

**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE TOWN HOUSE ON MONDAY 6th MARCH 2017**

1. Present

Cllr I Turner (Chairman), Cllr G Clark, Cllr P McPartland, Cllr Y Lee, Dst. Cllr Gerald Morris, Mrs Laura Childs (Clerk), Mr Tim Martin (RFO)

2. Apologies

Cllr Jerry Carlisle, County Cllr Tony Hunter & Mr Nick Shaw (Chair of Townhouse Management Committee)

3. Councillor's Declaration of Interest

No declarations

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 6th February '17 were read and approved. Proposed by Cllr G Clark and seconded by Cllr P McPartland.

5. Matters Arising

The Clerk confirmed that she had finally had a response from BT and had the contract to formally adopt the red telephone box in Smiths End Lane. It was agreed that the document would be signed at the end of the meeting and Mr Martin agreed to arrange payment of the £1 required to finalise the purchase.

Cllr McPartland updated the meeting on the progress made with the Fox & Hounds. He confirmed that the Right to Bid application has been formally submitted and Mr Adrian Parkes, the owner of the Fox & Hounds had additionally been informed of our submission. The first meeting of the working group, formed to take forward this project, is due to be held later this week and is made up of 4 volunteers from the village plus Cllr McPartland and Mr Martin. At the meeting, priority needs to be given to which is the best route to be taken with regards to funding the bid. Cllr McPartland agreed to speak with the Plunkett Foundation regarding accessing any grants that might be available to us and to seek their advice going forward. It was also noted that the pub is now being formally marketed with Everard & Cole for offers in excess of £265,000. Cllr McPartland will report further at the next Parish Council meeting and it was agreed that the Clerk should add the Fox & Hounds as an agenda item.

Cllr Lee asked if it was known if Cllr Carlisle and Mr Gary Henning of Herts Highways had discussed the poor road surface at the entrance to Crossways when they met last month, in Cllr Carlisle's absence, this was not known and the Clerk agreed to clarify this at the next meeting.

Cllr Turner confirmed that he had spoken to the owners of 4 Crossways regarding their hedge which borders London Road and specifically our request for it to be cut back as it was now causing vehicles, particularly high sided vehicles, to cross into the other carriageway to avoid the high branches. Following their meeting the owners have agreed to arrange for it to be cut back. Cllr Turner suggested that once this has been done it would be a good idea to get the white line on the side of the road repainted as its original position has been moved.

Cllr Lee asked if any contact had been made with the Rights of Way officer following the posting of notices advising the application to change the status of the footpath that runs from Smiths End Lane through to Pudding lane into a restricted bridleway. The Clerk advised that she had contacted Herts County Council and spoken to one of the Rights of Way officers about this and other footpath applications in place around other areas of the village. The Clerk was also aware that Cllr Carlisle had additionally spoken with a Rights of Way officer more specifically about the footpath that Cllr Lee is referring to but the Clerk was not aware of the outcome of that conversation. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to the gentleman who was submitting these applications and ask that he speaks to the Parish Council about this application, as this path was not suitable for the purpose that he is requesting the change of use to.

6. Planning

Case ref: 17/00295/1HH The Croft, Picknage Road, Barley – first floor extension to existing dormer bungalow and pitched roof to existing attached garage.

Following initial confusion regarding the drawings submitted, due to their poor printed quality, and general lack of detail submitted, it was agreed, after discussions, that there would be no objections raised to this application.

Case ref: 17/0374/1 Land north of Churchfield, Pudding Lane, Barley – Erection of 1 x 4 bedroom dwelling with integral garage and 1 x 4 bedroom dwelling with detached garage, vehicular access onto Pudding Lane, landscaping and ancillary works.

Following discussions it was unanimously agreed to object to this application and the Clerk was asked to submit the following comments:

By way of background we note:-

- The proposed development lies outside the village envelope as defined by both the current 1996 Local Plan and the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan 2016.
- Under Policy 7 Barley is included as a “Selected Village”
- It is stated in the 1996 Local Plan that the Council will not normally grant planning permission for development proposals outside the defined areas (village envelope) of selected villages unless the exceptions of Policy 6 apply. These include that the proposal:-
 - is for a single dwelling; and
 - positively improves the rural environment.
- The site immediately adjoins the Barley Conservation area and in particular Visual Area 4.
- It falls within the Landscape Conservation Area LC2 (Policy12)
- The site is currently used as an open builder’s yard with little or no built form.
- Currently traffic to and from the site is intermittent and very limited by the physical constraints of Pudding Lane.

