

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting**  
**Held at the Pavilion, Barkway on Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 7.30pm.**

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

**Also present:** Mrs C Toms (Clerk/RFO), Dist. Cllr. M Prescott & County Cllr. R Brown

**Members of the Public:** No members of the public were present.

**2. To receive and accept apologies for absence:** Cllrs. D Marchant and J Cox (work commitments). Apologies were accepted.

**3. To receive Councillors' Declarations of Pecuniary Interest and to remind Councillors of their requirement to update register of interests under change of circumstances – None.**

**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 meetings – None.**

Stand Orders were suspended.

**5. To receive report from District Councillor – Dist. Cllr. Martin Prescott** reported that he would be attending to make representation at the planning appeal on 12<sup>th</sup> May relating to the development on Barkway Road in Royston. He was of the opinion that it was a totally inappropriate development for the location.

North Herts Council (NHC) had increased their portion of the Council Tax by the maximum it could of 2.99%.

The Learner Pool in Royston was now back on plan with £4.75m allocated in the budget for 2026/27.

Street Sweeping had been an issue in Barley with the service problems being caused by lack of funding. Cllr. Prescott was in contact with the Officer at NHC dealing with this service and would also pursue any issues occurring in Barkway. However, it was reminded that gullies and drains were the responsibility of Herts County Council (HCC).

**6. To receive report from County Councillor – County Cllr. Ruth Brown** reported HCC had produced a balanced budget for 2026/27 with just a 5% increase from last year. The Fair Funding Review had meant that Councils with deprived areas had been allocated more of the overall funding for the year from central government. A £55m saving had been made by making efficiencies.

£1.5m of additional funding had been allocated for the 20mph schemes. The Speed Management Strategy had changed meaning that expensive infrastructure was no longer required, and schemes could now be implemented with just signage. However, these could only be funded where it was demonstrated that the community wanted them.

In North and East Herts the Herts Lynx bus service was getting another two smaller buses to make it a more demand responsive service.

Cllr. Brown's Highways Locality Budget (HLB) had increased this year from £90k to £95K, the first increase for a decade.

The Equestrian signs requested for the B1368 on the south of the village were now in the 2026/27 budget and could be installed from April.

The Village Gates for Cambridge Road and London Road were also in the 2026/27 budget at a cost to the HLB of £14k for the 4 gates.

There were four current consultations being conducted:

- Speed Management Survey
- Sustainability Survey
- Draft Air Quality Strategy
- Local Government Reorganisation

The Local Government Reorganisation was the biggest reorganisation proposal for 50 years. There were various options to consider. Cllr. Brown was in favour of the option of two Unitary Councils for Hertfordshire as the proposed areas would tie in better with existing Health and Police Services. Parish Councils would not change at all but the changes might involve devolving of some services to more local level.

Cllr. Prescott and Brown were thanked for their reports.

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

**8. Public Session – to receive representations from members of the public** – No one present.

Standing Orders were resumed.

**9. Council Administration – To consider and agree renewal proposal for insurance with Zurich** – The Clerk reported that the insurance renewal was £2,698.67, an increase of 4% on the previous year. It was noted that the Fidelity Guarantee cover was £100k, which was considered to be more than adequate. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to renew the policy with Zurich. **Action: Clerk**

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

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

**10.2 Planning**

**10.2.1 To receive monthly update report from Redrow regarding BK3 development and agree any response needed** – The Clerk had been in contact with representatives of Redrow to ask for an update. They would hopefully be attending the April Parish Council meeting. It was noted that no hole had been made in the hedge to create an entrance to the site from Royston Road by the end of February and it was now bird nesting season until October. It was still unclear what was going on about Condition 9 (of permission granted) being met. The Parish Council submission to NHC regarding Condition 9 and ambiguity of the response received from Thames Water was still not showing on the NHC Planning Portal. The Clerk to contact the Case Officer. **Action: Clerk**

