

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 4th October 2023 at 7:00 pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: C Hammond, N Martineau, T Steer, J Chalmers & L Hebert

1. Apologies for absence

Cllrs: R Baxter, WSC C Bull & SCC J Spicer.

2. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

- 2.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None.
- 2.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.
- 2.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

3. Minutes - The minutes of the Wednesday 6th September 2023 meeting were agreed and signed as a correct record.

4. Meeting open to the public 1 resident present.

5. Report from County Councillor: J Spicer

Cllr Spicer was unable to attend the meeting. She has been in correspondence with the resident in Bardwell Road about traffic calming, to provide an update. As we are aware there is a delay in any works to be carried out, due to the change in Suffolk County Councils highways contractors. The principal of a new gateway has been agreed – but the final position is still subject to agreement. Confirmation of who is covering costs is still in train. It was confirmed that the slow markings on the Coney Weston Road, need refreshing. The Clerk will ensure that this is included in any works request. Cllr Steer will look at how many of each size of the 30 mph stickers are required, so the Clerk can order them, to refresh the signs.

Action Cllr Steer/Clerk

Cllr Spicer is looking at an option to relocate a 20's plenty sign, further in to Mill Road, to help address issues of speeding there.

Action Cllr Spicer

6. Report from West Suffolk Councillor: C Bull

Cllr Bull was unable to attend the meeting as she was attending a meeting at Stanton to discuss the planning application at Shepherd Grove. Cllr Bull has been asked to report back to the Parish Council any new information that would be of interest.

Action Cllr Bull

7. Chairman's reports

The Chairman had no additional report to make this month.

8. Clerk's Report

Cllr Training, to confirm dates for Cllr Baxter training.

As Cllr Baxter was unable to attend the meeting the Clerk will liaise with her outside the meeting to confirm the dates that she would be available to attend some training. **Action Cllr Baxter/Clerk**

The Clerk is experiencing issues with her computer's performance. She has an engineer coming out next week to have a look and offer some advice. Any expenditure will be split across her four Councils. **Action Clerk**

9. Finance.

9.1 The following accounts were approved for payment.

Bench bishops Croft	Broxap	£714.00
tree works	Countryside, conservation, and tree services	£780.00
Admin	Various	£1,971.92
Training T Steer	SALC	£72.00
Website	Community Action Suffolk	£60.00
Trimming and Strimming	Countryside, conservation, and tree services	£330.00
Grass cutting	Countryside, conservation, and tree services	£316.80
Wreath donation*	Royal British Legion	£50.00

*Cllr Steer will lay the wreath on behalf of the Parish Council at the Remembrance Service in November.
Action Cllr Steer

9.2 Bank reconciliation and budget report

The Clerk provided a schedule of payments and bank reconciliation for information.

9.3 to discuss issue with Barclays bank.

Despite sending the recently requested information back to Barclays in a timely manner, we have received a letter to say they are going to restrict our account. After 4 attempts to contact Barclays, and being told there was a waiting time in excess of 2 hours, the Clerk finally managed to speak to a member of the Barclays team. They assured her that the account was not going to be restricted and that they were having issues with the checking progress, but we should hear back soon.

9.3 To discuss the 2024/25 budget.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with some figures to assist with the budget discussion for 2024/25. It was acknowledged that we will undoubtedly have to increase the precept this year as cost have continued to rise and we held the precept, at a nil percentage rise, last year. Our cash holding is down on last year and this situation is not sustainable going forward. It was anticipated that we would not need to fund any extra works for the Neighbourhood Plan, not already covered by the grant from Groundworks. Information about this will hopefully be clearer prior to the next meeting where the budget will be discussed further. A further discussion will be had at the November meeting and hopefully the Clerk will have more information, regarding the tax base, to better inform the Councillors decision.

Action All/Clerk

9.4 Potential issue with internal auditor.

The Auditor who has been carrying out our internal audits is taking semi-retirement and as such is reducing the number of audits he carries out. As a larger council he is still willing to carry out the audit for Barningham. However, due to the logistics of having the audits done for all the Councils the Clerk works for, she will be exploring alternative arrangements. It is noted that SALC could carry out this service for £261. We have been paying £300, but this has been for a very good and comprehensive service.

Action Clerk

10 Village matters.

10.1 To receive update of traffic calming measures, Coney Weston Road.

See under Cllr Spicers report.

10.2 To discuss issues with bench, St Andrews Close.

Cllr Steer has ordered a bolt for this bench to carry out the necessary repair.

10.3 Update on bench replacement, Bishops Croft.

The replacement bench, for the entrance to Bishops Croft, is due to be delivered to Peter Kerry next week. It was agreed that the new bench should be secured to concrete pads. This will add an additional cost to the installation, which should not exceed £275 in total.

Action Clerk

11. Aggies Piece

11.1 To receive any update on wetland project progress.

Cassie Chainin, from the Rivers Trust, is arranging a meeting to discuss taking the wetlands project forward. As Cllr Baxter is the lead on this for the Parish Council will let her confirm the most suitable date.

