

Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held remotely via Zoom on Tuesday 10th November 2020 at 7.48pm.

1. In attendance: Cllrs:

Mr W Dennis (Chair)
Mr P Baker (Vice Chair)
Ms J Cox
Mr D Marchant
Mr N Stuart
Mr R Tym

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

Members of the Public: No one present

2. To receive and accept apologies for absence: Cllr. J Connolly (family matters) and Dist. Cllr. Gerald Morris. Apologies accepted.

3. To receive Councillor's Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and to remind Councillors of their requirement to update register of interests under change of circumstances – none received.

4. Minutes

4.1 To approve the minutes of the last meeting - Proposed, seconded and all in favour to approve. Resolved. **Action: Clerk**

4.2 To consider any matters arising from the last meeting – None

5. Public Session - to receive representations from members of the public – No one wished to speak at this time.

Standing Orders were suspended to allow County Cllr. Hill to make her report.

6. To receive report from District Councillor – no report.

7. To receive report from County Councillor - County Cllr. Hill reported that in the current second lockdown Royston waste recycling was still open but Buntingford waste recycling remained closed. Libraries were open but with restrictive measures in place. Herts County Council (HCC) was continuing to closely monitor developments with Covid-19 and take appropriate actions. Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) were being installed on the A10 at Reed and would soon be operational. Other matters to report were covered elsewhere in the agenda.

Standing Orders were resumed.

8. Council Administration – nothing to report.

9. To receive updates from Portfolio Holders

9.1 Corporate Governance – To adopt Standard Terms of References for Committees – Cllr. Cox reported that a meeting was due to take place later that week with herself, Cllrs. Baker and Tym in order to set up a Barkway Hub Committee. This would be used as a template for the Terms of Reference for other Committees. This would be circulated to Cllrs. over the next month for feedback and would be reported on further at the December meeting. **Action: JCox**

9.2 Planning

9.2.1 Wisbridge Reservoir update – An interesting photo was shared, which was from some drone footage of the area. With the application of some specialist software, it showed evidence of some interesting archaeological infrastructure beneath the surface in an area of woodland adjacent to the reservoir site. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to forward this to the EA and NHDC for their information, with the hope that it might produce some action from them. **Action: Clerk**

9.2.2 Neighbourhood Plan – to receive update on Reg. 14 consultation – The Clerk reported that the consultation period would run until 23rd November. So far, a number of detailed responses had been received. These would be collated after the consultation period had closed and a further meeting of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee would agree any changes in order to produce a final draft to be approved by the Parish Council prior to submission to NHDC. **Action: Clerk**

9.2.3 NHDC Local Plan Hearing Sessions – to receive update regarding postponed hearing sessions – These had now been rescheduled to re-commence virtually on 23rd November. The Planning Consultant would be contacted to confirm that she was still able to represent the Parish Council at the Hearings. **Action: Clerk**

9.3 Highways

9.3.1 To receive update regarding speed and volume surveys to be carried out – Cllr. Hill reported that having gone back and reviewed previous data, it was not considered that any new surveys would produce any different data. Data was shown as average speeds only. Frustration was felt that something needed to be done to try and stop the ridiculous speeding and dangerous overtaking by a minority of vehicles, which was being witnessed now regularly. County Cllr. Hill agreed she would look into what options were available to reduce speeding vehicles and would try to arrange some more Police speed checks. Cllr. Dennis would aim to resurrect a Barkway Drivesafe team of volunteers. **Action: WD**

9.3.2 To consider and agree action needed to encourage use of the off-road parking strip along Cambridge Road – After discussion it was agreed that some under hanging branches would be cut back and a small sign installed by the Parish Council. Cllr. Dennis had received confirmation from Highways that they had no problem with this. The Clerk to obtain a quotation to cut back the trees and Cllr. Dennis to decide wording for Cllr. Cox to obtain a cost for a sign. To be discussed further at the December meeting. **Action: Clerk/WD/JCox**

9.3.3 To consider joining a campaign for speed management in Barkway of ‘20’s Plenty’ – County Cllr. Hill informed the Parish Council that unfortunately Barkway did not meet the criteria for this, as street lighting was not wanted along the High Street.

9.3.4 To note complaint received regarding overgrown condition of footpath from outside Ashgrove south to the Tally Ho and agree action to resolve this – After discussion, County Cllr. Hill would see if the footpath could be cleared using money from her Highways Locality Budget in the forthcoming financial year. In the meantime, the Clerk would write to owners of properties with overhanging vegetation and ask them to trim it back. **Action: Clerk**

9.3.5 To receive report from Remembrance Sunday – Cllr. Dennis reported that a very small service, with limited numbers, had taken place in front of the War Memorial.

9.4 Sports and Recreation

9.4.1 To consider quotations and possible dates for installation for replacing/repair of multi-play equipment and for carrying out regular play area inspections and maintenance – Cllr. Baker reported that having met with a supplier, quotations were still awaited. Other suppliers would be contacted for alternative quotations. To be reported on again at the December meeting. **Action: PB**

9.4.2 To receive report on football activities – Some training sessions had been taking place, but all matches had been cancelled and the changing rooms remained closed.

