

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting  
Held in the Reading Room, Barkway on 14th August 2017 at 7.30pm.**

**1. In attendance:** Cllrs:

Rev S Falaschi-Ray (Chair)  
Dr G Frapporti (Vice-Chair)  
Dr R Davidson  
Mr G Swann  
Dr R O'Sullivan

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

**Members of the Public:** Mr Humphreys, Mrs Gatward, Mr Cockerton, Mr and Mrs Campbell

**2. To receive and accept apologies for absence:** Cllr. B Morss (away on business), Apologies accepted.

**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.

***Correction to the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 12th June 2017***

District Councillor Morris raised the point that he thought that he had been mis-quoted in the minutes of the June meeting. If he had been present at the July meeting, he would have pointed out the matter then. After item 7.2.1 - Cllr. Morris had updated the Council regarding some planning matters. He was quoted as reporting that 'The application for a 2 bed property on the northern end site at the Tally Ho had been refused'. This was incorrect and should have read 'The planning case officer at NHDC was minded to recommend refusal of the planning application for a 2 bed property on the northern end site at the Tally Ho.' It was noted that the planning application had since been refused. It was proposed by Cllr. Falaschi-Ray, seconded by Cllr. Davidson and agreed by all to approve this amendment. **Action: Clerk**

**5. Public Session - to receive representations from members of the public** - No members of the public were in attendance at this stage in the meeting. (see after item 7.2.2)

**6. Council Administration**

**6.1 Update on Parish Councillor Recruitment** - Nothing to report.

**6.2 Corporate Governance - To consider proposed change to Standing Orders and to agree to adopt revised document.** Cllr. Davidson informed the Council that he had just made one change to the Standing Orders. He had removed the requirement for speakers to stand when speaking. He did not consider that any further changes were needed at this time. It was proposed by Cllr. Falaschi-Ray, seconded by Cllr. Frapporti and agreed by all to adopt the revised document. **Action: Clerk**

**6.3 For information only: To note complaint received and response submitted** - The Clerk informed the Council that a complaint had been received from a Parishioner

regarding the conduct of the Chair of the Parish Council during an incident that took place in July. The Clerk having consulted with the Vice-Chair and District Councillor, had responded directly with the complainant saying that as the alleged incident took place when the Councillor was not on Council business, it was not considered to be a Parish Council matter. The complainant had also escalated the complaint to NHDC, who had considered the matter and also concluded that there was no case of breach of the Code of Conduct. The matter was now closed.

**6.4 For information only: To note response sent following receipt of a complaint regarding Councillor conduct at the Extraordinary Meeting on 22nd May** - The Clerk reported that the Vice-Chair had now responded in full to the complainant and that the matter was now closed.

**6.5 Update on External Audit** - The Clerk reported that the required information had been sent to BDO by 17th July. The period for the exercise of elector rights had finished on 7th August. No request had been received to inspect the financial records. The external audit was expected to be concluded by the end of September.

## **7. To receive updates from Portfolio Holders**

**7.1 Neighbourhood Plan - update** - no update to report.

District Cllr. Gerald Morris suggested that it would be worth contacting Louise St John Howe to invite her to attend the October Parish Council Meeting and discuss the matter of site BK3 in the NHDC Local Plan. She was the Independent Programme Officer appointed to assist the Inspector with all the aspects of the independent examination of the NHDC Local Plan. **Action: Clerk**

### **7.2 Planning**

**7.2.1 Report from NHDC Planning Committee Meeting - Thursday 20th July** - Cllr. Swann had addressed the Planning Committee objecting to the planning application for 25 houses on land north of Mill Croft. Dist. Cllr. Morris had also spoken against the application. The Planning Committee unanimously refused the application. It was considered that the development would have blighted an open area of natural beauty being on the edge of the Chiltern Ridge and on the East Anglian Heights.

**7.2.2 Listed Building Application - Former RAF Barkway Site and Mast - Update** - Cllr. Davidson reported that unfortunately the application had been rejected. It was refused for the following reasons: Nothing remained on the site from the second world war period, alterations more recently had removed all equipment and fixtures and fittings, leaving empty buildings and the buildings had no architectural interest.

Some members of the public arrived in the meeting at 7.45pm. A typing error on the Agenda had stated that the meeting started at 8pm. The Clerk apologised to the members of the public and the Chair proposed and it was agreed by all that the public session should now take place. Standing Orders were suspended.

