

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held in the Reading Room, Barkway on 18th December 2017 at 7.30pm.**

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

Also present: Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO)

Members of the Public: Mrs Jackie Connolly, Mr Bill Dennis, Dist. Cllr. Gerald Morris

2. To receive and accept apologies for absence: 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 - Cllr. Davidson reported that further to clarification received from NHDC regarding one of the planning applications for High Peak (17/02701/1HH), a response from the Parish Council had since been submitted to the Planning Case Officer. The Parish Council could find no material planning consideration that could cause it to object to the application, therefore there was no objection.

Cllr. Davidson also mentioned that an email had been received from Roy Rowe, a resident of Barkway and also the architect involved in the several current planning applications for High Peak, expressing concern that he considered that the Parish Council was not being consistent with responses to planning applications. Cllr. Davidson had responded saying that each planning application was considered impartially, looking at adherence to planning conditions and regulations and ensuring that each application was considered on its individual merits. In some cases the Planning Officer at NHDC would be contacted to clarify any information, especially if the applicants had not consulted with the Parish Council beforehand. The Parish Council considered that it had built a good relationship with the Planning Officers at NHDC and that it was beneficial to the Council in that it had helped defeat several planning applications in the past that may have gone ahead without it. However that did not mean that the Parish Council always agreed with the views of the Planning Officers. The Parish Council always listened to the views of residents and even if their objections were not material planning considerations that could be used by the Parish Council, these were recorded in the response and passed on to NHDC and residents were encouraged to make their views known individually to NHDC.

5. Public Session - to receive representations from members of the public - Mrs Jackie Connolly was present to put herself forward for possible co-option onto the Parish Council. She explained that it was a role that she had been considering for some time and although she did not have a lot of spare time, having consulted with the Clerk, she felt that she may be able to add value as a member of the Parish Council. (see item 6)

Mr Bill Dennis was present to address the Council regarding item 7.1. It was proposed and agreed that Standing Orders could be suspended at that point to allow Mr Dennis to speak.

6. Council Administration - to discuss and decide on co-option of new Councillors -

It was proposed by Cllr. Swann, seconded by Cllr. Davidson and agreed by all to co-opt Mrs Jackie Connolly onto the Parish Council. She was warmly welcomed on to the Parish Council and asked to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office in order that she could participate in the rest of the meeting. This was duly done and witnessed by the Clerk. It was considered that a suitable Portfolio for Cllr. Connolly would be that of Special Projects. There was a possible project in mind, to install a defibrillator into the old BT phone box on the High Street. This would be an item on the Agenda for the January meeting. **Action: Clerk**

7. To receive updates from Portfolio Holders

7.1 NHDC Local Plan Hearing - update - Dist. Cllr. Morris asked permission from the Chair to speak - he reported that he had attended some sessions of the hearing just to understand the process and how it worked. The opportunity for Barkway to make a representation was still scheduled for the 8th February and there was still an opportunity to submit additional information to the Inspector since the initial consultation. There was still the question as to whether the site BK3 ever went through the required public consultation process. Some investigation works would be carried out, looking through previous consultation documents. Cllr. Morris proposed an informal meeting at his house on Monday 29th January to gather together this critical information.

Standing Orders were then suspended to allow Mr Bill Dennis to address the meeting. He was present to let the Council know that he had been doing much researching and reading through the NHDC Local Plan information. He said that he had learnt that the Council had a very determined land owner to battle with in regards to development on site BK3. He emphasised that he was still happy to help the Parish Council in any way he could with the Local Plan objection and the forthcoming hearing with the Inspector. Cllr. Swann agreed to meet up with Mr Dennis in early January. **Action: GS**

Standing Orders were then resumed.

7.2 Planning - To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Permission Householder: Two storey detached habitable outbuilding (annexe) Greenways, Bucklnad Road, Barkway, Royston, SG8 8HA - Case Ref

No: 17/04169/FPH - It was understood that this application had since been withdrawn by the applicant, although it had not been notified as such by NHDC. After some discussion it was agreed that an extension should be requested on time allowed for the Parish Council to make comment should the application still be being processed. If not, then there was no need to comment on the application. **Action: Clerk**

Dist. Cllr. Morris asked the Chair if he could address the Council regarding some other planning issues that had been brought to his attention by residents. This was granted.

