

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 5th June 2024 at 7:00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present

Cllrs: C Hammond, J Chalmers, Y Martin, N Martineau, R Baxter, S Baker, SCC C J Spicer & WSC C Bull. 5 members of public.

The Parish Council formally thanked Carol Hammond for all that she had done for the Council during her time as Chair.

1. Co-option of new Parish Councillor

To Confirm Co-option of Sharon Baker on to the Parish Council

The Parish Council confirmed Sharon Baker has now been co-opted on to Barningham Parish Council. The Clerk will ensure that the relevant paperwork is submitted to West Suffolk council.

Action Clerk

2. Apologies for absence

The Parish council accepted and agreed the reason for apologies for the absence from Cllr. L Hebert

3. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. Cllr Baxter declared an interest in item 14.1 on the agenda. They remained and participated with the discussion.

3.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.

3.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

4. Minutes - the meeting of the minutes of the Wednesday 1st May 2024 were agreed and approved as a correct record

5. Meeting open to the public

A resident from Bardwell Road came to ask why, despite being cleared, the ditches close to her property still have water in. Cllr Spicer asked that the resident wait until we discussed the issues of flooding in Bardwell Road later on in the meeting.

Some new residents from Mill Road came to speak about the speed of vehicles using the road. It was explained that we have explored, quite extensively, options for traffic calming in Mill Road in the past and so far, we had not come up with a satisfactory solution. The option to make the road one way has been considered but rejected as it was concerned that this would just encourage vehicles to drive faster. We have also looked at blocking of the road at one end and making it a no through road. The issue with this is that there would need to be a turning circle at the closed end, and there just is not room in the road to accommodate this. The residents put forward a suggestion of a speed cushion, but as this would require 24-hour street lighting, and can be noisy for residents close by, this was also not considered to be a viable option. Cllr Spicer and the Clerk will look at the logistics of extending the 20's plenty zone and report back at a future meeting.

Action Cllr Spicer/Clerk

A member of the public, present at the meeting expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council. Unfortunately, we do not any vacancies at the moment. There are however often opportunities for members of the parish to get involved in Parish Council initiatives as a working party member.

Contact details were taken to facilitate this.

Action Clerk

6. Report from Suffolk County Councillor: J Spicer

To receive any update on grit bin and progress with flooding investigations for Bardwell Road.

There was no further update on the request for a grit bin for Bardwell Road, this will continue to be pursued. With regard the flooding in Bardwell Road Cllr Spicer has been in communication with Amanda Mays, Asset Manager at Suffolk highways, to discuss the issue. Cllr Spicer asked that the

Parish Council head up a working party of residents who have local knowledge of the flooding and that we put together a comprehensive report of where the problem is. Once we have a thorough record we can meet with SCC Andy Moore, Cllr Spicer and some residents who have been involved in the previous works to look at exactly what needs to be investigated. Cllr Bull suggested that it may be beneficial to engage also with someone from the Environment Agency. Cllr Bull will provide contact details to facilitate this. The resident, from Bardwell Road, was asked to keep a diary of any flooding near her house to be included in the report for SCC. Cllr Spicer informed those present that the A1088, from Ixworth through to the other side of Stowlangtoft, will be closed from 8th July for bridge repairs at Stowlangtoft. **Action Clerk**

7. Report from West Suffolk Councillor: C Bull

Cllr Bull reported that the West Suffolk Local Plan was approved by full council on 24th May and will now go to Secretary of State for examination by the Inspectorate. It is hoped the final adoption of the Plan will take place in the spring of 2025.

8. Chairman's reports

8.1 To include a report from the Village Hall.

The Chair reported the Village Hall held their AGM in May and that Carol Weaver was elected as Chair, Lindsay Sams as Secretary and Julie Surridge as Treasurer. Another successful fish and chip bingo evening raised over £400. The Village Hall are hoping to host another village event this year, the details of which are still to be confirmed. The Village Hall asked the Parish Council if they would be able to make a contribution of £150 towards the event. The Councillors agreed to this in principle but asked that the request was made formally.

9. Clerk's Report

9.1 To confirm adequacy of insurance cover.

The Councillors reviewed and agreed the adequacy of the insurance cover. The payment for renewal will be noted and agreed under item 10.1.

