

BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN BARHAM CHURCH HALL, ON MONDAY 20th JANUARY 2025, 7.00pm

PRESENT: Chairman Casey Wooltorton, Cllr Brenda Mitchell, Cllr Paul Fenn, Cllr Marilyn Lesley, Cllr Bonnie Head, Cllr Graham Head & Cllr Ian Woods.

Also present: BMSDC Cllrs David Penny and John Whitehead, the Clerk and 2 members of the public.

SCC Public Rights of Way Officer Oliver Westall introduced himself to the PC and explained that he is in charge of the Section 106 money which the county council has received relating to the Taylor Whimpey development. To be shared between Barham & Claydon. He welcomed a wish list of footpath improvements for him to act upon, preferably existing PROW. The Chairman suggested the footpath leading from Pesthouse Lane to the steps down to the lakes. The Slade from Church Lane to the recreation ground. The Crescent to Pesthouse Lane. Asked him to follow up with Brett Aggregates the state of the footpath along by the Quarry.

He would like to give a top dressing to the PROW from The Slade to Church Lane, making it suitable for cycles to use.

There is also potential to link up the PROW from Shrubland to the bottom of Sandy Lanae, which is a Bridleway.

The Chairman to meet up with Mr Westall to discuss further, will bring information back to the next PC meeting.

Developer present representing 20th Century Builders who are to develop the site at the old doctor's surgery Kirby Rise, need to move one of the street lights owned by the Parish Council as it will be in the way of a new driveway. Also, the overhead cabling from 2 of the street lights owed by the PC needs to be taken underground. He asked that the PC pays for this work to be done, £12,000 in total.

The Chairman advised that the PC cannot afford and will not pay for this to be done. Not seen any plans for where the lights are proposed to be moved to. Residents do not want the lights to be moved. Recommends that he speaks to the district council as they will have owned the land in the first place and to seek further advice. The Parish Council all agrees that advice must be sought from Mid Suffolk legal team.

Cllr John Whitehead will arrange a meeting with the legal team and planning department and for the developer and Chairman to be present also. Developer will in the meantime get a site plan showing the relocation of the street lights.

BMSDC David Penny report has been distributed to all prior to the meeting.

The main issue is Devolution and reorganisation of the district and county councils. Creation of a Unitary Council and there is to be a mayor of this new authority. Norfolk and Suffolk combined elections to take place May 2026.

Changes to the joint local plan, housing targets have been released and have risen.

He supports Neighbourhood Plans, thinks they are a good idea, Parish Councils will need to be more proactive in the future.

1.01 APOLOGIES

a. Apologies for absence. Cllr Julie Gregory – work commitments. SCC Cllr Chris Chambers at a previous engagement.

b. Consent/non consent to absence. Consent was granted to the PC

2.01 COUNCILLORS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

a. Declaration of interests with regards to any item on the agenda – None.

(Councillors who are on the Barham Picnic Site Community Charity have previously been granted dispensations relating to Barham Picnic Site, to July 2028.

3.01 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 19th NOVEMBER 2024.

The Clerk has amended the minutes, BMSDC David Pennys report corrected to “small electrical items collection bin at Needham Market, railway station”.

Chairman's initials.....

Also corrected BMSDC John Whitehead, locality money left to spend in their budgets to the end of March 2025.

The minutes were then approved correct, proposed The Chairman seconded Cllr Mitchell, signed by the Chairman.

4.01 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

a. Work Plan

Asked Cllr Whitehead to chase up with highways to repair the road sign which has been knocked down at Pesthouse Lane.

Repair of steps leading down to the Barham Lakes to be passed over to PROW Oliver Westall.

SCC Chris Chambers has informed that the Norwich Road does not meet the requirements for the continuation of 30mph speed limits along the Norwich Road, but this may change if phase 2 of the Taylor Whimpey site goes ahead.

Cllr B Head informed that she is still dealing with the work to take place on the bus shelter, contractor is waiting for weather to improve.

b. Update on the move to barhamparish.gov.uk. The Clerk informed that the parish council website has successfully moved over to .gov.uk and that all councillors apart from Cllr G Head have the new .gov.uk email addresses. Cllr Woods to help Cllr G Head to make the move to the new email address.

5.01 TO CO-OPT A NEW MEMBER ONTO BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL. No applications.

6.01 REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING LIST DISCUSS NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.

a. DC/24/05455 Change of use from information/Visitors centre to cafe and extension of building. Erection of play area. Former Picnic Site, Lower Crescent, Barham. The Parish Council has not objection to the application.

b. DC/24/04646 Change of use of lodge from commercial to holiday let and alternatively ground floor assembly room for anglers. Insertion of 2 No dormer windows to front (west) elevation. The Lodge, Barham Lakes, Pesthouse Lane, Barham. The Parish Council is against this application, it would appear that steps are being taken to change of use to a residential house. The 3 acres of grassland has become greatly developed over the years with no planning permission.

The Chairman asked BMSDC John Whitehead to be proactive in helping the PC to stop this application. The PC objects to the application. Individuals also encouraged to put in objections to the district council.

7.01 FINANCE

a. Monthly Payments – to agree the payments for November & December 2024.

November, payments £8,049.65, receipts £5,875.20, approved by all, signed off by Cllr Mitchell.

December, payments £4,419.35, receipts £0.00, approved by all, signed off by Cllr Mitchell.

b. Monthly reconciliation – December bank reconciliation.

