

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting  
Held at the Pavilion, Barkway on Tuesday 9th April 2024 at 7.30pm.**

- 1. Attendance:** Cllrs:  
Mr W Dennis (Chair)  
Mr D Marchant  
Ms L Fletcher  
Mr W Sapsford  
Ms J Cox

**Also present:** Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO) and County Cllr. F Hill and District Cllr. G Morris.

**Members of the Public:** Four members of the public were present.

**2. To receive and accept apologies for absence:** Cllr. G Swann and Cllr. P Baker (away on holiday). Apologies were 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 –** Cllr. Dennis – items 10.5.1 & 10.5.2.

**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.

**6. To receive report from the Police –** PCSO Brabrook was present on behalf of the Police. He reported that crime in the area was generally very low. Traffic speeding was recognised as an issue in the village and another speed check was due to be carried on London Road.

Concern was raised regarding recent incidents of high-speed racing of cars after dark from the junction of the Nuthampstead and London Road heading towards Nuthampstead. This was duly noted and it was asked if there was any video footage, or details of number plates that could help the Police with trying to apprehend these offenders.

Regarding the vandalism taking place with traffic cones being placed on top of telegraph poles throughout the area, the Police were in contact with the family of the offender and liaising with other agencies to deal with the matter.

The Police were due to have a Crime Prevention stall this year at Barkway Market in May and they were holding an Emergency Services Day in liaison with local schools in June.

PCSO Brabrook was thanked for his report and for attending. He departed from the meeting at 7.43pm.

**7. To receive report from District Councillor –** Councillor Morris reported that there was no update on development of site BK3 and there had been no appeal lodged so far

against the decision to refuse the planning application for a development adjacent to Ashmill.

He reported that he would not be standing for re-election on 2<sup>nd</sup> May and that Mr Martin Prescott (in attendance) would be standing as his replacement. The Parish Council gratefully thanked Cllr. Morris for all his help and hard work on behalf of the Parish over the last few years, especially in the fight against the BK3 development.

**8. To receive report from County Councillor** - County Cllr. Hill also thanked Cllr. Morris for his support and hard work on behalf of the community. She reported that the Herts County Council (HCC) budget had been approved by Full Council. She was continuing to work to try and improve healthcare services in the area. Libraries were being used by the Police and Barclays Bank as drop-in centres and there were plenty of activities taking place in the libraries for all age groups. She had attended the Active Travel Workshop. She was also looking into the problem of flooding being experienced in Birch Meadow (site BK1). The road was not the responsibility of HCC as it was an unadopted road. The water seemed to be coming from the adjoining field (site BK3) so the landowners of that field did have a responsibility to ensure that water from there was drained appropriately. She had been in contact with the planning officer at North Herts Council (NHC) and had been advised that conditions regarding drainage had been imposed in the approved planning application for site BK3.

Speed and Volume Traffic Surveys for the village were on the Highways Locality List of jobs for the current financial year. It was noted that historic data from past surveys was still available.

Cllrs. Morris and Hill were thanked for their reports.

Standing Orders were resumed.

## **9. Council Administration**

**9.1 To agree pledge to sign up for the Armed Forces Covenant** – Cllr. Sapsford had looked into the matter in detail and advised the Council that he considered that it would be possible to support this and sign up to several of the pledges, including, appointing a Champion (himself), promoting the Armed Services by using their logo, maintaining the War Memorials in Barkway and Newsells, and holding a Remembrance Day Service each year. It was proposed, seconded and all voted in favour to sign the Covenant. Cllr. Hill expressed thanks to the Council for supporting this.

**9.2 To agree arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting (APM) on Weds 22<sup>nd</sup> May** – The evening would commence with a report from the Chair, this would be followed by a presentation, being organised by Cllrs. Fletcher and Cox, regarding the restoration of the Carriage Wash. This would be followed by a talk from the Guest Speaker, a representative from Newsells Park Stud, talking about their new business venture of a winery. There would then be an interval where drinks and a light buffet would be served. The evening would then have representations from the various village organisations.

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

**10.1 Corporate Governance** – nothing to report.

### **10.2 Planning**

**10.2.1 To receive update on matters relating to site BK2 and agree any necessary action** – No update.

**10.2.2 To consider and make comment on planning application:**

**Listed Building Consent : Repairs to a side wall internally and externally. Other internal and external works.**

**96, High Street, Barkway, Hertfordshire, SG8 8EF – Case Ref No: 24/00541/LBC**

– After consideration of the application, it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that there was no objection to the application provided that the Conservation Officer was satisfied that work would be in keeping with the Conservation Area. Resolved.

