

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held in the Reading Room, Barkway on 12th June 2017 at 8pm.**

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

Also present: Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO)
District Cllr. Gerald Morris
County Cllr. Fiona Hill

Members of the Public: PC Mark Ellwood

2. To receive and accept apologies for absence: Rev'd S Falaschi-Ray (Clergy Conference)

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. Cllr. Davidson wished that it should be recorded in the minutes what an excellent job the Clerk had done of the difficult task of the writing up of the minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of 22nd May. **Action: Clerk**

4.2 To consider any matters arising from the last meeting - Cllr. Frapporti informed the Council that a complaint had been received from a Parishioner regarding the conduct of the Chair (Cllr. Falaschi-Ray) at the Extraordinary meeting held on Monday 22nd May. Cllr. Frapporti, as Vice Chair, was currently working on resolving matters. It was agreed that the meeting on 22nd May had been a difficult meeting to chair as there were many concerned members of the public present who had wished to address the Council regarding their concerns over the proposed new car park on the Rec. The public were really only interested in getting their view heard and to stick rigidly to the Standing Orders had been a nearly impossible task in that situation. The Councillors felt that the Chair was not single handed responsible for the proceedings at that meeting and that the Council as a whole needed to take the responsibility. It was proposed by Cllr. Morss and seconded by Cllr. Davidson and agreed by all that the matter would be deferred until the July meeting, when Cllr. Falaschi-Ray would be present and the matter could be discussed further. Cllr. Frapporti recommended that the Council should reflect on recent events and was of the opinion that there were lessons were to be learnt from the situation. In the meantime, the Clerk would send out to all Councillors copies of the Code of Conduct and the latest version of the Standing Orders. The Councillors all agreed to read through these documents and ensure that they were fully familiar with them by the July meeting. **Action: Clerk**

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

PC Mark Ellwood was present to address the Council. He informed the Council that there had been two recorded crimes since the May meeting. Cokenach Cricket Club had been burgled and a quad bike stolen. The criminals had accessed the premises from across the

fields. The latest crime had been earlier in the day when a car, left with keys in the ignition, had been stolen from the Flint House development site.

Following the spate of shed and outbuilding burglaries earlier in the year, it was reported that some progress had been made on apprehending the criminals, although nothing was concluded as yet. He emphasised that people should report anything suspicious at all by phoning the Police on 101. Police presence through the villages had been increased recently but as always the Police resources were over stretched. Cllr. Swann asked PC Ellwood if he could request his officers to look out for vehicles parked up on the pavement along Cambridge Road as this was becoming common practice along there. With the pavement obstructed it was putting pedestrians at risk by having no choice but to walk in the road.

PC Ellwood departed from the meeting at 7.55pm. He was thanked for attending.

6. Council Administration

6.1 Report from the Annual Parish Meeting on Wednesday 17th May - It was considered that the Annual Parish Meeting had been a successful event and, in spite of dreadful weather, had been attended by about 40 people. Cllr. Falaschi-Ray had delivered a report from the Parish Council and District Councillor Gerald Morris had spoken about the NHDC Local Plan and the implications that it might have on future development in Barkway. Guest speaker, Mr Ken McDonald, from the Hundred Parishes Society, gave a very interesting talk which was really appreciated. Following an interval, representatives from village organisations gave an update on their activities over the past year and their aspirations for the coming year.

6.2 Report from the Extraordinary Parish Council Meeting on Monday 22nd May - (see above item 4.2 - Matters arising). As a result of the Council deferring any decision on the creating of a new car park on the Rec. until further options could be researched, a Working Party was being formed and it was hoped to arrange a first meeting shortly. **Action: BM**

6.3 To receive report from Internal Auditor and agree any appropriate action points - The Clerk reported that the Internal Audit had now been completed by Carol Willis. The audit was an independent examination for the Council of its accounts, accounting processes and budgetary controls. It also reviewed the relevant aspects of the Council's corporate governance and risk assessment. It found that the Parish Council was continuing to conduct ongoing reviews of all areas of responsibility. The report concluded that she found that effective systems were in place to ensure that the financial statements represented accurately the financial position of Barkway Parish Council and as a result no matters had arisen which needed to be brought to the attention of the Council. It was proposed by Cllr. Davidson and seconded by Cllr. Frapporti and agreed by all to accept and approve the report from the Internal Auditor.

