

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 7:00pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: C Hammond, J Chalmers, L Hebert, R Baxter, T Steer, SCC C J Spicer & WSC C Bull

**1. Apologies for absence** Cllr N Martineau

**2. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:**

- 2.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None.
- 2.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.
- 2.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

**3. Minutes** - to confirm and sign the minutes of the Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2023 meeting as a correct record.

**4. Meeting open to the public**

A resident of Bardwell Road came to speak to the Parish Council about their concerns over the flooding in Bardwell Road. Cllr Spicer will get an update on the works. We will check if the ordered work to jet the lines through has been completed, look again at the signage and the possibility of a road closure. We will also look to arrange a meeting, on site, to look at options going forward. It was recognised that this may be a long-term problem and that we might need to engage with the Environmental Agency about how to limit the impact of excessive rainfall going forward. The Parish Council again extended their gratitude to local resident, Kathy Cummings for the help and support she provides to residents in the parish and also to Andrew Moore, SCC highways Engineer for the works he is doing trying to resolve the issue. **Action Cllr Spicer/Clerk**

It was reported that the drain, in the road, opposite the Lychgate in Church Road was discharging sewage into the road. The Clerk will report this to Anglian Water. **Action Clerk**

The drain at the bottom of Bardwell Road, near the junction with Church Road, is blocked. The Clerk will report this to SCC to investigate.

It was reported that there was an issue with the road flooding on Pound Corner, adjacent to the pond. This information will be passed on to the Highways engineer for action in the future. It was understood the road is not currently flooded. **Action Clerk**

Two residents in Sandy Lane have contacted the Parish Council regarding flooding, from the adjacent farmers field, coming into their gardens. It was ascertained who the farmer was, and the Clerk will contact them to alert them of this issue and ask for their advice on what residents should do. **Action Clerk**

**5. Report from Suffolk County Councillor:** J Spicer

Cllr Spicer had no additional report to make. The Parish Council thanked her for her continued support over the flooding in Bardwell Road. Cllr Spicer reported that there will be a 4.99% increase in SCC's element of the Council tax this year. Some very difficult decisions had to be made with a phasing out of funding for the arts programme. This, and other budget items have had to be addressed as SCC have statutory obligations that need to be met. In the main a large amount of funding needs to be allocated to Child and Adult services which has a knock effect with other, non statutory items

**6. Report from West Suffolk Councillor:** C Bull

Cllr Bull reported that the bin lorry, reported at the last meeting as driving too fast through the flood in Bardwell Road, has been identified and the driver spoken to. This matter was taken very seriously, and words of advice have been given to all the drivers about dealing with flood waters.. Following changes implemented by the Boundary Committee, It was reported that it is recommended that Barningham sits in the Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket Parliamentary Constituency. This information will be used for the next elections.

## 7. Chairman's reports

The Chairman has been sharing information from the Police, via Police Connect. Information on how to sign up for this service is available on the Suffolk Constabulary website at [suffolk.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/](http://suffolk.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/)

## 8. Clerk's Report

8.1 to provide update from SALC on holding separate Parish Council email accounts.

The Clerk contacted SALC about using work accounts for Parish Council email correspondence. They informed the Clerk that Councillors should not be using company equipment and emails for Parish Council work. SALC said that using company work equipment and email addressed leave the company open to request under FOI and open to cyber-attacks. They also informed the Clerk that she should be working 'set hours' for all her Parish Councils and that they should all have their own work device. The Councillors and the Clerk would rather that she continued to work in the way she does which offers a more flexible approach to her varying workload and means there is economies of scale by sharing resources and information.

8.2 West Suffolk Parish and Town forum, 18<sup>th</sup> March, Mildenhall.

The Clerk intends to attend the next Parish and Town forum, to be held on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 19.00-20.30 in Mildenhall. Cllrs Steer and Chalmers both intend to attend if they can.

**Action Cllrs Steer/Chalmers/Clerk**

8.3 To provide current information on SCC Community Self-help scheme.

Community Self-Help still exists, and SCC still offer training free of charge. There are very few activities SCC would support via Community Self-Help if volunteers were not trained. The only exception is if we were planning on undertaking activities well away from both the roadside and footpaths, which is normally unlikely. To this end we will try to arrange some training for Peter Kerry to cover the works he often does for the Parish Council on a voluntary basis. **Action Clerk**

8.4 Feedback from the police about attending meetings.

The Clerk has made contact with our newly appointed Police Constable Rachel Reeve. At the present time she will cover all North rural from the A14. If we would like to meet to discuss any issues and have a face-to-face introduction, she is very happy to organise this. In regard to the meetings, it may be easier to email any issues as and when they arise? PC Reeve said that if there is something to make her aware of then an email is great as she appreciates knowing of anything happening on her beat. However, if it is a crime or something more urgent, please report online just in case she is on days off as she would hate for anything to be missed if time critical. The councillors are still keen to meet with PC Reeve and the Clerk will pursue this as an option.

**Action Clerk**

## 9. Finance.

9.1 The following transaction were noted/approved for payment.

Admin	Payment	various	£2,002.78
Clothing bank	Receipt	Receipts	£10.50
Data protection	Payment	Data Protection	-£40.00

9.2 Bank reconciliation and budget report.

The Clerk provided a schedule of payments, budget report and bank reconciliation for information.

9.3 Confirmation of Taxbase 2024-25.

West Suffolk council confirmed receipt of our Precept request for 2024/25. West Suffolk council confirmed that, provisional tax base figures previously provided, were approved by West Suffolk Council, so there will be no changes to the forms already sent. Also agreed by West Suffolk Council was the continuation of the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2024-25 for the up 100% discount for working age claimants.

