor Wimpey developers, they will keep residents updated with information via the In Touch Magazine.

She has attended the SALC Conference, Milestone are the new contractors for Highways. 850 homes recently flooded in Suffolk. Financial advice recommends that a Parish Council does not hold more than £85,000 in a bank account, but to place in a Building Society or alternative with higher interest rates. She will ask the advisor to attend a future PC meeting to explain.

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Cllr Mitchell reported how difficult Barclays bank are proving to be and they have put a hold on the bank account again! Could consider changing to Lloyds or HSBC.

Cllr B Head asked that Public Transport in Barham could be on the agenda for the next meeting.

11. CORRESPONDENCE – To report to the Councillors any correspondence received.

Correspondence has been received regarding hedges, footpaths and mud from new development have all been addressed.

All Correspondence and emails received from residents have been addressed by the Chair and Clerk.

12.12 DATE OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS. 15th January, 26th February, 8th April 2024.

The Chair advised that the PC cannot hold its February meeting on the 26th as the church hall will be in use by the Church. It was therefore agreed to move the meeting from 26th February to 19th February 2024

The meeting ended at 8.58pm

Chairman

Date