

**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT THE TOWN HOUSE ON MONDAY 2<sup>nd</sup> JULY 2018**

**1. Present**

Cllr Jerry Carlisle, Cllr Mel Chamings, Cllr Bill Sterland, County Cllr Fiona Hill, Cllr Tony Hunter, Mrs Maryna de Klerk (Clerk).

Mr Richard Emmerson, Mr Nick Shaw (Chairman of the Town House Management Committee) and 1 member of the public.

**2. Apologies**

Cllr Ian Turner, Cllr Yvonne Lee, Cllr Peter McPartland, Mr Tim Martin (RFO), District Cllr Gerald Morris, 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**

Cllr Jerry Carlisle mentioned that Mr Martin, RFO, confirmed that the amount claimed back from the Plunkett Foundation was £1,553 rather than the £1,550 stated in the minutes.

Subject to the above amendments the minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 2018 were read and approved.

Proposed by Cllr Carlisle and seconded by Cllrs Chamings.

**5. Matters arising**

County Cllr Hill reported that Mr Derek Jerrard of Ringways (HCC highways contractor) confirmed that the road gully at the end of Pudding Lane would be cleared during July.

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 meaningful update on his quest to establish the ownership of Bankside, however he did report that he has now established contact with the Grounds Maintenance Manager at North Herts and that it appears NHDC do undertake grass cutting on behalf of North Herts Homes on that part of Bankside that is not NHDC's direct responsibility. That's done under a contract with North Herts Homes. That being the case it would suggest that North Herts Homes are responsible for part of Bankside including some of the trees that need pruning. He awaits the outcome of further enquiries.

Cllr Carlisle thanked Cllr Hunter for his continuing efforts yet noted again that because of the dry weather the tress in question are sagging and that tall lorries particularly straw lorries with high straw loads are catching on the large overhanging branches. This situation remains quite dangerous as several branches had been dislodged already leaving concerns that these may hit either cars or pedestrians and were dangerous if left in the middle of the road.

Cllr Carlisle requested that The Clerk confirm whether the situation has been reported to the Herts Highways fault line to request that these large overhanging tree branches are cut back as soon as

possible, failing which to contact Herts Highways fault line as soon as possible especially before the new straw season starts.

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 reports that Sgt Westwood advised that due to the World Cup football and a number of Fetes there have not been any available resources to undertake speed checks in Barley and the other surrounding villages this month. With England's progression through to the next round of the World Cup this is likely to impact on the available police resources, including Specials and PCSO's.

Mr Clark further reported that Sgt Westwood advised that he is being allocated a new special who wishes to be based in Royston as opposed to Hitchin where the Specials that have been supporting his officers are currently located. Also there will be another PCSO joining the team in Royston which will mean that he will then have two PCSO's to be based in Royston and two that will be covering the rural villages instead of only one PCSO covering the villages. This coupled with the additional special should, going forward, allow the police officers to undertake more future speed checks. This is still a priority for Sgt Westwood when he has available resources.

Due to England progressing through the first round of the World Cup, Sgt Westwood has had his shift patterns changed and was not therefore be able to make the meeting tonight. Mr Clark confirmed that both he and Sgt Westwood will hopefully be able to attend the Barley Parish Council meeting in October.

Mr Emerson confirmed that there have been some developments regarding the grant application to be submitted to the Police & Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire as he had finally managed to contact the lady dealing with Road Safety Fund Applications. Apparently due to shortage of staff and underestimating the work in evaluating the previous round of applications, the next round is going to be delayed until at least September probably with a 2 month window to receive applications after which they would then be processed and evaluated as a batch.

County Cllr Hill confirmed that the 'Barn Meeting' hosted by the Police to enable them to communicate with rural communities, was held on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June at Thrift Farm, Baldock Road, Royston. Both County Cllr Hill and District Cllr Gerald Morris attended the meeting. Other attendees included farmers, local members of the public, members from the Police and Fire Services. Nothing changed in terms of Police priorities; it was more to do with concerns being raised by attendees. Concerns raised included for example Hare coursing, fuel thefts, hedges and footpaths and issues regarding the A505. County Cllr Hill stated that it was a very positive meeting and that all involved agreed to the advantage of having similar meetings in future again.

