



**Barley Parish Council Meeting: 7th September 2026 at 19:30,
Town House, Church End, Barley.**

Meeting Minutes

Present

Chair Yvonne Lee, Vice Chair Alison Hearn, Cllr Jerry Carlisle, Cllr Alan Cayford, Cllr Ian Turner, Cllr Ian Northen, District Councillor Martin Prescott.

In attendance – Three members of the public.

1. Apologies - RFO Lynn Brett, Clerk Alison Gibson, County Councillor Ruth Brown, Town House Management Committee Alan Wiltshire

2. Declarations of Interest - none

3. Minutes

The minutes of the Barley Parish Council meeting held on 6th July 2026 were approved.
Proposed by Cllr Cayford, seconded by Cllr Turner

The minutes of the Barley Parish Council meeting held on 10th August 2026 require a minor edit in the final paragraph of Section 4 adding "including urgently addressing the priority items from the Heasells' report" after "planned maintenance programme".

4. Public Participation

The chair confirmed that this is a Parish Council meeting and not an open public meeting so any questions or points which the public wish to raise needs to be done at this stage of the agenda.

Two members of the public were in attendance specifically in relation to the planning agenda item, with another attending for general interest.

Those attending in relation to the planning agenda items commented that the revised plans are preferred due to moving the front of the property in line with neighbours and reducing the overall scale such that there is a reduction in overlooking.

5. Action updates

The action log was reviewed and updated.

Update in relation to Item 68 – the locations for the signs is agreed. The Town House one is done, with the doctors' surgery one currently outstanding.

Update in relation to Item 69 – we need to meet the Barley Cricket Club to discuss options before proceeding. The cheaper cabinet does not meet current requirements, and there is a discrepancy in costs between the email and T&Cs.

6. Planning

6.1 26/01727/FP- Full Planning Permission: Erection of self-build dwelling with Juliet balcony, solar panels, and access steps following demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings. Hard landscaping to include creation of no. 2 parking spaces to front elevation. Installation of bin storage (as amended by plans received on 21st August 2026). Deadline September 15th 2026.

In addition to the comments made by the public, Cllr Carlisle noted that there may still be overlooking issues into the garden of the adjoining property no. 4 Cambridge Rd, and that there is still no information on accessibility of the rear garden by disabled people or those with impaired mobility. Similarly there is no information as to how it is proposed to deal with noise break out from the plant room at the front of the proposed development. It was agreed to write to NHDC to advise that until these two items have been fully addressed BPC continue to raise an objection to the proposals.

7. Reports from County/District Councillors

7.1 To receive a report from County Cllr Brown – no report circulated in her absence.

7.2 To receive a report from District Cllr Prescott

Cllr Prescott noted that central government have recently announced they are pausing local government reorganisation. This will mean that the proposed reorganisation moving Barley Parish to the East Herts authority is delayed and may not proceed. It was further noted that the significant time and money wasted on a process now paused, is a significant frustration.

Cllr Prescott has chased Jeanette Lowdon on road cleaning – no answer yet – and suspects that staffing challenges means they struggle to adhere to the road sweeping schedule.

8. Finance RFO report for the Parish Council

8.1 To consider and approve payments for the Council.

Barley Parish Council				
EXPENSES				
Payee	Date	Amount	Inv.Ref.	For
Lynn Brett	01/09/2026	£339.81	01/09/26	RFO gross pay & expenses July/Aug
Alison Gibson	27/08/2026	£635.48	Jul-26	Clerk gross pay & expenses July
Alison Gibson	27/08/2026	£305.34	Aug-26	Clerk gross pay & expenses Aug
Alison Gibson	12/08/2026	£35.94	D4L6955	3D metal defib AED wall sign paid AG
Alison Gibson	12/08/2026	£41.33	NK00443727	Seton AED user guide and signs paid AG
CDA Herts	24/08/2026	£40.00	27/CM	Membership 1.9.26 - 31.08.27
Heasell Elec Serv Ltd		£1,603.19	447165	Electrical work for Barley Show
PKF Littlejohn	10/08/2026	£378.00	SB20260472	PKF external audit 25/26
TOTAL BPC for approval		£3,379.09		
For Information				
Peninsula	26/07/2026	£223.45	U005793474	Paid via DD
Peninsula	26/08/2026	£223.45	U005851498	Paid via DD
Heasell Elec Serv Ltd	19/03/2026	£1,437.17	HEA13232	
North Herts Council	19/06/2026	£582.48	702657	Dog bin and collect approved August meet pd 20/8/26
HMRC Paye	23/07/2026	£604.30		PAYE April - June 26 PD DD
TOTAL BPC for information		£3,070.85		PAID/PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

Total BPC for approval £3,379.01 subject to being reimbursed by Barley Show for the Heasells invoice (£1,603.09)

Proposed Cllr Turner, Seconded Cllr Cayford

8.2 Update on AGAR

All approved. To publish on the noticeboard and website.

8.3 To start the discussion on budget requirements for 2027/2028

The chair urged councillors to review the circulated papers ahead of next meeting to facilitate a fuller discussion.

