

BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN BARHAM CHURCH HALL, ON TUESDAY 27TH JUNE 2023, 7.00pm

PRESENT:

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

Also present: SCC Chris Chambers, BMSDC John Whitehead, BMSDC David Penny, the Clerk and 14 members of the public.

OPEN FORUM – The Chair welcomed all to the meeting. She reported to all the protocol to conduct parish council meetings and reminded of the 20 minutes given for the open forum.

Member of the public informed that he had put in a complaint to Highways and District Council regarding the overgrown footpath between Barham Church Lane and Pesthouse Lane, it has become unsafe to walk along due to the footpath now being too narrow. He has received a reply from Highways to safe that they have been out to inspect the footpath and cannot see a problem! The Chair asked SCC Chambers to take this up with Highways.

Member of the public would like to bring to the attention of the PC that he saw a bunch of youths at the Kirby Rise play area, there are clear notices that says the play area is for Under 11s.

He is disappointed that Barham Speed Watch has not yet resumed. Also disappointed that no further work has commenced at the Barham Country Park. Chair explained she had talked with police community watch and was awaiting the speed camera to be returned by previous Chairman.

He notes item 2b, but some councillors had not declared an interest in the Country Park prior to a dispensation being granted at previous PC meetings.

A member of the public who has an interest in the building at the Country Park, would like to report that someone has destroyed the locks which he had fitted. He would also like it noted that in November 2022 the PC agreed unanimously that the building should be used as a mechanical workshop. He has also spent a lot of money on installing new windows to the building.

The Chair advised that the PC has changed the locks, no lease has been issued for the building, so he has no authority over the building. The change of use planning application has also still not been approved by the district council. Another member of public asked for access to get his processions out of the building.

The Chair granted permission and this will be carried out tomorrow at 10am.

Report from SCC Chris Chambers.

His report had been sent to all in advance of the meeting. The SCC AGM took place on 16 May. Library Services which were running at a £60,000 loss has been protected by cabinet and they have agreed to fund the gap. A scheme for Suffolk residents has been introduced “Shake it Up” to help reduce recyclable waste. £10m funding in addition to the budgeted £11m to repair A & B roads. Committed to key services in Suffolk and to create new SEND places by 2025. Also concentrate on flood prevention and footpath repair work. The new Highways contractor Milestone to start in October.

The Chair would like to bring to his attention the outstanding road safety improvement works still waiting for the Sandy Lane area. He advised that high costs are involved with this and it is being looked at.

Chair also reminded him of the £3000 Locality Budget he has promised out of his current financial year, towards the country park. He stated this would be ring fenced for Barham Country Park and can apply when by completing the application.

Chair will make a list of all the Barham footpath issues and pass onto Cllr Chambers for him to follow up.

Newly elected David Penny BMSDC reported that he is looking forward to representing Barham for the next 4 years. As a Green Party representative, he is very interested in environmental issues and will be taking these forward. His report has been circulated to all prior to the meeting, he will try to concentrate on reporting on topics relevant to Barham. He encourages litter picking in the village, try to establish a pride of place for the village.

The Chair said she was interested in “cleaning village road signs day”, Cllr Penny stated they were looking into insurance to ensure members of the public are be covered.

Report from BMSDC John Whitehead. Disappointing that no GP surgery provision has been made for the area. He has not heard the outcome of the meeting which took place on 6 June with MP Dr Dan Poulter.

This whole session was disrupted by some members of the public who were on many occasions asked to allow Cllrs to speak uninterrupted. One member of the public was given warnings about his disruptive behaviour.

1.6 APOLOGIES

- a. **Apologies for absence.** None.
- b. **Consent/non consent to absence.** NA.

2.6 COUNCILLORS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- a. **Declaration of interests with regards to any item on the agenda.** None.
- b. **Dispensation to be considered under 13h of standing order to allow Cllrs Wooltorton, Mitchell, Lesley, G Head, B Head and Cornish to be allowed to vote Other Registrable Interests relating to Barham Country Park, to May 2024, as they are all on the charity Barham Picnic Site Community Project.**

The Chair informed that this is necessary, due to the number of councillors prohibited from participating in the business of the Barham Country Park being so great a proportion of the Council, that is impedes the transaction of the business. The Councillors listed have all completed a dispensation form, the Chair asked the PC to approve a dispensation for the period of a year for each of the named councillors. This was agreed by all with a show of hands, proposed Cllr Lesley seconded Cllr Head.

