



BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting of Barley Parish Council Annual Meeting

on Monday 15th May 2023 at 8pm at the Town House

PRESENT

Cllr Brian Haughey, Cllr Jerry Carlisle, Cllr Alan Cayford, Cllr David King, Cllr Ian Turner, Cllr Ali Hearn, RFO Lynn Brett, Parish Clerk Alice Robertson

IN ATTENDANCE

County Cllr Fiona Hill, District Cllr Gerald Morris, Nick Shaw, and two members of the public.

Meeting Minutes

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair for the coming year 2023-2024

- 1.1 To consider nominations for and to elect the Chair for the coming year. Nominations were received for Cllr Brian Haughey and Cllr Carlisle for Chair. Cllr Brian Haughey was voted in with the majority vote.
- 1.2 To consider nominations for, and to elect the Vice Chair for the coming year. Nominations were received for Cllr Carlisle and Cllr Turner for Vice Chair. Cllr Carlisle voted in with the majority vote.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Fiona Hill who would be arriving late due to a previous meeting.

3. Conflict of interest

- 3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

4. Minutes

- 4.1 Council confirmed the minutes of Barley Parish Council held on 3rd April 2023 as an accurate record of proceedings.

Proposed by Cllr Turner, Seconded by Cllr Carlisle

5. Public Participation

Members of the public and councillors can raise matters of concern. No issues were raised under this item.

6. Planning

- 6.1 **Reference: 23/00772/FP, The Garage, High Street, Barley, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8JA**

Full Planning Permission: Insertion of solar panels to south elevation workshop roof.

To record Inter-meeting decision by the Council that there were no objections to this proposal.

Council Agreed.

7. Finance RFO report

- 7.1 To approve payments

The RFO had previously distributed the list of payments for approval at this meeting.

Barley Parish Council

Alice Robertson - £778.00 Clerk for Apr 2023

Lynn Brett - £774.44 - RFO for Apr 2023

Stewart Bullard - £209.38 - April cut of footpaths

HAPTC - £270.00 - Internal Audit 22/23

Broadmead - £374.40 – Repairs to Playground Equipment

TOTAL BPC £2,406.22

Barley Town House

TOTAL Town House £0.00

Council Agreed. Proposed by Cllr Turner, Seconded by Cllr King

7.2 To present finalised year end accounts 31 March 2023 along with approved budget for 2023/24

The RFO presented the accounts, copies of which had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL ye 31/3/23

Banks

- Opening balance £32322, Closing balance £43098, excess income over expenditure £10776. Bank balances have therefore recovered with the reduced expenditure.
- Monies are still earmarked for a number of projects that have yet to take place; these may include replacing the container with one or more newer ones, replacing the cess pit behind the Scout Hut, possible sports changing rooms, Town House Roof

Incomes

- Incomes were in line with budget at £46587. This was an increase on the previous year £28995, an additional £17592.
- This included vat recovery £8689 and the precept increase £6000 . Specific grants were received £1310 (NHDC 280+435+595) and the income from Club Room recovered (after Covid holiday) £1708. There was a slight shortfall on allotments and other incomes

Expenditure

- Maintenance and repairs includes works to Town House £6171, Picnic Table £425, Club Room AC £244
- Parish Council continues to pay the Insurance costs for the Town House
- Professional fees: Audits for the Parish Council (£825+£300), Curwens relating to Club Room new lease £2203
- Plaistow maintenance includes new trees which were covered by grant, £280; gates £747 and other ground maintenance £1320
- Donations included Jubilee costs £1135, RCT £250 Air Ambulance £250 and Childrens Christmas party £400
- Village maintenance: includes footpaths £1034 and Churchyard £300 and dog bins costs £480
- Printing and stationery includes RFO/Clerk expenses £494 plus inks £73 and Jubilee printing book cover £535
- IT includes MS, Norton, Website licences
- Town House Roof: long term renovation/repairs could be quite costly, decided in 2019/20 to put aside £5k pa for future repairs; survey was done and some relatively minor repair work at the back costing £12k has been completed and taken from Sinking Fund 21/22

Budget set for 2023/24:

- Precept was £28k 22/23 and is £29.4k 23/24
- Costs allow for Changing Rooms, Containers, Drainage etc. and the continued transfer to a sinking fund for the Town House roof.

Members resolved to accept the year end accounts and budget for 2023/24.

Proposed by Cllr Turner, Seconded by Cllr Cayford.

