

Barley Parish Council Annual Village Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Town House on Wednesday 10th May 2017 from 8pm

1. Present

Cllr Jerry Carlisle, Cllr Ian Turner, Cllr Yvonne Lee, Cllr Peter McPartland, Cllr Bill Sterland, Mrs Laura Childs (Clerk), Mr Tim Martin (RFO), District Cllr Gerald Morris, County Cllr Fiona Hill, Cllr Tony Hunter, Mr Nick Shaw (Chairman of Town House Management Committee)

7 members of the public.

2. Apologies

Cllr Mel Chammings

3. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 11th May 2016 were read and approved. Proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Mrs Sheila Carlisle

4. Matters arising

Local Plan:

District Cllr Morris explained about the local plan to those present in the meeting and how the plan runs from 2011 - 2031. Landowners have been asked to put forward potential sites for housing and if suitable, sites were identified and then included within the draft local plan. On 11th April the draft local plan was approved and will now be reviewed by the Planning Inspectorate. Whilst there are no specified sites in Barley there is a potential site in Barkway (BK3) for 150 homes which was discussed and the traffic implications for Barley noted.

Highways:

Cllr Carlisle has recently attended a meeting regarding proposed improvements to the Flint Cross junction on the A505, which whilst in South Cambridgeshire greatly affects residents in Barley who commute along this route. Cllr Carlisle spoke about the improvements that are proposed but was concerned that these are short term solutions and not really tackling the bigger problems. Funding is an issue and it is hoped that both Hertfordshire and South Cambridgeshire County Councils could work together on this.

More local Highway issues include the general state of our roads and particularly the gullies. Most of the gullies are blocked, with some of the drains collapsing. Cllr Carlisle has had an ongoing dialogue throughout the year with Mr Gary Henning of Hertfordshire Highways who is very helpful but his hands are tied due to budget restrictions. The previously considered plan to implement some 'self help' by funding the hire of a gully guzzler ourselves has been thwarted. We have been advised that we are not permitted to open the drain covers ourselves. Mr Derek Jerrard of Ringways the contractors for Hertfordshire Highways is now back in post and it is hoped that he may be able to pick up this issue for us as he is fully aware of the history with the gullies and drains around the village and our flooding problems.

County Cllr Fiona Hill spoke about her role as County Councillor.

Cllr Carlisle asked County Councillor Hill if she was able to assist at all with the Speeding issues that we experience through the village. Unless we get the backup from the Police our interactive flashing speed signs are not effective we feel that better support is needed.

Cllr Carlisle advised that both of the Red Telephone boxes have now been acquired. The one in the High Street is now a book exchange, and everyone hoped it would work well. The use for the one in Smiths End Lane was discussed and the possibility of installing a Defibrillator.

5. Presentation of 2016/2017 Annual Accounts

Parish Accounts

Mr Martin presented the annual accounts to the meeting and spoke about a lot of fundraising for the new Playground undertaken last year and then the playground expenditure this year, hence the discrepancy. He explained that the main council income is via the Precept and the rent charged for the Clubroom, plus VAT reclaimed on purchases.

Cllr Carlisle explained that possible future expenditure for the Parish Council included the changing facilities behind the Scout Hut to support those groups using the Plaistow.

Mr Shaw asked if the Parish Council had a Reserves Policy to say that the Parish Council accounts couldn't go below a certain amount. Cllr Carlisle responded that the Parish doesn't run a surplus or a reserve policy.

The Parish Precept has not been raised for a number of years now. This is set by looking at what projects the village has or what needs to be done in the coming year and set the precept accordingly.

Town House accounts

Mr Shaw explained to the meeting that last year a lot of expenditure was carried out with grants received for some of the costs. The Town House has been decorated inside and out, new curtains / blinds, floors done, new kitchen downstairs. Lots of works carried out. Annual lettings of £10,000 are required each year to break even. Cllr Carlisle reminded the meeting that the Town House is a registered charity and the Parish Council are the sole trustee for the building. The Parish Council pay the insurance. Cllr Turner thanked Mr Shaw for all his efforts to improve the Town House.

A new leaflet promoting the Town House is being worked on.

Cllr Turner raised the issue of vaping, because the fire alarms were set off the recently. Mr Martin agreed to look at adding this into the letting agreement terms.

Barley Parish Charities

The Accounts for the year were reviewed for the benefit of the meeting by Mr Jeffrey Wilkerson who is the current chairman of the Trustees.

6. Town House

Mr Shaw reported that a lot of necessary electrical work had been carried out, hard wire tested and any faults found and rectified. The invoice has yet to be received but it was thought that it would be a large expense. Mr Darren Partt has re done the floor upstairs and is maintaining it free of charge for which the Parish Council are very grateful. Mr Shaw was happy to report that more or less all the major renovations that needed to be done have now been completed and the Town House is looking much improved. Cllr Carlisle thanked Mr Shaw for his all his work.