Regarding grass cutting and footpaths, Cllr Carlisle confirmed that he had spoken to Mark Davies and agreed with him that he would trim at least once a month the footpaths within the core of the Village. Cllr Sterland suggested it is emphasised that the scope of work also include cutting of verticals.

## 6. Planning

**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**

Barley Parish Council objects to this application and when arriving at their decision wish NHDC to take the following comments into account:-

This application appears to be substantially the same as the previous application under case ref.18/00694/FP except that the proposed development is now to be a pair of 3 bedroom semi-detached houses rather than two detached 3 bedroom houses. Our objections to this application are similar to those of the previous application.

The property is situated within the Barley Selected Village Policy Area of the current 1996 NHDC Local Plan and the Barley Selected Village Policy Area of the Preferred Options Draft Local Plan which is currently the subject of Examination by the Planning Inspectorate. The property is also within the Barley Conservation Area.

As noted in the Design and Access Statement accompanying the application there have been two previous consents granted for this site – the original consent for 2x2 bedroom semi-detached houses which has now expired (February 2017) and more recently for 1x4 bedroom detached house. In each case access was over the adjoining Fox and Hounds car park. This application for 2x3 bedroom semi-detached houses remains in our view a significant over development of the site, with the scale, bulk and massing of the proposal being unacceptable in this sensitive location. We note that the application does not include any meaningful information on the impact of the proposed development on the street scene in this important location in the heart of the village. This is an important omission from the application. The absence of this information makes it difficult to set the proposal in proper context with its surroundings. We also have concerns that as the two houses are set back into the site there will be overlooking issues affecting both Kestrels to the rear and the adjoining house on Bankside.

The planning application states that there is no new or altered vehicle or pedestrian access to the site. Both of these statements are clearly untrue.

We have major concerns about the proposed access for the development which is the same as for the previous application and which the applicant has totally failed to address. Contrary to the statement in the Design and Access Statement the proposal will not in our view allow sufficient vehicular turning space within the site or sufficient visitor parking. Furthermore it is our view that it will not be possible for the necessary sight lines for vehicles exiting the property safely to be achieved due in part to the difference in levels between the site and the public highway including the footpath, and the need to construct retaining walls as shown on the plans. The provision of this new access so close to the existing access road serving Bankside and the other existing accesses to properties on the opposite side of High Street will constitute an added and unacceptable danger to passing vehicles and pedestrians. High Street in this location is effectively a single carriageway due to the number of cars parked on the opposite side of this busy road.

The Design and Access Statement states:-

“...The proposed access uses an existing dropped kerb and therefore access cannot be denied. The design of the access together with the ramp has been designed to accord with Highway requirements and was approved for the previous scheme by the Highway Engineer.” Bearing in mind the Highway Authority’s comments on the current application there would appear to be some doubt as to whether any part of this statement is true other than in respect of the existence of a dropped kerb along a small part of the frontage. While a dropped kerb does exist its use has long been abandoned (its last previous use being unknown) but it is located adjacent to the boundary of the site with Bankside and not in the middle of the frontage as shown on the plans. The position of the proposed access would only use a very small section of this dropped kerb. In any event the ground level along the boundary of the site with the highway has been built up over the years such that there is now a difference in the levels between the site generally and the pavement of in excess of 1.0m which makes this proposed access, because of inadequate sight lines and the close

proximity of existing accesses to other properties and other matters referred to earlier, unsatisfactory in highway terms. This is particularly important as the proposed scheme needs to allow for 4 cars and visitor parking on site to exit safely from the site in a forward motion, and safe arrangements for other occasional vehicles including delivery vehicles etc. should be made. We also note that there is no segregated pedestrian access to the proposed development. Since the original consent was granted in 2014 the potential for creating an access in this general location has been considered many times by the different site owners but a satisfactory solution in highway terms has not proved possible. This proposal is no exception and the application should in our view be refused on this basis alone.

We are aware that Hertfordshire County Council Highway Authority also share our views on the proposed access and parking/turning arrangements and have recommended that planning permission be refused.

