

**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE TOWN HOUSE ON MONDAY 4th JUNE 2018**

1. Present

Cllr Jerry Carlisle, Cllr Ian Turner, Cllr Yvonne Lee, Cllr Peter McPartland, Cllr Mel Chammings, Cllr Bill Sterland, County Cllr Fiona Hill, District Cllr Gerald Morris, Cllr Tony Hunter, Mrs Laura Childs (Clerk), Mr Tim Martin (RFO) and 2 members of the public.

2. Apologies

Mr Nick Shaw, Chairman of the Town House Management Committee, Mr Graham Clark who acts as police liaison on behalf of the Parish Council.

3. Councillor's declaration of interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

4. Minutes of last meeting

Mr Martin, RFO, asked for some minor amendments to the minutes of the last meeting. The amount claimed back from the Plunkett Foundation was £1,550 rather than the £1,400 stated in the minutes and it was Mr Martin who suggested the nil return and not the FSA. He additionally asked it to be noted that he had circulated the Internal Controls Report prior to last months meeting when it was then discussed and agreed upon.

Subject to the above amendments the minutes of the meeting held on 16th April 2018 were read and approved.

Proposed by Cllr McPartland and seconded by Cllr Turner.

5. Matters arising

County Cllr Hill confirmed that she has spoken with Mr Derek Jerrard of Ringways, HCC highways contractor, who has confirmed that some investigatory works have been carried out and County Cllr Hill was reassured that the drains would be cleared, although no actual time frame for the works was given.

County Cllr Hill had no update on any further works planned in regard to the junction at Flint Cross.

Cllr Hunter could provide no further update on his quest to establish the ownership of Bankside. Cllr Carlisle thanked him for his continuing efforts. It was noted however that with the trees now being in full leaf and the straw lorries that had now started travelling through the village the situation was becoming quite dangerous. Several large branches had been dislodged by the high straw loads and concerns were raised that these may hit either cars or pedestrians and were dangerous if left in the middle of the road. The Clerk agreed to contact Herts Highways fault line and request that they are cut back as soon as possible.

In his absence, Mr Graham Clark, who acts as police liaison on behalf of the Parish Council, had emailed the Clerk to report on his most recent meeting with Sgt Guy Westwood. He advised that there had been no speed checks this month in the village. This was due primarily to the officers being overstretched with other priorities. It is hoped that Sgt Westwood would be available to attend our meeting in July and he asked if he could speak early on in the meeting and be advised of any specific issues that we wanted to discuss prior to the meeting, in order to allow him to prepare.

The Clerk reported that a potential new Parish Clerk had been found, Mrs Maryna de Klerk, who was attending the meeting, had spoken with both the Clerk and the Chairman about the position and was attending the meeting to answer any questions from the other Councillors and understand what was involved with the role.

Cllr Carlisle confirmed that he had met with Mr Emerson regarding the grant application to be submitted to the Police & Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire and fine tuned the wording prior to its submission.

County Cllr Hill spoke about an upcoming meeting that the police host called a 'Barn Meeting'. These are held to enable the police to communicate with rural communities and everyone is welcome to attend although it is mostly the farming community who attend to share information and issues. The next meeting is scheduled for 27th June at Thrift Farm, Baldock Road, Royston.

6. Planning

Case ref: 18/01395/FP: Erection of two 3-bed semi-detached dwellings together with associated parking and amenity space. Fox & Hounds, High Street, Barley, SG8 8HU

This application was received very late on the day of this meeting and so it was agreed that the Clerk would request an extension of time to consider this application more fully at the next meeting on 2nd July 2018.

Case ref: 17/02316/1: Residential development of eight dwellings, garages, parking and landscaping. New access road, car park for existing surgery, relocation of existing electricity substation and double garage and store to existing garage for 'Chadwick', at The Gables, High Street, Barley, Herts, SG8 8HY

Cllr Lee confirmed her attendance at the recent Planning Control Committee meeting where she spoke on behalf of the Parish Council with objections to this application. Cllr Lee reported with great disappointment that the decision had been in favour of granting permission and that the development would be going ahead with some planning conditions attached. Cllr Lee expressed sadness that the committee appeared to lack any curiosity about the application and were not enquiring enough. Additionally she felt that the committee had not given full consideration to the impact of the development on the Conservation Area in Barley. Cllr Carlisle additionally expressed his disappointment that this application was granted despite the fact that it was contrary to both the existing Local Plan and the emerging plan.

This led Cllr Lee to speak about the possibility of the village funding a Conservation Area Statement that could be adopted by the local authority enabling them to have some sort of definitive statement which gives guidance when considering further applications within the villages Conservation Area. Cllr Lee suggested that we approach Mr Tom Allington, Senior Planning Officer or Mr Richard Tiffin, Area Planning Officer at North Herts District Council to see if they would enter into a dialogue about our proposal. District Cllr Morris offered to approach Mr Tiffin on our behalf as he was meeting with him shortly. The prospect of a day time meeting was discussed and agreed that we would work around Mr Tiffin's availability.

7. Town House

In the absence of Mr Nick Shaw, Chairman of the Town House Management Committee the Clerk reported that he had emailed to advise that there was nothing to report other than the fact that the upstairs lighting problem has now been sorted out.

The Lettings Officer, Mrs Robin Saklatvala has advised that there are no weddings booked for this month and that only the regular users were booked in. Concerns were discussed regarding the frequency of the more lucrative bookings and Cllr Chamings and Mr Martin both agreed that it would be prudent to have a meeting with the rest of the Town House Committee to discuss how best to improve this situation. Mrs Saklatvala has reported that she has had lots of recent viewings of the Town House for potential weddings next year but as yet no confirmed bookings.

