

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting**  
**Held at the Pavilion, Barkway on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 7.30pm.**

- 1. Attendance:** Cllrs:  
Mr W Dennis (Chair)  
Mr P Baker  
Ms L Fletcher  
Mr G Swann

**Also present:** Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO)

**Members of the Public:** One member of the public was present.

- 2. To receive and accept apologies for absence:** Cllrs. D Marchant, W Sapsford and J Cox (work commitments).  
County Cllr. Fiona Hill and Dist. Cllr. Martin Prescott (attending the Royston and District Community Forum).  
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 and Cllr. Swann – item 11.2.

**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.

Standing Orders were suspended.

- 5. Public Session – to receive representations from members of the public** – A resident, who had recently moved into the village, addressed the Council about her concerns regarding volume and speed of traffic in the High Street. Cllr. Swann responded on behalf of the Council to explain that concerns raised were unfortunately not new and were matters that the Council had been seeking to resolve with little progress for many years now. There was hope that with a new Police and Crime Commissioner recently in place, that previous barriers encountered with regards to acceptable locations from which to be able to conduct Community Drivesafe speed checking might be overcome. In addition, a good liaison had now been established with the local Police Officer and it was understood that additional Police speed checks were due to be carried out again soon. County Cllr. Fiona Hill was also working on behalf of the village to try and find acceptable solutions to minimise the impact of the traffic. Speed and volume surveys were scheduled to be carried out which would produce data taken over a continual period of time. It was also explained that chicanes and speed humps would require street lighting and residents felt that would detract from the rural village feeling and urbanise it with the additional signage required. 20 mph zones being introduced elsewhere were only advisable and not enforceable speed limits. HGV's could not be prevented from coming through the village as they needed to use the road for access and there was also the unavoidable seasonal large agricultural farming vehicles travelling through.

That said, the Parish Council would still be actively seeking to address the issues highlighted. The resident said that she would be a willing volunteer to help if a new Drivesafe Campaign could be started. She was thanked for attending.

Standing Orders were resumed.

**6. To receive report from District Councillor** – District Cllr. Martin Prescott reported in his absence that he would be on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at North Herts Council (NHC) as a full member and on the Planning Control Committee as a substitute member for this coming year. There had not yet been any meetings of the Council committees of which he was a member and he was not aware of any Barkway planning or other significant village issues that needed progressing on his part.

He was pleased to report that the Nuthampstead defibrillator had been installed at The Woodman Inn and just awaited formal commissioning. He thanked Barkway Parish Council and County Cllr. Hill on behalf of Nuthampstead Parish Meeting and the residents of Nuthampstead, for their support in this matter.

He had been approached by a Barkway resident about a damaged footway (due to utilities work) by the Alms Houses and this had been referred to Cllr. Hill as this was a Herts County Council (HCC) matter.

He asked the Parish Council to report anything to him which the Parish Council would like him to investigate or follow up.

**7. To received report from County Councillor** – County Cllr. Hill reported in her absence that additional funding had been put into SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and a large number of staff were being recruited, with thorough inductions and ongoing training for existing staff.

She continued to encourage Parish and Town Councils to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant and was looking into how to make this process easier. She had attended some very moving events to commemorate D-Day which had been widely supported by the community.

Royston library continued to host the Police and Barclays Bank for drop-in sessions and she had been working with stakeholders regarding establishing a banking hub in Royston. There was still a commitment for this to be in place in 2024.

She had attended a meeting with the Chair, Clerk and Rights of Way (ROW) Officer to investigate improvements to the bridleway alongside the proposed BK3 site. The ROW Officer was now looking into ideas to put forward and would be back in touch.

Replacement signs, rumble strips and speed/volume surveys had been scheduled in the village and she had raised the issue of damaged pavements due to utility works in the village.

Cllrs. Prescott and Hill were thanked for their reports.

**8. To receive report from the Police** – No report.

**9. Council Administration – To receive report from the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May** – It was reported that it had been well attended and the guest speakers from Newsells Park Winery had given a very informative presentation about their new business venture and afterwards had generously offered tastings of their wine to the attendees. The Clerk to contact Newsells Park Winery to thank them. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Fletcher had delivered a well prepared and persuasive presentation about the plight of the Carriage Wash and to launch the Carriage Wash Restoration Fund. This had already resulted in a donation being added to the fund.

Representatives for the various village organisations then gave updates on their activities over the past year and their aspirations for the forthcoming year.

## **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** – It was agreed that there was a need to talk to HCC Cllr. Hill about getting the grass verges reinforced with grasscrete now that the building works had all finished. That would tidy up the area and ensure that the verges would remain in good condition if they were used for parking.

