

**MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD AT THE TOWN HOUSE ON MONDAY 5th SEPTEMBER 2016**

1. Present

Cllr Jerry Carlisle (Chairman), Cllr I Turner, Cllr G Northen, Cllr Y Lee, District Cllr Gerald Morris, Mrs Laura Childs (Clerk), Mr Tim Martin (RFO), 8 members of the public

2. Apologies

Cllr Graham Clark, Cllr M O'Brien, County Cllr Tony Hunter, Mr Nick Shaw (Town House Management Committee Chairman)

3. Councillor's Declaration of Interest

Cllr Northen advised that she had a potential conflict of interest due to her employment with Ginmeister Ltd and an item to be discussed later in the meeting.

4. Minutes of Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 4th July 16 were read and approved.
Proposed by Cllr Y Lee and seconded by Cllr G Northen

5. Matters Arising

Cllr Northen reported that the restoration works are yet to be undertaken to the red telephone box on the High Street. There are works being carried out in a neighbouring property and it is thought that Mr Partt is waiting until these have been completed before starting restoration. Cllr Northen has been told that an electrical feed runs from the village shop to the telephone box but after discussion it was agreed that the village shop referred to is most probably the 'old village shop' now known as Icknield Way Cottage. Cllr Northen will speak to the owners to see if they have any information or indeed are even aware of the situation.

Mr Martin has started to go through some of the information on the village website with a view to making suggestions for improvements to make it more user friendly and current. He has already found a lot of out of date information about clubs and other village organisations with some of those named now deceased or moved away. He agreed to continue with this work and present findings to Cllr O'Brien for updating.

6. Town House

Mr Martin reported that the hard wiring testing has yet to be carried out as our contractor, Busy Bee, has not been able to attend. It was suggested that if the work was not undertaken very shortly then we should approach someone else in order to get the work carried out as soon as possible.

The Wedding Licence for the Town House is due for renewal and will need to be in Mr Shaws name, as Chairman of the Town House Management Committee. Mr Shaw will action accordingly.

The revised letting terms for the Town House have been completed and should be on the website shortly.

The new clock, kindly donated by the Gooding family, has been placed and secured to the wall and the meeting unanimously agreed is a fine addition to the Town House.

7. Planning

Application Ref no.16/01914/1HH at 1 Putty Hall, Shaftenhoe End, Barley, Royston, SG8 8LF - Full Planning Permission Householder : *First floor front, side and rear extension and insertion of first floor window to side. Single storey side extension following demolition of existing conservatory and alterations to existing fenestration.*

Following a review of the plans and discussions it was unanimously agreed that there were no objections to this application.

Application Ref no. 16/01865/1 at Land north of Churchfield, Pudding Lane, Barley - Full Planning Permission : *Erection of 1 x 4 bedroom dwelling and 3 x 2 bedroom dwellings with vehicular access onto Pudding Lane, associated garages, car parking, landscaping and ancillary works. Land north of Churchfield, Pudding Lane, Barley- Case Ref No: 16/01865/1*

Cllr Carlisle explained that each planning application must be dealt with on its own merits and we, as a Parish Council, try to maintain a consistent approach and have regard to the local plan when considering applications. He further explained to the meeting how this application differed to the recent planning application from its neighbouring property, Hilltop in Pudding Lane, in connection with which the Parish Council raised objections and which was subsequently withdrawn.

Concerns were raised by members of the public about the only access road, Pudding Lane, and its poor state, with no passing places and close proximity to many of the properties particularly Roly Poly Cottage which borders directly onto the lane.

After further exchanges of views and discussions it was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would object to this application and would respond to NHDC with the following:

The application as detailed on NHDC website appears defective in that we believe it is incomplete because:-

There is no plan showing Plots 1 - 3. We are advised by the applicant that this is an error and we have been supplied by the applicant with a copy of Plan No PUD/16/03B which shows the proposed elevations and floor plans for plots 1 -3. However others who may be interested in the application will not have the benefit of this drawing and will therefore not be able to properly consider the application.

There is no Design and Access Statement.

The site area of 0.01234 hectares specified in the planning application is clearly wrong. The site plan showing the development site indicates a site very much bigger than stated.

Despite these omissions we consider we do have enough information to comment on the proposals.

We note that the proposed development lies outside not only the main area of the village (village envelope) in the current 1996 Local Plan but will also lie outside the proposed village envelope of NHDC's "Preferred Options" and "Draft Emerging Allocations Map for Barley" dated July 2016 and accordingly Selected Village Policy 7 of the current Local Plan or its replacement in the new plan will not apply to this proposal.

As the site is not covered by Policy 7 then we assume Policy 6 applies. However in our view the proposals do not comply with any part of that policy either and should be refused accordingly.