BARLEY TOWN HOUSE ye 31/3/23

- Opening bank balance £26912, closing balance £29843, leaving income over expenditure £2931
- Lettings have recovered on the previous two years and exceed former levels, being 76% up on 21/22 £20418
- Expenditure increased on previous year by £4625 in total
- Electricity (which included a correction to previous year, understated) was £3961 (£562 21/22)
- Letting Officer fees increase in relation to lettings, £2904 (£1156 21/22)
- Cleaning includes schedules deep clean and janitorial supplies (£2522 compared to £140)
- Marriage licence £1310 is renewed every 3 years
- Equipment included new cooker £450 and hand driers £358
- Extinguishers/Alarms includes regular maintenance plus repairs/call outs and Electrical repairs £523
- Support continues from the Parish Council -paying the insurance and putting aside money for a roof fund

Members resolved to accept the year end accounts for 2023.

Proposed by Cllr Turner, Seconded by Cllr Cayford.

7.2.1 The RFO then presented the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of Internal Control for the financial year 2022-23 which she had circulated to members prior to the meeting.

The Council noted and approved the contents of the RFO's report and agreed that the controls currently in place are effective.

7.3 To consider and agree the Internal Audit Report in conjunction with the Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2022/2023.

- 7.3.1 The RFO read out to the Council each item in “Section 1 - Annual Governance Statement”, and “Section 2 - Accounting Statements” of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return 2022/23 Form 3, for the purposes of acceptance and agreement by the Council.

Council agreed each of the statements.

- 7.3.2 The RFO had prior to the meeting circulated to all councillors the 2022/2023 Internal Audit Report dated 3rd May 2023 prepared by Hertfordshire Internal Audit Service.

The RFO highlighted the comments and recommendations made by the Internal Auditor which the council and council officers noted. It was agreed that where necessary these would be addressed at the earliest opportunity.

Cllr Hearn questioned whether the Internal Audit Report with new supplier Hertfordshire Internal Audit Service was a success over previously used supplier Hardcastle Burton. The RFO and Clerk commented that there was benefit regarding process and policy recommendations given by the internal auditor but that there was no money saving benefit in this instance.

The Council agreed to defer any decision for next year’s Internal Audit suppliers until after the External Audit was complete.

7.4 Update on new banking arrangements

- 7.4.1 The RFO updated the meeting concerning the new banking arrangements and confirmed the transfer of the accounts from Barclays Bank to Natwest Bank has started. Completion will take 6-8 weeks. The Barclays accounts will remain open for the time being.

- 7.4.2 RFO Brett also confirmed the new arrangements with Natwest Bank including free banking and free accounting software.

- 7.4.3 A formal complaint has been submitted by the RFO to Barclays Bank regarding the lack of customer support for us as a business customer.

- 7.5 The RFO advised that she had not yet received any notification from the council’s insurers of any increased insurance premium in respect of the Club Room following the required increase in the building sum insured. The RFO was asked to seek confirmation from the council’s brokers Gallaghers that they had actioned the request by the RFO regarding the required increase in the sum insured following the recent building cost reinstatement valuation undertaken by Savills in March this year.

- 7.6 The Clerk advised that there will be unbudgeted costs from NHDC for this council’s contribution towards the costs for the recent Parish Elections. The amount has not yet been quantified by NHDC.

8. Reports from County/District Councillors

8.1 Report from County Cllr Hill.

- 8.1.1 Waste and recycling centres are currently in discussions about only allowing county residents and disallowing those outside the area the ability to use their facilities e.g. Royston only allowing NH residents. Thriplow only allowing Cambridgeshire residents etc. No decision on this has been taken as yet.
- 8.1.2 Libraries took part in various coronation events and Cllr Hill extended her thanks for all the work that went into Barley's coronation event.
- 8.1.3 Cllr Hearn raised concern about the number of accidents at Picknag Road cross roads citing 4 accidents in the last 6 months. Cllr Hill confirmed that this is being reviewed with Highways with urgency with new white lines being repainted and other measures also being considered.

Cllr Turner suggested red rumble strips to help raise awareness.

Cllr Haughey suggested a flashing sign.

Cllr Hill acknowledged requests and confirmed all possible new installations of signage within the law are and will be considered.

- 8.1.4 A further full report on other items will be issued at the Barley Village Meeting being held on Wednesday 17th May 2023.

8.2 To receive a report from the NHDC District Cllrs following recent election.

- 8.2.1 Cllr Morris has been re-elected. He also confirmed that another election will be going ahead in a years time following procedural changes that have taken place affecting the timing of district council elections.
- 8.2.2 Cllr Morris advised that a member of the public in Picknag Road had raised concerns about subsidence at the side of their house which he had been able to resolve this week through discussion with Settle Homes who came and fixed the problem today.
- 8.2.3 A further full report on other items will be issued at the Barley Village Meeting being held on Wednesday 17th May 2023.

9. Reports from Working Parties, Committees and Portfolio Holders

9.1 Town House

- 9.1.1 Nick Shaw, Town House committee chair reported that lettings are increasing but that fundraising efforts for the maintenance of the Town House are lacking. Cllr Turner suggested he could be involved in organising future fundraising events. Agreed to be discussed at the next Town House committee meeting.
- 9.1.2 Due to Wedding Notices being required in the Town House notice board, it was requested that the Town House noticeboard is not to be used for Parish Council notices going forward. Council agreed.

