



**Barley Parish Council meeting: 15th April 2024 at 8pm,
Town House, Church End, Barley.**

Meeting Minutes

PRESENT

1.1 Cllr Brian Haughey (Chair), Cllr Jerry Carlisle (Vice Chair) Cllr Alan Cayford, Cllr David King, Cllr Ian Turner, District Cllr Gerald Morris, RFO Lynn Brett

IN ATTENDANCE

7 members of the public.

1. Apologies

1.1 Cllr Fiona Hill and Cllr Ali Hearn sent their apologies. The Clerk Alice Robertson was absent due to sickness.

2. Declarations of Interest

2.1 No declarations of interest were made.

3. Minutes

3.1 The minutes of the Barley Parish Council meeting held on 4th March 2024 were approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings. Proposed Cllr Cayford, Seconded Cllr King.

4. Public Participation

4.1 Several of the members of the public present raised concerns regarding a planning application that had been made in respect of a property and site known as Foxlea at The Mount. The Council advised that although it was aware that such an application had been made, the Council had only received notification that day (15th April) and the application was not to be considered at this meeting because the Councillors had not had sufficient time to consider it prior to the meeting. In these circumstances the Council had requested an extension of time to North Herts Council to enable the application to be properly considered and in anticipation of that extension of time being granted the application would be considered at the Council's next meeting on the 13th May 2024. If however, the extension of time is not granted then given the concerns expressed, then an additional meeting would be arranged by the Parish Council in order to consider the application properly within the original time frame requested by North Herts Council. The public would be advised accordingly.

5. Planning

5.1 Reference: 24/00573/FPH - Wellside Cottage, Smiths End Lane, Barley, Royston, Hertfordshire, SG8 8LJ

Full Permission Householder: Part two storey, part single storey rear extension following demolition of existing conservatory and outbuildings. Installation of flue following demolition of chimney stack, and alterations to fenestration.

This application was considered by the meeting and it was resolved as follows;

- *We note that the site lies within the Defined Village Boundary for Barley and also within the Barley Conservation Area of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 adopted in November 2022.*
- *We note that no Design and Access Statement has been provided in support of the application which we consider an omission which should have been addressed by North Herts Council at the time the application was registered.*
- *While Barley Parish Council have no objection in principle to the proposed alterations and additions, we have the following concerns about the proposals;*
 - *The demolition of the existing garage and other outbuildings will result in the property having no provision for external storage or garaging facilities e.g. for garden equipment etc, as no alternative replacement provision for such facilities are proposed.*
 - *It is noted that it is proposed to replace most if not all the existing timber windows and frames with UPVC windows and frames and yet the new rear single storey extension is proposed to be a specialist oak framed structure with timber framed windows, presumably metal bifold doors and Velux Conservation windows. Having regard to the location of the property and its prominent position on Smiths End Lane coupled with the fact that it is located within the Barley Conservation Area we would have hoped to see all replacement windows to be of timber and metal (e.g. bi-fold doors etc) and not mixed with UPVC replacements.*

Should North Herts Council be minded to approve the application we would ask that all future permitted development rights be withdrawn.

5.2 Reference: 24/00574/FP - Sells Close House, High Street, Barley, Hertfordshire, SG8 8HY.

Full Planning Permission: Change of use of former agricultural land to residential garden.

This application was considered by the meeting and it was resolved as follows;

Barley Parish Council object to the proposed change of use and ask North Herts Council in arriving at their decision to take the following comments into account.

- *We note that the location of the site of the proposed change of use lies within the Barley Conservation Area but outside the Defined Village Boundary for Barley of the North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 adopted in November 2022.*
- *The land immediately to the south of the application site now known as Paddock View was recently developed as part of the Fox Acre development not all of which so far as we are aware, is designated residential garden land, although it may in practice be so used. However, the land to the north of the application site is open undeveloped agricultural land. Our concern is that this application if granted could encourage further applications by others immediately adjoining or close to the site, to similarly seek change of use of land to residential garden use - thus creating a potentially large plot of land which although outside the current village boundary, but within the Conservation Area, may prove difficult to resist should any future applications to develop such land be made. In this regard we note that under the new Local Plan there are no sites allocated for residential development in Barley, but we are aware that North Herts Council will be undertaking or required to undertake, a review of the recently adopted Local Plan. Barley Parish Council would not wish to encourage any suggestion that this land, the subject of the application coupled with other land as suggested above, be put forward for inclusion in any amended Defined Village Boundary following such review.*

- We further consider that the proposed change of use would cause harm to the open character and appearance of the Barley Conservation Area in this vicinity.

For all of the above reasons we ask that North Herts Council refuse this application.

If notwithstanding our concerns and objection to this proposal, North Herts Council are nevertheless minded to approve the application, then we ask that all Permitted Development Rights in relation to the site be withdrawn.