It was noted that the clubroom rent could cease from May unless a tenant is secured. The loss of this income, together with associated costs currently incurred by the tenant, such as insurance, could have a significant impact on 2027/2028 and beyond.

It was further noted that we need to reflect the decision made under item 10.7 in relation to payrise and backpay for the Clerk and RFO.

9. Finance RFO report for the Town House Charity (As sole Trustee)

The chair noted that the current invoicing cut-off of 25th of month was causing practical challenges for the RFO and suggested bringing it forward to 20th to allow sufficient time, which was unanimously accepted.

9.1 To consider and approve payments for the Town House Charity (as Sole Trustee).

<u>Barley Town House Charity</u>					
<u>EXPENSES</u>					
Payee	Date	Amount	Inv.Ref.	our ref	For
Elviria Gusejnova	02/09/2026	£572.00	Jun-Aug 26		Letting & cleaning Fee June - Aug 26
TOTAL TH for approval		<u>£572.00</u>			TO APPROVE FOR PAYMENT
<u>For Information</u>					
PNET	23/07/2026	£29.99	ET 3948488-1	TH	paid by DD
PNET	24/08/2026	£29.99	ET 3948488-1	TH	paid by DD
NHDC	1/7/2026	£47.00		TH	paid by DD (none Feb/march)
NHDC	3/8/2026	£47.00		TH	paid by DD (none Feb/march)
Octopus	10/7/2026	£77.81		TH	Electricity supply DD monthly charge
Octopus	11/8/2026	£60.76		TH	Electricity supply DD monthly charge
Everflow Ltd	23/7/2026	£55.38	5743042	TH	Water supply DD
Everflow Ltd	24/8/2026	£54.64	5843120	TH	Water supply DD
TOTAL TH for Information		<u>£402.57</u>			PAID/PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

Total TH for approval £572.00

9.2 To start the discussion on budget requirements for 2027/2028

It was suggested that this should coincide with BPC budgeting.

10. Reports from Working Parties, Committees and Portfolio Holders

10.1 Town House Charity (as Sole Trustee) – Alan Wiltshire / Cllr Cayford

10.1.1 To receive a report from the Chairman of the Town House Charity Committee together with confirmation that all necessary safety checks have been carried out.

An email report was submitted by Alan Wiltshire and noted the following:

- The defibrillator is now on the cooker circuit and therefore will not switch off as and when the noise meter cuts in.
- New first aid kits are in place and the old ones have been removed
- Richard Emerson and Ella Gusejnova are planning to resign from the Committee.

Cllr Cayford noted that while Mr Emerson's resignation was immediate, he advised that Joe Ells has been co-opted to the committee in his place, and that Ella Gusejnova has stated that she is willing to remain as Letting Officer for a few months until a replacement has been found and appointed in her stead.

Cllr Lee pointed out that the proposed roundtable meeting is an important short-term focus in order to consider in particular marketing and the revised Terms of Reference.

10.1.2 To receive an update on the electrical required works and action plan.

Alan Wiltshire's email update stated that in response to previous safety report an updated Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) report has been issued. As part of recent works the spotlights upstairs have been replaced.

10.1.3 To receive an update on income generation for the Town House.

Following its recent meeting the Town House Charity Committee has a renewed emphasis on marketing. One issue noted is the Town House website sits within the Barley Village one. Cllr Lee suggested that this should be taken forward at the planned joint meeting

10.2 Cllr Cayford

10.2.1 Plaistow, Children's Playground, Green areas

To receive a report and note any issues arising in the Plaistow together with confirmation that all necessary weekly safety checks have been carried out.

Cllr Cayford reported that the Plaistow has been regularly inspected. Broadmead have been instructed to address the flagged items in the play area safety report. Signage for the play area is required with the clerk's contact details.

There is one gate catch at the Bankside entrance that needs replacing – this is in hand.

Work on the overhanging yew tree (which also affects the scout hut) is scheduled for 16 September

In relation to the Town House – call points, emergency lighting, and extinguishers have been checked. The extinguisher in the committee room has a broken seal and missing pin, which will be addressed at the same time as servicing, which is due this month in any case.

10.2.2 Bench project – no progress to date. The original plan was to get a group of willing volunteers to help repair 40 benches but it is proving complicated. Instead we will now pursue a rolling programme of approximately four benches per month. Cllr Cayford to initiate a rolling programme of bench repairs.

Cllr Lee received some correspondence in relation to an incident on the Plaistow on 16 August. While a village family was playing tennis, it appears that someone fired an air rifle from an adjoining property, most likely Bankside, with the projectile coming over the boundary. The matter was reported to Tennis Club Safeguarding Officer and is in the hands of Herts Constabulary.

10.3 Cllr Turner
10.3.1 Traffic and Speed Management – Update on MOU with Police and Crime Commission

Nothing further to report at this time.

10.3.2 20mph consultation

Cllr Lee to take it up with Clerk to understand the status of our submission.

