



**Barley Parish Council meeting: 3rd February 2025 at 8pm,
Town House, Church End, Barley.**

Meeting Minutes

PRESENT

1.1 Cllr Jerry Carlisle (Chair), Cllr Alan Cayford, Cllr Ali Hearn, Cllr Ian Turner, Cllr Yvonne Lee, District Cllr Martin Prescott, County Cllr Fiona Hill.

IN ATTENDANCE

5 members of the public.

1. Apologies

1.1 Cllr Hill apologised for running late due to a previous meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 None.

3. Minutes

3.1 The minutes of the Barley Parish Council meeting held on 6th January were approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings other than a minor amendment of two words to the Scout Hut Item. Proposer Ali Hearn, Seconder Cllr Cayford.

4. Public Participation

4.1 None.

5. Planning

5.1 None.

6. Reports from County/District Councillors

6.1 To receive a report from County Cllr Hill

Cllr Hill reported that:

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC)

The Integrated Plan process is proceeding through the Council with the final budget going to Full Council on 25th February.

Armed Forces Covenant

Links have been confirmed with the Barley PC Champion and progress is being made.

Highways Action Plan

This has been completed by Highways officers and herself.

Highways Updates

The horse/deer signs have been erected.

The damaged bridge between Barley and Royston has been reported and is scheduled for works with no timescale as yet. However, the bridge is being monitored as it has been reported as a safety issue.

Events/Consultations

The Councillors' Surgery in Royston Market took place on Saturday, 11th January. The Ermine Ward Surgery was held on Saturday, 1st February in the Woodman, Nuthampstead.

She had responded to the following NHDC consultations:

Planning Application 21/00765/OP – Land off Barkway Road and North of Flint Hall, Barkway Road, Royston, Hertfordshire – details on the North Herts (District) Council Planning portal.

There are proposed Parking Tariff Increases for 2025/26.

6.2 To receive a report from Cllr Martin Prescott

Cllr Prescott reported that:

Alongside Cllr Hill he was also working on some of the above matters and advised that he is now a member of the North Herts Planning Committee. He is also liaising with the NHDC street cleaning team for the village in order to improve the service provided. There remain a number of issues that the team need to address to bring the service provided to the village to an acceptable standard.

7. Finance RFO report for the Parish Council

7.1 To consider and approve payments for the Parish Council.

BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL			
<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Payee	Date	Amount	For
Alice Robertson	27/01/2025	£282.00	Clerk gross pay balance Jan & expenses
Lynn Brett	28/01/2025	£181.04	RFO gross pay & expenses Jan
Barley Property Maintenance	01/09/2025	£907.07	Refurb Village Notice Boards £700 approved BPC 06
Adcock	28/1/2025	£294.00	Clubroom air con mtc
Broadmead Leisure Ltd	16/12/2024	£108.00	1/4 inspection village playground 12/12/2024
TOTAL BPC for approval		<u>£1,772.11</u>	
For Information			
Peninsula	27/1/2025	£223.45	Paid via DD
Alice Robertson	28/1/2025	£400.00	S/O paid as agreed with BPC
HAPTC	7/11/2024	£444.12	Membership Subscription 2025-2026 pre-approved
TOTAL BPC for information		<u>£1,067.57</u>	PAID/PREVIOUSLY APPROVED
<u>INCOMES</u>			
		Year to Date	
VAT refund		£3,059.66	
Club Room		£9,294.00	Rent & Ins BBP
NHDC precept		£32,000.00	Full precept
CTRS Grant		£543.01	
CDA Grant			
Other incomes		£165.00	Allotments
Interest		£155.34	
Barclays Bank		£150.00	Compensation
Alice Robertson		£2,295.00	Goal Donation
TOTAL BPC Incomes		<u>£47,662.01</u>	
<u>Bank Balances Held</u>			
	account	Balance	
Barley Parish Council			
Main	2188	£40,127.57	
Savings	5127	£0.00	
TH Sinking Fund	5720	£13,948.97	
TOTAL BPC Banks		<u>£54,076.54</u>	
<u>Other Sections</u>			
Barley Show Profit		£2,317.39	Final
Barley Show		<u>£11,240.89</u>	
Barley Tennis Club		<u>£19,694.70</u>	Bank balances
S137 expenditure limit			
22/23	8.82		
23/24	9.93		
Precept Requested 24/25			
CTRS		£32,000.00	
Total		<u>£32,543.02</u>	

The Payments were agreed.

