

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held at the Pavilion, Barkway on Tuesday 13th August 2024 at 7.30pm.**

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

Also present: Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO), County Cllr. F Hill and Dist. Cllr. M Prescott. In addition, PC Tom Woollard and PCSO Chris Brabrook.

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

2. To receive and accept apologies for absence: Cllrs. D Marchant (work commitment), J Cox and W Sapsford (holidays). 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

4. Minutes

4.1 To approve the minutes of the last meetings - 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 – no one wished to address the Council.

6. To receive report from District Councillor – District Cllr. Martin Prescott reported that not a lot had happened as it was the holiday period. He agreed to follow up with North Herts Council (NHC) Principal Estates Surveyor the outstanding matter of the transfer of ownership from NHC to Barkway Parish Council of the land to the rear of Windmill Close as nothing further had been heard from NHC since 18th July.

7. To receive report from County Councillor – County Cllr. Hill provided the following report:

EDUCATION - SEND was on the agenda for the last Impact of Scrutiny Advisory Committee. It was agreed to continue monitoring closely and bring back for further review. The additional funding has enabled significant recruitment and ongoing training for existing staff, which should alleviate pressure and result in timely communication and support for children.

KJAR has responded positively following the storm damage and necessary temporary accommodation.

Adult Learning (Step2Skills) continues to offer invaluable courses so that everyone can succeed in education.

HEALTH - Healthcare, particularly timely GP appointments and accessibility to dentists are of concern nationally. The ICBs attended the Health Scrutiny meeting in May at Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and both issues were discussed, including

the ambition for an integrated healthcare facility/diagnostic centre for Royston and the villages.

There is an extensive programme of events including the HAPpy Camps and Healthy Hubs.

I am working with partners on various nutrition projects for children and trying to establish a Junior Park Run.

COMMUNITY UPDATES - Following the announcement last year that Royston has been identified for a Banking Hub, potential sites are being investigated.

Royston Town Council has committed to signing up to the Armed Forces Covenant.

Royston Fire Station Open Day was hugely successful with great attendance.

The Summer Reading Challenge was launched at Royston Library on 6th July with excellent engagement.

Looking for volunteers for Royston Old Barn.

Grants available including Locality Budget and HCF.

There had been an issue with collection of Brown Garden Waste bins in Barkway this week. Resolved the next day. A resident has emailed her thanks and those of other residents. Thanks have been passed to the officers at the District Council and Urbaser.

HIGHWAYS - Grateful for a decision from Barkway PC as to whether there is a wish to go ahead with mitigation measures due to the parking issues raised in Windmill Close through the Highways Locality Budget (HLB).

Drainage – options being investigated to resolve problems in Gas Lane and High Street.

Speeding – awaiting outcome of Speed and Volume surveys funded through HLB regarding next steps.

Cllr. Hill was thanked for her report.

8. To receive report from the Police – PC Woollard and PCSO Brabrook reported that crime in the area was generally low, although there had been a spate of thefts from unlocked vehicles in the area, so people were being reminded to lock their doors. An early morning speed check had been carried out by the Tally Ho and several drivers were given words of advice. Results of the recent speed and volume surveys were still awaited and they were well aware that speeding traffic was one of the main concerns in the village. They were advised that vehicles seen parked outside the industrial units on Bell Farm Industrial Park were doing regular high speeding late at night along the Nuthampstead Road to the junction of London Road. It was asked if photos could be obtained and passed to them. **Action: DM**

The Police would arrange a meeting at Royston Police Station to discuss the speeding issues and invite all stakeholders.

9. Council Administration

9.1 To note end of period of Public Rights – This had ended on 9th August following a period of 6 weeks. There had been no requests received to inspect the records. The external audit report was expected by the end of September.

9.2 To approve correction of minutes from 14th May – this related to a correction of wording from Cllr. Hill's report. Proposed, seconded and approved by all. Resolved.

9.3 To remind Cllrs. of the mandatory Code of Conduct training to be undertaken by 16th August – This was duly noted.

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 the Open Space agreement between NHC and the Parish Council – (see item 6).