As at 31/12/24 the Current Account £61,255.79. Business Account £55,206.78. The accounts are holding reserves of £88,630.96 CIL money & £15,000.00 for road repairs (Brett Aggregates) Signed off by Cllr Mitchell.

c. Q3 spend against budget Quarter 3, October to December.

Councillors have received this in advance of the meeting for consideration. Cllr Fenn would like to see a clearer picture of what "Other Expenses" relate to as these are not broken down on the spreadsheet.

The Clerk informed that £50,000 was transferred out of the current account into the business account and that the majority of the rest of the other expenses relates to the ND Services court case.

Cllr Woods suggests that an appendix to "other expenses" should list the payments to give a clearer picture. It was agreed that the Clerk will implement this going forward in the next financial year.

d. To Discuss the Allocation of CIL Funding.

The Chairman informed that the picnic site charity is now looking at its funding package for the future projects of which includes the visitors centre cafe and extension of building and erection of a new play area. They will also be looking at funding from the district council and lottery etc. But applications cannot be made until it is seen that a promissory note has been received from the Parish Council in support. He would like to propose that the PC ring fences £88,000 of the CIL money.

Cllrs Woods and Fenn informed that they are not happy with this amount as the PC has already given £15,000 to the charity. Do not agree with giving almost 100% of the PC CIL money as it could be used elsewhere in the village.

Cllr Lesley advised that the picnic site is for the use of the whole village and that everyone who lives in Barham will benefit from it.

Chairman's initials.....

Cllr John Whitehead informed that the Parish Council can expect to get further CIL money from the TW site, up to £200,000 over the next few years.

The Chairman would like to propose that the Parish Council ring fences £88,000 CIL money for the BPSCP Charity, seconded Cllr Lesley. The Chairman asked for a vote to ring fence £88,000 CIL money for the BPSCP Charity, 5 councillors for and 2 against.

8.01 TO CARRY OUT THE ANNUAL APPROVAL OF STATUTORY ITEMS

a. To Approve the Internal Auditor, Heelis & Lodge to carry out the audit of the end of year accounts - April 2024 to March 2025

Having had a successful internal audit carried out on the last end of year accounts by Heelis & Lodge, it was agreed by all to instruct them again for this financial year. Agreed by all, proposed The Chairman seconded Cllr Mitchell.

b To Review the Asset Register.

The Clerk advised that the Picnic Site and mobile phone has been removed from the list, no other changes, all up to date, approved by all.

c To Approve All Risk Assessments – Property, GDPR & General.

The Clerk advised that the Picnic Site has been removed from the property assessment.

GDPR policy, Cllr Fenn asked the Clerk how the PC laptop is backed up. She informed that the Cloud back up is no longer functioning. The Clerk to seek software support and in the meantime to purchase an external hard drive.

General risk assessment of the PC, no changes

All assessments have been reviewed no other amendments needed, approved by all.

d To Review Financial Orders & Standing Orders

No changes need to be made to the documents, approved by all.

Having approved all of the above documents, proposed the Chairman seconded Cllr B Head.

e. To Review the Internal Control Statement. To be carried out by Cllr Mitchell at the end of the financial year.

9.01 ANNUAL INSPECTION OF KIRBY RISE PLAY AREA CARRIED OUT BY ROSPA.

The Chairman reported that a few things have been highlighted in the report.

A buffer needs to be inserted on the gate to prevent fingers being trapped however, there is not enough space to do this therefore he recommends that the gate remains open all of the time (locked open)

Height of the basket swing to be increased.

Matting is worn away under the swings and needs to be replaced. Price to be sought from Sovereign.

The ladder is a fall hazard on the slide and needs a safety barrier.

Cllr Mitchell suggests that the equipment may still be under guarantee and that when Sovereign installed the slide the safety aspect should have been addressed by them at that time.

Clerk to arrange for Sovereign to come out and have a site meeting with the Chairman.

Cllr Mitchell continues to carry out weekly visual checks of the play area.

10.01 TO CONSIDER BARHAM CARRYING OUT A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cllr John Whitehead explained that a neighbourhood plan can be carried out by the parish or sometimes it makes sense to include neighbouring villages. It looks at what is needed in the village along with housing. Identify areas within the village suitable to build new homes and therefore gives the PC more control to preserve areas of the village in the future. Planners have to by law take a Neighbourhood Plan into consideration when making planning applications. Currently Barham receives 15% CIL money from the district council, with a neighbourhood plan the PC would receive 25%.

Encouraged to get the village involved in the process of carrying out a plan by conducting surveys. The backing of a lot of people is needed. The district council does offer help and support with carrying out a Neighbourhood Plan.

After this a referendum goes ahead with the residents, and it is then passed onto the district council to take to the planning department.

The Chairman advised that if the PC does decide to proceed then it will be in the forthcoming financial year, once the new precept has been received.

A representative from the district council could be invited to give the PC a presentation of what is involved with carrying out a neighbourhood plan, then to make a decision after that.

Cllr Whitehead and Penny will arrange this for the PC

Chairman's initials.....

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

The Chairman informed that he has a meeting with Taylor Wimpey in February.
Cllr Fenn will attend the AGM of the Community Centre and will report back at the net PC meeting.

12.01 DATE OF NEXT MEETING. Monday 17th March 2025

The meeting ended at 8.46pm.

Chairman

Date