Proposed Cllr Turner, Seconded Cllr Cayford.

8. Finance RFO report

8.1 To consider and approve payments for The Town House Charity (as Sole Trustee)

<u>EXPENSES</u>			
Payee	Date	Amount	For
PJ Robinson Electrical	21/01/2025	£271.20	Carry out portable appliance testing
Swift Fire & Safety	27/01/2025	£261.00	Fire Alarm Call out
Elvira Gusejnova	29/01/2025	£443.93	Ella fees & expenses Oct 24 - Jan 25
Rebecca Taw	30/01/2025	£112.00	Town House Cleaning
TOTAL TH for approval		<u>£1,088.13</u>	TO APPROVE FOR PAYMENT
For Information			
PNET	23/01/2025	£28.04	paid by DD
NHDC	2/1/2025	£37.00	paid by DD (none Feb/march)
Octopus	10/01/2025	£261.72	Electricity supply DD monthly charge
Everflow Ltd	23/01/2025	£40.21	Water supply DD
TOTAL TH for Information		<u>£366.97</u>	PAID/PREVIOUSLY APPROVED
<u>INCOMES</u>		Year to Date	
Town House YTD		£18,230.00	
BPC Donation		£5,777.18	Donation re Insurance
Bank Interest		66.73	
TOTAL TH Incomes		<u>£24,073.91</u>	
<u>Bank Balances Held</u>		account	Balance
Barley Town House			
Main	3265	£37,371.79	
Deposits	8330	£3,510.00	
Savings	8104	£5,992.75	
		<u>£46,874.54</u>	
<u>Deposits</u>			
Opening balance		£3,210.00	
Received		£600.00	
Refunded		-£300.00	
Trf to main ac			
Closing Balance		<u>£3,510.00</u>	

The Payments were agreed.

Proposed Cllr Turner, Cllr Cayford

- 8.2 The RFO advised that the Gallagher Insurance renewal on the Town House is coming up on the 15th April and we should expect a premium request in the next couple of months.

9. Reports from Working Parties, Committees and Portfolio Holders

9.1 Town House Charity

- 9.1.1 Alan Wiltshire the new Chairman of the Town House Committee advised that the key locks to the Town House have been changed on the 31st January 2025 to an electronic lock system. This enables tracking of all users of the Town House gaining entry and will ensure a higher level of security for the building.
- 9.1.2 There is an issue with lights onto the carpark not going out properly with light spilling into a neighbouring property which is being investigated. He also reported that there is an issue with the speakers for the new sound system which have been fixed to the beams connecting with the neighbouring property. This has led to unacceptable noise transference from the sound system to the adjoining property and suitable alternative arrangements are currently being investigated.
- 9.1.3 Alan Cayford confirmed all weekly Fire, Health and Safety checks had been carried out.

9.2 Plaistow & Childrens Playground

- 9.2.1 Cllr Cayford carried out weekly checks on the playground and Plaistow. He reported that the catch on the gate by Bankside is defective and furthermore some adjustment to the post to stop the gate swinging too far is needed.
- 9.2.2 There has been a lot of dog fouling on the Plaistow and around the village recently. It was agreed that signs would again be distributed around the village urging dog walkers to clear up after their dogs and also that a suitable notice would be put in the village magazine The Diary to similar effect.

10. Truvelo Speed Cameras Scheme

- 10.1 The Clerk advised the meeting that following the online meeting with the OPCC on the 9th January 2025 they have subsequently advised that they can agree to the request for additional letters for the same cost but were unable to agree to a cap on annual cost increases as these were largely beyond their control. Barley Parish Council's ultimate sanction would be to terminate the MoU if the increase in the costs were deemed to be unacceptable. We are now expecting a final draft MoU from the OPCC in the next few weeks for signature.

11. Clerks Report

- 11.1 Cllr Lee and The Clerk attended an online meeting with CDA Herts to discuss undertaking a Housing Needs Survey. CDA Herts will confirm if and when this can go ahead in due course.
- 11.2 Stephen Bye has been trimming the hedge on Chishill Road.
- 11.3 A number of Councillors have been struggled with .gov email issues. The Clerk suggested getting some IT support to resolve the issues. Citadel charge £80 per hour and are based locally and come recommended. The Council agreed to the cost and the Clerk was to arrange prioritizing the RFO Lynn Brett's emails first.
- 11.4 The Clerk advised the Council that if we are to replace the wooden picnic tables in the Playground area, the general cost of a recycled Picnic Table was circa £800-£1,200). The Clerk was asked to do some research and suggest some to choose from.