Barley Parish Council set out its concerns with regard to the development of this site very clearly when a previous application for 4 residential units was submitted last year (ref 16/01865/1). Whilst the scale of the overall development has been reduced, the fundamental issues still remain:-

- **Access**
 - Pudding Lane is an unmade, un-adopted track. The ownership of which is unknown and is only maintained through the good offices of the existing residents.
 - It is a narrow single track with few if any passing places.
 - We understand NHDC refuse lorries are no longer allowed to use Pudding Lane.
 - The junction of Pudding Lane with Church End has extremely restricted visibility, being completely “blind” to the north east due to a substantial brick retaining wall.
 - The application states that a new or altered vehicular and pedestrian access way is proposed from the public highway, but no details are provided. Given the current constraints we are at a loss to know how alterations could be made.
 - The increase in vehicular traffic resulting from this development both during and post development would place an unacceptable burden not only on Pudding Lane itself but also compromise the safety of Church End.
- **Drainage**
 - The extent of the development and the increase in the quantum of hard surfacing will considerably increase the surface water discharge from the site.
 - It is noted in the application that this will be dealt with by soakaways , no mention of SUDs.
 - The increase of surface water discharge will only exacerbate the already well documented drainage and flooding issues in this part of the village.
- **Character of the area**
 - The extent of the proposed development will have an adverse impact on the quality and character of the area.
 - It will compromise the Conservation Area and the Landscape Area, adversely impacting on the visual quality of the site, further compromising the biodiversity of the site and its surroundings.
 - The form and scale of development does not give sufficient regard to its immediate environs and the adjoining properties.
- **Policy**
 - The proposed development does not respect or fulfill policy requirements and guidance for what is an extremely sensitive site.
 - It does not satisfy the criteria of Policy 6 being neither a single dwelling nor a development which would enhance the rural environment.
 - The development would compromise the quality and character of the adjoining Conservation Area.
 - It does not respect Policy 12 and would certainly not add to the character of the landscape.

Barley Parish Council acknowledges that the site is currently used as an open builder’s yard, however, in this instance after careful consideration, it objects to the proposed development for the principle grounds set out above namely, access, drainage, character and policy.

Case ref: 16/031441/1 Kestrels, Church End, Barley

The Clerk advised that it had come to light very late this afternoon that amended plans have been submitted for this application and that, despite NHDC planning department advising that they had distributed to all relevant parties for review, nothing had been received by either ourselves or the owners of the neighbouring property. Due to the NHDC planning portal being down the Clerk was unable to print off copies of the revised drawings and therefore the meeting was unable to provide any comments on the amendments. The Clerk was asked to request an extension of time to submit the Parish Councils comments regarding any revision to the application.

Manor Farm, Barley – self storage units

Alison Wright of Bidwells, attended the meeting on behalf of the Doggett family, to talk about proposals to submit a planning application for a further 31 additional storage containers at Manor Farm, Barley. Drawings were shown to those present of the proposed location for the additional storage containers and Cllr Lee expressed her concern over the additional traffic impact that these additional units might generate together with concerns over any future change of use. Ms Wright confirmed that she would take these comments back to her client.

District Cllr Gerald Morris left the meeting at 21:05

7. Town House

In his absence, Mr Nick Shaw, Chairman of the Town House Management Committee had emailed the Clerk to report that he has now had all the certificates and associated documents provided by Busy Bee. There are however 3 small jobs still to be completed and it was expected that these will soon be done and then an invoice will be raised by Busy Bee for the works completed. Mr Shaw is expecting this invoice to be quite large, but it should be viewed as covering a long period of time.

Mr Shaw confirmed that he will be checking and recording all the emergency lighting in the Townhouse, once a month, for Health & Safety purposes and Busy Bee will check the emergency lighting on an annual basis.

The PAT testing is now overdue and so Busy Bee will shortly be undertaking this.