3.6 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST PARISH COUNCIL MEETING ON 15th MAY 2023

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

4.6 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING, WORKPLAN AND PLANNING LIST

a. Matters Arising – Key holder for Kirby Rise play area, or to be permanently unlocked?

The Chair reported that since the last PC meeting, she has visited the play area regularly especially in the evenings but had not locked the gate. There has been no signs of disruption or anti-social behaviour, so would therefore suggest that the play area is permanently left unlocked. However, this can be reviewed. Agreed by all, proposed by Cllr Wooltorton seconded Cllr Mitchell.

b. Review of Workplan. Just one outstanding item on the workplan Sandy Lane, highways safety issues. Awaiting funding from Highways to be able to proceed.

c. Review of Barham Country Park Workplan and update on expenditure to date, also looking to the future of the park. Cllr Wooltorton has prepared a new workplan to repair damage done to site and to make it fit to open to the public. Copies have been circulated to all prior to the meeting, Cllr Wooltorton was continually interrupted by the same member of the public, verbally abusive and threatening.

The site although overgrown again and left in a state with trailing wire, rutted land etc. Pictures were available for the public to see. Cllr Chambers who had visited the site earlier this year, prior to MUGA area being dug out, said at that time the site was in good condition.

Cllr Wooltorton advised that the single-phase electrics had been disconnected. The PC to be paid back by UK Power Networks for money the PC has overpaid, approx. £4000.

As the meeting became disruptive due to the same person as earlier. The chair gave the same member of public a second warning for his behaviour stating if this continued he would be asked to leave the meeting. He stated he would not go.

The Chair was unable to communicate with Councillors, she informed that she may need to ask the public to leave the meeting as the public are not permitted to now be involved in discussions.

It was agreed by PC to get costings for the work needed to be carried out at the Country Park. Unfortunately, there will not be enough money in the PC accounts for a new Play Area, despite the grant applications which the Clerk has applied for and been declined.

As the meeting became more heated the Chair suspended the meeting for 5 minutes.

d. Review of Planning List & To Discuss any new Planning Applications Received, including DC/23/01565 MUGA planning application for the Country Park.

The application has been refused by BMSDC.

Chairman's initials.....

DC/23/0281 playground/open spacing/landscaping conditions. Cllrs Gregory & Woollorton reported that they are impressed with the evergreen boundaries design and for the work proposal for a playground. Also, the natural environmental design will encourage nature, birds and nesting. However, it does look like the existing hedge way is to be replaced, it is not clear of the proposals for this. Clerk to update the district council planning portal with the comments of the PC. The Chair informed that the PC will be having monthly meetings with Taylor Wimpey developers, once building commences, to be kept up to date.

5.6 TO CONFIRM THE FOLLOWING PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

- a. **Recreation Ground Committee representative.** The Chair informed that a vacancy has arisen, she is happy to represent the PC, all agreed.
- b. **Footpath representative.** Cllrs B Head & G Head are happy to take this on.

6.6 COMMUNITY SPEED WATCH VOLUNTEERS, TRAINER AND LEADER NEEDED.

To ascertain where cameras are for speed watch are and discuss a forward plan how to re-establish.

The Chair reported that 6 people are needed to proceed with Barham community speed watch, unfortunately 4 volunteers have dropped out. Propose joining up with Claydon as they have volunteers and are awaiting training. It was agreed by all to join forces with Claydon so that community speed watch can continue, proposed Cllr Lesley seconded Cllr Gregory. More volunteers needed.

7.6 KIRBY RISE ANNUAL PLAY INSPECTION REPORT – Carried out by David Bracey and to consider using another agency to inspect in the future. The Chair informed that further to the annual inspection, which was carried out by David Bracey, some of the timber on the play equipment is split and needs replacing ASAP. Sovereign, the company who the PC purchased the new play equipment from, are coming out to inspect as the timber should still be under warranty. She is also looking at an alternative company to carry out future annual inspections who may be cheaper.

