

BARLEY PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of meeting of Barley Parish Council
held on Monday 4th January 2021 via Zoom

PRESENT

Cllr Jerry Carlisle (Chair), Cllr Ian Turner, Cllr Brian Haughey, Cllr Bill Sterland, Cllr David King, Cllr Yvonne Lee

IN ATTENDANCE

District Cllr Gerald Morris, Mel Chammings (Clerk), Tim Martin (RFO), County Cllr Fiona Hill, District Cllr Tony Hunter and Mr. Nick Shaw
1 member of the public.

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 9th December 2020

The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th December were read and approved.
Proposed by Cllr Sterland and seconded by Cllr Turner.

MATTERS ARISING

The clerk was asked to report on the action log, which had been distributed with the agenda papers.

Cleared actions

- 1) A note confirming the BPC's position on the London Road works plan had been sent to Highways (Clerk).
- 2) Work to clear the gully and drain at Picknage road was completed on 19th December. Members thanked County Cllr Hill for her help in driving this through.
- 3) A written request to call in the Draytons planning application to the Planning committee was made to District Cllr Morris (Clerk). There was no further update yet.
- 4) Objections to the Langley farm barn proposal were sent on behalf of BPC (Clerk). It was noted that the application had been refused.
- 5) Cllr Carlisle and the RFO met again with the VAT advisers (On agenda)

Actions outstanding

- 1) Although the Village Plan Review meetings were postponed, Cllr Lee hoped to continue work on the survey questions. The suggestion that the provision of outdoor adult fitness equipment for the Plaistow should be added to the new Village Plan was accepted as part of the consultation process.
- 2) Cllr Haughey would seek further quotes for repair/renewal of the septic tank and pump system behind the scout hut. To date no further company was prepared to give a quote.
- 3) Following a further meeting with VAT advisers a decision on whether to proceed with the TH promotional proposal would be made (On agenda)

- 4) Cllrs had been asked to reconsider proposed expenditure plans and the draft budget and to alert the RFO to any potential changes prior to this meeting if possible (On agenda)
- 5) Further information was sought by the clerk about the Greening Campaign and was forwarded to Cllr Sterland to consider on behalf of the BPC. It was agreed that the concept was a good one and could be developed as part of the Village Plan. The Clerk was asked to contact with the Greening Campaign official to ask for help on what we could realistically do and how we should implement it.
- 6) The ONS would send additional information on how the BPC might help with the 2021 census. (Clerk)
- 7) Repairs to the kissing gates on the footpath crossing Lovely View were still outstanding. The clerk wrote again to Countryside Management but to date no response had been received.

UPDATE FROM COUNTY CLLR HILL

- The work to the embankment and drainage on London Road was still scheduled for March next year. Gary Henning (HCC Highways) would visit the site to review the ownership issue on his return from holiday. A meeting of interested parties to discuss the work plan would be arranged when Derek Jerrard of Ringway (HCC Highways contractor) returned from leave on 11th January.
- The Road Safety Fund application was underway. Before completion, there were several technical questions about the functionality of the preferred camera which required answers and were being followed up by correspondence.
- During the meeting a national lockdown was announced, details of which were still to be published. With regards to the Plaistow playground, it was agreed that we would follow whatever playground arrangements NHDC made. District Cllr Tony Hunter said he would follow this up on our behalf. *Post meeting note: Playground remains open; tennis courts are closed; Royston waste/recycling centre open but think essential use only; Royston library open for returns and click and collect only.*

PLANNING

- There were no planning applications to consider.

FINANCE

The following list of payments was authorised at this meeting

Barley Parish Council

M Chammings	£371.60	Clerking December
T Martin	£218	RFO December
HMRC	£432	Quarter tax
Elysian	£1500	VAT advice

Payments were proposed by Cllr Haughey and seconded by Cllr Sterland

Barley Town House

R.Saklatvala	£ 50-00	Letting Officer fee for November
Swift Fire and Safety	£ 226.75	Alarm repair
B Haughey	£24.98	Lock for wheelie bin

Payments proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr King

VAT

Mr. Martin and Cllr Carlisle shared the results of the follow up meeting with the VAT advisers. In essence it was concluded that the current arrangements would remain i.e. Town House Charity continues to invoice hirers and where invoices are received for goods or against work orders will pay any VAT due which will not be reclaimed. . This position would be reviewed prior to any major projects commencing. A written report from the advisers would be sent to councillors once received.

Budget

At the last meeting Cllrs considered the draft precept budget and it was agreed that the figures presented were in line with the proposed expenditure plans that had been discussed at previous meetings. Although it left the total reserves at a lower level than normal, it was felt that given the circumstances this year it was not appropriate to increase the precept which had remained at the same level for 10 years. If necessary, plans could be adjusted throughout the year to ensure that reserves stayed at a reasonable level.

As no further comments were made it was agreed to accept the draft budget, with no change to the precept.

The clerk would send the appropriate paperwork to NHDC.

Other business

Mr. Martin who had been the RFO for several years announced that he would like to retire by the end of March. Cllr Carlisle had approached a possible replacement and asked Cllrs to submit any other potential candidates to him.

TOWN HOUSE

- Promotional Proposal

Following feedback from the Council last month, an amended proposal was being considered. This would be discussed by the Town House Committee before submission to the Council next month.

- Town House roof

We had not received the decision on the listed building application yet. Mr Shaw had received two quotes so far for the works and a further quote was being sought. Cllr Lee reminded the meeting that there may be a need for CDM requirements to be put in place prior to the appointment of a contractor and any work commencing.

RECREATION GROUND

Cllr Turner reported that:

- The picnic table seat was repaired and was reinstated. Repairs to the gates still needed attention.
- The goal post and net were in situ.
- Cllr King reported that the trees behind the tennis courts needed to be cutback to allow the grass cutting machinery better access. It was agreed that this should be done i.e., lower branches removed.

- A concern was raised about a gate in the fence at the rear of one of the Bankside houses leading directly onto the Plaistow. As there was no right of way onto the Plaistow for any Bankside houses that backed on to it, the Clerk was asked to contact settle to ask them to arrange to either remove the gate or to secure it so that it could not be opened and used.

HEALTH & SAFETY

There were no additional health and safety issues other than those already discussed under the Town House and Recreation Ground reports.

CORRESPONDENCE

The LGA had reviewed the Code of Conduct for local authority councillors. Subsequently the NHDC monitoring officer had written to say that NHDC would consider the revised code at their March meeting. For consistency, she asked Parish Councils to adopt the NHDC code once published. Cllrs asked to view the proposed revised code prior to agreeing this proposal.

AOB

Cllr Haughey had carried out further research into electrical charging points in the village. There was a grant available through the Rural Community Energy Fund to carry out feasibility work and it was agreed that Cllr Haughey should register for the feasibility grant. District Cllr Morris would also make enquiries about grants available from NHDC

The meeting ended at 21.30.

The next meeting would be held by zoom on Monday 1st February 2021