

BARNINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Barningham Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 17th May 2023 at 7.00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

1. Apologies for absence Cllr R Baxter

2. Minutes. Minutes of the meeting of Wednesday 11th May 2022 signed and approved as a correct record.

3. Matters arising from the minutes. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4. Report from Parish Council Chairman: Carol Hammond

Another very busy year for Barningham Parish Council, working for our village community, as always, in co-operation with our Suffolk and West Suffolk Councillors, Joanna Spicer and Carol Bull respectively. Extra thanks to our team, some still in full-time work. We are really appreciative of your contributions. A resident expressed an interest in joined the Parish Council and The Neighbourhood Plan Group. There were lots of positive feedback regarding the village Jubilee Events. Rules of Engagement on the Parish Council website were introduced in November.

The green and natural village areas, from July 2022 work planning was begun with the Tree Contractor: The Lawn cemetery, Lychgate Cemetery – to have a wildlife area, Barningham Cemetery –(new Cemetery Regulations agreed in April 2023), Cricket Meadow, Aggie's Piece which needed a lot of work on overgrowth and cutting back. We had a link with Sicon Charity, a great supplier of free trees. Memorial sites were agreed in Aggie's for Peggy Elinor, Eddie Sier and Mower. The Parish Council agreed to pay for the new bench, installed in October. November there was a lot of flooding in and beside Aggie's Piece plus Fly-tipping of a bath and tyres. Photos were taken for reporting. Removed in January 2023. There have been two other instances of Fly-tipping there since. The ditches and hedges ownership at Aggie's needs clarification.

There was some concern over the Millennium Tree on Millfield Green which was mentioned to West SC.

The overhanging tree that halved the small path to the village hall from Bishops Croft path, noted in October, was sorted swiftly by the Caretaker. The Grass-cutting tender was taken on by Peter Kerry, our Tree Contractor who attended the PC meeting in January 2023 to share his plans and advice. At this meeting was Mr Hurst from the Norfolk Rivers Trust, interested in Hopton Brook which runs to and under Aggie's. His plans were followed by a meeting in March 2023 with Joanna, Carol, Highways, Peter Kerry and a landowner. This was to assess current problems on the road and drainage and restore the natural drainage -funding by The NRTrust. The ditches and hedges ownership at Aggie's needs clarification.

The small play area surface by the village hall needed repair which was done in October. On the Cricket Meadow concern re-the condition of the zipwire seat which was photographed and sent to HAGS to monitor.

Instances of anti-social behaviour in the village concern all. In August PC Lee Andrews-Pearce gave advice regarding reporting crime procedures with phone and website information.

September report of drug use by a minor near the village hall and a smashed-up chair were dealt with. Also, after various incidents threatening elderly residents locally, I guided them to the Norfolk Suffolk Guidance on Anti-social Behaviour and how to record and report as well as informing our CEO. In January 2023 there was evidence of youngsters in the church putting lights on and off, organ and candles interfered with and comments in the visitors' book. Opening hours reviewed. March brought some serious threatening behaviour towards elderly residents in various parts of the village by a group of 6. Great distress to a seriously ill resident and the carer, also to a car driver on the B1111 whose window was smashed by a stone. Details were collected by myself, advice given and reports made on the West Suffolk C / Suffolk CC Anti-social behaviour websites and to our CEO. Names were reported, three not being residents of Barningham. Photographs of relevant evidence were sent to the CEO. In April one VAS had graffiti drawn on it plus an attempt to steal the battery was made.

Speeding is an ongoing concern, generally, especially after accidents on Bardwell Rd and residents there have recorded issues throughout the year. PC is liaising with Joanna as possible solutions are being addressed with the SCC Highways officer. Since September, the new School VAS has proved popular and effective. Parking around the school is constantly monitored. In November the school was setting up a Junior Road Safety Scheme.

The Neighbourhood Plan

After a review in July, it was decided to focus on the Plan content and a response was sent in August with our views on Strategic Response/ Overall Housing Distribution/ Site Allocations. Concerns and recommendations were made. A Lighting Audit was requested by West SC. A Councillor submitted our results on an excellent map for information. In October the group met with the West SC N Plan Adviser prior to the planning the next step - a WSC meeting re- The Local Plan. Subsequently, the focus was to be on Environmental and Sustainable issues in order to achieve something. When developers wish to hold a public event, the PC will attend.

Village News

Repair of the village sign base and kissing gate in Lawn Cemetery arranged.

Posters put up regarding Election ID.

Barningham Charity member Lesley Williams became our Local History Recorder in October 2022.

In October 2022 myself and Cllr Baxter attended The Community Emergency Rest Centre Training at the Village Hall. The Village Emergency Plan was updated.

Village Hall-October/ April - Fish and Chips and Bingo Supper raising funds for new heating. Rural Coffee Caravan. The latter to revisit May 22 from 10-12am at Jarrolds Close

Councillor Anthony Steer and myself attended wreath laying at the November Memorial at the church. The Victorian church clock has been repaired.

School Christmas Coffee morning and Christmas Fayre well attended. £900 raised at the latter.

January 2023, I researched a request from a local historian regarding a WW2 soldier on our War Memorial finding he was a local resident who married into the Lingwood family in Barningham.

Passed the information on.

May 8 - Keep Barningham Beautiful Litter Picking Day 10-12 am. Well attended. Village very clean. Caretaker doing great job.

The Defibrillator maintenance and coding is monitored regularly by the shop and PC and a Training session has been planned for June 3.