**Action: Clerk to respond to NHC.**

**10.2.3 To receive update on progress with the Barkway & Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan (BNNP)** – The Clerk had been in contact with Ms. Veater at GovResources, it was reported that Ms. Veater had met with the owner of Manyons Field and had allayed the concerns that she had about her land being included as a Local Green Space within the BNNP. She had since re-worded the text regarding the Local Green Spaces to thank the landowners for allowing these areas to be included. She had also strengthened the policy on BK3 and corrected the site map of BK3 to show the Reserved School Site. The BNNP was now all ready to submit to NHC for the next round of consultation with the aim of a Referendum at the end of June.

**10.2.4 To receive update on enquiry made with Thames Water regarding repairs to the Barkway Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP)** – Cllr. Dennis had contacted Thames Water to try and ascertain if money would be available to make the necessary enhancements to the STP. He was informed that in 2025/30 money might be available. However, the question needed to be asked as to whether this would be to make it efficient for current levels of sewage (so without suffering the unacceptable level of sewage discharges into the River Quinn) or would that be to upgrade the STP and the feeder pipes to cope with the extra demand that would result from the development of site BK3? Cllr. Dennis would persist with his enquiries and make the Planning Officer at NHC aware of this. **Action: WD**

**10.3 Highways – to receive update on progress being made to address the problem of traffic speeding in the village** – Further to the resistance being met by the Police and Crime Commissioners Office to agree appropriate places from which to be able to conduct the Drivesafe speed checks, the Police had been unable to find copies of past documentation that gave details of the previously approved sites for carrying out the speed checks. The Clerk to contact a former member of Drivesafe and enquire if he could remember any location details. **Action: Clerk**

#### **10.4 Sports and Recreation**

**10.4.1 To receive update on project to upgrade the play area equipment** - no update.

**10.4.2 Update on football activities** – All games had been cancelled the previous weekend due to waterlogged pitches. The football season was coming to an end but the area would continue to be used for training sessions in May and June but the pitches wouldn't need lining. The pitches were looking in good condition and the bonfire site had been cleared and re-seeded.

**10.4.3 To agree to purchase of replacement 5-aside goal posts** – A quotation of £260 to purchase replacement goal posts was proposed, seconded and agreed by all. The Clerk to purchase. **Action: Clerk.**

**10.4.4 To agree to make repairs to the Oliver Pritchard Memorial bench** – It was reported that a curved slat was missing from the back part of the seat. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to have this repaired. The Clerk to find someone who could do this. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Fletcher took over to Chair the meeting.

#### **10.5 Community Property**

**10.5.1 To receive update from Working Party looking at updating the Constitution of the Reading Room** – There was not much to report. A response to the revised draft plans was awaited from the Barkway Local History Group (BLHG).

**10.5.2 To receive update on progression of plans to improve accessibility to the Reading Room** – The Clerk had contacted the Architect to see if any progress had been made on the plans to improve accessibility and it was reported that he was still working on them. The Clerk to contact him again in a couple of weeks. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Dennis resumed as Chair of the meeting.

**10.6 Environment – to receive update on progress with Carriage Wash project** – Cllr. Fletcher had prepared a draft grant application to The Hundred Parishes Society who were awarding grants of up to £3,000 for suitable projects that met their criteria. She was confident that the application seemed a good case for their funding. The deadline for applying was late June. All Cllrs. were asked to look over the proposed submission. **Action: ALL**

The fund-raising campaign had been kick-started by a previously agreed £10,000 transfer of funds by the Parish Council into a spare bank account.

The BLHG were willing to assist by promoting the Carriage Wash Restoration Project on their website, which was currently enjoying 2,000 hits per month. Heritage England had agreed to allow the Parish Council to use their pictures and were prepared to work with the Parish Council on the project.

It was noted with interest that from mid-December there would no longer be a need to obtain a full newt mitigation licence, so there would not be the same constraints on when works could be carried out, so would be easier and hopefully less costly.

Cllrs. Fletcher and Cox to prepare a presentation on the project for the APM on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. **Action: LF/JC**

Becca Edwards – Community Partnership Officer at NHC (present) would give some thought as to any funding avenues that may be available to help the project.