Cllr. Baker had spoken to Mr Case from Case Environmental Services to enquire if he would be able to produce a report to submit to Thames Water that would provoke a more detailed response with greater clarification as to whether the Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) would have the capability to deal effectively with the increased demand from BK3. Mr Case was of the opinion that recent works at the STP would have been upgrading of the Reed bed and removal of any build up of vegetation. This would then explain why there had been no recent overflows from there. It was agreed to allow a cost of £1,500 for this report. Cllrs. Baker and Swann to have a Zoom meeting with Mr Case to formulate a report, with any recent appropriate information relating to Condition 9 forwarded to him ahead of the meeting. **Action: PB/GS/WD**

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

**Full Planning Permission : Erection of detached shed.**

**17 High Street, Barkway, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8EA – Case Ref No: 26/00018/FPH**  
After consideration of this new application (as the shed was not within the curtilage of the house) it was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to object to the application. This was on the

grounds that it was an oversized shed and there was a lack of information about the height of the structure and what the proposed usage was. The Clerk to respond to North Herts Council (NHC). **Action: Clerk**

**10.2.3 To consider and agree any action to support Barley PC in the Planning Appeal, Development on Barkway Road, Royston** – The Clerk and Cllr. Swann had been in contact with Barley Parish Council. It was agreed to support Barley Parish Council by submitting a written statement by 12<sup>th</sup> March. Barley Parish Council, having worked in some detail on the matter, agreed to share their proposed response ahead of this date to enable Barkway PC to produce a valid and effective response for submission. **Action: GS/Clerk**

Dist. Cllr. Prescott departed from the meeting.

### **10.3 Highways**

**10.3.1 To receive cost proposal for speed and vehicle registration indicator devices** – item to be deferred to the April meeting.

**10.3.2 To agree to proceed with a survey to ascertain the support for a 20mph zone on roads within Barkway** – item to be deferred to the April meeting.

Two other Highways issues were raised:

- 1) To remind Cllr. Ruth Brown about the very poor condition of The Joint, which was in urgent need of upgrade and currently had a lack of passing points (it was noted that Reed Parish Council had also raised this matter). Cllr. Brown would check if there was any allocation within the HCC Highways budget for 2026/27.
- 2) To report that there were trees belonging to HCC Highways along the Cambridge Road that urgently needed maintenance to remove encroaching ivy as these were destroying the trees and the dying trees were becoming a potential hazard..

Cllr. Brown advised that these issues should be reported to HCC online and she would follow them up.

### **10.4 Sports and Recreation**

**10.4.1 To receive update on football activities** – The Clerk reported that most matches had been cancelled recently due to poor weather conditions having left the pitches in an unplayable state. There was still the issue of cars parking up on the pavements along Cambridge Road during football matches. Cllr. Dennis would write to Buntingford Cougars to ask them to take action to prevent this happening. **Action: WD**

**10.4.2 To receive update on necessary play equipment repairs and agree any action required** – Cllr. Baker reported that he had approached another company for an alternative quotation but they had wanted a fee of £800 to attend site to inspect the equipment before providing the quotation. It was agreed that Playground Facilities should be given to go ahead to proceed with the repair work as soon as possible as it was a safety issue. **Action: PB**

**10.5 Community Property - To acknowledge and accept offer of £25 per month from the Barkway Local History Group (BLHG) towards running costs of the Reading Room** – after discussion it was agreed that the Parish Council would be happy to accept the £25 per month – as a donation. This would be reviewed on an annual basis. The Clerk to respond to the BLHG. **Action: Clerk**

### **10.6 Environment**

**10.6.1 To receive report from recent meeting of the Carriage Wash Restoration Working Party** – It was reported that a productive meeting had taken place (see Appendix A). Cllr. Fletcher raised concern that by agreeing to engage the services of an Ecologist and a Structural Engineer it might put the grant offer from the Pilgrim Trust into jeopardy, as they would not award grants to projects already commenced. However, after discussion it was thought that these services needed to be engaged in order to obtain detailed specifications and tenders for the project and then apply for the necessary funding. These consultancy fees did not count as Capital Works. Cllr. Fletcher would contact the Pilgrim Trust to clarify matters. **Action: LF**

In her absence, Cllr. Cox reported that she had attended a Webinar on applying for a Heritage Lottery grant. Any application must demonstrate that it was a project being carried out by a responsible organisation and that the project would be given the respect it deserved. A community involvement needed to be shown (it was planned to display information boards about the project at the forthcoming Barkway Market in May). AI should not be used in the

grant application. It also had to be shown that an evaluation of the project would be carried out and that a maintenance programme would be put in place.