The Clerk then informed the Council that, in accordance with the Accounts and Audit regulations 2015, the inspection period (of 30 working days) during which electors are able to exercise their rights to inspect the Council records was due to commence on 27th June and run through to 7th August. Copies of the Accounting Statement and Governance Statement, a statement detailing the exercise of public rights along with a notice to say that the accounting statement was unaudited and was subject to change, would be displayed on the notice board and on the website. The Annual Return along with additional supporting documents (in addition this year, Barkway Parish Council had been randomly selected to submit an intermediate review questionnaire) would then be submitted to the External Auditors, BDO, by 17th July. The External Audit would be concluded by 30th September 2017. **Action: Clerk**

6.4 Update on Parish Councillor recruitment - There was no further progress to report. Cllr. Frapporti would talk again to Tom Wornham to see if he had given any more thought to becoming a Parish Councillor. **Action: GF**

6.5 Corporate Governance

6.5.1 To approve and adopt proposed update of Standing Orders regarding recording of meetings by the press and public - Cllr Davidson had added a new paragraph (26) to the Standing Orders. The Local Government Audit and Accountability Act 2014 gave the press and public to right to record, film and broadcast meetings of the Council as long as it was not disruptive to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr. Davidson, seconded by Cllr. Frapporti and agreed by all to adopt the revised Standing Orders. **Action: Clerk**

6.5.2 To consider proposed revision to Social Media Policy - further to recent events relating to the proposed car park project on the Rec. it had become apparent that the Parish Council needed to re-consider what were the most effective means of communicating with residents. Current means of communication were through the website, by email, parish notice boards and the Bulletin. It was agreed that using Facebook to communicate Parish Council business would be unwise and it would be difficult to control. It was thought that any communication should come from the Council as a whole and that no one should use their own social media account to post anything about Parish Council business. It was suggested by Cllr. Morss that the Clerk send out an email to all Councillors clarifying this point. It had become very apparent, the urgent need for filling the current Councillor vacancy with a person responsible as a media controller. It was proposed by Cllr. Frapporti and seconded by Cllr. Morss and agreed by all to review the Social Media Policy in light of recent events and that this matter should be deferred until the July meeting. **Action: All/Clerk**

County Cllr. Fiona Hill suggested that the NHDC Social Media Guidelines for Councillors (available on the NHDC website) might be a useful reference point.

6.6 Update on Workplace Pension arrangements - The Clerk reported that she had now set up a pension scheme with the National Employment Savings Trust (NEST). She would be writing shortly to all employees to give them the opportunity to join the pension scheme. The staging date (to commence the scheme) for the Parish Council was 1st July 2017.

7. To receive updates from Portfolio Holders

7.1 Neighbourhood Plan - update - Cllr. O'Sullivan reported that the Neighbourhood Plan Working Party were due to have another meeting with Planning Consultant, Lorraine Hart, on Friday 16th June. Lorraine Hart had now looked at the previous draft which needed to be revised to be consistent with the emerging NHDC Local Plan, of which was now going forward towards submission to the Inspectorate for independent examination. It was thought that the NHDC Local Plan was still a year away from being finalised. He had been advised by Carina Helmn, when he had attended a recent training session, that one of the key things with the Neighbourhood Plan was to be clear in the Plan on what you wanted to achieve. It would need to have a clarity, so that any 3rd party would be able to pick up from the Neighbourhood Plan exactly what the village was. Cllr. O'Sullivan told the council that they could continue to make progress on the Plan and they now had the addition help of Mike Chapman from Nuthampstead. **Action: RO/SFR**

7.2 Planning

7.2.1 To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Permission Householder: Single storey rear extension and dropped kerb and crossover to allow highway access

5 Royston Road, Barkway, Royston, SG8 8BT - Case Ref No: 17/01317/1HH - The plans were examined in detail and it was considered that the proposed dropped kerb and off road parking would help alleviate some of the parking issues in the area. It was proposed by Cllr. Frapporti and seconded by Cllr. Swann and agreed by all that there was no objection to this application. Observations to be made as to whether Highways would approve the positioning of the dropped kerb and the fact that it may ease parking issues in the vicinity. The Clerk to respond to NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

District Cllr. Morris asked the Chair if he could update the council on some recent planning issues. This was approved.

With reference to the site adjacent to High Peak, Cllr. Morris told the Council that planning officers at NHDC were mindful to approve the application for two houses on that site.

He mentioned that the Golf Club had appealed against the refusal for planning permission to build a 4 bed detached house on their land behind High Peak. This had now been over ruled, so was going ahead.

The former Tally Ho beer garden had got planning approval for a 4 bed detached house. The application for two properties on that site was now deferred until the next planning meeting. The application for a 2 bed property on the northern end site at the Tally Ho had been refused.

He informed the Council that the application for 25 dwellings on land north of Mill Croft was due to go before the Planning Committee on 29th June. He recommended that the Parish Council request to speak at that meeting. The Clerk to book a slot. **Action: Clerk**

He also mentioned that the Rand family had withdrawn their application for part of site BK3 but were now in talks with owners of the remainder of the site and would soon be submitting a full application for the whole of site BK3.