5. Report from County Councillor: J Spicer

Cllr Spicer began by thanking the Chairman, Carol Hammond, the Clerk, Vicki Gay and all the Councillors for always making her welcome and for keeping her in touch with Barningham matters. Cllr Spicer also wanted to pay tribute to William Martineau, who has stepped down from the Parish Council after many years of dedicated service. This sentiment was echoed by all the Councillors present at the meeting. Cllr Spicer reported that Suffolk County Council have had a challenging year with the pandemic, Brexit, and the war in Ukraine, although it was recognised that the cost pressures were not as great as they could have been as funding had been forthcoming from Central Government to help with these issues. SCC will be making sure that they are more rigorous in what gains can be made from new building developments in the future. For the first time the Council budget is in excess of one billion pounds. A big percentage of these funds are spent on adult care. Cllr Spicer has been working on bigger projects at SCC and asked the Councillors if they would be interested in receiving more information about them. For instance, there is a lot of work being done around renewable energy and Freeport East. It was agreed that further information would be sent to the Clerk, and she will share this with the Councillors for information and then it can be decided if we want to receive further information or have an item on the agenda to discuss these projects further. Cllr Spicer reported that numbers at Barningham Primary School are quite encouraging with 11 new children coming into Reception in September. Ixworth SET school is currently oversubscribed.

6. Report of Borough Councillor: C Bull

This year seems to have flown by and whilst we have to the most extent been able to put Covid behind us and thought things could slowly return to some semblance of normality we are now faced with the challenges that the cost-of-living increases have brought for so many individuals, businesses and indeed the Council.

We were very pleased therefore to present a balanced budget for 2023/24 which was approved at February Council which will allow us to continue to provide all our essential services and ensure we continue to maintain our standards of service. In addition, by accessing other funding we are also going to be able to move other services and projects forward. For example, with the Government Household Support funding we have been able to provide extra support for those in receipt of free school meals, foodbanks, SEND, care leavers and pensioners among others. We have also administered the allocation of housing and homeless support to help prevent or relieve homelessness as well as improve the Council tax discretionary scheme to support vulnerable residents.

In addition, we have been able to secure funding from a number of other sources including the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders and the New Anglia Enterprise Partnership which have allowed us to progress a range of initiatives in relation to economic growth and recovery.

Our Families and Communities team have also been very busy helping to support residents impacted by the cost of living rises with for example the promotion of the Warm Spaces scheme, working with the voluntary and community sectors to build capacity to encourage digital inclusion, befriending services, community transport initiatives, subsidised lunch clubs and friendship clubs. And we have continued to support local projects through our Locality Budget and Community Chest funding which was increased by 10% this year.

Over the past four years West Suffolk Council has bid for and had grants from the Government of around £7.6 million and has also secured nearly £2.7 million from two other Government funds to further boost prosperity, the local economy and tackle the cost of living in West Suffolk.

This includes £1,943,467 allocated to West Suffolk through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), and £753,701 from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF), bringing the total amount of investment to £2,697,168.

The funding will help meet Government and local aims in supporting economic, wellbeing and environmental prosperity – including support for businesses, heritage, rural enterprises, and initiatives to tackle cost of living challenges. It will provide investment, in addition to that which the council and partners are already providing, in improving local towns and high streets – including better access for people with disabilities.

We secured £1.43 million from the Government's Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to help deliver a range of energy efficiency, decarbonisation and council initiatives – this included battery energy storage such as that we are using at Mildenhall Hub. The overall value of the work being carried out is £1.8 million, with the council providing 20.5 per cent match funding to secure the grant. This is an investment which will deliver energy savings and when fully operational generate income and cost savings estimated at £80,000 per year across six council owned properties.

This is really just a flavour of what we have been doing. I have not touched on things like the Local Plan which is a major piece of ongoing work, and which went out for consultation this year. There is also the review we carried out on our markets looking at growth and development opportunities, and work on the provision of commercial units to provide opportunities for small start-up businesses not to mention all that goes on in planning and licensing. Barley Homes has completed and sold out its first developments and has a number of others in progress. These have been very well received and sold very quickly. Work is also progressing on the Western Way development which will deliver a new swimming pool and sports centre among other things. We have also produced a very good, readable publication called "The Story So Far" which gives

a lot of information on what West Suffolk Council have achieved in the last four years and I would recommend it to you.

As you are all aware we have just had the District Council Elections, so I have been very busy in the build up to these and am extremely thankful to those who turned out on polling day and voted for me. It was the first time I have been contested at an election, so it was a new experience for me at the Count and a very good feeling to be able to finally say I have been elected. However, with no one party having an overall majority negotiations are ongoing to find a way forward. We will have some challenging times ahead.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all the Parish Council members for their work on behalf of their residents and say it has been a pleasure working with you and I hope and look forward to another fruitful four years.

7. Report from Village Hall

Work on the hall since May 2022

All existing fuse boxes were replaced, and 3 new distribution boards fitted.

Ceiling lights converted to LED.

New smart meter and coin meters installed.

Future planned projects

Replace the heating system.

Replace the ceiling tiles.

Other

We welcomed two new committee members, Jan and Malcolm Chalmers

Events at the hall: The committee has held two garden parties to celebrate the Jubilee and Coronation, two fish, chip and Bingo evenings and two coffee mornings.

Hall has been hired out for several private events.

Regular activities: Circuit training was cancelled.

Rounders equipment was purchased for local use.

Safeguarding practices have been put in place and a safeguarding lead assigned.

9. Any other Business

No further business, meeting closed.