8.6 FINANCE

a. Monthly Payments – to agree the payments for May 2023.

Payments £5479.00, no receipts. This was approved by all and signed by Cllr Mitchell.

b. Monthly reconciliation – to approve the bank reconciliation for May. As at 31/05/23 the Current Account £31,002.22 this includes £15,624.50 half year precept, £8959.93 CIL money and £3693.71 towards new play equipment, country park. Business Premium Account £4725.47. Cllr Mitchell signed the bank reconciliations.

c. To reconsider the budget and accounts for this financial year 2023-24.

Cllrs Mitchell and Lesley have considered the 2023-24 budget and put together a more transparent spreadsheet for the Precept Budget, which the Clerk and PC will use going forward. The precept has already been set for £31,249.00. Explained the ring-fenced money and the money left in the accounts. Considering money which is due to be paid out in this financial year relating to the previous year the PC does not have much money to spare. Therefore, the PC must make some savings with the current budget. An amount of only £3000 available money carried forward from last year after costs relating to previous year have been paid. PC must be very aware of any additional costs going forward. The Chair recommends that some savings can be made in particular with donations, she has spoken with the Wombles and they are happy not to receive a thank you hamper at Christmas time. Other donations will be amended from £3000 down to £1500.

Could consider cutting the street lighting times which is currently left on all night and costs the PC £3500 a year. This was for discussion at a future meeting.

Taking this all into account, cutting down on some of the expenditure is was agreed a new budget forecast ,recurring expenses £27,844 was adopted. This plus £4537.93 spent on expenses for county park and last years expenses in April and May leaves only £900 to spare for any unexpected expense from this year precept. Also agreed to put a hold on any further spending on the Country Park until costings have been put in place on the workplan.

d. To inform councillors of money available after recurring expenses paid 2023-2024. See item c.

e. To consider and agree the previous Chairman's request for outstanding Chairman's allowance and payment for storage of Parish Council documents.

An invoice of £910 has been received from M D Milward. The Chair advised that no reference could be found in the previous minutes of the PC approving storage of documents or the purchase of ink for him. Therefore, the PC agreed not to pay for the storage of documents cost (£390) and to also deduct £310

Chairman's initials.....

ink costs from the outstanding allowance for the previous Chairman (£520). Payment of £210 to be paid to Mr D Milward, proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr Woollorton.

f. Contributing Third Party (CTP) Payment £2875 – SUEZ grant.

The Chair informed that further to the successful grant application for £25,000 which the Clerk has applied for the new play equipment at the Country Park, the PC cannot currently commit to paying the CTP payment of £2875. Work would need to commence on the new play area by December 2023, PC would need to secure other grant funding for the project to proceed. The Clerk has been unsuccessful with the, BMSDC Communities Capital Grant application as they only give a maximum of £10,000, the PC had applied for £25,000. Next round of for bids opens end of July 2023.

BMSDC Community Development Grant could be applied for as they give up to a max of £20,000 however next round for bids does not open until September 2023.

The Chair will invite BMSDC to come to a PC meeting to explain the S106 money which the PC has been promised and how it can be spent.

Cllr Mitchell remembers that the Tarmac company had previously told the charity they could apply to them for the Barham Country Park Charity, money towards new play equipment, Cllr Cornish will follow this up to see if this is still the case.

g. VAS & SIDs to purchase new padlocks, keys and download device.

The previous Chairman has returned the keys etc, hopeful now that the SIDs can be moved around the village and also to be able to download from the devices.

h. Street Cleaners Annual Pay Increase.

The District Council has advised that the minimum pay for the street cleaners is to go up from £9.50 per hours to £10.42. Chair would propose that it is rounded up to £10.45 the same as what Claydon pays.

The Barham street cleaners have asked that the PC consider an additional 40p per hour on top of this making it £10.85 per hour. It was agreed by all that the PC cannot afford to pay the extra 40p per hour but will increase the hourly rate of pay to £10.45 per hour. Agreed by all, proposed.

