

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held in the Reading Room, Barkway on 11th September 2017 at 7.30pm.**

1. In attendance: Cllrs:
Dr G Frapporti (Chair)
Dr R Davidson
Mr G Swann
Mr B Morss

Also present: Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO)

Members of the Public: Mr and Mrs Winkworth, 12 Townsend Close.

2. To receive and accept apologies for absence: District Cllr. G Morris and County Cllr, Fiona Hill.

3. To receive Councillor's Declaration of Interest: None received

4. Minutes

4.1 To approve the minutes of the last meetings - approved as read.

4.2 To consider any matters arising from the last meeting - none.

5. Public Session - to receive representations from members of the public -

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Mr Winkworth to address the Council regarding his planning application (item 8.2.3). He wished to clarify matters regarding ownership of the rear wall of his outbuilding, the outbuilding being the subject of his planning application. He was able to prove through documentation that the wall had been built in by themselves in 2010 on their land and therefore belonged to them and not to their adjoining neighbour, Mr Wallace.

It was proposed and agreed by all to bring forward item 8.2.3.
Standing Orders were resumed.

8.2.3 To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Permission Householder: Works to detached outbuilding (including re-roofing) to facilitate conversion to habitable accommodation.

12 Townsend Close, Barkway, Royston, SG8 8ER - Case Ref No: 17/02080/1HH

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr. Davidson, seconded by Cllr. Morss and agreed by all that there was no objection to the application. The Clerk to respond to NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

6. To elect a Chairman and sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office - following the recent resignation of Cllr. Falaschi-Ray as Chair and Parish Councillor, it was proposed by Cllr. Frapporti and seconded by Cllr. Morss and agreed by all to elect Cllr. Swann as Chairman. Cllr Swann duly signed his declaration of acceptance of office. The Clerk to forward this document to NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

It was proposed and agreed that Cllr. Frapporti continue to Chair the current meeting.

7. Council Administration

7.1 Update on Parish Councillor Recruitment - Since the August Parish Council meeting it was acknowledged sadly that both Cllr. Falaschi-Ray and Cllr O'Sullivan had for different personal reasons resigned from the Council. It was agreed that there was now an urgent need to put out a positive message to try and recruit new Councillors. Cllr. Davidson agreed to forward to all a draft message and Cllr. Morss agreed to convert the information into a Powerpoint document. This would then be circulated prior to the October meeting with a view to agreeing a final document which could be used in the forthcoming edition of the Bulletin and also emailed out via the email database. **Action: RD/BM/Clerk**

7.2 Corporate Governance - To consider proposed change to Financial Regulations and to agree to adopt revised document. Cllr. Davidson informed the Council that he had just made one change to the Financial Regulations. Item 7.2 'Pension Contributions' had been added. It was proposed by Cllr. Frapporti, seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed by all to adopt the revised document. **Action: Clerk**

7.3 To note complaint received and action taken to date - The Clerk reported that a Parishioner had requested to see a copy of a complaint from a third party sent to the Council. As the Clerk had been unsure if this information could be released she had contacted the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and Hertfordshire Association of Parish and Town Councils (HAPTC) for legal advice. She had then responded to the Parishioner stating that although she was in possession of the information requested, under section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Council was not required to disclose the information as it fell under a third party personal information exemption. To release the personal data into the public domain would have constituted an unfair act to the third party involved. The Parishioner had in addition made a complaint that former Councillor Falaschi-Ray had not declared an interest at a recent meeting where the Parishioner's planning application had been considered and had therefore been in breach of the Code of Conduct. After seeking further legal advice from NALC and HAPTC the Clerk had responded to the complainant by supplying them with a copy of the Code of Conduct and suggested that if they still felt that there had been a breach then they should contact the Monitoring Officer at NHDC (contact details given) and ask them to consider the matter.

