

## **Minutes of Annual General Meeting of Barley Parish Council held on Tuesday 4 May 2021 via Zoom**

### **PRESENT**

Cllr Jerry Carlisle (Chair), Cllr Brian Haughey, Cllr David King, Cllr Yvonne Lee

### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Mel Chammings (Clerk), Tim Martin (RFO), Lynn Brett (RFO designate), County Cllr Fiona Hill, District Cllr Gerald Morris, Mr Nick Shaw, and Mrs Alison Hearn.

5 members of the public.

### **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Cllr Bill Sterland with notification of his resignation with immediate effect. The council wished to thank him for his valuable contribution to the work of the Parish Council during his time as a Councillor and the clerk was asked to send a note of thanks.

Cllr Ian Turner was absent from the meeting

### **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Cllr Carlisle stood down as chair and handed over the election process to the Clerk.

Cllr Lee proposed Cllr Carlisle, seconded by Cllr Haughey. As there were no further nominations, Cllr Carlisle was declared Chair for the 2021-2022 year.

### **CO OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR**

The vacant councillor post was advertised for three weeks. Three applications were received, and after due deliberation it was unanimously agreed that Mrs Alison (Ali) Hearn should be invited to join the council which she accepted, and it was resolved that Alison be co-opted with immediate effect.

### **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 6 April 2021**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 April 2021 were read and approved.

Proposed by Cllr King and seconded by Cllr Haughey.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

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

#### Cleared actions not on the agenda.

- 1) The Annual Parish Meeting was booked for Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May in the Town House.  
A notice had been posted in the Diary.

#### Actions outstanding

- 1) The results of the RSF application had not been received. County Cllr Hill suggested that it may be delayed because of purdah prior to elections. The Clerk would consult with Cllr Carlisle and draft a suitable response to the OPCC.
- 2) Picknag Road issues: County Cllr Hill's update refers.
- 3) The Clerk would contact settle to discuss the action needed to ensure that no access to the Plaistow from Bankside was possible.

- 4) Cllr Carlisle would contact the Roger Truett (Scouts) to ensure that there was suitable access to the storage containers.
- 5) Similarly, discussions between BPC and the scouts around future development plans would be led by Cllr Carlisle
- 6) The clerk would continue to press Countryside Management to repair the gates on FP11
- 7) Feasibility of 20mph zones in the village: County Cllr Hills update refers

#### **UPDATE FROM COUNTY CLLR HILL**

- The vaccination programme was on track.
- Library and waste sites were open with current Covid restrictions in place.
- Although erecting safety barriers and potentially installing a grate to prevent rubbish from entering the ditch at Picknage Road was plausible, on investigation land ownership needed to be established before HCC Highways could carry out any further work. A meeting after the elections should take place between Gary Henning, Derek Jerrad, a representative from settle and the elected County Cllr.
- Similarly, a meeting to determine if a feasibility study into the appropriateness of 20mph zones would take place after the election. County Cllr hill would recommend that any feasibility study work should be funded from the Highways Locality Budget
- There had been complaints about the damage to grass verges in Smith End Lane when it was used as a diversion following a mix up of diversion signs during the London Road drainage work. Cllr Hill said that if the problem had been caused by HCC it would take responsibility for repairs.

*County Cllr Hill left at 20.40*

#### **VILLAGE PLAN REVIEW**

Cllr Lee reported that a final draft of the update on the current plan and formation of questions for the next survey were on track for issue before the summer school holidays started. The next meeting of the working group would be on 26<sup>th</sup> May.

#### **ADOPTION OF A REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS**

The proposed revised code adopted by NHDC was distributed in advance of the meeting.

Those present who had read the code agreed that it should be adopted by the Parish Council, but Cllr Carlisle asked that for the sake of completeness those who had yet to respond do so by the end of the week so that the code could be formally adopted at the next Council meeting in June. When cleared by all councillors the Clerk would make the code BPC specific. The new code would be published on the website.

#### **PLANNING**

- a) **Amended Plans: Drayton's Garage development: Reference 19/03064/FP**

The following submission was made to NHDC planning department:

Barley Parish Council objects to this planning application as further amended and ask that NHDC in arriving at their decision take the following comments into account:

It is noted that the revised scheme is now for 10 residential units. This is a reduction of 2 units from the previously amended scheme, which is welcome, but nevertheless is an increase of 1 unit from the original proposal of 9 units. The amended proposals do not alleviate the parish council's concerns and objections in relation to this application and its various amendments as previously expressed to NHDC.