**5. Public Session - to receive representations from members of the public** - Residents from numbers 2, 4, 6 and 10 Townsend Close were present to address the Council regarding their concerns about the planning application for a 3 bed dwelling in the Orchard of Townsend House. Their properties backed onto the land owned by the applicants and numbers 2 and 4 backed directly onto the proposed development site. They felt that the impact that the proposed development would have on some of the residents of Townsend Close had not been given sufficient consideration. They queried why the Parish Council had been to visit the Macpherson's at Townsend House but not bothered to knock on any of the doors of houses in Townsend Close to see how the development could affect them from their side. Their concerns were loss of privacy and

view from numbers 2, 4 and 6, plus the negative impact of noise and light pollution. The negative impact the development would have on surrounding wildlife and the fact that the new build would necessitate removal of some mature trees. They failed to understand why the applicants no longer wanted to build a bungalow in the garden of Townsend House, for which they already had planning permission since 2015, as this would have been far less intrusive to residents in Townsend Close. A single storey building application on the Orchard site would have been better received as it would have had less visual impact on neighbouring properties. There was concern (particularly by the resident of number 2) that the access road to the new property would be built taking a route all around the outside edge of his garden boundary, which would have a negative impact on their privacy and peace. The residents were also concerned that the new build would have a detrimental effect on the value of their properties. They felt that the proposed access onto Townsend Close was hazardous, being on a bend with poor sight lines and close to other driveways. It was queried why the existing access from Townsend House into the Close could not be used, particularly as Townsend House currently had two access points, the other being onto the High Street. They were concerned also that by allowing this property to be built in the Orchard of Townsend House it would set a precedent to allow further development at a later date. It was also highlighted by the residents that the site fell outside the settlement boundary shown in the NHDC New Local Plan Consultation document. The site was marked as Site 20 and classified as a Priority 3 Site (least likely to be acceptable for development).

The Chair thanked the residents for attending to speak to the Council. She proposed to bring forward item 7.2.3 on the agenda in order that the residents could listen to the Council's discussion and decision regarding the planning application. All agreed. Standing Orders were resumed.

**7.2.3 To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Planning Permission: Erection of one part two storey and part single storey 3 bed dwelling including carport together with turning and parking areas.**

**109 High Street, Barkway, Royston, SG8 8ED - Case ref No: 17/01586/1**

The applicants had submitted a letter to the Council to clarify some of the issues about which the residents had concerns. This was read out by the Clerk. It explained that the driveway would be tarmac with compressed gravel and would be excavated so that vehicles would not be visible above the fences. The dwelling itself would be excavated to a metre down so that the bulk of the building would not be visible from nearby properties. Only trees in the small area of where the house would be built would be removed. With regards the positioning of the proposed house, they had followed advice from North Herts Planning Office. The planning application was discussed at length. Whilst the Parish Council was sympathetic to the concerns of the residents of Townsend Close, the concerns raised were largely not valid reasons for refusing a planning application. It was proposed by Cllr. Falaschi-Ray, seconded by Cllr. Davidson and agreed by a majority that there was no objection to the planning application, however in the response to NHDC it would list the points raised by the residents as addition comments. **Action: Clerk**

### **7.3 Highways**

**7.3.1 Highways report** - Cllr. Swann reported that Windmill Close was due to have some resurfacing work done commencing 1st September. He planned to ask residents to move their cars for the day. Complaints had been received from residents about the lack of parking in Windmill Close. It was reported that Gary Henning at Herts County Council Highways was looking into ownership of the grass in front of the

footpath to see if there was potential there for creating addition parking. Cllr. Fiona Hill said that her Highways Locality Budget may be able to provide some funding for this project. It was noted that Church Lane would be shut between 30th and 31st August for resurfacing work.

**7.3.2 Update on investigations regarding obtaining a weight restriction for the High Street** - Cllr. Swann reported that he had emailed Herts County Council but was still awaiting a response. County Cllr. Hill explained that a weight restriction would not stop all heavy vehicles coming through the village. Farm vehicles and quarry lorries would still be allowed through for access. The weight limit would apply for non local through traffic. How this would be enforced was not certain, apart from requesting the Police to undertake spot checks on vehicles. Cllr. Hill indicated that she would support funding from her Locality Budget to conduct a study to look into the feasibility of introducing a weight restriction. It was estimated that the cost of this would be £2,000 - £3,000. She agreed to look into this and report back and the Parish Council would then need to manage the expectations of the village once the finer detail was known. Cllr. Swann informed the Council that he had now applied for the road closure for Remembrance Sunday.