He reported that residents were expressing concern that the new houses being built on the former Tally Ho garden were higher than permission granted. Cllr. Davidson said that he had already checked out the plans and would contact Richard Tiffin at NHDC to request a site visit as the building seemed very high compared with nearby buildings. **Action: RD** Other concerns received from residents were regarding a native hedge that had been removed along the eastern boundary of the Tally Ho pub. The Clerk was requested to contact Sworders, who were the land agents for Thomas Keir and owner of the adjoining field, to find out who owned the hedgerow. **Action: Clerk**

Complaints had also been received about the unauthorised entrance onto the highway from a temporary car parking area/garden at the northern end of the Tally Ho. Cllr. Morris did not think that the Planning Dept at NHDC would be that interested but Herts County Council (HCC) Highways might be. Cllr. Davidson agreed to check with NHDC and HCC. **Action: RD**

7.3 Highways

7.3.1 Highways report - Cllr. Swann said that there was not much to report. However, he wished to thank Mike Baddeley for his help to clear a fallen tree branch from the road following the recent heavy snow fall. Cllr. Davidson said that he had reported that matter to North Herts Homes who owned the land where the tree was situated and they had since confirmed that they had sent out a HCC Arborist who was now dealing with the matter to make the tree safe.

7.3.2 Update on investigations regarding obtaining a weight restriction for the High Street - Mrs Elena Sapsford was still looking to conduct a household survey to establish the effects of the HGV traffic along the High Street and B1368 on residents and their properties. She would be considering issues such as mental health, sleep deprivation and vibration to properties. After some discussion it was considered that to give further weight to this survey and subsequent petition to be sent to Sir Oliver Heald, contact could be made with Barley and Great Hormead & Hare Street Parish Councils to find out if they wished to conduct a similar survey. The Clerk to provide Mrs Sapsford with the contact details. **Action: Clerk**

7.3.3 Update on land behind Windmill Close - Cllr. Swann reported that David Charlton at NHDC had contacted him to say that following formalisation of the lease to the Parish Council of the revised Village Green land he had appointed some Commercial Property Agents to market the remaining land in the Spring or Summer of 2018. He had noted during a recent site visit that there was a fair bit of undergrowth clearance that needed to be done. He would arrange to have this carried out, including on the side of the Parish Council boundary line also if wished. Once that work was completed, he would request for the site boundary between District and Parish's land to be marked out. Cllr. Swann had responded to him that it would be fine to remove the brambles along the boundary but would prefer not to have any solid fencing erected until the building plot was sold. In the meantime, a post and rail fence would be acceptable. He also asked if the clearance contractors could move an accumulated pile of grass cuttings if they were moved into the area to be cleared. Mr Charlton informed Cllr. Swann that the lease of the Village Green land had not yet been registered. Cllr. Swann confirmed that Railton Law had applied for the land to be registered on 28th November.

Other Highways matters -

The Clerk informed the Council that a resident, Peter Bassett who lived along the High Street had volunteered to grit a portion of the pavements since the recent snow and ice, to make it safer for residents. He asked if the Parish Council could provide some grit. Dist. Cllr. Morris informed the Council that he still had quite a stock from previous years stored at his home. The Clerk to contact Peter Bassett to let him know. **Action: Clerk**
Cllr. Davidson enquired whether a grit bin could be placed next to the bus stop on the corner of Periwinkle Close and Royston Road. It was thought NHH permission might be needed as it was their land. Cllr. Swann agreed to contact County Cllr. Fiona Hill to see if this could be funded from her Locality Budget. Cllr. Frapporti to check on grit level in the grit bin located by the school. **Action: GS/GF**

Dist. Cllr. Morris asked to be excused and departed from the meeting at 8.45pm.

He was thanked for attending.

7.4 Sports and Recreation

7.4.1 Pitch maintenance and football update - Cllr. Morss said there was not much to report. Unfortunately, Jacob the new Groundsman had disappeared and was not attending to his duties or responding to any messages. So far his employment had not been terminated but a meeting needed to take place to sort out matters. In the meantime Cllr. Morss wished to thank the cleaner and bookings clerk, Janine Reay, for covering some extra duties. As the line marking had now been successfully sub-contracted out to Tim Drake, it was suggested and agreed to contact Mr Bob Bonfield to see if he might be interested in taking on a caretaking role at the Pavilion. Cllr. Morss and the Clerk to arrange to meet Mr Bonfield. **Action: BM/Clerk**

