

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held in the Reading Room, Barkway on 14th November 2016 at 7.30pm.**

- 1. In attendance:** Cllrs:
Rev'd S Falaschi-Ray (Chair)
Dr G Frapporti (Vice Chair)
Dr R Davidson
Mr B Morss
Mr G Swann

Also present: Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO)

Others present: Mr A Spriggs, Mrs G Talbot, Mr S Anderton.

2. To receive and accept apologies for absence: Dist Cllr. Gerald Morris.

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

4. Minutes

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

4.2 To consider any matters arising from the last meeting: The Clerk reported that at the last Parish Council meeting Ms. Olivia Erby had advised the Council in the public session that she understood that some of the S106 monies arising out of the proposed development of 13 houses on site BK1 in Barkway was to be directed towards the Bancroft Youth Centre in Hitchin. Having researched this matter, the Clerk reported that this information seems to have arisen out of a request from a Ms J Nixon of Hertfordshire Property in her response to the NHDC consultation on site BK1. The Clerk would follow this matter up with NHDC and report back to the Parish Council. **Action: Clerk**

5. Public Session: Mr Spriggs, Mrs Talbot and Mr Anderton, residents of Ash Mill, were present to explain to the Council that they wished to object to the planning application for 3 x 2 bed terrace dwellings with associated access on land adjacent to Ash Mill. Mr Spriggs explained that there seemed to be no difference in this current application, apart from an odour report commissioned by the applicant, to the previous application in 2015. It was noted that the previous application had been withdrawn by the applicant before the close of the consultation period, following a strong recommendation from the Environmental Health Agency to NHDC that the proposed residential application should be refused. Mr Spriggs informed the Council that since that time the residents had commissioned an independent Land Ownership Investigation Report which had confirmed that there was no registered owner of Ash Mill and that only the four houses on the lane had right to access and the right to give access to others. The residents would be submitting, along with their individual letters of objection, a joint signed letter stating that they would not be allowing access along Ash Mill for the purpose of the development.

It was proposed by Cllr. Falaschi-Ray and seconded by Cllr. Davidson and agreed by all to bring forward item 7.1.2 on the Agenda.

Following some discussion it was proposed by Cllr. Falaschi-Ray and seconded by Cllr. Davidson and agreed by all, for the Parish Council to place an objection to this application using the same grounds as before:

- 1) Environment Health and proximity to the Poultry Farm, reminding NHDC that the Environmental Health Agency had strongly recommended refusal to the previous application.
- 2) The nature of Ash Mill. The lane being narrow, un-adopted and having no turning circle. There being limited visibility and therefore hazardous access onto the B1368.
- 3) Extra traffic movements due to the additional houses on an unsuitable, narrow and unmade up lane.
- 4) Access to emergency vehicles. Ash Mill fails the requirements laid down by Herts Direct Fire Safety Dept.
- 5) Right of way over Ash Mill. It would be pointed out to NHDC that residents had now established that only they had right of way on the lane and that they would not be allowing access for the purpose of the development.

In addition to the above points, the Parish Council would point out to NHDC that since 2015, nothing had changed with regard to the operation of the Poultry Farm and that Environmental Health Agency (**who were an independent body**) had at that point issued a report strongly recommending refusal of the planning application.

The Clerk to write to the Planning Dept. at NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

The members of the public then departed from the meeting.

6. Council Administration - update on Parish Councillor recruitment to fill vacancies - Cllr. Swann passed on apologies from Mr Mark Anderson who had said that he would try and get to the next Parish Council meeting. Cllr. Davidson informed the Council that there was one other person who may be interested in joining the Parish Council, Cllr. Morss agreed to contact him to discuss the matter further. **Action: BM**