Although not within the Barley Conservation Area the site immediately adjoins it and the site does fall within Landscape Conservation Area LC2 of Policy 12 of the current Plan and in respect of which we consider the proposal to be contrary to both paragraphs (i) and (ii) of Policy 12 which generally requires proposals to add to the character of North Herts landscapes. While currently used as an open builders yard the scale of the proposed development would not in our view comply with the requirements of this policy. As already referred to the site adjoins the Barley Conservation Area and access to the boundary of the site lies totally within the Conservation Area. This access, which is the only access, is poor. Pudding Lane is a narrow single track unmade up private road which is a dead end leading nowhere other than to serve a very few (7no) properties along its entire length and where there are few if any passing places. The ownership of the lane is unknown and only maintained through the good offices of the existing residents. It is in our view most unsuitable to accommodate any additional vehicular traffic as would result if this proposal were to be approved. The proposed development would potentially result in more than 20 additional vehicular movements per day along this lane which cannot be widened and where there is very limited scope to accommodate any improvement works. It is already wholly unsuitable to commercial vehicles much larger than a transit type van or similar and we understand that NHDC refuse lorries are no longer allowed to use Pudding Lane. Emergency vehicles such as fire engines or even ambulances would struggle to reach the site. Furthermore sight line visibility at the junction of Pudding Lane and Church End is wholly inadequate to accommodate the additional traffic as it is "blind" to one side (to the N.E.) because of a high brick retaining wall. The increase in vehicular traffic using/visiting the site resulting from this development would have a substantial adverse impact upon the character of the Conservation Area which is clearly contrary to the provisions of the Conservation Area Policy (Policy 20) which requires any proposal to maintain or enhance the character of the area.

Notwithstanding our comments above we are aware of and note the existing use of the site as a builders yard. However the site is largely open in nature with little in the form of built structures of any note. The traffic to and from the site is intermittent and limited by the very physical constraints of Pudding Lane. The application proposes four new dwellings with 10 car parking spaces which in the opinion of the Parish Council represents a gross over development of the site.

We consider the scale and density of the development proposed to be unacceptable having regard to both the location and existing physical constraints of the site and access to it. In terms of location it is considered that it would have an adverse impact on the character of the immediate area, not just the Conservation Area already referred to, and also be detrimental to the character, extent and structure of the current existing "green space" of the site and its surrounding area further compromising the biodiversity of the site and its surrounds.

The extent of the proposed built form including the hard surfacing to provide car parking spaces will considerably increase the surface water discharge from the site exacerbating the already well documented existing drainage problems in this particular area of the village and Pudding Lane.

The Parish Council is aware that a large number of local and other residents of the village also object to this proposal and who may already have notified NHDC accordingly.

Update on Fox & Hounds Public House, High Street, Barley

Cllr Carlisle advised the meeting that Mr Adrian Parkes who owns the property has appealed against NHDC's decision to refuse planning permission and also against the Asset of Community Value (AoCV) listing. Currently we don't know the date of the planning appeal and most people who had objected originally should have had a communication about that and asked if they have had anything further to add. The Parish Council had previously made comprehensive objections and met in early August to discuss how to go about responding to these appeals. Mr Parkes has requested that the appeal is in the form of a hearing rather than by written representations and the Parish Council has asked to attend the hearing and to participate. It is most likely to be held locally although a venue has yet to be advised. It is thought the appeal date may be in early November but this has not yet been officially advised.

The decision of Mr Parkes appeal against the AoCV listing should be known within the next 10 days.

Nobles Cottage

The Clerk was advised by Melissa Tyler of NHDC planning department in early August that no planning application has been received from the owners of Nobles Cottage for works to the flint wall at the front of their property. The Clerk was asked to enquire if an application has subsequently been received.

Dovehouse Shott

Cllr Northen gave a brief update on the plans for Pinkster Gin to relocate their premises to an alternative location. The planning application for their new premises has yet to be approved and therefore they were having to revert to a 'Plan B' which meant that pending the grant of the required consent for their preferred location, while the business would still be relocating from Dovehouse Shott this would be to temporary premises. This is expected to happen within the next few months.

8. Financial Officers Report & Signing of Payments

Mr Martin reported that the following payments were made in between meetings.