10.4 Cllr Carlisle
10.4.1 Club room contract and marketing

No change on the current contract, with the lease due to end in May 2027. No agents have been contacted yet but it is proposed to approach Messrs Brown & Lee and Savills for advice on marketing, likely rents and potential lease terms achievable, together with proposed fees to secure a new tenant.

10.5 Cllr Northen
10.5.1 Allotments

We have written to all tenants about the water charge and clearance plan. All have offered their support on the latter if available.

Over the coming weeks we will get the hedges cut back – Cllr Northen to action. This will have the benefit of creating more space for the installation of the water meter. Once that is done, we will proceed with the hiring of a skip and mini-digger.

10.5.2 Communication

Cllr Hearn attended a recent session on communication and engagement strategy – see 10.6.2 below.

10.6 Cllr Hearn

10.6.1 Safeguarding Policy – circulated and comments received

There are four changes required to the draft before we finalise:

- Tenants and other organisations on PC property are required to adhere to the policy
- While not mandatory, we should have an appointed Safeguarding Officer. It was agreed this should be the Clerk.
- Remove the need for contractors' adherence specifically and generalise the reference to avoid missing relevant parties.
- Remove the requirement for signed statement from an individual making a report to the Safeguarding Officer.

10.6.2 Reaction from 'Managing the Message' event

The session was quite useful and based on large town council (Edenbridge). Key takeaways were:

- The overall message was that less volume but better quality is the right approach.
- Facebook and Instagram are the best channels.
- There should be two strands to communication: topical (notifications, events); and evergreen (“stuff that matters”, who we are and what we do, what makes Barley special).
- We should disable the ability for users to add comments in order to control the narrative.
- Best practice now is to have a Social Media Communications Officer (proper officer). In our case, this will form part of the Clerk’s role.
- Councillors should not initiate comms.
- Having both a Communication Strategy and a Communication Policy is best practice.

Cllr Northen to draft Communication Strategy and a Communication Policy

10.7 Cllr Lee

10.7.1 Pay scale Review

Cllr Lee provided some background – the Clerk and RFO are both on spinal point 22. In the case of the Clerk, it was agreed that, after 12 months we would review the spinal point if the CILCA qualification is achieved.

Both are currently paid at the 2024/2025 rate for their spinal point (£16.93/hr). The increase to £17.47 from April 2025 was not implemented. The 2026/27 rate for spinal point 22 has been set at £18.04 from April 26. Cllr Lee proposed that we increase the rate for the Clerk and RFO to £18.04 with immediate effect and backdate the increase to 1 April 2026, which was unanimously supported.

10.7.2 Town House management Committee Terms of Reference

These have been circulated by Cllr Lee. All councillors were urged to review the content and provide comments.

10.7.3 Neighbourhood Plans

Cllr Lee noted that she had hoped, following the village meeting, to widen engagement and involvement on Neighbourhood Plans. However, local government reform has created upheaval and our local authority’s attention is elsewhere. Consequently, we will put this on hold for now and monitor the situation. It could become more important in the context of proposed changes to planning that would mean officers determining planning applications without Parish Council involvement as consultee.

11. Clerks Report

11.1 To review updates from clerk

- Followed up the conversations with the police and crime commissioner regarding the MOU. Attended meeting with councillors and HCC to agree way forward. MOU signed off by BPC.
- Informed by our current contractor that they have not been awarded the rights of way clearance contract. HCC contacted for update, the contract award is currently in its final stages for being awarded – no update.
- 2nd quote received and distributed for cutting back of the walnut tree on the Plaistow – circulated to councillors.

- Herts Care Ltd are quoting £576 against Shire Trees which was £510, both include VAT. Shire Trees instructed to proceed with works which will require prior consent from NHDC as the Playstowe lies within the heart of The Barley Conservation Area.
- H&S policy sent to Peninsular for review. Have updated BPC H&S against the full Peninsula document and submitted to them for comment.
- Attended the HAPTC AGM as part of learning.
- Clerks inductions sessions attended.
- Attended with Cllr Lee the parish council footpath with the HCC rights of way team to review required works on car park and footpath.
- Attended with Cllr Lee and Cllr Hearn the new local planning seminar.
- Added risk for the bottle well on Peninsula system.
- First aid kits ordered and passed over to TH committee.
- Defib signs ordered and received.
- Actions as per action log.

In relation to the footpath near the scout hut it was agreed to contact Darren Partt to clear block drain

11.2 Privacy notice sign off

Approved.

11.3 Health and Safety review against Peninsula policy – August 2026 – for information and any comments

No comments.

12. Recognition of buildings of importance – Cllr Hearn

Years ago it was decided to have information on the board covering the history of the Lockup and Town House. To consider for next year in the context of budgetary constraints.

13. Items of Correspondence

Plaistow incident – see 10.2 above.

14. Items for future discussion

Pavement on London Road distorted from The Mount to Fox & Hounds
Hedge impeding outside doctor's surgery

Date of next Barley Parish meeting

To note the date of next Parish Council Meeting will be on October 5th 2026
Apologies received from Yvonne Lee

Contact: Alison Gibson, Clerk to Barley Parish Council
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