12. Items of correspondence

- 12.1 None.

13. Any Other Business

- 13.1 Following further lengthy discussion at this meeting, Cllr Turner requested that it be noted in these minutes that he was not happy that Barley Parish Council continued to follow the agreed actions set out in January's Parish Council meeting to urgently send a letter to the Barley Barkway School Federation regarding the Early Years Consultation undertaken by the school, as he had changed his position on this following the January meeting and had requested that sending the letter be delayed until after the matter had been discussed by Barkway Parish Council. The Chairman stated that the decision was made to proceed as discussed and agreed in the January meeting due to the Council having been advised that timing was of the essence and delaying could be detrimental to the concerns raised.(Letter attached)

14. Date of next Barley Parish meeting

The date of the next Parish Council meeting will be on the 3rd March 2025, commencing at 8pm.

Contact: clerk@barleyparishcouncil.gov.uk



BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**Mrs Sharon Brown
Headteacher
Barley Barkway School Federation**

**Barley VA Church of England First School
Church End, Barley, SG8 8JW**

**Barkway VA Church of England First School
84 High Street, Barkway, SG8 8EF**

Dear Mrs Brown,

Barley Barkway School Federation – Consultation for proposed expansion into Early Years teaching.

Barley Parish Council (BPC) has been made aware by concerned villagers of Barley Barkway School Federation's (BBSF) proposal to expand into early years teaching commencing September 2025.

We understand that a consultation took place from 13th December to 3rd January, clashing with the extended Christmas holiday period, this was very unfortunate timing for an important issue that directly impacts on community provision. BPC was not directly notified about the consultation and the first opportunity to consider the proposal was at the Council meeting on the 6th January. Barkway Parish Council are also in the same position and are not able to consider the matter until their first meeting on the 14th January.

BPC has always been very supportive of Barley village school and its successor, Barley Barkway School Federation, and fully recognises the importance of high quality early years learning, with the well-being of the children being front and centre.

However, it is evident to BPC that this proposal by BBSF has created very strong views in Barley. Concerns raised have been wide ranging, from what the quantifiable benefits to early years learning in our community will be, to the impact on the existing Barkway Pre-school (and toddler group) and the appropriateness of the application for public funds made by the school to help deliver the proposals. But central to all of these concerns is the lack of

information and engagement with other stakeholders and, in particular, the role of the successful Barkway Pre-school.

Barkway pre-school, a small non-profit making organisation and a registered charity, currently occupies space at Barkway school where it cares for children aged 2-5, many of whom go on to join BBSF. In addition, the pre-school also provides wrap round care in support of BBSF's nursery and reception classes, and runs the Barkway toddler group. BPC is aware from representations made to it that the pre-school is a highly respected and valued community asset serving not just Barkway but Barley as well. We further understand that during the consultation process, notice was served on Barkway Preschool to gain vacant possession of the space currently occupied by the pre-school.

There is no reference in the consultation to the present or indeed future role of the pre-school. The pre-school and the Federation, working together have the potential to deliver excellence in early years learning. Why remove an excellent existing provider and seek to replace it with another untested mode of delivery? The removal of the existing successful pre-school could well see a reduction in the number of children coming through to BBSF, with a potentially adverse impact on the long term viability of Barley school, this is a major concern to BPC.

BPC is concerned at the lack of information provided by the school and the speed with which this proposal is being rushed forward without engaging with the very community it seeks to serve. We strongly urge the school to enter into an informed and open dialogue, sharing information to allow a full and proper debate with the community and stakeholders, to ensure the long term success of such important educational provision.

Yours sincerely,

Alice Robertson

Alice Robertson
Barley Parish Council Clerk
clerk@barleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Copy sent by email to the following parties:

- *Charlotte Johnson, The Diocese of St Albans Board of Education.*
- *David Shevlane, Early Years' Service, Children's Services, Hertfordshire County Council.*
- *Jamie Leavy, Early Years' Service, Children's Services, Hertfordshire County Council.*
- *Cllr Fiona Hill, Hertfordshire County Council*
- *Leader, Barkway Preschool*
- The Clerk Barkway Parish Council