Parish Council

G Booth	Mowing of Churchyard (July)	£ 194.00
D Partt	Notice board refurbishments	£ 271.49
Drew & Baltrop	Annual Health & Safety advisor contract	£ 960.00
Broadmead Leisure	Playground payment	£ 9,000.00

Town House

Carol Robinson	Cleaning (July)	£ 36.00
Prompt Fire Protection	Annual fire protection equipment inspection & new fire extinguisher	£ 112.80
N Shaw	Reimbursement for cleaning & materials June & July	£ 146.99

Mr Martin reported that the following payments were due this month

Parish Council

BDO	Annual Audit fee	£ 360.00
Came & Co.	Annual Parish Council insurance premium	£ 1,886.61
Laura Childs	Parish Clerk (Jul & Aug hours)	£ 511.20
Tim Martin	RFO fees (Jul & Aug hours)	£ 302.40

Town House

Carol Robinson	August Cleaning materials	£ 94.29
Vanessa Martin	Caretaking (August)	£ 50.00
Herts County Council	Wedding Licence	£ 1,300.00
Alison Stacey	Letting officer fee (Jul & Aug)	£ 322.70

Wedding deposit cheques refunded

Mr Daniel Mitchell	£150.00
Mr Harry Balncharch	£150.00

It was agreed that these payments should be made
Proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr Lee

Mr Martin (RFO) has already distributed via email details of the proposed insurance renewal including sums insured and the premium. He raised some concerns regarding the Marquee's which still appear to be being hired out to other villages, Great Chishill most recently. It was agreed that a separate meeting with Mr Jack Shephard to discuss the marquees should be arranged.

The Annual Audit report has been received from BDO and the relevant notices posted on the village notice boards and it will be posted on the website shortly.

The annual appointment letter has been received from Hardcastle Burton with their terms of business, detailing their responsibilities.

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

9. Recreation Ground

Cllr Northen reported that the playground safety inspector and the playground equipment provider have reached an agreement over the outstanding queries concerning one or two of the new items and hopefully therefore the play ground will soon be fully signed off.

There has been an issue with dirty nappies being left, without any wrapping, in the open bins and Cllr Northen reported that this problem has now hopefully been resolved.

The latch on the gate is broken and requires repair. Cllr Clark is currently away on holiday and will repair it on his return.

10. Speeding

Following many previous discussions it was agreed that the Parish Council would invest in one of the new speed activated interactive flashing signs. Mr Haughey, who has carried out considerable research into the best available unit to serve the village's requirements, will liaise with Mr Martin regarding the purchase of the chosen unit.

11. Scout Hut

Cllr Carlisle reported that he has been in conversation with the Council's solicitors who have advised that the local Scout leaders have asked if the new lease could be in the name of individuals acting as trustees rather than in the name of The Scouts Association as at present. Cllr Carlisle explained that there would need to be a proper Trust Deed put in place and that the main Scouts Association would need to be in agreement as they are the current tenant but that in principle there didn't seem to be a major problem to the proposal. The Council's solicitors are responding accordingly.

12. Lock Up

Cllr Lee reported that she has met with two builders recommended by English Heritage who will provide estimates for the works required to the Lock Up and she hopes to have these available for our next meeting. Cllr Lee has also been looking into gaining a grant to carry out the works but unfortunately this is not looking promising.

13. Health & Safety

Cllr Carlisle advised that he is due to meet with the Parish Councils Health & Safety advisors, Drew & Baltrop in mid-October, otherwise there was currently nothing further to report.

14. Correspondence

Mr Haughey has now completed the restoration of the benches around the village and has kindly provided a document (via email) with details of the works completed and locations of all the benches. A couple of the benches are somewhat lost in undergrowth but could be bought back in to use if the vegetation was cleared. The Chairman thanked Mr Haughey for all his work.

A letter has been received from Barley Charities advising that the Parish Councils representative, Mr Richard Newham, has resigned due to ill health. The new rector Rev. Ruth Pyke has been suggested as a replacement and the meeting agreed that this would be an excellent appointment. The Clerk was asked to write to Barley Charities to request that they invite the Rev. Pyke to become the Parish Councils representative.

All other correspondence received is to be circulated amongst Councillors.

15. Any Other Business

Concerns were raised regarding the overhanging branches of the hedge that borders London Road (B1368). They are causing problems on the highway, especially large vehicles and farm machinery. The Clerk was asked to write to the owners of 4 & 6 Crossways and The Quakers on the corner of Smiths End Lane.

The poor visibility at the cross roads of Royston Road with Picknagge Road were again discussed, the sight line from Royston Road towards Flint Cross is very poor and the vegetation needs cutting back.

It was discussed that beside the agenda being posted on the village notice boards it should also be distributed via the village email system to those that had expressed an interest in Parish Council matters. The Clerk agreed to do this going forward. It was also discussed that the agenda should be posted on the village Website.

Mr Martin had noticed that the individual Declaration of Interests made by each councillor on their appointment and lodged with NHDC were not up to date on North Herts District Council website. In particular Cllr's Northen and Lee were not listed and old Councillors have not been removed. The Clerk agreed to contact NHDC to ask them to update their website.

Meeting closed at 22:15