9.2 To consider requirement for annual clock service.

It was agreed that Cllr Baxter would make enquiries about re-instating the annual clock service.

The Clerk will share the contact details she holds for the horologist. **Action Cllr Baxter/Clerk**

9.3 To consider adoption of new updated Standing Financial orders.

The Clerk will circulate the new Standing Financial Orders document, after updating it with our requirements, for approval at the next meeting. **Action Clerk**

9.4 To confirm arrangements for dedicated email addresses for Councillors.

Community Action Suffolk (CAS) have now been accepted on to the government approved list as host for .Gov domain names, this means they are able to offer the .Gov domain name, and associated emails, and take advantage of the £100 government grant. This means we can have a .Gov domain name for £18 for the next two years. After that it will be £138 for two years. It was agreed that we would take up this offer. It was agreed that we would not be moving over to .Gov email addresses at this time as we had recently set up the BNPC@outlook.com addresses for those councillors that could. The Clerk has confirmed that we still require the SSL certificate and so this will also be set up. **Action Clerk**

10. Finance.

10.1 The following accounts were approved/noted.

Type	customer	Account name	VAT	Total
Payment	CCTC	grass Cutting	£158.40	-£950.40
Payment	CCTC	Aggies	-£55.00	-£330.00
Payment	CCTC	Church Cemeteries	£135.00	-£810.00
Payment	SALC	Audit	-£54.80	-£328.80

Payment	Parish online	subscription	-£3.38	-£20.25
Payment	Vicki Gay	Office	£0.00	-£126.90
Payment	Various	Salaries etc	£0.00	£2,006.16
Payment	CCTC	Aggies	-£55.00	-£330.00
Payment	CCTC	Church Cemeteries	-£10.00	-£60.00
Payment	CCTC	Church Cemeteries	-£10.00	-£60.00
Receipt	Alford Storage	Miscellaneous Receipts	£0.00	£18.00
Payment	Clear Councils	Insurance	£0.00	£753.28

Cllr Martin carried out the additional checks at this meeting.

10.2 Bank reconciliation, schedule of payments and budget report.

The Clerk provided a bank reconciliation, schedule of payments and budget report for the Councillors consideration. It was agreed that a working party would be set out to work on the budget and other financial matters to aid discussion at meetings.

Action All

10.3 To confirm submission of AGAR to PKF Littlejohn and compliance with requirements, including requirements under the Transparency code.

The Clerk has submitted the AGAR to PKF Littlejohn. Although there are currently no publication requirements explicitly relating to transparency for local councils, with a turnover between £25,000 and £200,000, Barningham Parish Council considers it to be good practice to do so and to this end the Clerk has ensured that all the relevant Transparency Code information and further accounts information is available on the website.

10.4 Current banking arrangements.

In the absence of Cllr Hebert, this item was deferred until the next meeting.

Action Cllr Hebert

11 Village matters.

11.1 To discuss the flooding in Bardwell Road and the plan going forward.

The Clerk has again contacted the SCC Drainage team to ask for an update. As discussed under item 6 a working party will be set up to bring together information to aid SCC with their investigations.

11.2 To discuss issues with grass cutting in the village.

It would appear that West Suffolk Council had missed Barningham off their grass cutting schedule. The Clerk contacted them about this, and they acted promptly and came and cut their grass areas in the village. A complaint was received about other areas in the village, which has since been addressed. The wet weather has had an effect of the timings of the grass cutting but our contractor has been prompt in rectifying any areas of concern in a timely manner.

The Primary school would like our grass contractor to give them a quote for grass cutting and other grounds works.

Action Clerk

The Lawn Cemetery grass cutting was discussed under item 15.1.

11.3 To receive update of traffic calming measures, including application for entrance gates for Bardwell Road and request for a mirror.

A query was received about erecting a mirror on a verge in Bardwell Road. The Clerk informed the resident that, as SCC were in the ownership of the verges, that any applications would need to be made directly to them. The Clerk further informed the resident that, in the past SCC did not support the erection of mirrors on their land. It was commented that the newly erected bend signs on Bardwell Road had been noted and were appreciated. We continue to struggle to find a suitable location for some entrance gates, on Bardwell Road, that meet Highways criteria. The Chair and Clerk will be meeting soon to look for a suitable location.