7. To receive updates from Portfolio Holders

7.1 Planning

7.1.1 NHDC Local Plan Consultation update - Cllr. Falaschi-Ray reported that she had been in contact with an independent Traffic Consultant who was conducting a traffic report as it was agreed that 'Sustainability' was the key angle with which to object to the Local Plan. It was hoped to get the finalised traffic report by the end of the week. She agreed to talk to others to see if there were any other key points that could be used. It was noted that a Speed Indicator Display (SID) sign was about to be installed on Royston Road, this would prove in due course that there were too many vehicles going too fast along that stretch of road, which would only get far worse with the proposed new development. It was agreed that Cllr. Falaschi-Ray, Davidson and Swann would meet in the Reading Room on Wednesday 16th Nov. to draft a response to NHDC. It was agreed that it should be in the form of a letter rather than being submitted via the NHDC website, as local internet was unreliable and poor connection made the process difficult. Cllr. Swann reminded everyone that he was organising an Open Session at the Pavilion on Sunday 11am - 2pm where residents were invited to drop in and view displays showing information on the NHDC Local Plan and would be able to receive help in responding to the NHDC consultation if they wished. It was agreed that copies of the National Planning Policy Framework would be made available. **Action: GS/Clerk**

7.1.2 To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Planning Permission : Erection of 3 x 2 bed terrace dwellings with associated access, parking and landscaping

Land Adjacent to Ash Mill, High Street, Barkway, Royston - Case Ref No: 16/02588/1 - (see item 5 - public session)

7.2 Highways - update - Cllr. Swann reported that he had been in contact with Highways regarding the poor resurfacing work completed by contractors along Burrs Lane following installation of services to the new Highfield Grove development. Highways had sent out their inspectors and they had agreed that the work had not been carried out to the correct standard and would contact the contractors and check that they had previously obtained the appropriate permission to carry out work (otherwise they could be fined) and request that the work to the surface in Burrs Lane was redone properly.

Cllr. Swann understood that Windmill Close would be resurfaced in 2017 and would check on likely dates. **Action: GS**

It had also been learnt that a Tree Preservation Order had been placed by NHDC on an Ash tree on the corner of development site BK1.

7.3 Sports and Recreation

7.3.1 Recreation update - Cllr. Morss reported that the Zip Wire had been put out of action following advance notification from the Playground Inspector, via Neil Fairey at NHDC, that he had found severe rot in the timbers and he had requested that the item be put out of use until repaired. The Clerk was requested to chase for the actual written report in order that it could be established exactly what needed to be done.

Action: Clerk

It was reported that the football was all going well and that Sam Methven was continuing to do a good job.

Cllr. Davidson reminded the Cllr. Morss that data needed to be collected for the returns required by the Football Association. He reported that at the last meeting of the BRGMC, Angela Baulk had advised that she was resigning as Joint Chair for Royston Town Youth Football Club. The new contact for information would be Frankie Westerby.

7.3.2 Bonfire Night Saturday 5th November - It was reported that the event had been well attended. Due to a drop in wind conditions, a member of the fireworks team took the decision to start the firework display half an hour earlier than advertised, which was a huge disappointment for those people that turned up just before 7pm. An apology was later placed online. It was agreed that in future the display would start at the agreed set time. It was suggested that next year the bonfire site remained where it was but that the fireworks were set off from an area at the bottom of the Rec. and instead of digging holes in the grass, sandbags and wheelbarrows could be used to position the fireworks. Cllr. Davidson reported that unfortunately help was a little thin on the ground this year with only two people turning up to help build the bonfire. Cllr. Davidson had stepped in to help set off the fireworks as Graham Aldridge had damaged his ankle. Cllr. Davidson informed the Council that he was not wanting to do the fireworks display again next year. Thanks were given to the fireworks team, Cllr. Davidson, Cllr. Swann, Chris Cooper and Sam Methven and also to Craig Garner who had supplied the pallets for the bonfire and thanks also to all the stewards. The bucket collection had raised £435.91 towards the cost of the fireworks. The BRGMC had raised £48.50 from the sale of glow sticks, which would be placed in their fund raising account.

7.4 Community Property

7.4.1 Barkway Recreation Ground Management Committee (BRGMC) - Cllr. Davidson put forward the opinion that he wondered whether the BRGMC in its current form was worth continuing. Quarterly meetings had proven difficult to arrange and often had poor attendance. He thought that contact could be maintained by a weekly phone call and that fund raisers could be co-opted. It was proposed and agreed to give this some thought and it would be on the Agenda for the December meeting. **Action : RD/Clerk**

7.4.1.1 Report from quarterly meeting of BRGMC on 26th October (see appendix A)

7.4.1.2 Pavilion Maintenance - Cllr. Davidson reported that there had been a problem with blocked drains. The Dodkins had investigated and found builders' rubble in the drains. This had now been cleared and all was working again. The Dodkins were of the opinion that the drain inspection chamber covers needed attention to make them secure and less likely to be damaged or tampered with. The Clerk to ask them to carry out this work. **Action: Clerk**

A new neighbour to the Recreation Ground, Glen, had kindly volunteered to sort out the railing on the veranda of the Pavilion as it was falling apart.