Action Cllr Baxter

12. Caretakers report Circulated.

The seeding of the levelled-up graves, reported last month, was successful due to some timely rainfall and an extra visit with a watering can. I have had to remove graffiti from some of the equipment at the Cricket Meadow where I again found glass bottles smashed against the youth shelter. I have cut back the brambles overhanging the rear row of graves in the cemetery as far as I can. There was one bins-only week this month when I took a short holiday.

Emptying the public litter bins has been something of an experience in recent weeks, particularly the one by the layby opposite the pub. I am often finding bags of what is clearly domestic waste as well as, at various times, a large fluffy dressing gown, a fleece blanket and a full sandbag (twice). That is in addition to the bath towel I found in a hedge on Church Road.

It was agreed that we will keep an eye on this issue.

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

13.1 To receive any update on damaged ladder/equipment on the cricket meadow.

The Clerk has chased Hags about the replacement ladder and is waiting for a reply.

13.2 To receive update on issues with scramble net anchor.

Cllr Steer will have a look at this and give his opinion.

Action Cllr Steer

13.3 Cricket Meadow report

There is a new inspector working for West Suffolk Council and they have highlighted a number of issues. The Clerk is in discussions with various individuals to address these issues. The Caretaker has already tackled several of the issues and has some more in hand. The Clerk will continue to work on this.

Action Clerk

14. Churchyard/Cemetery

14.1 Update on works to Cemetery, to discuss progress.

The issues with some of the grave spaces remain the same. The Clerk will work on some notices to make the regulations clearer. The area in front of the noticeboard will be cleared to make seeing these notices easier. If people are still not compliant with the regulations, we will remove items and store them in a secure box for collection.

Action Clerk

It was agreed that we will ask the contractor to carry out some more regular grass cuts in the cemetery next year. These will be programmed for biweekly cuts, with additional cuts in-between if the growth is excessive.

Action Clerk

14.2 To discuss the re-positioning of the noticeboard in Cemetery.

It was agreed that re-positioning of the noticeboard was unnecessary at this time. As discussed above it was agreed that clearing the area in front should be sufficient.

14.5 To receive update on Lychgate replacement.

The gates are booked in for installation on the 9th of October.

15. Neighbourhood Plan.

15.1 To discuss the draft plan ahead of submission for consultation.

Following a meeting with the working party and members of the Parish Council several changes to the text were made. Cllr Chalmers raised the point that the plan felt quite generic and as such it was agreed that some more work should be done to make it more personal to Barningham. This would include raising concerns about traffic, in particular around the pinch point near the shop. Cllrs Chalmers will work on a draft with Cllr Hammond and share this with the group for further discussion.

Action Cllr Chalmers/Hammond

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

16.1 DC/23/1154/OUT Outline Planning Application (means of access to be considered) for demolition of existing buildings and structures to provide new employment floorspace (Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and B8) including vehicular access with all other matters reserved. Shepherds Grove Industrial Estate East Sumner Road, Hepworth.

Barningham Parish Council fully endorse the comments made by Hepworth Parish Council and support their objections. In addition, they raised concerns about the impact the recognised increase in traffic would bring to Barningham. This would include the junction with the B1111 at the shop crossroad in Barningham, already a difficult junction to navigate with the current levels of traffic, and the junction in Stanton, from the B1111 on to the A143. It is already difficult to turn on to the A143 at this junction and the increase in traffic will only exacerbate this problem. Concerns were also raised about the considerable problems experienced at the roundabouts in Ixworth, where significant delays are already experienced at peak times.

16.4 DC/22/0445/FUL Planning application - ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with substations, inverter/transformer stations, grid connection infrastructure, grid cable route, site accesses, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, storage compound, and ancillary infrastructure, landscaping, and biodiversity enhancements LOCATION Land East of Firfield, Bowbeck, Bardwell. **The amended construction route was noted. Our concerns, previously raised regarding this application, still stand.**

17. Councillors reports and items for future agenda

17.1 To include any update on VAS placement for traffic monitoring.

Cllr Steer has placed the VAS on the grass triangle at Pound corner in a bid to record speeds of the traffic there. Unfortunately, parked vehicles are blocking the lines of vision, so it is proving difficult to take accurate readings. The device will be left here for a period of time to see if enough data can be collected to be useful.

17.2 It was reported that the post, with the school sign on, in Church Road is leaning very badly.

The Clerk will report this to SCC highways.

Action Clerk

17.3 Although recognised that the purchase of a new VAS was possibly not a viable financial option at the moment, the Clerk was tasked with finding out more details about the new VAS's at Stanton to inform future discussions.

Action Clerk

18. Correspondence for information.

18.1 Review of Polling Districts and Polling Places, circulated.

18.2 Getting to Grips with NSIPs - Wednesday 18th October, The Clerk will attend this event. Cllr Chalmers will also try to attend if she is able.

Action Clerk/Cllr Chalmers

18.3 Citizens Advice West Suffolk - October to December Newsletter. Circulated.

19. Date of next meeting 1st November 7pm 2023 in Barningham Village Hall.

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

20.1 Personnel Issues. None. 20.2 Legal Issues. None.