7.4 To note complaint received and to decide on action to take - The Clerk reported that a complaint had been received from some residents in Townsend Close who had attended the previous Parish Council meeting held on 14th August. They were disappointed in the way that the planning discussions had been handled at the meeting and wanted to complain about the Chairperson's behaviour and attitude towards them at that meeting. After some discussion it was agreed by all that the Standing Orders needed to be adhered to at all times and that, as a Council, it needed to tighten up on procedures to ensure no further complaints such as this could be made. It was proposed by Cllr. Davidson and seconded by Cllr. Frapporti and agreed by all to respond to the complainant, enclosing a copy of the Code of Conduct and suggesting that if they still felt that there had been a breach of the Code of Conduct then they should contact the Monitoring Officer at NHDC (contact details given) and ask them to consider the matter. **Action: Clerk**

7.5 To approve and accept the Annual Return and certificate of conclusion of audit for the year ended 31st March 2017 - The Clerk presented the Annual Return to the Council with the completed certificate of audit from the External Auditors BDO LLP. There had been no matters arising from the audit. The Annual Return and certificate of completion of audit was duly approved and accepted by the Council.

The Annual Return and Notice of Conclusion of Audit would now be displayed on the noticeboard and published on the website for a period of 14 days. **Action: Clerk**

8. To receive updates from Portfolio Holders

8.1 Neighbourhood Plan - To discuss latest correspondence from Consultant Lorraine Hart and agree action to continue proceeding with the Neighbourhood Plan - After some discussion it was agreed that Sonia Falaschi-Ray, on her return from holiday, would be invited to a meeting to conduct a detailed handover in order that the Council fully understood what stage the Neighbourhood Plan was at and what needed to be done next as a result of the Consultant's report. In the meantime it was agreed that a letter should be written to MP Sir Oliver Heald in order to gain his support. Cllr. Morss agreed to find out if Sir Oliver Heald was holding any surgeries locally that could be attended. An invitation would be extended to Louise St John Howe (the Independent Programme Officer appointed to assist the Inspector with all the aspects of the independent examination of the NHDC Local Plan) to attend the October Parish Council meeting. Lorraine Hart would then be invited to attend the November meeting when the Council would be in a more informed position to make the best use of her consultancy service session. **Action Clerk/BM**

8.2 Planning

8.2.1 To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Planning Permission: Proposed extension to existing agricultural building including new grain dryer facilities with associated works including hardstanding.

New Farm, The Joint, Barkway, Royston, SG8 8DU - Case Ref No: 17/01925/1

Following a lengthy discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Davidson, seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed by all to object to this planning application based on the unsuitability of road links to the proposed development site. Cllr. Davidson had already worked on a detailed response, Cllr. Swann agreed to finalise this and forward to the Clerk for submission to NHDC before the deadline of 15th September. **Action: GS/Clerk**

8.2.2 To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension.

116 High Street, Barkway, Royston, SG8 8EG - Case ref No: 17/02007/1HH

The Council considered this application. It was proposed by Cllr. Davidson, seconded by Cllr. Morss and agreed by all that there was no objection to this application. The Clerk to respond to NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

8.2.4 To consider and make comment on planning application: Installation of electric roller garage doors (in black) to open car port.

2 Pledgers Place, Barkway, Royston, SG8 8DQ - Case Ref No: 17/02155/1HH

The Council considered this application. It was proposed by Cllr. Davidson, seconded by Cllr. Morss and agreed by all that there was no objection to this application. The Clerk to respond to NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

8.2.5 CPRE Planning Skills Seminar - Thursday 5th Oct - reserved place - to decide if any Councillor can attend. As none of the Councillors would be able to attend this daytime seminar previously booked by former Cllr. Falaschi-Ray, the Clerk agreed to attend on behalf of the Council in order that the fee already paid would not be wasted. **Action: Clerk**

8.3 Highways

8.3.1 Highways report - Cllr. Swann reported that resurfacing work had been completed in Windmill Close and Church Lane and that he had requested Periwinkle Close to be resurfaced next year. Cllr Swann confirmed that he now had the request approved for the High Street road closure for Remembrance Sunday on 12th November.

8.3.2 Update on investigations regarding obtaining a weight restriction for the High Street - Cllr. Swann reported that although County Cllr. Fiona Hill was willing to support the feasibility survey with funds from her Locality budget, it appeared that this might be a waste of money. Herts County Council had informed him that the Police were not interested as they could not see any valid reason for imposing a weight restriction and would therefore never be enforced. It was also difficult to prove structural reasons for a weight restriction. Cllr. Swann would update Cllr. Hill and find out if she wanted to proceed further with her investigations. **Action: GS**

8.3.3 Update on land behind Windmill Close - Cllr. Swann reported that NHDC had now applied to make the land as an Open Space and that a lease was being put in place as an interim measure. This lease would then be terminated when the land became officially an Open Space. He stated that there was a need to ensure access to the Open Space was maintained for maintenance when the remaining part of the land was sold off for development.