It is the view of the whole parish council that the scheme remains a significant over development of the site. The scale, bulk and size of the development is in our view excessive and wholly inappropriate for its prominent location within the heart of the village and the Barley Conservation Area.

The access and onsite parking arrangements are in our view poorly designed and inappropriate for a development of this scale and are symptomatic of a scheme designed to purely maximize the scale of development the consequence of which will have a significant and detrimental impact on the Conservation Area. Each property has double bank parking (one behind the other) which is impractical and will result in cars being parked on the estate road which because of the restricted width will cause obstructions to traffic on site. Furthermore, there are only 5 visitor parking spaces for 10 houses. This is totally inadequate.

The amended scheme offers no particular benefit whatsoever over the previous iterations so far as parking and traffic generation is concerned because while there are two fewer housing units the parking on site shows no change because the parking for the two existing semi-detached houses fronting High Street is now accommodated to the rear of those properties but within the proposed development. The amended scheme, as with the other schemes, will result in significant parking issues on the High Street as visitors and delivery vehicles will have nowhere else to park but on the High Street. In this regard and as we have pointed out before, there are already considerable traffic/parking issues in the area particularly along this section of the High Street due to the GP surgery opposite the site and the new development behind the practice the impact which is yet to be realised but is unlikely to improve the situation. The cause of any additional parking on the High Street because of the development proposed by this application must be avoided to prevent any further highways issues arising the consequences of which should not be underestimated.

We also repeat our previous comments about heavy vehicles such as refuse vehicles, other HGV's and emergency vehicles being able to access the site, turn round, and exit the site safely. To do so will require that there are no obstructions such as parked vehicles on the estate road which would prevent this happening, and that there are no vehicles, which today already park on High St, on either side and opposite the proposed entrance/exit from the site which would otherwise also make this manoeuvre difficult to achieve safely.

We understand that the applicant continues to maintain that the scale of the proposed development is necessary to protect the financial viability of the project. We repeat the comment we made previously in this respect that we do not consider the financial view or position of the applicant is a planning matter and their perception as to viability should not influence the planning process. An applicant's perception as to viability should not be used as an excuse for poor design and overdevelopment of the site leading as it does in our view, in this case to demonstrable harm to its setting within, and to, the Barley Conservation Area.

We note that some minor design changes have been made to the scheme including the height of the roof to unit 1 and other elevational changes but there remains a general lack of landscaping to soften the impact of the development, which is disappointing, but which probably reflects the fact that there is little room to do so due the desire to maximize the number of units on what is a relatively small site of less than 0.5 hectare.

Surface water disposal remains a concern as we have previously expressed. We are aware that the developer has undertaken further site investigations and now better understands that they will have to deal with not only any surface water drainage arising from any development of the site itself but also the water from the existing Herts Highway network and other surface water generated upstream of the site and which passes through the site. Such existing offsite surface water drainage becomes the developer's, and in due course the residents, responsibility once it passes on to the site. So far as we are aware a solution to all such surface water disposal has not yet been determined.

As we have stated before in respect of this application it is our view that no attempt has been made to properly address the concerns raised by Barley Parish Council in our previous comments; the latest proposals remain in our view in direct conflict with the policies of the NHDC Local Plan No 2 with Alterations and those contained in the Emerging Local Plan together with the NPPF, which all collectively seek to ensure that special account is taken of a site's location within a Conservation Area and that the siting and scale of the development should enhance or at the very least maintain the character of the area. The original proposal and the subsequent amended schemes singularly fail to do that. The demonstrable harm that we consider will be occasioned to the character and appearance of the Barley Conservation Area totally outweighs any possible benefit that the applicant may argue would result from this development.

We acknowledge that this is a brownfield site, and we have no objection to the principle of a residential redevelopment, but this application and its various iterations are for a scheme that in terms of its scale, bulk and size represents a significant overdevelopment of the site and is excessive and inappropriate for its prominent location within the heart of the village and the Barley Conservation Area.

We therefore repeat that Barley Parish Council consider that this application should be refused, and we urge NHDC to do so.