5.3 Appeal ref: APP/X1925/W/23/3333430 (Planning Application REF: 23/01967/FP) - Land Adjacent To 7, Butterfield, Barley, Hertfordshire, SG8 8FD by: Bampton Properties Ltd Site address: Description: Erection of one 1-bedroom dwelling

The Council noted that the applicant had decided to appeal the refusal of planning permission by North Herts Council and it was agreed that the Planning Inspector be advised that we repeat our objections to this application and fully endorse North Herts Council's refusal. We sincerely hope the Planning Inspectorate will dismiss this appeal.

6. Finance RFO report

6.1. To consider and approve payments for the Council.

Barley Parish Council

EXPENSES

Payee	Amount	For
Alice Robertson		Clerk gross pay & expenses
Lynn Brett	£269.36	RFO Pay
Lynn Brett	£54.82	Underpaid 4/23
Broadmead Leisure	£108.00	1/4 inspection playground 11/03/2024
TOTAL for approval	<u>£432.18</u>	TO APPROVE FOR PAYMENT

For Information

HAPTC	£417.83	Membership Subscription 2024-2025 pre-approved awaiting invoice April 2024
Peninsula	£223.45	Paid via DD
Host-IT	£35.88	Email Boxes 18.3.24-17.3.25 DD taken 21.3.24
Branson Street Furniture	£1,004.40	Bench for Plaistow
Alice Robertson	£565.81	Paid 11/04/2024
TOTAL for information	<u>£2,247.37</u>	PAID/Previously Approved

INCOMES

VAT refund	£2,048.73	
Club Room	£10,780.31	Rent & Ins BBP
NHDC precept	£29,400.00	Final precept
CTRS Grant	£586.19	
CDA Grant		
Other incomes	£330.00	Allotments
Interest	£161.01	
Donation Barley Show	£3,500.00	Re Marquee
Donation HCC	£400.00	Salt Bins
Donation Margaret House	£200.00	Defib

Donation for Bench	£687.00	Bench for Plaistow
Donation from Hertfordshire CC	£150.00	Bench for Plaistow
Barclays Bank	£100.00	Compensation
TOTAL BPC Incomes	<u>£48,343.24</u>	

<u>Bank Balances Held</u>	Balance
Barley Parish Council	
Main	£41,703.47
Savings	£0.00
TH Sinking Fund	£13,793.63
TOTAL BPC Banks	<u>£55,497.10</u>

<u>Other Sections</u>		
Barley Show Profit	£1,004.06	Final
Barley Show	<u>£12,820.98</u>	
Barley Tennis Club	<u>£13,019.60</u>	Bank balances

S137 expenditure limit

22/23

23/24

Precept Requested 23/24	£29,400.00
CTRS	£586.19
Total	<u>£29,986.19</u>

Proposer Cllr Turner, Seconder Cllr Cayford

- 6.1.1** The RFO Lynn Brett presented the final Parish Council accounts following the Year End as at 31st March 2024 against the budget for the year 23/24 and the revised budget for 24/25. The biggest difference between the budget 23/24 and budget 24/25 was the increase in salaries and the decision to omit from the budget the item for the Special projects/container-storage project (£25,000).
- 6.1.2** The RFO advised of a shortfall of salary due to the RFO amounting to some £54.82 which it was agreed by the meeting should be paid. Proposed by Cllr Cayford, Seconded by Cllr Turner.
- 6.1.3** The RFO suggested, as also suggested by the Internal Auditor, that the Parish Council donation to the Townhouse Sinking Fund should be made at the end of the financial year in March, rather than at the beginning. This was agreed by the meeting.
- 6.1.4** In order to provide some certainty as to income stream for the Clerk, the RFO suggested that the Clerk should receive a minimum payment to be made by Direct Debit of £400 per month on account of hours worked to be adjusted as necessary against actual hours worked at the next meeting. This would avoid the difficulty of irregular payment dates created by some irregular Parish Council meetings. It is also recommended good practice by the HAPTC. This was agreed by the meeting.
- 6.1.5** The RFO presented drafts of the Asset Register and AGAR which the RFO will be reviewing and completing in readiness for being formally approved by the Council at the next meeting on the 13th May 2024 for submission to the External Auditor.
- 6.1.6** The RFO presented the revised Financial Risk Assessment Schedule March 2024 discussed at the meeting on the 4th March 2024 with minor corrections. This was approved by the meeting and duly signed by the Chair.