## **10 Village matters.**

10.1 To discuss flooding in Bardwell Road.

This item was discussed in the public forum and Cllr Spicer and the Clerk are following up on this matter.

10.2 To receive update of traffic calming measures.

Cllr Steer and the Clerk will meet on site to check measurements before submitting any requests to SCC for consideration.

**Action Cllr Steer/Clerk**

10.3 To received information about concerns raised in Sandy Lane (Nth) regarding speeding.

Cllr Steer has managed to collect data from the device mounted on the triangle at Pound Corner. In a two-week period, there were 13 instances of vehicles exceeding the speed limit leaving the village. On one occasion a vehicle was recorded as traveling at 37 mph. The problem with this area is there is no existing post on Sandy Lane – with the correct sight lines - to site the VAS that would collect data of vehicles entering the village. We will look for a potential site for a new post in Sandy Lane but need to be aware that there will be a cost implication associated with this.

**Action Cllr Steer/Clerk**

10.4 To receive an update on funding for damaged post, Church Road.

The Clerk made enquiries with Havebury about possible funding for replacing the damaged post in Church Road. Unfortunately, Havebury would not be able to fund this. It is understood the post is not secure and as such the Clerk will report this again to SCC.

**Action Clerk**

10.5 To receive information on new VASs for the village.

The Parish Council would like to purchase a new VAS for the village. Both Cllrs Spicer and Bull would, potentially, be able to help with funding in the new financial year. This item will be put on hold until after this time.

10.6 Update on church clock chimes.

The issue reported with the church clock chimes has been addressed. The Parish Council extended their thanks to Cllr Baxter and her husband for fixing this problem.

10.7 To discuss options for purchase of grit bin for Bardwell Road.

As under item 10.4 no funding is available from Havebury for a new grit bin. It was agreed that the Parish Council should provide a grit bin for Bardwell Road, ideally near the junction with Drouts Lane. Cllr Steer and the Clerk will have a site meeting to find an appropriate location. In the meantime, Cllr Steer will try and get a grit pile set up in this area to help with the current situation caused by the flood water.

**Action Cllr Steer/Clerk**

## **11. Aggies Piece**

11.1 To receive any update on the Aggies Piece wetland project.

This matter is in hand and Cllr Baxter is waiting to hear back from Andrew Moore with some further information on the location of some structures and extent of SCC ownership of the verge.

**Action Cllr Baxter**

## **12. Caretakers report Circulated.**

Having got the worst of my family emergency behind me I was able to catch up on some delayed jobs this month. I have scraped up and carted away the wet leaves in Church Road and from around the seat in the layby opposite the pub. I have also used the water-based solvent to remove the paint from the instruction sheet at the Cricket Meadow with reasonable success. I have continued to sweep leaves in Church Road and Bishops Croft and have raked the Old Cemetery. I also swept the slippery leaves from the path leading up to the school gate.

I have completed the year having underworked my contracted time by 16 hours, hence my reduced payment. As of 1 January, I am now trialling the 6-hour working week previously agreed by the Council.

**13. Play area /Cricket Meadow to receive any update.**

13.1 To confirm extra work on brambles and bushes surrounding the Cricket Meadow. This work has been ordered with the contractor.

13.2 To receive any update on items included in the Play area report. No additional update this month.

**14. Churchyard/Cemetery**

14.1 To receive any update on works to Cemetery.

The wording and content of the updated Cemetery Regulations were agreed, and Cllr Chalmers will put a copy of these on the noticeboard for information. In addition, a summary of the pertinent points was agreed and will also be displayed.

The Caretaker will be asked to purchase a suitable container to hold items in, for a period of two months, if the occasion arises that we need to remove items from the graves.

**Action Cllr Chalmers/Caretaker/Clerk**

**15. Neighbourhood Plan.**

15.1 To further discuss the draft plan ahead of submission for consultation.

The Clerk has received the following update from our consultant on the current status of our Neighbourhood Plan.

He has been having to do some fairly major editing of the Plan to reflect the content of the new Draft Local Plan that comes out on consultation in a couple of weeks plus the new National Planning Policy Guidance that came out a couple of days before Christmas.

He will try and get the new draft Plan to us by the end of the month. In the period while we had the Plan, he had to turn to other Plans that were on the production line. He would think that we could start the (minimum) 6 weeks consultation in early March, depending upon our reaction to the amended Plan. He noted the comments about the Local Plan indicating a minimum of 37 houses for Barningham. A bit of feedback on this. It has to be expressed as a minimum as there will be windfall in the form of infill plots and conversions that will come forward over the next 20 years. The site is still the same as before – south of Hopton Road so he suspects there may be some objections. We will need to be careful that residents do not confuse the Neighbourhood Plan with the Local Plan.

**16. Planning.** to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted. None received.

**17. Councillors reports and items for future agenda**

Cllr Baxter will collate some information for the newsletter. Cllrs Hammond and Chalmers will work to put the newsletter together going forward.

**Action Cllr Baxter/Hammond/Chalmers**

The Coffee Caravan is coming to the village again on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January.

**18. Correspondence for information.**

18.1 West Suffolk Council - Strategic Priorities for 2024-28, circulated for information.

18.2 The Clerk has put a link to some up-to-date cost of living advice on the website. This was also circulated to the councillors.

**19. Date of next meeting** 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024 7pm in Barningham Village Hall.

**20. To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:**

20.1 Personnel Issues. None.

20.2 Legal Issues. None.