**b) Section 73 application: Hillcrest, Shaftenhoe End: Reference 21/01194/S73**

The following submission was sent to NHDC planning department:

Barley Parish Council objects to this application and ask NHDC in arriving at their decision to take the following comments into account:

This condition formed part of a consent granted some 9 years ago and which was implemented by the applicant shortly after being granted. The consent related to quite substantial alterations and additions to a pre-existing modest bungalow. The property is situated in an elevated position on the edge of open countryside at Shaftenhoe End, a small hamlet within the parish of Barley. The condition, which was effectively to withdraw Permitted Development Rights, was in our view quite appropriate given the scale of the proposed alterations and extensions to the property and, so far as we know, was not contested by the applicant at the time. (The applicant for this S73 application is the same as for the original planning application). As far as we are aware the only real effect of the condition is to require a specific planning permission for any proposed development which is not particularly onerous other than in terms of time and the cost of an application.

What has changed the situation from the applicant's point of view after some 9 years is not disclosed in the Supporting Statement and in our view the application has little merit in respect of a property much altered from its original construction and located in such a prominent location and where the character and amenities of the area are important issues and are of as much, if not more so, relevance today as they were when the condition was first imposed.

We ask that NHDC refuse this application.

**c) Claremont development pre planning proposal for Picknage Road development**

A further proposal for the development of Picknage Road had been received. The clerk would organise a meeting with the consultants. Attendees would be Cllr Carlisle, Cllr Lee, Cllr Haughey and District Cllr Morris.

*District Cllr Morris left 21.35*

## FINANCE

The following list of payments was authorised at this meeting.  
Barley Parish Council.

M Chamings	£371.60	Clerking April
T Martin	£515.60	RFO April
Savills	£1440.00	CDM regulations Town House roof

Payments were proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr Haughey.

### Barley Town House

N Shaw	£153.04	Various expenses
Dolly's Vintage Tea party	£ 100	Invoice 2 for marketing service
Dolly's Vintage Tea party	£ 243.50	Invoice 3 + expenses for Open Day

Payments proposed by Cllr Haughey and seconded by Cllr Lee.

### Payments authorised between meetings: Barley Parish Council

HMRC	£326.40	PAYE for last quarter
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Authorised by Cllr Carlisle and Cllr Haughey

### Finance update

- Income: £ 200 for allotment fees and the first instalment of the precept were received.
- £5,000 was transferred to the Town House Roof fund which now stood at 15,000
- BPC account was now circa £50,000 and Town House current account £13,000. The Barley Assistance fund was now £440.
- Cllr Hearn agreed to take over the Payment checking process from ex- Cllr Sterland
- There were several banking mandates issues which should be resolved this month
- The RFO had previously distributed the Review of Effectiveness of Internal Controls for year 2020-2021. This was discussed and approved at the meeting. Cllr Lee asked for clarity on the Annual Finance Risk Assessment items (*post meeting action cleared by RFO*)
- Return of the External Audit deadline was 30<sup>th</sup> June.
- The Payroll was now transferred in-house to the RFO

## TOWN HOUSE

- The Wedding Open Day was very successful. Wedding bookings now stood at 4 definite and 1 on hold for this year and 4 definite, 2 on hold for next year.
- Cars were parking in front of the school fire exit. Mr Shaw would purchase new larger signs for the gate and Cllr Haughey would supply two large cones /bollards for emphasis.

- Town House roof

The CDM issues were now complete, and Cllr Carlisle would instruct Rivetts to proceed with the work. Mr Shaw would notify the local contact and agree a suitable start date.

#### **RECREATION GROUND**

- The swings had been re installed in the playground. Cllr Haughey agreed to take on the task of repairs to the entrance gates at the high street and scout hut. It was noted that the RoSPA H&S visit to the playground was due in May. The subsequent report would be distributed by the Clerk once received.

#### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

- The Town House May check would be carried out later in the month.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE**

None

#### **AOB**

- Cllr Haughey had contacted the street cleaning contractors during their recent deep clean visit and was hopeful that future cleans would be better coordinated
- Cllr Carlisle had made appointments for 2 companies to view the club room premises for specifications and costs to improve the EPC. He would endeavour to source two further companies to provide costings.
- A Power point presentation outlining the potential for delegation of services to the Parish Council should there be a further local authority reorganisation was distributed prior to the meeting. To ensure that all councillors had time to consider the proposition Cllr Carlisle asked that they send their views to the Clerk by the end of the week.

The meeting ended at 22.30.

The **next meeting** would be held on the usual first Monday of the month on **Monday June 7th, 2021** in the Town House.