Cllr. Tony Hunter arrived in the meeting at 8.25pm

**7.3.3 Update on land behind Windmill Close** - Cllr. Swann reported that NHDC now plan to place the section of land as an Open Space and Windmill Close resident Emma Bransom will now have to give permission for the withdrawal of their Open Space application. It was noted that this case had been ongoing now for the last 4 years.

#### **7.4 Sports and Recreation**

**7.4.1 Pitch maintenance update and consider quotations received for an annual maintenance contract** - nothing to report.

**7.4.2 Update on recruitment of new Groundsman and to ratify decision to employ proposed applicant** - The Clerk reported that due to the fact that Sam Methven's notice period ran out on 7th August, a decision had been made by Cllr. Morss and the Clerk to employ (on an initial 3 month probationary period) applicant Jacob Kingston as a replacement Groundsman. This was duly approved by the Council. It was reported that Sam had been most co-operative and had agreed to stay on a little longer in order to work alongside Jacob and train him. The Clerk would sort out all the administration and would liaise with all parties to get Jacob started in the job as soon as he returned from holiday.

**Action: Clerk/BM**

**7.4.3 Play area maintenance update** - It was reported that the big swing seats had now been reinstated by the Dodkins with new connecting links. There were a couple of other maintenance jobs identified recently, including re-fixing the wooden half rounds on the ramp on the fort and re-fixing two of the seats on the small children's picnic table. The Dodkins had been asked to do this. Cllr. Davidson urged caution regarding the condition of the D rings. These had been inspected when they had been taken down to replace the links and it had been considered that there was still plenty of wear left in them. It was hoped to replace the swings entirely in the near future. Cllr. Hill indicated that funding from her Locality Budget may be able to assist with the cost. The Clerk to do some research and report back to the Council. **Action: Clerk**

**7.4.4 Youth Football Development update** - There was nothing to report other than that Dave Winkworth was supposed to be contacting Cllr. Morss.

**7.4.5 Report from meeting of the Working Party (18th July) to resolve car parking issue for users of the Recreation Ground** (see Appendix A). Cllr. Swann reported that a new draft proposal was currently being looked at by the Working Party, to create a large car park directly in front of the Pavilion. This idea was discussed briefly by the Council. Cllr Davidson expressed his concern that it would have a negative impact on the attractive outlook and direct access to the play area from the Community Room and could discourage hirers and therefore the future viability of the Pavilion. Cllr. Swann said it was only a proposal at the moment and more research was being undertaken and the date of the next meeting of the Working Party had been set for 12th September. This would be reported on at the October Parish Council Meeting. **Action: Clerk/BM/GS**

**7.4.6 To discuss and agree proposal to purchase a new line marking machine**  
- nothing to report.

## **7.5 Community Property**

**7.5.1 War Memorial renovation project update** - The Clerk reported that the contractors, Universal Stone, had come along recently to double check measurements and hoped to start work within a couple of weeks. The Clerk now needed to deal with the required publicity, in accordance with the conditions of the grant awarded from the War Memorials Trust. Cllr. O'Sullivan asked if a re-dedication ceremony could be performed at the War Memorial once the renovation works were complete. This was considered to be a very good idea. The Clerk would look into this and report back. **Action: Clerk**

**7.5.2 To consider quotations received for curtaining for Community Room and agree to purchase and agree amount of Parish Council contribution** - The Clerk reported that she had obtained two quotations: Direct Fabrics: £1,254.45 excl. VAT and Curtains Direct: £1,286.95 excl. VAT. She had emailed the members of the fundraising committee to ask if they would approve a spend of £800.00 from their fund raising account balance which stood at £1,028.06. She had received 3 emails supporting the proposal. The remaining money would have to be taken from Parish Council funds. It was proposed to go ahead with the Direct Fabrics quotation of £1,254.45 + VAT. The remaining £454.45 could be taken from the Pavilion repairs and maintenance budget or allocated against the contingency budget for the Recreation Ground. This received full approval from the Council. The Clerk would now proceed and place the order. **Action: Clerk**

**7.6 Environment - update** - Cllr. Frapporti informed the Council that due to higher than average rainfall in recent weeks the water level in the pond was now back to normal again. He would check the Wagon Wash. Cllr. Falaschi-Ray volunteered to cut back the excess foliage around the Wagon Wash as it was beginning to look very overgrown. **Action: GF/SFR**