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

EXPENSES

Payee	Amount	
The Diary	£80.00	Advertising in The Diary
Swift	£209.26	Fire & Lighting 6th Mth Service
NHDC	£111.02	Trade Recycling Waste Service
NHDC	£114.99	Trade Refuse Waste Service
Barley Property	£176.46	Wash and scrub town house floors
Elvira Gusejnova	£405.50	Lettings Fees Jan-Feb24
Gallagher	£5,748.59	TH Insurance 15.4.24 - 14.4.25
TOTAL TH for approval	<u>£6,845.82</u>	TO APPROVE FOR PAYMENT

For Information

PNET	£25.99	paid by DD
NHDC	£41.62	paid by DD (none Feb/march)
Octopus	£252.23	Electricity supply DD monthly charge
Octopus	£233.19	Electricity supply DD monthly charge
Octopus		Electricity supply DD Est £865 outstanding
Everflow Ltd	£39.35	Water supply DD
Hallmaster	£265.00	PD 05/03/2024
TOTAL TH for Information	<u>£857.38</u>	PAID/PREVIOUSLY APPROVED

INCOMES

Town House YTD	£23,221.61
Bank Interest	£70.50
TOTAL TH Incomes	<u>£23,292.11</u>

Bank Balances Held

Barley Town House	Balance
Main	£34,449.69
Deposits	£4,010.00
Savings	£5,926.02
	<u>£44,385.71</u>

Deposits

Opening balance	£3,410.00
Received	£900.00
Refunded	£0.00
Trf to main ac	-£300.00
Closing Balance	<u>£4,010.00</u>

Proposer Cllr Cayford & Cllr King

- 7.1** The RFO had prior to the meeting circulated to all Councillors the details for the renewal of the Town House Insurance and following a brief discussion the meeting agreed to the renewal through AJ Gallagher. Proposed Cllr Turner, Seconded Cllr Cayford.

Cllr Carlisle noted that the loss of income provided by the policy in the event of a major incident resulting in the Town House not being available for use was limited to 1 years loss of revenue. However in the event of a major incident it could take substantially longer to rebuild/reinstate the property perhaps as long as 2/3 years and suggested that the RFO seek confirmation of the additional premium should we increase this period to 2 or 3 years. This was agreed and the RFO will action.

- 7.2** It was agreed by the meeting that the cost of the Barley Community Group's Public Liability Insurance premium of £100.80, would as suggested by the Town House Chairman Nick Shaw, be paid by The Town House Charity for this year. Proposed Cllr Turner, Seconded Cllr Cayford.

- 7.3** Relating to both the Parish Council, and The Town House Charity, the RFO and Clerk have expressed concern that email requests to Councillors were not responded to as speedily and diligently as required. This sometimes led to unnecessary delays in payments or action being taken where required. Following discussion, it was agreed that where Councillors have been asked to approve payments or other actions but where no response has been received (except where lack of response was due to illness and or other unavailability e.g. previously notified holidays), then approval will have deemed to have been given if no response has been received within 3 days of the original email being sent.

8. Reports from County/District Councillors

- 8.1 To receive a report from County Cllr Hill**

INTEGRATED PLAN (IP)/BUDGET

Hertfordshire County Council approved the Integrated Plan at its Council meeting on 13th February and managed to maintain frontline services with no planned closures of libraries or fire stations. Full details of the budget proposals are available on the County Council website.

SCHOOLS/EDUCATION

Following the considerable damage in the storms during January students are now back to full face-to-face learning at King James Academy Royston (KJAR) in temporary buildings while the permanent repairs are carried out.

HEALTH

I continue to press, with the NHS and through HCC, the need for improved services in healthcare, particularly timely GP appointments and accessibility to dentists, both of which are issues across Hertfordshire. The problems are high on the agenda of the Health Scrutiny Committee at HCC, where the NHS is held to account by County Council members. I am also continuing to collaborate with stakeholders and push for an integrated health and social care hub in Royston.

BANKING HUB

Following confirmation from LINK, in September 2023, that a recommendation had been made for a banking hub in Royston, I have suggested possible buildings to site the hub and raised the question of timescales. The general guideline from initiating the idea of a hub to finding a suitable location is around 12 months. I will continue to push for progress.

LIBRARIES

Royston Library continues to host the Police and Barclays Bank for drop-in sessions, together with many other new activities, in addition to the regular activities, such as Storytime, which exist throughout the year. The Lego Club and Code Club are back and a new project, Page One, begins on 22nd April for four sessions.

ARMED FORCES COVENANT

All presentations to the winners of the Christmas Card competition have now taken place and the winners participated in a day of adventure which I had the pleasure of observing. We also held a meeting of the Armed Forces Covenant Board during March and I attended the Commonwealth Flag Raising at County Hall on 11th March. There will be numerous events during Armed Forces Week in June.

HIGHWAYS/TRANSPORT

The Action Plan has been updated by Highways officers and me. In addition, we are looking into speed and volume surveys in Picknag Road and there will be carriageway works in The Mount – date to be programmed.