- 9.1.3 Nick Shaw has requested that weeding for the carpark behind the Town House be included in the Bullards contract.
- 9.1.4 Cllr King suggested Bullards be asked to provide a quote to re-surface the access path down to the Plaistow for better wheelchair access.
- 9.1.5 Cllr Haughey confirmed that all health and safety checks are satisfactory.

9.2 Plaistow

- 9.2.1. Cllr Turner reported that Broadmead Leisure have carried out the playground repairs that were necessary as per their report with the exception of the gap between the gate and the post.

Cllr Turner to expand the distance between the gate and the post in the playground by planeing one of the surfaces.

- 9.2.2 Cllr King proposed Dog Poo Bag Dispensers to be installed in the Plaistow. To be looked into.
- 9.2.3 Council agreed that the replacement of 2 x dead trees for the Plaistow to be discussed after the summer when weather more favourable for planting.
- 9.2.4 Cllr Turner confirmed the lost lock on the access gate the bottom of the Plaistow has been replaced.

9.3 Kings Coronation

The Parish Clerk reported a successful Coronation Picnic Event enjoyed by all who attended and thanked those involved for their contributions and efforts.

9.4 Barley Show, 8th July

Cllr Haughey confirmed himself and Cllr Turner along with Glyn Stacey and a team will be putting up the new Marquee on Thursday 6th July.

The Clerk reported she has received confirmation that the Police will attend in a community interest capacity.

All other organisation of the show is currently in the hands of Glyn Stacy. No further information to report.

9.5 Tennis Club

Yvonne Lee has amended the proposed agreement with the Tennis Club and forwarded it to them for their approval. Cllr Carlisle to follow up.

9.6 Updates on outstanding items from previous agenda:

- 9.6.1 A summary of the status for the proposal for new Scout Hut was presented to the council by Cllr Carlisle for the purposes of new council members. It was confirmed that the Council are, since their meeting with the Scout Hut committee, waiting on a revised plan to be put forward by the scouts for discussion.
- 9.6.2 The Parish Clerk confirmed the arrangement of the presentation by the Probation Service for services they can offer the parish, for our consideration. June 5th at 7.30pm in the Town House
- 9.6.3 The Parish Clerk also confirmed a presentation by CDA regarding an Affordable Rural Housing Survey in Barley, scheduled for July 3rd at 7.30pm in the Town House.
- 9.6.4 Cllr Hearn confirmed she has checked the existing Defibrillator is set and that the battery is still fully charged. We have requested to be notified of when we can apply to be added to The British Heart Foundation waiting list for second defibrillator. we have applied to be notified when we can apply for a grant towards the new defibrillator, of which we will have to also contribute some expense to.

Cllr Carlisle confirmed that instructions had been given to Tim Ashcroft to submit a planning application for the installation of a second defibrillator at the back of the Town House. Listed Building requirements will mean decision on this will take some time.

10. Clerks Report

- 10.1 The Monitoring Officer will provide Code of Conduct training on Tuesday 16 May 2023 from 7pm for Cllr Cayford.
- 10.2 Councillors need to submit any Election expenses incurred by 1st June to NHDC.
- 10.3 A sharing/filing policy with the RFO and Clerk is being created will be shared in due course.
- 10.4 The Village Noticeboards around the village need some care as all show signs of rot and weather damage. Clerk also suggested the installation of a new metal noticeboard by the Playground in the Plaistow. Refurbishment costs and new noticeboard costs to be researched and presented in due course.
- 10.5 There have been complaints of falling apples and wasps in the summer on the path leading to The Plaistow hampering access. Discussions with owner of trees on agreed action to take place.
- 10.6 Clerk suggested that she establish and implement a Barley Business Directory to be featured on the Village Website. An invitation via the Parish Council Facebook page would be advertised to any Barley residents who can offer a service or business who would like to be featured. Members thought this a good idea and asked the Clerk to action.

10.7 The Clerk advised that the council should have a suitable Safeguarding Policy and a Social Media Policy developed and put in place and uploaded to Village Website as soon as possible. The council agreed and asked the Clerk to action.

10.8 Confirmed the Annual Village Meeting is being held on 17th May 2023.

11. Items for Future Discussion

The Armed Forces Covenant and Town and Parish Councils

The Council agreed in principle to sign up and support. Council to agree specific pledges.

12. Date of next Barley Parish meeting and items for the agenda

To note the next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 5th June 2023, at the earlier time of 7.30pm (to allow for the Probation Service Presentation).

Contact: Alice Robertson - Clerk to Barley Parish Council

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