Mr Bentley had been clearing the Open Space area, but had concerns as there was a lot of rubbish to be cleared. It was agreed that a skip could be ordered as this was likely to be a one-off job and it would sort out the problem quickly. Once the area had been properly cleared it would be far easier to maintain it on an ongoing basis.

It was queried what had happened to the signed agreement between HCC and the Parish Council regarding the Open Space. The Clerk to investigate matters. **Action: Clerk**

**10.2.2 To receive update on progress with the Barkway & Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan (BNNP)** – The BNNP was in its final consultation. This was being run by NHC and any responses needed to be sent directly to them. Comments had to be submitted by 25<sup>th</sup> June. Following this an independent examination of the comments from the consultation and the content of the plan would take place. Further updates would be made on the examiner's recommendations, prior to the plan being subject to a referendum. The date of the referendum would be well publicised and likely to be in early autumn. The cost of the referendum would be met by NHC. In the meantime, the Parish Council had applied for and successfully obtained a further grant of £1,457 from Groundworks UK to cover costs involved to complete the process.

**10.2.3 To receive update on enquiry made with Thames Water regarding repairs to the Barkway Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP)** – Cllr. Dennis was in the process of obtaining maps showing all the drains and sewerage pipe network in the village.

**10.2.4 To receive update on Bridleway 17 hedgerow reinstatement following meeting with HCC Public Access Officer** – (also see item 7). It was reported to have been a positive meeting looking at means to reinstate a 4m width along the length of the bridleway (as recommended by the British Horse Society) and planting of a hedgerow. A horse-rider was encountered using the bridleway and was able to explain problems that users had with the bridleway in its current state. The Officer from HCC agreed so look into matters and see what could be done. There was a Woodland Trust scheme currently offering free saplings for suitable projects. The HCC Officer would consult with his colleagues and advise.

Other planning matters raised: Concerns were raised over the deteriorating condition of the Cart Barn to the rear of 9 High Street. It had changed ownership since planning permission had been granted to allow a small rear extension and convert it into a small dwelling. Work had already been commenced, by the previous owner, on the footings for the rear extension, so the planning permission would now not lapse. The current owner had removed the roof tiles and further work had since ceased. The Clerk to contact the Conservation Officer at NHC. **Action: Clerk**

### **10.3 Highways**

**10.3.1 To receive update on progress being made to address the problem of traffic speeding in the village** – (see item 5)

**10.3.2 To note concern raised by residents on ongoing placing of traffic cones on top of telegraph poles** – The Police were involved and were working with other agencies to try and resolve the matter. The offender had been due to appear in court but the case had been adjourned. Roadworks by the War Memorial had been disrupted due to cones being removed overnight, these were subsequently found hidden up Footpath 12.

### **10.4 Sports and Recreation**

**10.4.1 To receive update on project to upgrade the play area equipment** - A quotation of £5,230 had been received to replace the wavy bars with a conventional stainless steel slide. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that if it could be reduced to £5,000 and installed in time for the summer holidays, to place the order. Cllr. Baker to contact Playground Facilities Ltd. **Action: PB**

**10.4.2 Update on football activities and agree any pitch maintenance required for next season** – The football season was now over and just some informal training sessions were taking place there until the end of June. Football would re-start in Sept. A quotation was still awaited for any pitch maintenance needed. Apart from a bit of re-seeding on the top pitch, the pitches looked in good condition.

**10.4.3 To discuss and agree to hold Bonfire Night on 5<sup>th</sup> Nov 2024** – It was proposed, seconded and agreed that Bonfire night could go ahead on 5<sup>th</sup> November. Cllr. Baker to contact his team of volunteers and ask them to ‘hold the date’. Cllr. Baker recommended that suggested donations for entry to the event be increased to £3 per adult as the cost of fireworks was likely to be higher this year.

Cllr. Baker 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 meeting was due to take place with members of 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, Cllr. Dennis, the Architect and residents from either side of the Reading Room had recently met to look at the revised plans. One of the residents had taken the trouble to actually mark out the proposal on the site, which had made it easier to envisage. It was agreed by all parties that the Architect should make further contact with the Conservation Officer at NHC and submit a planning application. In the meantime, the Clerk to try and obtain three quotations for the proposed work. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Dennis resumed as Chair of the meeting.

**10.5.3 To note bad debt to be written off on hire of the Pavilion £364** – The Clerk reported that the Pilates class had been stopped for a few months now and that the lady still had keys to the Pavilion and owed £364 in hire fees. In spite of initially having agreed a repayment plan, she was no longer responding to emails or paying off any of the debt. It was agreed in future that for regular classes, keys would be lent on a week by week basis and hire fees paid each week and that address details of the hirer would need to be logged. It was noted that the husband of this lady had treated Barkway Village Hall similarly, where he had been hiring the hall for dance sessions. The Council to be kept informed on any progress with the matter. **Action: Clerk**

## **10.6 Environment**

### **10.6.1 To receive update on progress with Carriage Wash project – Cllr.**

Fletcher reported that a grant application to The Hundred Parishes Society, who were awarding grants of up to £3,000 for suitable projects, had now been submitted.

