

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

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

Also present: Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO), County Cllr. F Hill and Dist. Cllr. M Prescott.

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

2. To receive and accept apologies for absence: Cllrs. D Marchant, J Cox (work commitment) and L Fletcher. 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 11.2.

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 – A member of the public wished to ask the Parish Council about the progress being made on the review of usage of the Reading Room. Cllr. Baker reported that a meeting had been held with members of the Barkway Local History Group (BLHG) where a proposal had been put forward for a re-designed room layout providing space for their displays and in addition, allowing for a table and a few chairs to enable small meetings to take place there, should other community groups wish to use the room. The BLHG had come back with a counter proposal. It was hoped to be able to start the project by the end of the summer. There was a lot of work to be done as the room would have to be emptied of all furniture and contents and re-decorated before the re-fit could commence. There were still a number of issues to be addressed including lighting and security. Quotations would now be sought for the work needed to be carried out. Revised plans had been drawn up for the improved path and access and were due to be submitted to North Herts Council (NHC) shortly to obtain Listed Building Consent. Once again, quotations would now be sought for the work. There was no plan to do the two projects side by side, so any delay on getting planning permission would not prevent the interior work being carried out. It was hoped that the interior work would be completed by mid-November. Cllr. Baker was asked if he could share the proposed new design layout with the Chair of the Barkway Community Group. **Action: PB**

6. To receive report from District Councillor – District Cllr. Martin Prescott was due to arrive later in the meeting.

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

Libraries - The Summer Reading Challenge was launched on Saturday, 6th July. All completed entries will receive a medal.

Banking Hub - There is a commitment to deliver a hub in Royston by the end of the year and searches are being made for a permanent site or a temporary site, if necessary, to ensure delivery within the specified timescale.

Healthcare -Cllr Hill is continuing to push for a bespoke health facility for Royston and the villages, to include diagnostics. Both ICBs attended the last Hertfordshire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee.

There is a Health and Wellbeing event being held in Royston Health Centre on Sunday, 15th July. This is by Granta in conjunction with Roysia Surgery.

Highways - There will be a site visit to Windmill Close on Wednesday with the local Highways officer and representatives of Barkway Parish Council to find a solution to the damage to verges. The subject of speeding in Windmill Close was also raised as there are several young children playing in the area. It was agreed to investigate solutions to increase awareness for drivers.

There will be an inspection of pavements in the village.

Speeding in Barkway was raised. Speed and Volume surveys are scheduled to take place through the HLB, in several locations and results will be shared.

Following the recent walk along the bridleway with the ROW officer to determine legal widths, feedback has been received and this will be reviewed.

General - Cllr Hill has attended D-Day events and a flag raising ceremony that took place at County Hall during Armed Forces Week.

There is grant funding available through NHC (previously NHDC) – Prosperity Fund.

Cllr. Hill was asked if she could report that the drain by the War Memorial was blocked solid yet again, the situation being exasperated by the fact that the drain by the Flint House was also blocked. It seemed that some drains were just not listed on the schedule for routine maintenance, putting extra pressure on the others. Cllr. Hill would check.

Cllr. Hill was thanked for her report.

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

9. Council Administration – To notify Cllrs. of the mandatory Code of Conduct training to be undertaken by 16th August – The Clerk to re-email the link again to all Cllrs. **Action: Clerk**

District Cllr. Martin Prescott arrived in the meeting at 7.50pm.

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 – The Clerk had found evidence of a draft lease and contract for sale and a completion statement from the Solicitors dated 10.11.2017. The Solicitors had been contacted to see if they had copies of the finalised documents, however they were not responding to emails or answering phone calls.

In the meantime, the Clerk had applied for a land registry title plan to establish whether there was any lease or other agreement relating to the land.

Cllr. Hill would find out who to write to at NHC as the two officers that had been dealing with the matter previously had both moved on.

10.2.2 To receive update on progress with the Barkway & Nuthampstead Neighbourhood Plan (BNNP) – Further to the Regulation 16 consultation being carried out by NHC, a resident had submitted a request that all references to her property ‘Ashgrove’ be removed from the BNNP. In addition, any references to ‘Barkway Stud’ in Burrs Lane also be removed as they were family concerns, not village leisure facilities. Ms. Veater, the Planning Consultant, said that this couldn’t now be changed. However, if the Parish Council agreed, then she would write to the Independent Examiner of the BNNP and request this information to be removed.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to request removal of all references to ‘Ashgrove’ and ‘Barkway Stud’ from the BNNP. Resolved.

Once the NHC consultation period had closed, NHC would put forward a list of possible examiners and Ms. Veater would choose one which she felt would be most suitable.

10.2.3 To receive update on enquiry made with Thames Water regarding repairs to the Barkway Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) – Thames Water had responded indicating that their Capital Plan for the period 2025-30 included a project to address the issue of STP incapability to cope with the current levels of sewage. This however, did not allow for the additional requirements that development of BK3 would bring. Cllr. Dennis had written to our new MP, Chris Hinchliff, for his position on the matter as it was noted that he was a former member of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE).

10.2.4 To receive update on Bridleway 17 hedgerow reinstatement following meeting with HCC Public Access Officer – HCC Robert Lloyd had since spoken to his colleagues from the Definitive Maps team and had been advised that the best way to secure the width of the Bridleway would be to not plant anything along the edge of the Bridleway. The reason being that a width of 6m or more may be able to be achieved through planning gain, so hedging it up to 4-6m now would unnecessarily restrict the width to something narrower that could be ultimately be achieved.

Cllr. Swann to email Cllr. Dennis a map of site BK3. **Action: GS**

10.2.5 To consider and make comment on planning application: Full Permission Householder : Single storey rear and side extension following demolition of existing rear conservatory.