9.5 Community Property - To receive update on donors board for the Pavilion entrance hall - Cllr. Cox would measure up the area and provide a costing for the December meeting. **Action: JCox**

9.6 Environment – To consider report commissioned for Structural Assessment of the Wagon Wash and agree actions to be taken – in the absence of Cllr. Connolly, the report was discussed at some length along with the recommended works and actions. It was agreed by all that the Wagon Wash was an important historic feature of the village and that it was the duty of the Parish Council to ensure that measures were put in place to preserve it going forward. Cllr. Baker agreed to contact Cllr. Connolly to arrange a meeting with other Cllrs. that were interested to take part, to get a proposal together to put forward for agreement by the Parish Council at the December meeting. It was felt that whilst contractors were still working on the ponds at Barkway House, it was important to progress with the project. **Action: PB**

9.7 Media and Communications

9.7.1 To discuss website accessibility, consider quotations and agree any necessary action to acquire a compliant website – Cllr. Stuart reported that the current Weebly website was not compliant and that he was in the process of seeking quotations have a new website constructed, likely to be using Word Press. Five quotations had been received, varying between £800 and £900, plus a monthly hosting fee. It was estimated that it would take 3 weeks to build the new website. All information would be circulated ahead of the December meeting in order for a decision to be made. **Action: NS**

9.7.2 To consider production of a Winter edition of the Barkway Bulletin – Cllr. Cox suggested that it might be appropriate, after such a difficult year, to produce a short edition of the Bulletin extending seasons greetings from the Parish Council, with the target of delivering over the weekend of 12th December. Going forward, the aim would be to get back on track with producing a quarterly edition. This was agreed. **Action: JCox/WD/Clerk**

9.7.3 Police Report – No report available although there had been local reports of chalk marks being left recently on lampposts and pavements and in addition some

people had been receiving scam phone calls relating to alleged police security checks. County Cllr. Hill mentioned that the Police priorities to deal with locally were: speeding, anti-social behaviour and theft from vans.

9.7.4 To receive update on the Barkway Hub - (Also see item. 9.1) Cllr. Cox reported that although some people had stepped down, others had joined and there was still a core number of volunteers to offer assistance to anyone who needed help. A newsletter had recently been delivered to all households giving up to date information and contact numbers for the Hub. It was reported that the Parish Pantry foodbank was still operational and appeared to be being used and equally replenished.

10. Finance – To receive finance reports from the Clerk

10.1 To provide update on current financial position

Parish Council Account:

The Parish Council bank balance at 10.11.2020 was £90,662.74

Petty Cash £16.01

Receipts since the last meeting:

None

10.2 To authorise payments to be made

Approval of payments since last meeting:

DD £8.40 – Sage Software – Monthly Subscription

DD £68.31 – Nest – Pension Contributions

DD £8.70 – Castle Water – Water Pavilion

DD £71.00 – EDF – Electricity Pavilion

BP £421.10 – HMRC – PAYE Qtr 2

DD £130.00 – NHDC – Waste Collection Qtrly

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

By bank transfer

£1,064.39 - Catharine Toms – Clerk’s Monthly Salary + Office Allowance

£30.00 – Roz Danter – Pavilion Bookings and Cleaning Oct

£30.00 – Orla Swann – Litter Picking Oct

£22.50 – Kaitlin Aldridge – Litter Picking Oct

£76.50 – R Bonfield – Maintenance Rec. Oct

£170.00 – T S Drake – Grass Cutting & Line Marking Oct

£120.00 – HAPTC – Online Training Sessions Planning

£1,152.00 – The Morton Partnership – Engineering Survey Wagon Wash

Reading Room Accounts:

Bank Balance at 10.11.2020 was £11,442.51

Receipts since last meeting:

None

Payments since last meeting:

DD - £41.00 – NHDC Rates Reading Room

Proposed, seconded and approved by all. Resolved.

10.3 Report from the meeting of the Finance Committee and to request input from portfolio holders to set budgets for 2021/22 (see Appendix A)

11. Correspondence –

a) An email from the Property Manager at NHDC regarding the sale of land at Windmill Close. He was unaware of the agreement in place, that on sale of the remainder of the land for development, the ownership of the open recreational space would pass to Barkway Parish Council. Dist. Cllr. Hunter agreed to sort this out with NHDC. The Clerk to forward all the details. **Action: Clerk**

b) Three consultations relating to both Luton and Stansted Airport. It was agreed that there had not been given enough notice to respond to the first Luton consultation. The others would be given some thought as to how much impact these proposals would have on Barkway.

c) An email originating from a member of the editorial committee of the Diary. They were seeking grant funding to enable the publication to continue as advertising revenue had dropped considerably. It was agreed that they should be asked to submit a formal grant application for consideration at the December meeting. **Action: Clerk**

12. Items to be deferred to the next meeting – Terms of Reference for Committees and Working Parties, incl the Barkway Hubb, Off-road parking along Cambridge Road, New play equipment for the Rec. and maintenance programmes, the Donors Board for the Pavilion, New storage shed, Action plan for the Wagon Wash, Quotations for a compliant website, Christmas Bulletin, 1st Draft Budget 2021/22, Grant application from the Diary.

13. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 8th December.

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