10.2.2 To receive update on progress with the Barkway & Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan (BNNP) – The BNNP was now at Examination stage and NHC Officer Clare Skeels had applied to the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiner Referral Service (NPIERS) for a list of independent examiners available to conduct this. It was understood that the emerging BNNP held some weight now because there had not been any substantial objections received as a result of consultations. Once the Examination was over it would hold great weight in the planning world, despite then having to wait for NHC to sort out the referendum.

10.2.3 To consider and make comment on Section 73 planning application:

Section 73 Application : Removal of Condition 2 (Archaeological WSI) of planning permission granted on 13/06/2024 for:

Installation of swimming pool and associated pump house in rear garden. (Development already carried out).

109 High Street, Barkway, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8ED. Case Ref No: 24/01594/S73 – After consideration of the application, it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all that there was no objection to this application. The Clerk to respond to NHC. Resolved. **Action: Clerk**

10.2.4 To receive any update on matters relating to site BK3 – The Clerk reported that she had contacted Redrow to set up a line of communication since it had been learnt that the site had been sold by Rands. Redrow had been in communication and had suggested a meeting with the Parish Council where they could share their proposals. This had been arranged for Monday 19th August. Redrow had said that they would not have time to hold an open day for the general public as they were imminently about to submit their Reserved Matters Planning Application to NHC. It was understood from Redrow that they had already held Pre-Application meetings with NHC, which had been followed by a ‘Workshop’. Cllrs. Prescott and Hill had been unaware of these events.

The meeting on 19th August between Redrow and the Parish Council Planning Working Party would be a fact-finding meeting and an opportunity to point out to Redrow concerns and issues that would need to be addressed. Issues that NHC may not have alerted them to. Redrow had kindly sent, in advance of the meeting on 19th, their proposed site plan which the Clerk had managed to print off in time for the meeting this evening. It was noted that the plans were dated February 2024. Cllrs. Hill and Prescott were invited to also attend on 19th August and an invitation would also be extended to a representative from Newsells Park Stud. **Action: Clerk**

The Police departed from the meeting at 7.56pm – they were thanked for attending.

10.3 Highways

10.3.1 To receive update on progress being made to address the problem of traffic speeding in the village – Speed and volumes surveys had been carried out and data obtained as a result of these would be analysed. (Also see Items 7 and 8)

10.3.2 To receive update on request for reinforcing grass verges, etc. in Windmill Close to provide additional parking and safety signage to alert drivers of children playing – Following site meetings with Cllr. Hill, an Officer from HCC Highways, the Clerk and Cllrs. Dennis and Swann, Cllr. Hill had obtained costings for the various options discussed. Cllr. Swann to email Cllr. Hill with a decision on work ideally required by Monday 19th in order that it could be considered for inclusion in her Highways budget expenditure. **Action: GS**

10.4 Sports and Recreation

10.4.1 To receive update on project to upgrade the play area equipment -

An order had been placed for the new slide for the multi-play equipment and was due to be installed on the Tuesday following the bank holiday.

10.4.2 To agree service of the zip-wire – further to comments received that the zip-wire was not currently functioning well and it also needed re-tensioning, it was proposed, seconded and agreed to request that Playground Facilities be asked to service the zip-wire when they came to install the new slide. Resolved.

10.4.3 To receive update on football activities – It was reported that the new season was underway with some training sessions and friendly matches now arranged before September. The Buntingford Cougars U12's were now playing on Sundays and an enquiry had been received from Cougars Girls to play on Saturdays. Royston United had also been in contact to book a few fixtures on Sundays.

10.4.4 To receive update on arrangements for Bonfire Night on 5th Nov 2024 – Cllr. Baker understood that the team of volunteers from last year might be willing to do the display again this year, he would follow this up with an email for confirmation of the arrangement. **Action: PB**

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 nothing further to report other than the revised plans had now been discussed with the Chair of the Community Group. A quotation to obtain a shipping container, to be placed behind the Pavilion, for storage of items from the Reading Room had been received. 2.1m x 3m container would cost £1,638.00 uninsulated. Insulated version would be £2,352.00. Extra security might be needed in addition to these costs. Cllr. Baker to circulate the proposal. **Action: PB**

A plinth may also be needed and relocation of the gutter downpipe behind the Pavilion.