Action Cllr Chalmers/Clerk

11.4 To receive any update on VAS issues.

Malcolm Chalmers is continuing to try and download information from the VAS's. So far, despite getting a new cable for the Westcotec device, he has been unable to extract any data from that. There is potentially a fault with the device. Following a discussion with another Parish Council Mr Chalmers is hoping to be able to download the information from the Elan devices. We will not be able to put the device at Pound Corner, to monitor the speed in Sandy Lane, until we can download the data. All the devices are currently working, and the batteries are being changed regularly.

11.5 To receive any update on the 30mph stickers.

Cllr Chalmers has produced a map showing the locations of the replacement stickers we require. This information, giving sizes and amounts will be sent to Cllr Spicer. **Action Cllr Chalmers/Clerk**

11.6 To confirm works to bench at Bishops Croft entrance and memorial arrangements.

The bench is due to be installed shortly. At the time of the meeting the Clerk had not received any further instruction from the family wishing to have a memorial plaque on the bench, but this matter is in hand.

11.7 To confirm works to Emergency Plan.

This is still a work in progress.

11.8 To receive report from the Village Hall.

See under item 8.1.

12. Aggies Piece

12.1 To receive any update on the Aggies Piece wetland project.

Cllr Baxter has been in contact with Sam Hurst, from Norfolk Rivers Trust, and is still awaiting a response.

12.2 To discuss request received for Geocaching at Aggies Piece.

A request has been received from some Coney Weston residents, asking permission to place a few discrete caches around Aggies Piece. Geocaching is an outdoor recreational activity, in which participants use a Global Positioning System receiver or mobile device and other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers, called geocaches or caches, at specific locations marked by coordinates all over the world. There is already a Geocache at the Church in Barningham. The Parish Councillors were supportive of this but asked that any containers were made of environmentally or biodegradable materials. **Action Clerk**

13. Caretakers report Circulated.

The recent weather has led to rapid growth in all the usual trouble spots. I have had to attend to the elevated path opposite the shop several times, with both secateurs and hedge-trimmer; I have done my best to cut out the brambles there. I have had to cut back the branches around the broken litter bin at the Cricket Meadow to stop it disappearing altogether. I have also cut back the shrubs along the Sandy Lane footpath as well as scraping up some soil and leaf mulch there. I have tightened the bolts on the sign attached to the Play Area gate.

13.1 To discuss options for future replacement for caretaker role.

Our current Caretaker is planning on retiring from the role in the near future. There is likely going to be the need for a handover period so it was agreed that we should start to advertise for his replacement sooner rather than later. The Clerk will put together an advert to this end and circulate to the Councillors for agreement. Once agreed this will go on the website, facebook, noticeboard and in the village magazine. **Action All/Clerk**

14. Play area /Cricket Meadow to receive any update.

14.1 To discuss access options for potential future works to ditches. Cllr Baxter declared an interest in this item but remained and took part in the discussion.

The Clerk has received a price for the works to the ditches at the Cricket Meadow. These are as follows: (i) Clear ditch of scrub/small trees to allow free flow if needed. Chip arisings and removed from site. £675, + VAT. This price is based on 1 days' work, if there were 2 or 3 volunteers it will be possible to get it all completed in that day, otherwise, it may cost the parish another day's money.

(ii) Re-open section of filled in part of ditch to allow flow of water include Digger, £420 +VAT. Cllr Baxter will discuss these quotes with her husband and this item will be re-visited at the next meeting.

Action Cllr Baxter/Clerk

14.2 To discuss works to replace the damaged ladder equipment.

These works are being scheduled and should be undertaken soon.

15. Churchyard/Cemetery

15.1 To receive any update on works to Cemetery, to include regularity of grass cutting.

It was agreed, by all, that the Cemetery should be cut weekly in the peak growing season moving forward. This will enable the contractor to keep on top of the grass and stop it becoming overgrown and unsightly. At £50 per cut this will cost additional £250 over the whole season.