Cllr Lesley seconded Cllr Mitchell.

i. David Bracey, Kirby Rise Annual Play Inspection – Invoice to pay £144.00. Agreed to pay.

j. Grant application to BMSDC Community Grant Funding for playground equipment in Barham Country Park. Already dealt with in item f.

9.6 TO SET UP A WORKING PARTY TO REVIEW THE JOB DESCRIPTION OF THE STREET CLEANERS TO ENSURE COMPLYING WITH THE GRANT PROVIDED BY BMSDC.

The Chair advised that a Risk Assessment must be put in place for the street cleaners and would like PC members to form a working party to review the job description, compliance to grant and risk assessment. Cllrs Woollorton and Mitchell happy to help the Chair with this.

10.6 TO AGREE A PROCEDURE WHO CAN ISSUE JOBS TO THE VILLAGE MAINTENANCE MAN.

The previous Chairman had had a good working relationship with the maintenance man Mr Jelley, who would just need to be contacted via text message for any work needing to be carried out in the village. The Chair has asked him for a schedule of his costs and to run this against a seasonal budget. She is happy to hand out the maintenance jobs to Mr Jelley along with the back up of Cllr Woollorton in her absence. Agreed by all.

He has recently cut along the Church Lane and Kirby Rise.

11.6 TO AGREE WHO WILL TAKE ON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MOVING THE SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES (SID) AROUND THE VILLAGE AND HOW OFTEN.

Cllrs Woollorton & G Head happy to carry this out, to do every 3 months.

12.6 COMMUNITY LAND AT THE PROPOSED NEW DEVELOPMENT ON NORWICH ROAD, TO DISCUSS WHAT THIS COULD BE USED FOR.

The Chair informed that the PC needs to make a decision for its use . Possible ideas at present a Community Centre or Allotments. She believes from plans seen it would accommodate a community centre and parking for up to 60 cars. Suggest deferring a decision and to ask the district council to come along to a PC meeting to give an update. Agreed by all.

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

Port One – Cllr Woollorton reported that this does not affect Barham directly. However, the developers have purchased a piece of land “Gipping Meadows” which is in Barham. They propose that the land could be turned into a water meadow and leased to the PC for £1 a year. They are happy to fence it all

Chairman's initials.....

in and to carry out any maintenance needed. He will have a further meeting with the developers to discuss the way forward and report back at the next PC meeting.

Port One has also promised to fund solar panels on community centres and will be doing so for the next 5 years.

Police Forum - The Chair reported that she has attended the recent meeting. PC must continue to report all anti-social behaviour and speeding incidents to the police to keep them aware. Next meeting to take place on 20th September 2023.

The Chair informed that she has also met with the Principal Planning Officer at the district council regarding Church Lane development and community funding. She also informed that monthly liaison meetings will start with Taylor Whimpey once building commences at the site on Norwich Road.

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

Clerk has no further correspondence to report.

Cllr Mitchell would like added to the Highways list for SCC Chambers, that the hedge by the old Dr's Surgery/Kirby Rise junction needs to be cut back as it is difficult to see past when trying to pull out in a car (Highways had said that they could see no danger)! The Chair advised that If Highways will not attend to this then will ask the village maintenance man to cut back.

Cllr Fenn informed that the footpath off Pest House Lane leading to Gt Blakenham also needs to be cut back and that the roadside armco barrier blocks access to the steps leading down.

Cllr B Head would like to bring to the attention of the PC that Persimmon Homes had allocated a piece of land by De Sumarez Drive for a small play area, but nothing has yet come of this.

Cllr Mitchell recommends that further to her SALC training the PC should consider that all Councillors have an alternative email address for PC business and not to use personal email address for PC communications. Cllr Gregory will look into getting this set up and will report back at the next PC meeting.

15.6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

The Chair would like the PC to consider proceeding with 6 weekly PC meetings and suggests the following dates, 7th August 11th September 30th October & 4th December 2023. Agreed by all. Dates will be advertised. Dates for 2024 will be agreed at the next PC meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.50pm

Chairman

Date