7.4.1.3 Proposal to create additional car parking on the Rec. It was reported that a letter had been received from Tom Wornham saying that the Village Hall was disappointed not to have seen any progress or had any indication of likely timetable for carrying out the necessary work to create additional car parking for users of the Recreation Ground. Cllr. Davidson pointed out that it was not illegal for cars to park on the road, although it was dangerous when they were parked up on the pavement. He reported that a quotation had now been received from Joe Poulton for £3,500 to move and re-site various items of play equipment and to put in some post and rail fencing and move the gate, creating an area for parking. In addition to this work, Cllr. Davidson thought that plastic matting could be pinned down in the area, providing a firmer surface but still allowing the grass to grow through for a price of about £2,600. It was agreed that two further quotations were needed for the project before a decision could be made. It was also noted that the Clerk had requested a statement of S106 monies available to Barkway from NHDC as there was a possibility that this fund may be available to help with the cost of the new car park rather than money coming from the Solar Farm Community Contribution Fund. So far, no response had been received from NHDC. The Clerk to chase up on this matter. **Action: Clerk**

The Clerk was asked to write to Tom Wornham giving him an update on the situation and to reassure him that the matter was still in hand. **Action: Clerk**

7.4.2 Update on renovation of the Telephone Box - It was reported that Tony Terry and Andy McPherson were still working on the project but it looked to be nearly finished now. It was agreed that once finished the box should be locked until it was decided on what its future use might be.

7.4.3 Update on future use of the Reading Room - It was proposed and agreed to postpone this matter until a future meeting. The Clerk agreed to check out the paperwork on grants previously awarded to the Reading Room to check if there were any restrictions associated with these and to report back on this at the December meeting. **Action: Clerk**

7.4.4 Update on grant application status for renovation of the War Memorial - The Clerk reported that a member of the War Memorials Trust had conducted a site visit on 5th October. Since then they had submitted a suggested specification of works in order to move things forward with the grant application. The first thing to do would be to steam clean the WW2 plinth. This would enable them to assess the legibility of the lettering and decide on what conservation method would be most appropriate. Two directly comparable quotations would be needed for all aspects of the work required for the whole of the War Memorial. **Action: Clerk/RD**

7.5 Environment - update - Cllr. Frapporti informed the Council that water levels were generally low and that these would be monitored. **Action GF**

The condition of the Byroad (RUPP 2) and Bridleway 5 across Tom Duke's land was not good with deep ruts having been left by vehicles used during recent shoots. A letter to be written to Tom Duke to ask if these could be filled in. **Action: Clerk**

It was mentioned that it was thought that some footpaths were being used by horse riders. Footpath 14 had evidence of horse droppings 2/3 of the way down and damage was being done to the new surface with the horse hooves. The Clerk to monitor this and report back. **Action: Clerk.** Cllr. Morss thought that horses were also using footpath 11. He would monitor the situation and report back. **Action: BM**

7.6 Media and Communications

7.6.1 Police Report - PCSO Chris Brabrook was unable to provide a report for the meeting. However, the latest Rural Watch newsletter had not reported any recent crimes in Barkway. It was understood though that a resident of Barkway was currently being interviewed by Police in relation to some recent fly-tipping. The Clerk reported that Gordon Baker had asked if the Council would offer their support to the Police for local crime prevention by putting out a message via the email database to residents to inform them about crime prevention advice and services that were available to them from the Police. This was duly approved. **Action: Clerk**

7.6.2 Website update - Gordon Baker reported that he was happy to continue offering his support with the website and communication whilst the Council was still seeking new Councillors. It was reported that the website had been getting loads of hits recently. However, his opinion was that the website had become cluttered and looked stagnant. He had spent time looking at new designs and layouts. Once he had come up with a new proposal he would circulate this for an opinion, this was likely to be early next year. He reported that he would also be happy to design and produce an edition of the Bulletin before Christmas as long as he received the articles in good time. The Budget and Precept edition would then need to be produced in January.