Cllr. Hill suggested looking at the Hertfordshire Community Foundation website (HCF) for possible funding. **Action: LF**

A further suggestion by Cllr. Marchant was to seek sponsorship for the restoration from the UK's biggest car wash company as, in recent media coverage, the Carriage Wash had been referred to as the country's earliest car wash. Cllr. Fletcher to look into this idea. **Action: LF**

### **10.7 Media and Communications**

**10.7.1 To receive update regarding the new website** – A positive meeting had taken place with a Parishioner who was willing to help behind the scenes with the ongoing maintenance of the new website and the creation of a dedicated page for the BNNP. **Action: Clerk**

**10.7.2 To discuss and agree content for the Spring edition of the Bulletin** – Due to being unwell Cllr. Cox apologised that she had been unable to progress matters as planned. The following topics were agreed for inclusion and Cllrs. to submit wording to Cllr. Cox:

Reading Room (**LF/PB**)

Bridleway 17 (**WD**)

Carriage Wash media coverage (**WD**)

New Telephone Systems (**DM**)

Armed Services Covenant (**WS**)

Play Equipment (**PB**)

## Neighbourhood Plan (Clerk)

It was hoped to be able to produce something in time for the APM on 22<sup>nd</sup> May. **Action:**  
**JC/ALL**

### 11. To receive finance reports from the Clerk

#### 11.1 To provide update on current financial position

The Parish Council bank balance at 09.04.2024 was £63,959.56

Petty Cash £9.28

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

CR £20,975.00 – North Herts Council – Half Year Precept

CR £200.00 – Taylor – Deposit for Hire of Community Room

CR £50.00 – Buntingford Town FC – Hire of Football Pitch

#### 11.2 To authorise payments to be made

#### **Approval of payments since last meeting:**

DD £112.00 – EDF Energy – Electricity Pavilion

DD £39.19 – Castle Water – Water Pavilion

DD £87.14 – Nest – Pension Contributions

DD £9.60 – Sage – Payroll

DD £53.94 – BT – Broadband

BP £150.00 – Taylor – Refund of Hire Deposit

BP £3,150.00 – Govresources Ltd – Neighbourhood Plan

BP £50.00 – Taylor – Refund of Hire Deposit

TRF £472.60 – To Reading Room A/C – Rates 2024/25

TRF £1,000.00 – To reading Room A/C – Electricity 2024/25

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

By bank transfer

BP £1221.50 - Catharine Toms – Clerk's Monthly Salary

BP £41.25 - Orla Swann – Litter Picking Jan

BP £37.50 - Annie McPherson – Litter Picking Jan

BP £548.64 – HMRC – PAYE & NI Qtr to Mar 2024

BP £520.00 - Tim Drake – Line Marking Mar & Clearing and re-seeding of bonfire site

BP £268.80 - Deluxe Perfect Cleaning Ltd – Cleaning at Pavilion Mar

BP £189.00 – R Bonfield – Maintenance Pavilion & Rec. Mar

BP £530.44 – HAPTC – Annual Subscription

BP £351.60 – Sage – Accounts software 1 year

BP £55.00 – M Thornton – Window Cleaning Pavilion/ Reading Room/Bus Shelters

#### **Reading Room Accounts:**

Bank Balance at 09.04.2024 was £21,537.70

Receipts since last meeting:

CR £472.60 – Barkway Parish Council – Rates 2024/25

CR £1,000.00 – Barkway Parish Council – Electricity 2024/25

Payments since last meeting:

DD £74.95 – British Gas – Electricity

**11.3 To set a date for meeting of the Finance Working Party – The Clerk**  
to arrange by email. **Action: Clerk**

## **12. Correspondence**

- 1) Hedgehog protection project (passed to Cllr. Fletcher)
- 2) Letter from Parishioner asking if the Parish Council could make a representation to the Post Office objecting to the removal of evening postal collections in the village.

**13. Items to be deferred to the next meeting** – Play Equipment repairs/replacements, Carriage Wash project, Audit of Seats and Benches, Reading Room Constitution, Open Space tidying, shipping container for storage, Barkway Bulletin, Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan, Drivesafe.

**14. Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 14th May 2024 – The Annual Meeting followed by the monthly Parish Council Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.28pm