8. Financial Officers Report & Signing of Payments

Mr Martins reported that the following payments are now due:-

Barley Parish

Tim Martin	RFO for May	£ 240.00
Laura Childs	Clerk for May	£ 363.60
Geoff Booth	Grass cutting of the church yard in May	£ 255.00

It was agreed that all of these payments should be made
Proposed by Cllr McPartland and seconded by Cllr Sterland

Barley Town House

Robin Saklatvala	Letting Officer fee for May	£ 82.50
Carol Robinson	Cleaning May	£ 72.00

Wedding Deposit Refund

Laura Hughes	Deposit refunded	£ 150.00
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It was agreed that all of these payments should be made
Proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr Sterland

Mr Martin explained that we have now received a refund from VAT of £3,355.41 of which £599.54 is through Town House expenditure has been transferred to their bank account.

Mr Martin confirmed that as part of our approved grant from the Plunkett Foundation re the Fox and Hounds, he had submitted a claim for £ 1,553. With regards to the company formed during the bid process Mr Martin advised that as per the FCA website we have seven months to submit what will be a nil return. The next stage would then be to officially dissolve the company - to be discussed at a future meeting.

Discussions took place about putting some of the Parish Council's financial resources in a savings account. Cllr Carlisle expressed a view that he wouldn't want to see any funds tied up for longer than 12 months. Mr Martin agreed to investigate options available.

Prior to the meeting Mr Martin had circulated a copy of the Parish Councils Annual Audit Report for the last financial year 2017-18 which he received back from our accountants with no major issues raised. There were a couple of minor recommendations which included the suggestion of a more frequent review of income and expenditure against original budget and following discussions it was agreed to review this every 6 months, as is our current practice. It was felt that our current expenditure didn't warrant a more frequent review and that our controls were considered as being effective. Should this change however then we would of course reassess this policy. Cllr Carlisle signed the Accounting Statement for the external auditors.

Cllr Carlisle reviewed the Annual Governance & Accountability Statement for 2017/2018 with the rest of the council members and then signed to confirm acceptance.

It was agreed that a copy of the notice advising the Parish that they can view the accounts, as posted on the Village Notice Board, should also be posted on the village website.

Cllr McPartland and Mr Martin met prior to the meeting to review and revise the Financial Regulations for the Parish Council. It is expected that they will be ready for review by the full council shortly.

Discussions took place with regards to email correspondence received from the Plunkett Foundation inviting the parish council to continue its membership with them on a 'supporters' basis. The fee for this is £50 and is basically a donation to the Plunkett Foundation to assist them in continuing their good works. It was agreed as a gesture of goodwill to continue with our support.

The bank statements and balances of accounts were distributed and reviewed.

9. Recreation Ground

Cllr Turner reported that all was well with the Plaistow although he had been unable to get hold of Mr James King to instruct him to repair the gate post into the playground. An alternative mobile number was given.

Cllr Turner advised that he had emptied the bins on the Plaistow but had found some to contain dog waste bags. This was particularly disappointing to hear given that the dog waste bins are almost next to the general waste bins. The Clerk was asked to place an article in The Diary to ask that people place the correct waste in the appropriate bin.

It is anticipated that the annual RoSPA report of the playground will shortly be received as the inspection was expected to take place sometime during May / June.

10. Scout Hut

Cllr Carlisle reported that he has been chasing for an amended engrossment of the proposed new lease to the scouts for signature but the solicitor dealing with it has been away. Hopefully this should be to hand shortly to enable this long outstanding matter to be completed.

Cllr Lee asked, now that we have received a preliminary build cost estimate for the proposed changing room facilities, how it is proposed to progress the project. Cllr Carlisle suggested that we wait until the grant of the new lease has been completed before proceeding any further. It was noted that the planning permission for the works was due to expire shortly and the Council will need to apply for a new consent to include the work to the trees at the rear of the Scout Hut. Cllr Lee proposed that a sub-committee is formed to take the project forward.

11. Health & Safety

Cllr Chamings advised that the next meeting with Drew & Baltrop, health & safety advisors to the Parish Council is scheduled for July and Cllr Chamings agreed to let Cllr Carlisle know of the date. There was nothing further to report.

12. Correspondence

No correspondence was received other than that already circulated via email.

Discussions took place about the need to circulate paper copies of the NHDC Members notices which were the main bulk of the correspondence as an electronic copy was now distributed. All Councillors agreed that they would prefer to receive this information via email. The Clerk will however continue to distribute any other hard copies of correspondence as and when it is received.

13. Any Other Business

Cllr Carlisle discussed the various grass cutting issues around the village, particularly around the footpath network. The Clerk advised that a request had been made, via the village Facebook page to cut back the grass along the path between the Plaistow and Picknage Road. Mr Mark Davis, who lives in the village, has put forward his services and it was agreed that the Parish Council would ask him to attend to all of the footpaths. Mr Geoff Booth would continue to attend to the grass cutting in the church yard.

Mr Martin advised that the police have given permission for the Parish Council to post their monthly newsletter on the village website.

Cllr McPartland led a discussion regarding the posting of Parish Councillors contact details on the Village Website page.

Cllr Turner advised that the Church Fete is to be held this Saturday at Homestall and that they are using one of the marquees. He has agreed to assist with erecting the marquee and asked if anyone else wanted to help.

Meeting finished at 22:15

Next meeting 2nd July '18