7. Recreation Ground

The new Playground facility is now completed and whilst it required a few tweaks initially it has generally been well received. An annual RoSPA inspection is due to be carried out in June, this first safety inspection is part of the contract financed by the installers.

Cllr Turner has taken back the duty of keeping an eye on the Plaistow and emptying bins. It was reported that the gate latch is missing where the footpath exits on to Bank Side and Cllr Turner agreed to organise replacing it.

8. Scout Hut

Cllr Carlisle reported that unfortunately we still haven't managed to get the new lease signed. It is understood that the Scouts will be debating the matter at their upcoming AGM. There is thought to be no dispute of the terms of the lease more a matter of wanting to save money by not getting legal representation. There was however a need to instruct someone as our lawyer was reluctant to deal with an unqualified lay individual. The scouts really do need to instruct a legal representative.

9. Fox & Hounds

Cllr McPartland gave the meeting an update on the Fox & Hounds Community Bid. An initial funding target of £400,000 to buy the pub and refurbish it with a target of £300,000 to get this in by the end of May, to allow us to put a bid in. The minimum investment is £50 and it is hoped that this will allow more people to get involved. A group has been set up called Community Benefit Society with a policy of one member one vote regardless of the amount invested. There is currently approximately £63,000 in the bank account from donors. Another leaflet calling for donations will be issued to every householder in Barley, to advise of the need for further investors and recent developments. It was noted that, under HMRC rules, of the £300,000 investment the first £150,000 donated should be eligible for tax relief.

10. Lock Up

A proposal has been accepted from a local company who are putting together an Ancient Monument application. Once this has been done and permission granted then the works can begin.

11. Website

Cllr McPartland explained about the progress made to date. Cllr McPartland's daughter Clare has been heavily involved with the development of the new site, for which the Parish Council are very grateful. Cllr McPartland hoped to have a copy of the sample website for the Parish Council to view in a couple of weeks.

12. Reports from local organisations

Tennis Club

Cllr Turner reported that the Tennis Club is open to all, with the cheapest membership of £35 per year for a family membership in the surrounding area and a £3 pay to play. The Tennis Club is self funding with reserves of £28,000, £25,000 of which is earmarked for resurfacing the courts when needed. The Club would like to spend some reserves on a small club house and would like to open discussions with the Parish Council on that at some point.

Cricket Club

Cllr Carlisle reported that the Cricket Club continues to hold their own in their respective leagues putting out two sides. New members are always needed and welcomed.

Barley Boys Club

Going from strength to strength with a trip to the Cambridge beer festival and punting scheduled. Good fun had by all, new members always welcome.

Gardening Club

The Gardening Club meets in the Town House on the first Wednesday of most months, except January and February. Membership is currently just £10 per person and £2 for visitors who are welcome to join any meetings or visits. In the past year the club have enjoyed talks from a variety of speakers with topics including The Swiss Garden at Shuttleworth, Japan in the Cherry Blossom season and **Hertfordshire's** Lost water Gardens. Visits have included trips to private gardens and the Hitchin lavender fields and Wimpole Hall gardens.

There have been some major changes in the committee this year as several members of the committee have resigned for a variety of reasons. The newly formed committee has several new members with lots of new ideas and skills to bring to the gardening club. Unfortunately membership numbers are down and it is likely that subscription fees will have to increase next year. The proposed programme of events for the coming year is advertised on the Village Notice boards and will be distributed via the newly created Newsletter. Anyone wishing to join should contact Robina Zygmunt.

Over 60's Club

New members are always welcome, especially in their 60's and 70's. Members are welcome from any of the surrounding villages as well as Barley itself. Membership is £5 per year and they meet fortnightly on a Thursday afternoon at the Town House. They have guest speakers, hold quizzes, games, bingo and also go out on visits. A raffle is held at each meeting, with prizes donated by the members and this helps to subsidise trips out.

Church

Works to the church roof are currently being undertaken.

Railway Club

The club continues to meet.

Scouts

The Scouts continue to be extremely popular and very well supported by children from Barley and the surrounding villages.

Karate Club

Barkway Karate Club holds a training session on a Tuesday evening in Barley at the Town House to cater for its growing membership. The club has gone from strength to strength over the past couple of years. New members are always welcome.

School

Barley and Barkway First Schools have formed a Federation with a new head controlling both of the schools and working closer together. They will run as one governing body and this is currently being reorganised.

Numbers are stable although the budget per pupil is getting less.

Barley Show

There are plans to have a slightly different format this year with the gardening club having their stands in the Town House not in their usual marquee. All the fun of the usual show is expected to be held on the 8th July '17.

13. Any Other Business

The Doctors Surgery have merged with Linton & Sawston Health Services under the Granta Medical Practices.

It is understood that there has been a meeting organised by the residents of Pudding Lane to take forward who may have ownership of the road and to look into sharing the cost of improving the road surface.

Meeting closed 22:15