Action Clerk

Tree in Churchyard

Micheal Rutterford, from WSC took a look at this tree on the 9th of May. He reported that the tree has responded extremely well to whatever factors were causing it to decline previously. The tree has good response growth and shows good vitality. There are a few sections of deadwood but overall the tree is doing better than expected. He will instruct the West Suffolk Arb team to remove this deadwood within 3 months. They will continue to monitor this tree and be back in contact should it require further work in the future. The Parish Council had concerns that some of the dead branches posed an immediate threat to adjacent properties. Cllr Bull will follow this up and see if the works could be undertaken more urgently.

Action Cllr Bull

16. Neighbourhood Plan.

16.1 To receive feedback from NHP working party meeting and to sign off on final draft of the Neighbourhood Plan ready for public drop in consultation in July.

The Councillors voted in favour of adopting the Plan as presented to them and as such were happy for it to go forward for a public consultation. It was agreed that this public consultation would be held on Saturday 13th July, subject to the hall being available. The Clerk will liaise with our consultant about getting the plan printed. The event will be a drop in event and copies of the plan will be available on our website. Hard copies of the plan will also be made available. The drop in will herald the start of an eight-week consultation period, beginning on 13th July and ending on the 7th of September. Before the drop in a 4-page leaflet, outlining the plan and the process will be delivered to all the households in the village. At the end of the consultation period any comments received will be analysed by our consultant. The Parish Council would then need to sign off on comments and recommended changes to Plan arising from the consultation. The updated plan would then be sent off to West Suffolk Council (WSC) along with all other supporting documents. WSC will then put the plan out for a six-week consultation, WSC will do work on this, and the Parish Council will need to make plan available at this time. Those who have ask to be kept updated (in the comments previously) will be contacted by WSC.

The Plan will then be sent to independent examiner (the appointment of which we have a say in) who identifies any changes we need to make, and then the Consultant can update the Plan to reflect any changes to bring the Plan up to date. Then the plan goes to referendum, this is organised by WSC.

Action All

16.2 To discuss the potential listing of The Royal George as a Community Asset.

The Neighbourhood plan working party had previously discussed listing the Royal George as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). The Community Right to Bid (Assets of Community Value in legislation) was introduced in the Localism Act 2011. The Community Right to Bid allows communities and parish councils to nominate buildings or land for listing by the local authority as an asset of community value. An asset can be listed if its principal use furthers (or has recently furthered) their community's social well-being or social interests and is likely to do so in the future. When a listed asset comes to be sold, a moratorium on the sale (of up to six months) may be invoked, providing local community groups with a better chance to raise finance, develop a business and to make a bid to buy the asset on the open market. Historically, the Royal George has been a central hub for the community, and has served as a key venue for socializing, eating, and drinking over many years. It was understood that the pub has recently been put on the market. This means we would need to list the pub as an ACV as a matter of urgency. The Clerk will submit an application to West Suffolk Council to list the pub as an ACV. If the listing is accepted this would give the parish a period of time to put together a plan to take the pub on as a Community Asset. A resident in the village is very keen to set up a group to look at ways to preserve the pub as a working pub for the village. The Parish Council are supportive of this and will do what they can to support this initiative.

Action Clerk/All

17. Planning. to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

17.1 To discuss concerns raised regarding possible works to Old Hall, Coney Weston Road. Concerns have been expressed about the removal of a number of trees at Old Hall in Coney Weston Road. Unfortunately, the trees were not listed, and the property is not in a conservation area, which means there is no restriction on their removal. It was further understood that some works had been carried out to some of the outbuildings. As the house is listed, permission would be needed for any such works. It was unclear what exactly had been done. Cllr Bull will follow this matter up with officers at West Suffolk Council so see what action could be taken to ensure correct planning procedures have been followed.

Action Cllr Bull.

18. Biodiversity and Environment.

18.1 To discuss and adopt biodiversity policy.

Work on this is in hand.

19. Councillors reports and items for future agenda

A request to move the meeting time to 7.30 was received. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Cllr Martineau gave his apologies for the July meeting. These apologies were accepted by the Council.

20. Correspondence for information.

None received.

21. Date of next meeting It was agreed to meet on Wednesday 3rd July, as normal, despite the election.

22. To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:

22.1 Personnel Issues.

22.2 Legal Issues.