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, it now had a further donation of £1,000.

Cllr. Fletcher pointed out that this was a massive project and that she needed help from other Cllrs. in order to progress matters. Cllr. Baker agreed to help once the Reading Room project was sorted out. A plea for a team of (3 or 4) volunteers from the village with fund raising experience, would be put in the Bulletin.

**10.6.2 To note change of litter pickers –** It was reported that one of the current litter pickers was leaving as she was due to start college. The Clerk had written to thank her for her 6 years of good and reliable service and wished well with her future plans. Twin sisters from the south end of the village had since taken over the role. The Clerk had supplied them with all the necessary equipment, including hi-viz waistcoats and safety gloves.

**10.6.3 To agree to reinstate plaque on Frank's bench –** Proposed, seconded and agreed by all. Cllr. Baker to take a photo of the broken plaque and send to the Clerk. **Action: PB/Clerk**

## **10.7 Media and Communications**

**10.7.1 To receive update regarding the new website –** nothing to report.

**10.7.2 To receive report on progress of production of the Summer edition of the Bulletin –** Cllr. Cox reported in her absence that she was still working on it would aim to get a draft circulated for approval as soon as possible. Cllrs. to forward any further material to be included as soon as possible. **Action: JC/ALL**

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

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

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

The Parish Council bank balance at 11.06.2024 was £60,397.51

Petty Cash £9.28

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

CR £500.00 – Herts County Council – Locality Budget Grant  
(Nuthampstead Defibrillator)

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

CR £880.00 – Buntingford Cougars – Hire of Football Pitches

CR £150.00 – Pape – Deposit for Hire of Community Room

CR £20.00 – G Aldridge – Cougars Football Training

CR £32.00 – G Aldridge – Cougars Football Training

CR £20.00 – G Aldridge – Cougars Football Training

CR £23.01 – Barclays – Interest

CR £174.71 – Barclays - Interest

### **11.2 To authorise payments to be made**

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

DD £112.00 – EDF Energy – Electricity Pavilion

DD £26.21 – Castle Water – Water Pavilion

DD £87.14 – Nest – Pension Contributions

DD £9.60 – Sage – Payroll

DD £58.21 – BT – Broadband

DC £15.59 – Zoom – Subscription  
DC £33.96 – Amazon – Equipment for new Litter Pickers  
DC £86.39 – Medisol – Replacement Pads for Defibrillator (Rec)  
DC £42.92 – Amazon – Toilet Paper/Soap/Washing Up Liquid supplies for Pavilion

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

By bank transfer

BP £1221.50 - Catharine Toms – Clerk's Monthly Salary  
BP £107.50 - Orla Swann – Litter Picking May (incl. holiday pay)  
BP £37.50 - Annie McPherson – Litter Picking May  
BP £170.45 – Catharine Toms – Clerk's Expenses \*  
BP £17.00 – HAPTC – New Councillor Training  
BP £312.00 – Deluxe Perfect Cleaning Ltd – Cleaning at Pavilion May  
BP £184.00 – R Bonfield – Maintenance Pavilion & Rec. May  
BP £84.00 – Playground Facilities Ltd – Quarterly Play Area Inspection  
BP £300.00 – Tim Drake – Line Marking and Grass Cutting May

- £26.66 – MS Office 365 Subscription  
£4.33 – McAfee Subscription  
£43.06 – Tesco – Drinks for Annual Parish Meeting  
£2.25 – Tesco – Supplies for Annual Parish Meeting  
£94.15 – Days – Buffet for Annual Parish Meeting

**Reading Room Accounts:**

Bank Balance at 11.06.2024 was £21,309.58

Receipts since last meeting:

CR £34.90 – COIF – Interest  
CR £41.83 – Barclays - Interest

Payments since last meeting:

DD £47.00 – North Herts Council - Rates  
DD £134.21 – British Gas – Electricity

**11.3 To receive report from the meeting of the Finance Working Party –**  
(See Appendix A)

**12. Correspondence** – nothing not covered elsewhere in the meeting.

**13. Items to be deferred to the next meeting** – Carriage Wash restoration project, Survey of Seats and Benches, Reading Room Constitution, Open Space tidying, Open Space agreement with HCC, Cart Barn to rear of 9 High St, shipping container for storage, Barkway Bulletin, Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan, Drivesafe, Reinforcement of verges in Windmill Close.

**14. Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9pm.