GENERAL/COMMUNITY ISSUES

The issues with land lease rates for some community organisations have now been resolved.

I have attended the Active Travel workshop held in the Town Hall on 12th March. This was an opportunity for key community organisations to feed in their views. The subject of the significant delays between S106 being agreed on new developments and the delivery of bus services was raised by several people. We are investigating how to resolve this.

At the Sustainable Travel Town meeting on 18th March, we discussed the Active Travel workshop, pedestrian ramp to the Market square and bike racks in the town. We also received a progress update.

I attended a virtual Sport Mental Health conference on 27th March, where the importance of sport on positive physical and mental health and wellbeing was strongly reinforced. I am currently working on a couple of projects which fit in with the Public Health prevention agenda.

8.2 To receive a report from Cllr Gerald Morris

Cllr Morris reported that there were no major matters to bring to the Council's attention this month. He advised that he would not be standing for re-election at the forthcoming local elections on the 2nd May 2024. The Council thanked Cllr Morris for his service to the Parish over the years he has been a District Councillor and wished him well for the future.

9. Reports from Working Parties, Committees and Portfolio Holders

9.1 Town House Charity

The Chairman Nick Shaw advised that there were issues with rodents chewing electrical wiring in the ceilings over the toilets. Suitable measures to try to eliminate the rodents were in hand, and repairs were being scheduled to the wiring and appropriate means to protecting the wiring investigated.

Cllr Cayford confirmed all weekly Health and Safety checks had been carried out.

9.2 Plaistow & Green Areas

9.2.1 Cllr Cayford carried out weekly checks on the playground and Plaistow.

9.2.2 Nothing further to report on the proposed works to improve the footpath from Church End to the Plaistow.

10. Clerks Report

1. Communication has been poor recently from the Councillors, with little or no acknowledgement of emails that have directly asked for your acknowledgement of email receipt, or for confirmation of payments. This leads to further work being required to chase you up by either/both the RFO and Clerk, (potentially) resulting in more hours being billed which could've been avoided. If for any reason you will be unable to check and respond to emails for more than 72hrs during the working week, please can we agree that you will let the RFO and Clerk know in advance that you are unavailable (unless in an emergency of course)? Happy to discuss a more suitable timeline as understand everyone is busy but it is important to try and ensure we run as efficiently and cost effectively as possible. I'm sure you all agree we want to keep costs down.
2. The Notice of Poll, Statement of Persons Nominated have been published for the NHDC Ermine Seat ahead of the Elections in May. They gave us very little notice to put up the Notice's (the weekend!) but it was done by Cllr Haughey (thank you). Martin Prescott who is contesting Cllr Gerald Morris' seat hopes to be present tonight as he has been for the last few meetings.
3. Equal Opportunities policy – Now uploaded to the website under governance.
4. Freedom of Information Act – Draft has been sent to Cllr Carlisle for his review/approval
5. Safe-guarding Policy – Draft has been sent to Cllr Carlisle for his review/approval
6. Migrating to .gov email addresses – I have had confirmation from everyone except Cllr Turner and Cllr King that they have installed their new email addresses. This needs to be completed and in use ASAP please. If there are issues you must let me know.
7. Response from Planning department re Draytons roof tiles and windows on Victorian building) – you were all cc'd in on the response from Melissa Tyler. Still awaiting further information from the Conservation Officer. I have chased.
8. No response yet to my email regarding implementation of residents contracts re the run-off water ditch maintenance for Drayton's development.
9. Health & Safety Documentation – still awaiting final checks on our previous documentation to be complete. Once done I will update everyone.
10. Tennis Club – we have had a response from R.Sims and Clerk is liaising with the Chair and Vice Chair.
11. Clerk has sent an email to the probation office about viability of the bench project for them, cc'ing in Cllr Cayford and Cllr Haughey.
12. Allotment Fence has now been fixed.
13. Bullards – Clerk has confirmed the village's ground maintenance works for the coming year.
14. Advert for the Annual Village Meeting has been placed in The Diary, and all local group leaders have been approached asking if they would like to give an update at the meeting.

11. Items of correspondence.

- 11.1 Request for sharing of allotment space. The applicant had been referred to another allotment user about the possibility of sharing.
- 11.2 Letter requesting a donation for a local group. See item **7.2**

12. Date of next Barley Parish meeting and items for the agenda

- 12.1 The date of next Parish Council Meeting which will be 13th May 2024 commencing at 8pm. This meeting is also the Parish Council Annual Meeting.
- 12.2 The date of the Annual Village Meeting is 15th May 2024, commencing 7.30pm for 8pm start.

Contact: Alice Robertson, Clerk to Barley Parish Council
Barley.parishclerk@gmail.com