10.5.2 To receive update on progression of plans to improve accessibility to the Reading Room – Planning Applications (Full Planning and Listed Building) had now been submitted to NHC. The Parish Council had not received any email for consultation.

Cllr. Dennis resumed as Chair of the meeting.

10.5.3 To discuss the concept of a competition to submit images (paintings/drawings/photographs) of the village with winning entries to be displayed on the walls of the Community Room – after discussion it was agreed that this was a lovely idea but that the Parish Council just did not have the manpower currently, with more important issues to address, to arrange this. The Clerk was requested to respond to the proposer and confirm Parish Council support of the idea but ask if others might be willing to organise this. **Action: Clerk**

10.6 Environment - To receive update on progress with Carriage Wash project – Cllr. Fletcher reported that she had written to the One Hundred Parishes Society thanking them for their generous donation of £3,000. The Society had suggested that it might be a good idea to get an alternative quotation as the existing quotation was from a company that wanted to carry out the whole project. If the costs could be broken down into different categories it might be easier to identify works that could possibly be carried out by volunteer groups under supervision. She had been given the name of a company they recommended. Cllr. Prescott to be sent the specification for the project

as he knew also of a local company that might be willing to provide an alternative quotation. **Action: LF**

Cllr. Hill suggested contacting Stansted Airport and Redrow for possible grant funding for the project. **Action: LF**

10.7 Media and Communications

10.7.1 To receive update regarding the new website – nothing to report. The webmaster to be asked to publish important information relating to BK3. **Action: Clerk**

10.7.2 To receive report on progress of production of the Summer edition of the Bulletin – Cllr. Cox in her absence reported that she would resume work on the Bulletin as soon as she had returned from holiday.

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 13.08.2024 was £54,437.76

Petty Cash £9.28

Receipts since the last meeting:

CR £245.00 – Williams - Hire of Community Room (Incl. Deposit)

CR £1,457.00 – Groundwork UK – Grant for Neighbourhood Plan

CR £50.00 – Khandel Light – Hire of Community Room

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 x 2 – Zoom – Software Subscription

DD £162.50 – North Herts Council – Quarterly Bill for Bin Collection Pavilion

DC £35.94 – Land Registry – Title Documents Open Space

DC £146.50 – North Herts Council – Planning Application Fee – Reading Room

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

By bank transfer

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

BP £36.00 - Annie McPherson – Litter Picking Jun

BP £30.00 – Sophie & Charlotte Anderton – Litter Picking Jun

BP £162.00 – The Community Heartbeat Trust – Defibrillator Annual Support

BP £390.00 – Deluxe Perfect Cleaning Ltd – Cleaning at Pavilion Jul

BP £115.00 – R Bonfield – Maintenance Pavilion & Rec. Jul

BP £240.00 – Tim Drake – Grass Cutting Jul

BP £36.00 – CDA Herts – Annual Subscription

BP £439.00 – A Dodkin – Maintenance

BP £60.00 – CPRE – Annual Subscription

Reading Room Accounts:

Bank Balance at 13.08.2024 was £21,169.71

Receipts since last meeting: None
Payments since last meeting:
DD £47.00 – North Herts Council - Rates
DD £19.75 – British Gas – Electricity

11.3 To approve change of name to ‘Barkway Parish Council – Carriage Wash Restoration Fund’ on A/C 50772712 – it was proposed, seconded and agreed. Resolved.

11.4 To consider and agree funding towards the costs of the village Christmas Tree in 2024 – after discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed that the Parish Council would fund 50% of the total cost if the remainder could be obtained as a grant from the Barkway Market Committee. The Clerk to respond. **Action: Clerk**

12. Correspondence –

- 1) Invitation to be included in the NHC Play Area and Risk Assessment Inspections – Agreed. The Clerk to respond. **Action: Clerk**
- 2) Letter from a resident saying that the bullrushes in the village pond were far too overgrown and needed mostly pulling out. Advice to be sought. **Action: Clerk**
- 3) An email from Cllr. Prescott reminding of current consultation being conducted by the Police as to guidance as to what the local population wanted as their policing priorities. The Clerk to respond. **Action: Clerk**

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, shipping container for storage, Barkway Bulletin, Barkway and Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan, Drivesafe.

14. Date of next meeting – Tuesday 10th September 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.54pm.