8.4 Sports and Recreation

8.4.1 Pitch maintenance update and consider quotations received for an annual maintenance contract - There was no update to report.

8.4.2 Update on new Groundsman - It was reported by Cllr. Morss that Jacob, the new Grounds Man was settling into his role. Sam had kindly agreed to do some training with him as a means of a handover. There had been a big increase of usage of the pitches recently. Apart from Royston Town FC (RTFC), there had also been requests from clubs such as Buntingford, Therfield and Hoddesdon. This was resulting in the Barkway Vets being excluded due to pitch availability.

8.4.3 Play area maintenance update - It was reported that there had been a few minor playground equipment repairs and the broken footpath post that were being addressed by the Dodkins. It was considered that a COSH risk assessment should be carried out in relation to materials stored in the shed. **Action: BM**

8.4.4 Youth Football Development update - It was reported that Dave Winkworth still planned to organise some football development sessions on the Rec. and it was hoped this would now be in the October half term.

8.4.5 To discuss and agree proposal to purchase a new line marking machine - Cllr. Morss informed the Council that he thought that a new line marker would cost in the region of £650 for a new unit or £500 for a reconditioned unit and these prices would be with a 5 year paint deal. He had arranged for a representative from Fleet (Line Markers) Ltd to come along and demonstrate a machine and provide a firm quotation. This would be reported on at the October meeting. **Action: BM/Clerk**

8.4.6 To discuss and decide if to go ahead and arrange Bonfire Night on the Rec, event - Sunday 5th November - After some discussion it was proposed and agreed that if additional help could be found then the event could go ahead. It was an event that the village expected to happen every year but with a depleted number of Councillors it would not be possible without additional support. Cllr. Morss agreed to ask Chris Cooper if might be willing gather a team to organise the fireworks display. **Action: BM**

8.5 Community Property

8.5.1 War Memorial renovation project update - The Clerk reported that the Contractors had indicated that they would be starting work at the beginning of October. She would organise all the necessary publicity of the project and had already spoken to the Vicar, Ruth Pike, regarding the possibility of organising a rededication ceremony of the newly renovation War Memorial directly after the Remembrance Day ceremony on Sunday 12th November.

8.5.2 Reading Room Roof - The Clerk reported that the Dodkins had been asked to look at the slipped slates on the roof but as yet there was no update.

8.6 Environment - to discuss and agree actions to smarten up Barkway - It was discussed as to whether some of the old pavement signage could be removed. Cllr Swann would look into the matter and report back to Council. **Action: GS**

8.7 Media and Communications

8.7.1 Police Report - There was only one recent crime to report, a break in to a stable yard on the Buckland Road where garden power tools had been stolen.

8.7.2 Website and Communication update - The Clerk read out a report from Gordon Baker. He was of the opinion that the current Barkway Village website was stagnant and that the whole matter of Parish Council communication needed a review to ensure that, by the most effective means, the Council met its obligation to keep Parishioners up to date and informed on matters relating to the village. Gordon Baker also indicated his desire to retire from managing the Barkway website as soon as a replacement could be found. He reported that a newcomer to the village, Kristian Melson had expressed an interest in getting involved. Cllr. Davidson agreed to arrange to meet up with Gordon Baker and Kristian Melson and report back to Council at the October meeting. **Action: RD**

8.7.3 To discuss content and agree action to produce an Autumn edition of the Bulletin - It was proposed by Cllr. Swann and agreed by all to produce articles for the next edition of the Bulletin in order that a draft document could be agreed at the October Council meeting and finalised and distributed before the end of October. Gordon Baker had kindly offered his services to edit and produce the document provided that the content was supplied to him as soon as possible. **Action: All**

8.8 Special Projects - Reading Room update - The Clerk reported that the residents in the adjoining cottage, Duck Cottage, had indicated that they would like to talk to the Council further regarding the possibility of renting the Reading Room as additional accommodation to their cottage. The Clerk to follow this up. **Action: Clerk**

9. Finance - to receive finance reports from the Clerk

9.1 To appoint a new member of the Finance Committee - It was proposed by Cllr. Davidson and seconded by Cllr. Frappporti and agreed by all to appoint Cllr. Swann (as required of the Chairman, per the Financial Regulations) to the Finance Committee.