It was agreed that all Councillors and the Clerk would urgently come up with articles to be passed over to Gordon for the Christmas edition of the Bulletin. **Action: All**

The Council wished to pass on their grateful thanks and appreciation to Gordon for all his support and hard work.

7.7 Special Projects - 'Smarten Barkway' - Update - it was proposed and agreed that this project should be put on hold temporarily as so much attention was needed on current planning matters.

8. Finance - to receive finance reports from the Clerk

8.1 To provide report from meeting of the Finance Committee on 7th November (see appendix B)

8.2 To provide update on current financial position

Parish Council Account:

The Parish Council bank balance at 14.11.2016 was £70,840.30

Receipts since the last meeting:

£200.00 - Barkway Vets - Hire of Football Pitches

£1,469.25 - RTFC - Football Contribution

£435.91 - Proceeds from Bucket Collection at Bonfire Night

8.3 To authorise payments:

Approval of payments since last meeting:

DD £117.65 - NHDC - Quarterly Waste Collection from Pavilion

DD £51.00 - EDF - Direct Debit Electricity Pavilion

DD £13.00 - Affinity Water - Direct Debit Water Pavilion

CHQ 102394 £25.00 - A Terry - Paint for Phone Box

CHQ 102395 £638.34 - R Davidson Expenses - Fireworks £600.00 + Pavilion bench repairs £2.50 + Cllr. expenses of mileage, printing and telephone calls £35.84

CHQ 102396 £18.50 - The Royal British Legion - Wreath for Remembrance Day

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

CHQ 102397 £280.00 - Tim Drake - Grass Cutting Rec. x 4
CHQ 102398 £114.00 - Zurich Management Services Ltd - LCAS Annual Subscription
CHQ 102399 £67.18 - Jewson Ltd - Pitch Maintenance.
CHQ 102400 £48.00 - R Davidson Expenses - Steam Cleaner for maintenance of War Memorial.
CHQ 102401 £911.84 - Catharine Toms – Clerk’s Monthly Salary + Office Allowance
CHQ 102402 £60.00 - Claire Methven - Litter Picking October
CHQ 102403 £292.50 - Sam Methven - Groundsman October
CHQ 102404 £60.00 - Janine Reay - Pavilion Bookings Clerk + Cleaning October
CHQ 102405 £66.47 - Catharine Toms - Clerk's Expenses*
CHQ 102406 £250.00 - Royston Town Football Club - 2nd out of 4 annual payments agreed for goalposts.

*

£13.20 Post Office - Stamps
£5.07 Amazon - High Viz Tape for Bonfire Night
£7.00 Tesco - Tea Towels and Teaspoons for Pavilion
£6.00 Tesco - Thank you Gift for Bonfire Night helper
£35.20 Tesco - Thank you gifts for Bonfire Night helpers

Parish Council - Pavilion Account:

Bank Balance at 14.11.16 was £1,088.06
Receipts since the last meeting:
£48.50 proceeds from sale of glow sticks on Bonfire Night
Payments since the last meeting:
CHQ 100122 - £60.00 - The Diary - 6 months advertising for hire of Community Room

Reading Room Accounts:

Bank Balance at 14.11.16 was £891.76
Receipts since the last meeting:
£26.74 EDF Electricity refund. (Now changed to new supplier Total Energy)
Payments since the last meeting:
D/D £43.00 - NHDC - Rates

9. Correspondence

1. Tom Wornham Barkway Village Hall - Re: car parking. (see item 7.4.1.3)
2. NHDC - Notification that the Precept requirement for 2017/18 must be submitted by 20th January 2017. **Action: Finance Committee/Clerk**
3. HCC - evaluation request for Locality Grant received of £500 for legal fees. The Clerk responded to advise them that the project for securing the Open Space behind Windmill Close was still ongoing but it was hoped to be concluded shortly when an evaluation would be submitted to HCC. **Action: Clerk**

10. Date of next meeting: Monday 12th December 2016 in the Reading Room.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.15pm