The site also lies within the Barley Conservation Area and we consider that this proposal will have an even greater adverse impact on the Conservation Area than either the current consent for a single 4 bedroom property or even the original consent for 2x2 bedroom semi-detached houses which consent expired in February 2017. The Conservation Area Policy provides that NHDC will only permit proposals which will maintain or enhance their character and any development proposal which does not respect and reflect the visual quality of the area because of its design, materials, colour, form and scale will be refused. It is our view that this proposal will have an adverse effect on the visual quality and character of the conservation area in this location because of its design, materials, form and scale and should be refused accordingly.

We consider that this proposed development is contrary to the provisions of both the current Barley Selected Village Policy Area as set out in the 1996 NHDC Local Plan and of the proposed Preferred Options Draft Local Plan, and the provisions of the Barley Conservation Area, and also having regard to Hertfordshire County Council Highway Authority's recommendation that the application be refused, the proposal also appears to be contrary to the NPPF, and we would urge NHDC to refuse this application.

***18/01515/FPH: Full Permission Householder: Alterations to fenestration including replacement roof light windows and installation of one new window. Smith End Barn, Smiths End Lane, Barley, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8LL***

Barley Parish Council is unable to comment on this application due to a lack of information relating to the proposed work. There is no information concerning any aspect of the proposed works other than a general reference to replacement windows and roof lights. No information is provided about what materials are proposed e.g. softwood, hardwood or plastic UPV, or whether the roof lights are traditional "heritage" style or more modern "velux" style etc.

The Council also note that there isn't a copy of the planning application on the NHDC website where this basic information might otherwise have been included. Bearing in mind that this is a listed property where a listed building application is presumably also required, The Council is somewhat surprised at these omissions.

In the absence of any even basic information to enable Barley Parish Council to comment (even if, having got the information required, we would have no objection to the proposed works) we may have no alternative but to object to the proposal which would be unfortunate.

*Mr Nick Shaw (Chairman of the Town House Management Committee) joined the meeting at 20:30.*

## 7. Financial Officers Report & Signing of Payments

In the absence of Mr Martins (RFO), Cllr Jerry Carlisle reported that the following payments are now due:-

### Barley Parish

Tim Martin	RFO for June & Stationary	£ 299.00
Maryna de Klerk	Clerk from 15 June & Handover	£ 133.20
Laura Childs	Clerk until 15 June, Handover & Norton Antivirus	£ 232.39
Playsafety	Playground inspection	£ 100.80
HMRC	PAYE quarterly	£ 475.20
Hardcastle Burton	Payroll	£ 156.00
Marks Gardening Services	Footpath work	£ 45.00

It was agreed that all of these payments should be made.

Proposed by Cllr Sterland, and seconded by Cllr Chamming.

All cheques were signed by Cllr Carlisle and counter signed by Cllr Chamming.

### Barley Town House

Robin Saklatvala	Letting Officer fee for June	£ 82.75
Nick Shaw	Reimbursement - cleaning April-June	£ 219.66
Carol Robinson	Cleaning June	£ 72.00

It was agreed that all of these payments should be made.

Proposed by Cllr Chamming, and seconded by Cllr Sterland.

All cheques were signed by Cllr Carlisle and counter signed by Cllr Chamming.

Cllr Carlisle reviewed and signed the Council's Bank Statements.

## 8. Town House

Mr Nick Shaw, Chairman of the Town House Management Committee reported that a Marketing Meeting has now been scheduled for the 6<sup>th</sup> of August. This month we already have £1,400.00 worth of bookings and have agreed to pay £150.00 to a Wedding Venue advertising Company whom we had a trial with and from whom we had a lot of enquiries.

Mr Shaw advised that a more immediate issue related to the cooker in the upstairs kitchen that needed repair. He suggested a discussion was required to decide whether the cost involved in repairing the cooker was justified or whether the cooker should just be replaced with a new one. Cllr Carlisle agreed that in due course the cooker should probably be replaced but suggested that in the meantime Royston Domestic Appliances be contacted to provide a quotation on what the cost for repair would be. Although the cooker is actually working at present, there is a concern that the fault is causing a health and safety issue in that if the cooker is not switched off by the wall, the hob remains hot. There was general agreement that for the benefit of future bookings of The Town House and the functions and weddings held there, any future replacement cooker should perhaps be a commercial cooker rather than a domestic cooker which is currently what is in use. The Town House Committee will discuss and decide on a replacement cooker during their meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August and forward their recommendation to the Council for approval.

