BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD IN BARHAM CHURCH HALL, ON MONDAY 19th MAY 2025, 7.00pm

PRESENT:
Cllr Casey Wooltorton – Chairman, Vice Chair - Julie Gregory, Cllr Paul Fenn, Cllr Ian Woods, Cllr Bonnie Head, Cllr Graham Head, Cllr Brenda Mitchell, Cllr Marilyn Lesley & Cllr Tim Carr.
Also present: BMSDC Cllrs David Penny and John Whitehead, 3 members of the public and the Clerk.

1.5 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN Cllr Mitchell proposed Cllr Wooltorton, seconded Cllr Lesley, all agreed, no other nominations received. Cllr Wooltorton elected as Chairman.
Declaration of Acceptance to Office form signed by the Chairman and Clerk.

2.5 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN
The Chairman proposed Cllr Gregory for Vice Chairman and seconded Cllr Lesley, all agreed, no other nominations. Cllr Gregory elected as Vice Chair.
Declaration of Acceptance to Office forms were signed by the Vice Chair and the Clerk.

OPEN FORUM – None.

3.5 APOLOGIES
a. Apologies for absence. Suffolk County Councillor Chris Chambers.
b. Consent/non consent to absence. N/A

4.5 COUNCILLORS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS
a. Declaration of interests with regards to any item on the agenda. Councillors have dispensations granted relating to the BPSCP
b. Councillors to Review their Declaration of Interests annually. The Clerk reminded of this, Councillors need to log onto the Register of Interests portal and review their interests.

5.5 TO REVIEW AND APPOINT PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES;

a. Claydon & Barham Village Hall Committee. Vacant.
b. Community Trust (Claydon & Barham Community Centre) – Cllr Fenn happy to continue.
c. Recreation Ground Committee – Cllr Carr.
d. Suffolk Association of Local Councils (SALC) – The Chairman and Clerk to continue.
e. Planning – Cllr Gregory happy to continue.
f. Finance – Cllrs Mitchell & Lesley happy to continue.
The above representatives were agreed by all, proposed Cllr G Head Cllr Fenn.

6.5 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 17th MARCH 2025.
The minutes were approved & signed by the Chair, proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr Fenn.

7.5 WORKPLANS AND PLANNING LIST
a. Review of Workplans. The workplan was reviewed and updated as follows;
The missing barrier on the Coopers Way footpath has still not been replaced. SCC Chris Chambers is dealing with this.
A14/Barham lakes steps and sign, this is being dealt with by the Public Rights of Way Officer, still not completed.
Bus Shelter Sturgeons Way, Cllr B Head was pleased to report that after a long struggle the work has now been carried out. She also advised that she has received notification that funding is available for the installation of new pathways leading from bus stops and that there is funding for existing bus stop pathways in need of repair. This will be looked into and in the meantime the PC to carry out a review of all bus stops in Barham which will include the bus shelter outside the Coop, Bus stop by the Sorrell Horse, bus stop in Church Lane and the bus shelter in Sturgeons Way.
To be included on the next agenda.
Street lighting site old Doctors surgery, nothing further has been heard from the developer, to be removed from the work plan.

Chairman's initials………………..

Pesthouse road sign “To Lower Crescent”, district councillor John Whitehead informed that he has passed the information over to the district council, still awaiting repair to be carried out.
The Chairman reported that the 30mph speed sign at Barham Green has been knocked down.
John Whitehad will inform Chris Chambers that the sign needs to be re installed.
Cllr Fenn reported that holes in the road along Sandy Lane have not all be repaired. The Chairman advised that unfortunately not all the holes meet the criteria for repair and some have had temporary fixes. Nothing more the PC can do other than to keep reporting the holes to Highways.