7.4.2 Playground maintenance update - The Clerk reported that the Dodkins had replaced the rungs on the ramp up to the fort, fitted pigeon spikes above all the swings and now fixed into position the new additional litter bin in the south west corner of the Recreation Ground. The annual Playground Inspection report had still not been received. The Clerk to chase this up. **Action: Clerk**

7.5 Community Property

7.5.1 War Memorial renovation project update - The Clerk reported that she still had to complete some admin to apply for the grant payment. **Action: Clerk**

7.5.2 Pavilion maintenance update - It was reported that the decking in front of the pavilion had become very slippery. It was proposed and agreed to ask the Dodkins to try and remove the build up of algae from the surface and fit some chicken wire along the length of the walkway. **Action: Clerk**

7.6 Environment - Cllr. Frapporti informed the Council that water level in the ponds was still unseasonably low.

With regards to installation of the memorial bench in Church Lane, Mrs Benton was now arranging for her son-in-law to do this at no cost to the Council. Cllr Frapporti would liaise with them on where it should be sited. **Action: GF**

7.7 Media and Communications

7.7.1 Police Report - There had only been one recent reported crime in Barkway. Damage had been caused to farmers crops by someone driving over the field, possibly hare coursing.

7.7.2 Website update - Standing Orders were suspended to allow Webmaster Kristian Melson to address the Council. He reported that he was generally updating the website and had even introduced a seasonal snowing effect! A new planning page had been developed. With the effect of the approaching new General Data Protection Regulation legislation (GDPR) effective from May 2018 it was necessary to take out any unnecessary data. Cllr. Davidson had already contacted Tom Wornham, Chair of the Village Hall to inform him that the Village hall bookings section would have to be removed shortly. All businesses were also now being removed. It was understood that as the current website was a free site run by Weebly it was difficult to control security and therefore the Parish Council may need to investigate an alternative solution to avoid any future security issues. Mr Melson was thanked for all his work and for attending the meeting.

Standing Orders were resumed.

8. Finance - to receive finance reports from the Clerk

8.1 Report from meeting of Finance Committee 6th December (see Appendix A).

8.2 To provide update on current financial position

Parish Council Account:

The Parish Council bank balance at 18.12.2017 was £68,674.64

Petty Cash £45.00

Receipts since the last meeting:

None

8.3 To authorise payments:

Approval of payments since last meeting:

DD £23.13 - Nest - Pension Contributions x 2

DD £7.20 - Sage Software Ltd - Payroll x 2

DD £51.00 - EDF - Direct Debit Electricity Pavilion

DD £10.00 – Affinity Water – Direct Debit Water Pavilion

DD £15.68 - Castle Water - Direct Debit Water Pavilion

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

CHQ 102561 £108.018 - Stationery Cupboard - Welcome Pack printing + Ink

CHQ 102562 £225.00 - T S Drake - Line Marking Nov

CHQ 102563 £208.00 - A Dodkin - Pavilion Maint

CHQ 102564 £130.00 - D Dodkin - Pavilion Maint

CHQ 102565 £87.77 - Jewson Ltd - Paint for Pitch Maintenance

CHQ 102566 £147.00 - SLCC - Annual Subscription

CHQ 102567 £901.30 - Catharine Toms – Clerk’s Monthly Salary + Office Allowance

CHQ 102568 £60.00 - Claire Methven - Litter Picking November

CHQ 102569 £298.32 - Pavilion A/C - Profit from Bonfire Night

CHQ 102570 £75.00 - Janine Reay - Cleaning/Bookings Pavilion - November

CHQ 102571 £36.00 - CPRE - Annual Subscription

Parish Council - Pavilion Account:

Bank Balance at 13.12.17 was £526.38

Receipts since the last meeting:

Barkway Parish Council £298.32 - Profit from Bonfire Night

Payments since the last meeting: None

Reading Room Accounts:

Bank Balance at 18.12.17 was £980.68

Receipts since the last meeting:

£29.18 - COIF Interest

£0.03 - Barclays Bank - Interest

Payments since the last meeting:

DD £38.00 - NHDC - Rates x 2

DD £76.75 - Total Gas and Power - Electricity

9. Correspondence

An email had been received from Mr Steve Alsop. He suggested that the Council should consider the installation of a defibrillator in the former BT phone box on the High Street. (see item 6).

10. Date of next meeting: Monday 8th January

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.25pm