It was queried with Cllr. Morris what was happening with regard to the planning application for 12 dwellings on site BK1. He agreed to investigate this and report back.

7.2.2 To note planning appeal to the Inspectorate and to decide on any further comments to be submitted regarding proposed development: Erection of 3 x 2 bed terrace dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping

Land at Ash Mill, Barkway, Royston, SG8 8HB - Case Ref No: 16/02588/1 - After some discussion it was decided that there was nothing additional to add to the detailed objection previously submitted.

7.2.3 Report from NHDC Planning Committee Meeting - Thursday 25th May
- Cllr. Davidson reported that the Rand BK3 application had been withdrawn but the former Tally Ho beer garden site application was heard. It had been a very long but interesting evening.

7.3 Highways

7.3.1 Highways report - Cllr. Swann had reported to Highways that the footpath on Cambridge Road, heading towards the Village Hall, needed maintenance as the grass verge had encroached making it very narrow.

He had reported once again the drain cover in Royston Road that had overgrown, it had been like that for over a year now. County Cllr. Fiona Hill made a note of it and would try and get the matter resolved.

He had not been given a date yet for the resurfacing of Windmill Close, although it was definitely included in the current year budget.

Cllr. Swann mentioned that he had received a request from some residents in Stallibrass Mews requesting a name sign to be installed indicating where this driveway was as they were experiencing difficulties with delivery drivers being unable to locate them. On

investigation he had found out that this would probably not be possible as Stallibrass Mews was an unadopted road and therefore not the responsibility of the District or County Council.

Cllr O'Sullivan reported that a hole about 2 foot deep had appeared in the road around the site in the middle of the village where the culvert had previously collapsed. Cllr. Swann would go and investigate this. **Action: GS**

7.3.2 Update on land behind Windmill Close - Cllr. Swann thought that the lease would be concluded within the next couple of months. NHDC had now decided that if it was in the public interest then the Open Space application could be abandoned.

County Cllr. Fiona Hill departed from the meeting at 8.45pm. She was thanked for attending.

District Cllr. Gerald Morris departed from the meeting at 8.50pm. He was thanked for attending.

7.4 Sports and Recreation

7.4.1 Pitch maintenance update - Cllr. Morss reported that he had made some enquiries regarding a pitch maintenance contract but had yet to hear back on this. Generally the pitches were in good order and he was of the opinion that rolling the pitches (as recommended by Tim Drake) would just tear up the grass. He said that already bookings were being made for the pitches for the new season. Cllr. Davidson advised not to accept too many bookings in July and August as the village would expect full use of the Recreation Ground over the summer holiday months.

7.4.2 Play area maintenance update - It was reported that some pigeon spike had been purchased to place above the cradle swings. The Dodkins would be asked to place this in position. **Action: Clerk**

Some further investigation needed to be done regarding the slightly worn D rings on the big swings. It was considered to be low risk but it was agreed that repairs should go ahead as the car park project had been put on hold for the time being. **Action: BM/Clerk**

7.4.3 Youth Football Development - Cllr. O'Sullivan enquired whether it would be possible, for a local resident from Townsend Close, who was involved with football coaching for Hornead Hares, to organise a session of football training for local youngsters on the Rec. during the summer holidays. It was considered generally to be a very good idea as the contract with the Football Association (FA) was dependent on the facility providing football development and each year the Parish Council needed to demonstrate that it had met that criterion. It was noted that numbers would be down for this current year as there would be no football tournament taking place and fewer youth teams were playing at Barkway, although Royston Town FC were trying to address this. Cllr. Morss said that his only concern was child welfare. If the person was a recognised FA coach then it would be alright. Cllr. Morss would check with the FA. It was agreed that for use of the Pavilion and Rec. a minimal charge would be made to cover the costs of cleaning. Cllr. Morss would liaise with the interested party. **Action: BM**

7.5 Community Property

7.5.1 Reading Room maintenance update - The Clerk informed the Council that Andrew Dodkin would commence work on the outside brickwork once the weather conditions were suitable. She would also contact the Conservation Officer again at NHDC to let him know that the work was now happening. **Action: Clerk**

7.5.2 War Memorial renovation project update - The Clerk reported that she was still awaiting completed paperwork from the Contractor in order to formally accept the grant offer from the War Memorials Trust. She would chase matters. **Action: Clerk**

7.6 Environment

7.6.1 Update on Memorial Bench in Church Lane - Cllr. Frapporti reported that now all parties were happy with the proposed location, the bench had been ordered.