Mr Shaw reported that the lights in the toilets are left on almost daily. It would cost £200 to £300 to install motion sensors which he recommended, and which was agreed. He also advised that in the upstairs kitchen there is still quite a bit of mould on the ceiling. It was suggested that we consider a very low wattage heater in the winter. Cllr Carlisle stated one was already installed but it

needed someone to switch it on in the winter months. Consideration for a thermostat was discussed although Cllr Carlisle also stated that there is an extractor fan installed at present which should supposedly also deal in part with this problem. It was agreed that Mr Shaw would ask the contractor who installed the fan, why it does not seem to perform as expected.

Mr Shaw stated that the front and back gardens of The Town House looked very nice and well maintained and that this was looked after and cared for by Fran Bowman at no cost. He suggested the Council write her a letter of thanks and appreciation of the superb work she's doing.

County Cllr Hill mentioned that if the Parish Council wanted anything from the locality budget / community budget, they are open now. Although they don't like providing monies for revenue items, the locality budgets are a lot more flexible than the Area Committee grants providing the projects are a one off and meet all their criteria. There is £10,000 for the whole of the division, so although the full amount for say a cooker might not be granted, it could perhaps be part funded as the Village Hall (Town House) is a community asset which everyone in the Village benefits from. Cllr Carlisle thanked County Cllr Hill for the offer.

## **9. Recreation Ground**

In Cllr Turner's absence, Cllr Carlisle reported on his behalf that Cllr Turner did manage to get hold of Mr James King and asked him to do the repair work to the boundary fencing to the recreation ground and the children's play area. Cllr Turner was now waiting on Mr King to confirm when he would be able to do that.

The Parish Council had now received the annual RoSPA report of the playground. The RoSPA inspection was carried out on the 18th of June 2018 and the outcome fairly favourable. Only a few low risk issues around the fencing and goal posts were reported. Cllr Turner will be asked to inspect the corroded goal post and arrange for repairs.

*All attendees bar Barley Parish Council members present and Clerk, left the meeting at 21:15*

Cllr Chamming reported that a local resident had approached her as she arrived for tonight's meeting reporting that the round bench in the play area was loose, in particular a few loose screws. It was further reported that the slide where fixed at the top and bottom, was buckling. Seeing as these issues were not reported on the recent RoSPA report, it can only be assumed that the recent very hot and dry weather could play a role. Cllr Carlisle offered to have a look at these in Cllr Turner's absence.

## **10. Scout Hut**

Cllr Carlisle reported that he spoke to the Solicitor who is dealing with the proposed new lease to the Scouts. Although the lease has been agreed and has been engrossed ready for signing, there were some typographical errors that Cllr Carlisle asked him to correct. The Solicitor is hoping to get the corrected document out this week for us to sign. As there will not be a Parish Council Meeting in August the meeting agreed that Cllr Carlisle was authorised as Chairman, to sign the corrected document on behalf of the Council so that this long outstanding matter may finally be completed.

It was noted that the planning permission for the proposed changing rooms to the rear of the scout hut was due to expire shortly and the Council will need to re-apply for consent for the works including the trees.

### **11. Health & Safety**

Cllr Chamblings advised that she is meeting with Janine Drew of Drew & Baltrop, the Council's Health & Safety advisors on the 11th of July for the regular six monthly review. Cllr Carlisle offered to attend the meeting with the D&B.

The fire drill that was planned to be done with the Community Group is now planned for September due to availability issues of Community Group members and their pre-scheduled commitments. Cllr Carlisle suggested that providing the planned fire drill goes reasonably well, the same be planned for the Gardening Club as each of these groups in theory should have an appointed Fire Marshall.

### **12. Correspondence**

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

### **13. Any Other Business**

None; although Cllr Chamblings noted, that the Privacy Statement on the Council's website needs to be updated, because the Parish Clerk information is now outdated.

Meeting finished at 21:40

Next meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> September '18