District Councillor Gerald Morris asked the Council if it could consider doing anything to try and eliminate some of the street clutter as he felt the village was beginning to look untidy in places. It was agreed that there were too many signs and in addition, placing of temporary notices by people who then failed to remove them. It was proposed and agreed to take down the 'Battle for Barkway' signs and store them for the time being. The Council agreed to give some thought to removing other excess signage. **Action: All**

## **7.7 Media and Communications**

**7.7.1 Police Report** - there was no report.

**7.7.2 Website and communication update** - Cllr. Falaschi-Ray and Cllr. Morss had met with new resident Kristian Melson to discuss with him the possibility of taking over the webmaster's role from Gordon Baker. Although Gordon had indicated that he did not want to go on managing the website indefinitely, he had been upset to hear that a meeting had taken place without his prior knowledge. Cllr. Falaschi-Ray had been to apologise and explain that they had been initial talks and that the Council still very much

needed Gordon's advice and judgement and that the process would need to be a gradual one.

**7.8 Special Projects - Reading Room update** - Cllr Falaschi-Ray had contacted an estate agent who was of the opinion that the Council now needed the advice of a proper surveyor to give a rental valuation on the Reading Room. It was thought that maybe Nicholas Tufton would be able to offer a sound opinion. Cllr. O'Sullivan said that he had given the matter of the terms of a rental agreement a lot of thought and would circulate this in an email for consideration. **Action: RO**

## **8. Finance - to receive finance reports from the Clerk**

**8.1 Report from quarterly meeting of the Finance Committee on 17th July** (see Appendix B)

### **8.2 To provide update on current financial position**

#### **Parish Council Account:**

The Parish Council bank balance at 14.08.2017 was £77,486.73

#### **Receipts since the last meeting:**

£50.00 - Buntingford FC - Hire of Football Pitch

£60.00 - Pavilion Fundraising A/C - to repay Parish Council re: advert in Diary

£1,469.25 - Royston Town FC - Quarterly Football Contribution

£42.00 - Coomes - Hire of Community Room

£48.00 - Stacey - Hire of Community Room

£50.00 - Stacey - 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

DD x 2 £15.68 - Castle Water - Direct Debits Waste Water Pavilion

DD £120.12 - NHDC - Quarterly Charge for Waste Collection

#### **Approval of payments to be made at meeting:**

CHQ 102504 £500.00 - Barkway PCC - Grant for Churchyard Maintenance

CHQ 102505 £200.00 - Barkway Chapel - Grant for Churchyard Maintenance

CHQ 102506 £50.00 - CPRE Hertfordshire - Planning Training - Cllr. Falaschi-Ray

CHQ 102507 £17.00 - NALC - Annual Subscription for Publications

CHQ 102508 £36.61 - Fenland Leisure Products Ltd - Parts for Swings

CHQ 102509 £1,218.02 - Historic England - Fast Track Listing Application

CHQ 102510 £70.68 - Jewson Ltd - Pitch Maintenance

CHQ 102511 £78.11 - Stationery Cupboard - Ink Cartridges

CHQ 102512 £12.60 - Graham Swann - Return mileage to NHDC

CHQ 102513 £12.60 - Sonia Falaschi-Ray - Return mileage to NHDC

CHQ 102514 £905.00 - Catharine Toms – Clerk's Monthly Salary + Office Allowance

CHQ 102515 £116.25 - Sam Methven - Groundsman July

CHQ 102516 £60.00 - Claire Methven - Litter Picking July

CHQ 102517 £77.90 - Janine Reay - Pavilion Bookings Clerk + Cleaning July

CHQ 102518 £162.77 - Catharine Toms - Clerk's Expenses \*

\* £4.50 - Sainsburys - 1st Aid supplies for Pavilion

£1.10 - Post Office - Signed for postage to BDO auditors

£129.46 - 123-Reg - Web Hosting Renewal - 1 Year

£20.99 - Amazon - Voice Recorder

£6.72 - Barley Stores - Book 2nd class stamps

**Parish Council - Pavilion Account:**

Bank Balance at 14.08.17 was £1,028.06

Receipts since the last meeting: None

Payments since the last meeting: None

**Reading Room Accounts:**

Bank Balance at 14.08.17 was £1,598.00

Receipts since the last meeting: None

Payments since the last meeting:

DD £38.00 - NHDC - Rate

**9. Correspondence** - An email had been received regarding an extension to 22nd Sept on the NHDC review of byelaws consultation. Cllr. Tony Hunter informed the Council that this consultation looked at taking out obsolete old byelaws.

**10. Date of next meeting:** Monday 11th September

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.02pm