7.6.2 To consider letter received from a resident regarding environmental health issues of living in the vicinity of a sewerage farm and a chicken farm - after some discussion on the matter it was agreed that the Clerk should respond saying that environmental issues were outside the remit of the Parish Council and that if they were experiencing problems due to their proximity to the sewerage farm or poultry farm then they should report the matter to the Environment Officer at NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Frapporti informed the Council that repairs had now been carried out by Herts County Council (HCC) to the deeply rutted byway between Reed and Barkway.

It was noted that the footpaths were overdue for their first cut of 2017, the Clerk had already chased HCC and the contractors had been asked to prioritise Barkway.

The Clerk reported that there was some vegetation overhanging the footpaths outside numbers 77 and 96 High Street. It was agreed that a letter should be written to the residents asking for this to be cut back as soon as possible. **Action: Clerk**

7.7 Media and Communications

7.7.1 Police Report - PC Mark Ellwood report (see item 5 - Public Session)

7.7.2 Website update - Gordon Baker had advised that he had added two small survey forms onto the front page of the website. One to obtain feedback on the website itself and the other to get feedback on methods of Parish Council communication.

7.8 Special Projects - Reading Room update - Cllr. O'Sullivan reported that he had made some progress regarding the matter of Council Tax payable for the Reading Room if it was converted to residential use. Council Tax would be payable and if it was adjoined to and used by the owners of Duck Cottage then would be combined within their Council Tax bill and would be payable by them. The valuation office would not be prepared to put a value on this until it happened. With that issue resolved Cllr. O'Sullivan said that the Parish Council really needed to list what it wanted out of the deal. What timescales were envisaged for a lease agreement and whether it would be transferable if Duck Cottage was sold. What would happen if they wanted to make modifications to the property. It was suggested that any modifications could only be made with prior approval and that a 10 year lease should be a minimum agreement and should include a two way exit clause. Cllr. O'Sullivan would talk to an Estate Agent to try and get an idea on rentable value and the Clerk would talk to the Conservation Officer at NHDC to check whether they might have any issues with the idea of leasing it out on a residential basis to the adjoining cottage. **Action: RO/Clerk**

8. Finance - to receive finance reports from the Clerk

8.1 To provide update on current financial position

Parish Council Account:

The Parish Council bank balance at 12.06.2017 was £71,801.85

Receipts since the last meeting:

£12.00 - Barkway Village Hall - Hire of Community Room

8.3 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

CHQ 102479 £60.00 - The Diary - Advertising for Pavilion (to be reclaimed from Pavilion fund raising account)

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

CHQ 102480 £55.00 - M Thornton - Window Cleaning and Bus Shelter Cleaning
CHQ 102481 £35.34 - Jewson Ltd - Pitch Maintenance
CHQ 102482 £168.34 - Stationery Cupboard - Planning Printing and Stationery
CHQ 102483 £300.00 - Carol Willis - Internal Audit Fee
CHQ 102484 £350.00 - T S Drake - Grass Cutting Rec x 5
CHQ 102485 £40.00 - HAPTC - New Councillor Training - R O'Sullivan
CHQ 102486 £37.17 - R O'Sullivan - Mileage expenses. Planning meeting and training session.
CHQ 102487 £919.80 - Catharine Toms – Clerk's Monthly Salary + Office Allowance
CHQ 102488 £129.38 - Claire Methven - Litter Picking May + Holiday Pay 2016/17
CHQ 102489 £399.38 - Sam Methven - Groundsman May + Holiday Pay 2016/17
CHQ 102490 £118.38 - Janine Reay - Pavilion Bookings Clerk + Cleaning May + Holiday Pay 2016/17
CHQ 102491 £102.28 - Catharine Toms - Clerk's Expenses *

* £15.12 - Mileage for trips to Tesco x 3 for Annual Parish Meeting Refreshments and Hire and Return of Glasses

£81.36 - Tesco - Refreshments for Annual Parish Meeting

£5.80 - Amazon - Pigeon Spikes for top of Cradle Swings

To authorise Direct Debit payment of Pension Contributions to NEST.

Parish Council - Pavilion Account:

Bank Balance at 12.06.17 was £1,088.06

Receipts since the last meeting: None

Payments since the last meeting: None

Reading Room Accounts:

Bank Balance at 12.06.17 was £1,674.00

Receipts since the last meeting:

£30.73 - COIF - Interest

Payments since the last meeting:

DD £38.00 - NHDC - Rates

9. Correspondence - an email had been received from Roy Rowe querying some recent comments made on planning applications by the Parish Council. The Clerk read out the letter and would respond to Mr Rowe saying that his comments had been noted. **Action: Clerk**

10. Date of next meeting: Monday 10th July

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.20pm