56 High Street, Barkway, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8EE. Case Ref No: 24/01266/FPH – 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**

10.3 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 were awaited and data obtained as a result of these would be analysed. (Also see Item 7)

10.3.2 To discuss arrangements for Remembrance Sunday and agree any necessary action – Cllr. Sapsford reported that an application for road closure had been submitted. A quotation for traffic management had been received of £487.60 + VAT. This was from the same company as previously used. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the quotation and book their services. Resolved.

10.3.3 To discuss with County Cllr. Hill need for reinforcing grass verges in Windmill Close to provide additional parking – See Item 7.

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 but an installation date was awaited. Cllr. Baker to chase this up. **Action: PB**

10.4.2 To receive and agree quotation for pitch maintenance required for next season – A quotation had been received of £600 + VAT for the overseeding of the centre circles and the Penalty boxes. And a quotation of £375 + VAT per pitch for vertical draining in the Autumn once the ground was softer. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to go ahead immediately with the reseeding and book the vertical draining for the Autumn. Resolved. The Clerk to contact Bullards. **Action Clerk.**

10.4.3 To receive update on arrangements for Bonfire Night on 5th Nov 2024 – Cllr Baker reported that the Friends of Barkway and Barley School had been in contact to ask if they could do the refreshments again this year. He would look into ordering the fireworks and making contact with the team of volunteers who oversaw the bonfire and fireworks on the night. **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 – It was reported that the meeting with BLHG had been cordial and there was optimism at the prospect now of having a semi-permanent museum. There was an idea put forward about having a sign made for the outside of the Reading Room to make people aware that it was the BLHG museum. (Also see item 5).

10.5.2 To receive update on progression of plans to improve accessibility to the Reading Room – Cllr. Baker pointed out that the Council needed to plan what to do with all the documents and other Council items currently stored in the Reading Room. The Clerk and Cllr. Baker to meet to discuss this further. (Also see item 5). **Action: PB/Clerk**

Cllr. Dennis resumed as Chair of the meeting.

10.5.3 To receive update on progress to chase outstanding hire fees for the Pavilion – The Clerk reported that she had made arrangements to meet the Pilates lady at another class she was holding in Buntingford in order to collect the keys from her for both the Pavilion and the Village Hall. At the last minute, the Pilates lady made contact to say she had mislaid both sets of keys. It looked likely that the £364 owed would have to be written off as a bad debt.

10.6 Environment - To receive update on progress with Carriage Wash project – It was agreed that it would be prudent to change the name of the spare bank account into which the Carriage Wash Restoration Funds were being held from ‘Barkway Parish Council’ to Barkway Parish Council Carriage Wash Restoration Fund’ ahead of a big push ahead on fund raising attempt. The Clerk to arrange this. **Action: 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 in her absence thanked Cllrs. for their contributions and would work to get everything tied up soon. The Clerk to ask Cllr. Cox to contact Cllrs. Hill, Prescott and Sapsford about contributions needed from them. **Action: Clerk**

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 09.07.2024 was £56,084.54
Petty Cash £9.28

Receipts since the last meeting:

CR £500.00 – Buntingford Cougars – Hire of Football Pitches
CR £150.00 – S & L McEwan – Deposit for Hire of Pavilion
CR £100.00 – S Castro – Hire of Pavilion
CR £80.00 – G Aldridge – Cougars Football Training
CR £100.00 – Buntingford Town FC – Hire of Football Pitches
CR £50.00 – Royston United – Hire of Football Pitch
CR £1,000.00 – T & T Wornham – Donation to Carriage Wash Restoration Project

11.2 To authorise payments to be made

Approval of payments since last meeting:

DD £112.00 – EDF Energy – Electricity Pavilion
DD £24.33 – Castle Water – Water Pavilion
DD £87.14 – Nest – Pension Contributions
DD £9.60 – Sage – Payroll
DD £58.21 – BT – Broadband
DC £29.99 – Amazon – Ink for Printer
BP £300.00 – Carol Willis – Internal Audit
BP £10.00 – The Hundred Parishes Society – Annual Subscription
BP £150.00 – J Pape – Refund of Hire Deposit Pavilion
BP £319.21 – Morgan Fire Protection – Fire Extinguisher Maintenance
BP £1,801.90 – Playground Facilities Ltd – Deposit for New Slide
BP £40.00 – Neil Bagulay – Pest Control Visit – Pavilion
BP £150.00 – S & L McEwan – Refund of Hire Deposit Pavilion

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

By bank transfer

BP £1221.50 - Catharine Toms – Clerk's Monthly Salary
BP £47.00 - Annie McPherson – Litter Picking Jun
BP £30.00 – Sophie & Charlotte Anderton – Litter Picking Jun
BP £529.05 – HMRC – PAYE Apr-Jun
BP £312.00 – Deluxe Perfect Cleaning Ltd – Cleaning at Pavilion Jun
BP £161.00 – R Bonfield – Maintenance Pavilion & Rec. Jun
BP £210.00 – Tim Drake – Line Marking and Grass Cutting Jun
BP £55.00 – Mark Thornton – Window Cleaning & Bus Shelter Cleaning
BP £36.24 – Cllr. Dennis Expenses – Printing of village sewerage pipe network plans
BP £12.00 – BWP Creative Ltd – Renewal Domain
BP £586.80 – Huttie Building Services Ltd – Installation of Nuthampstead Defibrillator

Reading Room Accounts:

Bank Balance at 09.07.2024 was £21,236.46

Receipts since last meeting: None

Payments since last meeting:

DD £47.00 – North Herts Council - Rates

DD £26.12 – British Gas – Electricity

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 13th August 2024.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.40pm.