It was noted that there was a Carriage Museum in Maidstone in Kent – where they might have information on what type of carriages might have used the Carriage Wash in the past.

Steve Parnwell from Green Willow Ecology had spoken to Natural England and it was looking like the project could be carried out with just a Conservation Licence, which would be free of charge. However, this was yet to be officially confirmed.

It was agreed that a monthly financial report would be needed on this project and any grant application would need to include an amount as a Contingency. **Action: Clerk**

**10.6.2 To consider and agree to accept quotation from The Morton Partnership for project services** – It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the quotation of £11,430.00 + VAT.

**10.6.3 To consider and agree to accept quotation from Green Willows Associates for Ecology services** – It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to accept the quotation of £394.60 + VAT.

**10.7 Media and Communications – To receive and agree proposed draft of Easter edition of the Bulletin** – any amendments were needed to be submitted to Cllr. Cox by 20<sup>th</sup> March. She would finalise the draft and circulate it for approval. It was proposed, seconded and agreed by all to approve the draft subject to any amendments. Resolved.

## **11. Finance – 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 10.03.2026: £16,631.73

The Carriage Wash Fund A/C balance: £14,004.97

Petty Cash £9.28

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

Parish Council A/C:

CR £200.00 – Buntingford Cougars – Hire of Football Pitches

CR £120.00 – Buntingford Town – Hire of Football Pitches

CR £57.98 – Barclays Bank – Interest

Carriage Wash A/C:

CR £35.37 – Barclays Bank - Interest

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

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

DC £16.79 – Zoom – Software Subscription

DD £96.49 – Nest – Pension

DD £13.20 – Sage – Payroll Software

DD £90.23 – EDF Energy – Electricity Pavilion

DD £57.54 – BT – Broadband Pavilion

DD £28.61 – Castle Water – Water Pavilion

DC £60.00 – North Herts Council – Annual Play Area Inspection

DC £1,518.16 – North Herts Council – Dog Bin Emptying Year to 31.03.26

DC £21.99 – Amazon – Coat Pegs for Pavilion

BP £44.55 – The Printed Page – Flyers for MP Q&A Session

BP £100.00 – Richard Courtice – AV Support for MP Q&A Session

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

By bank transfer:

BP £1,280.86 - Catharine Toms – Clerk's Monthly Salary

BP £72.25 - Annie McPherson – Litter Picking Feb & Flyer Delivery

BP £38.25 – Sophie & Charlotte Anderton – Litter Picking Feb & Flyer Delivery

BP £75.00 – R Bonfield – Maintenance Pavilion & Rec. Feb

BP £375.00 – Tim Drake – Line Marking Feb

BP £336.00 – Deluxe Perfect Cleaning Ltd – Pavilion Cleaning Feb

BP £50.40 – BWP Creative Ltd – Domain Renewal 2026/27

BP £2,698.67 – Zurich Municipal – Annual Insurance Renewal  
BP £80.00 – The Diary – Annual Advertising Pavilion  
BP £77.22 – JRB Enterprises Ltd – Dog Poo Bags  
BP £84.00 – Playground Facilities Ltd – Quarterly Play Area Inspection

**Reading Room Accounts:**

Bank Balance at 10.03.2026 was £1,626.04

Receipts since last meeting:

CR £37.04 – COIF – Interest

CR £0.29 – Barclays Bank - Interest

Approval of payments since last meeting:

DD £145.53 – British Gas – Electricity

Approval of payments to be made at meeting:

BP £82.00 – R Fisher – Chimney Sweeping

Proposed, seconded and agreed by all.

**12. Correspondence** – None.

**13. Items to be deferred to the next meeting** – Carriage Wash restoration project, Survey of Seats and Benches, Reading Room re-fit, Social Media Policy for 2026, Village Pond, Security measures for the Pavilion and Recreation Ground, Traffic speeding and 20mph zone.

**14. Date of next meeting** – Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

It was also agreed to set the date for the Annual Parish Meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> May 2026.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 20.47pm.