b. To Consider Barham Parish Council carrying out a Neighbourhood Plan.
Further to the presentation received at the last PC meeting, the Chairman would like a decision from the PC. His observations are that a neighbourhood plan will involve a lot of work from all of the parish councillors, he is aware that Councillors would not have enough time to be able to commit. A large financial commitment is also needed by the PC. Any areas of Barham which could be developed have already done so. The Quarry is likely to expand up to the Church so no further residential development can be carried out. No development can be carried out at the Shrubland Estate. Further development along the Norwich Road has already been approved.
Cllr Fenn agrees that the amount of time needed to carry out a plan would be too great and that the PC would not get the support from the community in helping. Councillors all have other commitments.
Cllr Woods agrees that it is far too much work and effort. Any future developments have already been earmarked in Barham.
Cllrs B Head & G Head agree that it is too much work for the parish councillors to commit to.
Cllr Gregory suggests that all the time, effort and money will give little return.
Cllr Lesley agrees with all the above points.
Cllr Mitchell is against carrying out a plan, to much work for Councillors, Chairman and Clerk to take on.
Cllr Carr agrees that there are no other areas in Barham which can be developed.
The Chairman proposed not to make a firm decision but to put on hold, seconded Cllr Gregory, all in favour.

c. Review of Planning List & To Discuss any new Planning Applications Received
DC/25/01807 - Application under S73 for Removal or Variation of a Condition following grant of Planning Permission DC/23/03272 dated 12/09/2023 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). - Erection of 2no new buildings including a Fishermans' Pavilion and a Storage Building - To vary Condition 2 (Approved Plans and Documents) as per supplied plans and built product. Barham Lakes, Pesthouse Lane, Barham.
The Chairman informed that the date for comments was 7th May 2025. He had therefore asked the Clerk to contact the district council on behalf of the PC, to inform that the Parish Council objects to the discharge of conditions, it should also be noted that extra windows have already been installed. These have not been granted planning permission.
This objection was agreed by all. Member of the public highlighted that lighting columns have been installed which bleed light onto nature areas and is causing wildlife destruction. Fencing and portacabins have also been installed. District Councillor David Penny will look into this on behalf of the PC. The Chairman asked the district councillor for his support in objecting to the application and that the removal or variations of conditions should not be permitted.

SCC/0054/25MS/SCOPE DC/25/01627 - EIA Scoping Request for an extension to the quarry workings in a southerly direction and associated infilling with inert materials. Barham Quarry, Sandy Lane, Barham, IP6 0PB. The Chairman informed that this is a pre applications. Aware that there is already a problem with the quarry lorries using Sandy Lane and that residents are not happy. PC to await the full planning application and to address all the issues at that time.

8.5 FINANCE

a. Monthly Payments – to agree the payments for March & April 2025. March payments £1625.98 receipts £195.27. April payments £5279.66 receipts £28.060.00. These were approved by all and signed by Cllr MItchell.

b. Monthly reconciliation – to approve April’s bank reconciliations. As at 30/04/25 the Current Account £80,230.20, this includes £88,630.92 CIL money which is ring fenced for the picnic site. Reserves of £15,000 Brett Aggregates (village road repairs). Business Premium Account £57,449.86. This was approved by all, Cllr Mitchell signed the bank reconciliations.

Chairman’s initials……………….

c Spend Against Budget for the Previous Financial Year ending 31st March 2025.
This has been circulated to all in advance of the meeting, along with the Quarterly Summary of Receipts & Payments. No issues raised.

d Report from the Internal Auditors, Heelis & Lodge on the End of Year Accounts 2024-2025.
The Clerk reported that this has been carried out and that the following recommendations have been raised;
It is noted that the AGAR, Form 2 has been supplied for the audit. Due to the income/expenditure of the Council exceeding £25,000, Form 3 should be used. The Clerks has rectified this.
As per the External Auditor's opinion for the 2024 financial year, the Council should tick 'No' to Assertion 4 in Section 1 of the 2025 AGAR, this was due to the smaller authority did not comply with Regulation 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it failed to make proper provision during the year 2024/25 for the exercise of public rights, since the approval date was not prior to the start of the period for the exercise of public rights.
The Clerk explained that this oversight had been due to the fact that the Annual General Meeting on 20th May 2024 had to be terminated. The date on the public notice was then not amended to 4th June which would have been the correct new date (a day after the 2nd AGM took place)
There is a rounding error of £2.00 in the draft figures in the AGAR, Section 2. The Clerk has rectified this and balanced the AGAR form.
When next reviewing Standing Orders, 18.c should reflect the changes in the Public Contracts Regulations in the Council's Financial Regulations. Clerk has amended the Standing Orders.
A number of policies have not been reviewed recently. It is recommended that a Policy Review Schedule is implemented to ensure policies are reviewed regularly to make sure they are still fit for purpose. The Clerk has created a schedule of policies and this will be reviewed during the forthcoming year.