Mr Martin advised that the Townhouse insurance is due for renewal shortly (15th April) and he agreed to circulate the terms. The renewal sum is £1,767 which has increased only slightly from £1,724 for this year. Mr Martin expressed some concern over cover regarding letting conditions, despite these conditions having been rewritten by our solicitors. He is of the opinion that the new letting agreements do not necessarily cover all types of hirers. Whilst the new terms cover commercial hirers it may not cover non-commercial hirers, such as children's birthday parties etc. Mr Martin agreed to clarify with the insurance company exactly where we stand and take their advice on the matter.

Cllr Turner noted that one of the heaters upstairs, in the corner to the left of the fire place, does not turn itself off from the last quarter of an hour and has to be manually switched to off. This should be investigated further as it could prove costly if left to run.

8. Finance Officers report & signing of payments

Mr Martin reported that the following payments were due to be made.

Parish Council

Laura Childs	Clerk fees & office expenses (February)	£ 334.40
Tim Martin	RFO (February)	£ 183.40
Stuart Bullard	Cutting play area of Plaistow (12 cuts)	£ 288.00

It was agreed that these payment should be made

Proposed by Cllr Clark and seconded by Cllr Lee

Town House

Carol Robinson	February cleaning	£ 74.50
Alison Stacey	Letting officer fee (January & February)	£ 160.80

It was agreed that these payments should be made

Proposed by Cllr Lee and seconded by Cllr McPartland

Mr Martin has previously circulated via email the Financial Risk Assessments for all Councillors to review, he explained that this document sets out all the possible financial risks that the Parish Council incur. The Financial Risk Assessments were approved by all present and Cllr Turner signed the document to approve it.

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

9. Recreation Ground

Cllr Clark has been chasing the company that installed the new play equipment as the agreed remedial works have not yet been carried out to the slide nor have they carried out their contractual safety check. Cllr Clark had been assured that the checks would be carried out this week.

Cllr Turner has been approached by someone in the village about starting a fitness 'boot camp' on the Plaistow, in principal he had thought it would be OK but asked the person to contact Cllr Clark to finalise.

10. Website

Cllr McPartland advised that the third meeting of the working group for the new website are making good progress. They have successfully negotiated a fee of £750 to create the website and then there may be ongoing costs to assist with running the website. They have discussed colour, layouts, logos, fonts etc. and are awaiting an outline design from the company which Cllr McPartland would bring along to the next Parish Council meeting for approval. A new 'logo' for the village was being created to incorporate two ears of Barley, which has previously been used elsewhere.

11. Scout Hut

In the absence of Cllr Carlisle there was no update reported.

12. Lock Up

Cllr Lee reported that everything is now in place and she is awaiting a start date for the works to commence. Due to the size of the works (on the small side) we are having to be 'fitted in' by the contractor amongst their other larger projects.

13. Health & Safety

In the absence of Cllr Carlisle there was nothing to report other than the annual fire alarm testing of the Townhouse was due to be undertaken soon.

14. Correspondence

All correspondence received is to be circulated amongst Councillors.

15. Any Other Business

Cllr Clark reported that he had met with Sgt Guy Westwood of Royston Police regarding the problem with cars parking in the Townhouse car park leaving litter, broken glass etc. and they agreed to patrol this area more frequently. He was additionally pleased to report that police officers had been seen in the village with speed guns for two weeks on the trot, and whilst there had been no official bookings several drivers had been warned. Sgt Westwood has committed to trying to give more attention to the issue of speeding in the village. Discussions took place about the merit of purchasing a further interactive speed sign.

Cllr Turner advised that there had been further break-ins in the village, mostly outbuildings and sheds this time. Mr Martin asked if the village operated a Neighbourhood watch scheme in the village and if not then how could we go about setting one up, it was thought that the police would be the first port of call and Cllr Clark agreed to speak to his contacts about this and the current OWL system, which doesn't appear to be as effective as hoped in providing information about criminal activity in the area.

Cllr Clark reported that Ginmeister have started to move their business over from Dovehouse Shott to their new premises. It is thought that all of the office side of the company has moved but the weights and measures has yet to be moved.

Meeting closed at 21:45