9.2 To set next date for meeting of Finance Committee - Monday 2nd October at 7.30pm in the Reading Room. **Action: Clerk/RD/GF/GS**

9.3 To provide update on current financial position

Parish Council Account:

The Parish Council bank balance at 11.09.2017 was £90,439.94

Petty Cash £45.00

Receipts since the last meeting:

£18,000.00 - NHDC - 2nd half of annual Precept

£48.00 - Jemmett - Hire of Community Room

£800.00 - Pavilion Fundraising A/C - Contribution towards curtains - Community Room

£48.00 - Price - Hire of Community Room

£48.00 - Cottrell - Hire of Community Room

9.4 To authorise payments:

Approval of payments since last meeting:

DD £51.00 - EDF - Direct Debit Electricity Pavilion

DD £13.00 – Affinity Water – Direct Debit Water Pavilion

DD £38.86 - NEST - Pension Contributions

DD £6.96 - Sage Software Ltd - Payroll

CHQ 102519 £10.00 - P Stacey - Refund of Hire Fees

CHQ 102520 £ 1,505.34 - Direct Fabrics - Curtains for Community Room

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

CHQ 102521 £36.00 - S Scott - Cutting of Heritage Verge
CHQ 102522 £82.69 - Jewson Ltd - Pitch Maintenance
CHQ 102523 £360.00 - BDO LLP - External Audit Fee
CHQ 102524 £55.00 - M Thornton - Window and Bus Stop Cleaning
CHQ 102525 £35.00 - Barkway Preschool - Refund of Hire Fees
CHQ 102526 £490.00 - T S Drake - Grass Cutting Rec.
CHQ 102527 £1,750.00 - Community Land Use - Consultancy Fees Neighbourhood Plan
CHQ 102528 £152.00 - A Dodkin - Maintenance Rec and Pavilion
CHQ 102529 £136.00 - D Dodkin - Maintenance Rec and Pavilion
CHQ 102530 £901.30 - Catharine Toms – Clerk’s Monthly Salary + Office Allowance
CHQ 102531 £135.00 - Sam Methven - Groundsman August + Holiday Pay
CHQ 102532 £60.00 - Claire Methven - Litter Picking August
CHQ 102533 £54.10 - Janine Reay - Pavilion Bookings Clerk + Cleaning August
CHQ 102534 £ 71.50 - Jacob Kingston - Groundsman August
CHQ 102535 £47.04 - Catharine Toms - Clerk's Expenses *

* £12.60 - Return Mileage NHDC Planning Control Meeting
£2.00 - Tesco - Tea Bags
£32.44 - Workwear Express - Uniform for Grounds Man

Parish Council - Pavilion Account:

Bank Balance at 11.09.17 was £228.06
Receipts since the last meeting: None
Payments since the last meeting:
CHQ 100124 £800.00 - Barkway Parish Council - Contribution towards cost of curtains in Community Room at Pavilion

Reading Room Accounts:

Bank Balance at 11.09.17 was £1,180.22
Receipts since the last meeting:
£36.30 - COIF Interest
Payments since the last meeting:
DD £38.00 - NHDC - Rates
CHQ 100090 - £416.08 - Total Gas and Power
To authorise DD arrangement to pay future bills to Total Gas and Power

10. Correspondence

The Clerk reported that letters of thanks had been received from Barkway PCC and Barkway Chapel for the grants received for the maintenance of their churchyards.

A letter had also been received from Val McGow and Shirley Streater saying that due to health reasons they would no longer be able to continue with the Welcome Pack. They had put a great deal of effort into producing the brochure and thought it would be a shame if it now got abandoned as it had been very well received by newcomers to the village. They would be happy to meet any new volunteers and hand over the project. The Clerk agreed to try and find someone to take over this important role. **Action: Clerk**

11. Date of next meeting: Monday 9th October

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.30pm