e. Invoice from Heelis & Lodge – Internal Audit Fee. Invoice £260.00, approved for payment, proposed the Chairman seconded Cllr Mitchell.

f Approval of the End of Year Accounts 2024-2025. As at 31st March 2025 the Current Account £57,449.90, Business Account £55,402.10. The accounts include reserves of £88,630.92 CIL money of which £88,000 is ring fenced for the picnic site. Reserves of £15,000 Brett Aggregates (village road repairs).
Section 1 Annual Governance was completed, as per the recommendation of the internal auditor, box 4 was ticked "No", approved by all, proposed Cllr Wooltorton seconded Cllr Mitchell. Signed by the Chairman & Clerk.
Section 2 Accounting Statement was approved by all, proposed Cllr Wooltorton, Cllr Mitchell. Signed by the Chairman and Clerk.
The Clerk explained the variances spread sheet which has been prepared for the external the auditors. The end of year accounts to be posted on the website and noticeboards along with the dates of the period to exercise public rights. Accounts to be sent to external auditors PKF Littlejohn.

g. To consider reallocating the Brett Aggregate's money to pay for NSK & Shades invoices. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had previously proposed to earmark the £15,000 received from Brett Aggregates, to be use for village road maintenance. The Chairman would like the Parish Council to re consider this decision and for the £15,000 is used instead, for payment of the grass cutting around the village which is carried out by NSK. This would then mean that money budgeted for grass cutting could be freed up and used for PC operating funds or to help build up reserves. This was agreed by all, proposed Cllr B Head seconded Cllr G Head.

h. Street Cleaners – Hourly rate increase. Notification has been received from the district council that the hourly rate is to be increased to £12.21. The PC infact already pay the street cleaners above this a rate of £12.50 an hour. It was therefore agreed that the street cleaners will continue to be paid £12.50 an hour. Proposed Cllr G Head, seconded Cllr Lesley.

Chairman's initials………………..

9.5 REPORTS – Councillors to report on any meetings that they have attended since the last Parish Council meeting.
The Chairman explained for the benefit of new councillor Tim Carr, the matter of the court issue relating to the building at the picnic site, which concluded last year. The Parish Council had put in a claim to its insurance company to help with the legal costs tor the court case. However, the insurance company informed that the Parish Council had not been covered as an entity but as individuals and rejected the claim. The PC had therefore been mis sold the insurance as it was understood that the PC was infact covered as an entity. The PC has put in a complaint to the Insurance Brokers who sold the insurance and have also put in a complaint to the Financial Ombudsman.
The insurance company do not acknowledge that the insurance was mis sold to the PC, but will look into the claim.

Cllr G Head asked when Taylor Whimpey will re instate the area at the junction of Church Lane/ Norwich Road. The Chairman advised that the landscaping at the front of the development is now being carried out, so hopeful the returfing at the junction will also be done.

The Chairman has been invited to a meeting at Gt Blakenham Parish Council on June 16th, regarding Port 1 developments. Cllr Carr would also like to attend the meeting with.
Port 1 has also offered to come and give a presentation to Barham Parish Council, the Clerk has invited a representative to attend the next parish council meeting in July.

10.5 DATE OF NEXT MEETING.
The date of the next meeting is Monday 28th July 2025, 7.00pm. Cllr Fenn gave his apology in advance.

The meeting ended at 8.25pm

Chairman …………………………………………………. Date ……………………...........