

Minutes of Barningham Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd August 2022 at 7:30 pm in Barningham Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs: C Hammond, J Chalmers, W Martineau, B Baxter & SCC Joanna Spicer & D Cllr Bull

1. Co-option of New Parish Councillor

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs S Kenyon & T Steer

3. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. None.

3.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.

3.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

4. Minutes – The minutes of the Wednesday 6th July 2022 Annual Parish Council meeting were agreed and approved as a correct record.

5. Meeting open to the public

Pc Lee Andrews-Pearce Bury St Edmunds Safer Neighbourhood Team Community Engagement Officer (CEO) attended the meeting. He urged anyone with a policing problem to report it either via the 101 telephone service or via the online reporting system. It is important that all crimes are reported as historic reports can be used to support and build a picture of criminal behaviour. The Police do harbour concerns that the ongoing cost of living crisis might lead to more crimes being committed. These could include things like, theft from allotments or gardens of produce, oil theft. It was recommended that residents review their security arrangements to limit their vulnerability. There is a lot of crime prevention advice on the Suffolk Police website www.suffolk.police.uk

Lesley Williams, a trustee of the Barningham Charities, gave a brief overview of what support the charities can offer to residents of Barningham in need. Funding can be made available to support families with transport to visit relatives in hospital. There are bursaries available to help with university and apprenticeships fees. Residents, experiencing financial hardship can contact the charity to see if they are able to offer any assistance. Details about the charity and contact details, for all local charities, will be included in an article in the Parish News. **Action Clerk**

6. Report from County Councillor: J Spicer

Cllr Spicer will investigate if any extra funds are left over from the budget for lining outside schools. We will re-visit the issue of parking at Barningham School, and set up a meeting with the school in the new academic year. The skirting of the Sandy Lane footpath was discussed but it was considered unlikely that any work there would be funded by SCC. **Action Clerk**

7. Report from WS Councillor: C Bull

Cllr Bull will provide the Clerk with some further information regarding the WS streetlight Audit. The Clerk will action this once received. Cllr Bull informed the Councillors that applications for funding from the Community Chest, for one off projects, is now open. It was noted that West Suffolk Council would soon be starting the annual canvass process to update the electoral register. There is work being done by West Suffolk as electors will need voter ID in future and they do not want this to disenfranchise those without recognised ID. The Suffolk Climate Action Community Match Fund will be provided by the Suffolk Public Sector Leaders group as part of its work to address the climate emergency. The group includes West Suffolk Council.

This new fund is available to charities, community interest companies, parish councils, voluntary groups and other not-for-profit organisations whose projects contribute to Suffolk's Climate Emergency Plan and support the vision for Suffolk to become carbon neutral by 2030. There is going to be a program of repair to the Parkway multi-storey carpark, starting in September. This work will be suspended during the Christmas shopping period.

8. Progress reports. For information, from:

8.1 Chairman

Water leak Bishops Croft. The Chairman noted that the leak at Bishops Croft has returned. She has reported this again and will continue to keep an eye on the situation.

8.2 Clerk:

8.2.1 Update on clothing bank at the shop.

The clothing bank has been installed in the shop car park. Initially it was placed in the wrong spot, but it should have been moved now. Following a discussion it was agreed that any funds raised by the bank should go to the shop with them splitting it 50/50 between the foodbank for local residents and the charities they support. The Clerk will contact the shop about this. **Action Clerk**

8.2.2 To discuss various tree works in the village following meeting with Peter Kerry CCTS.

The Clerk provided the Councillors with a list of works required in various areas of the village. The following was discussed and agreed.

Aggie's Piece

Location for memorial trees and bench, Peggie Elinor, Eddie Sier Mower. (See Plan)

Location for memorial bench for Mower. It was agreed to replace the plank bench, which is in poor condition with the new bench. The bench design was approved by the Councillors. The Parish Council agreed to pay for the installation. The Clerk will make the necessary arrangements.

It was agreed to clear the area, adjacent to the bench and plant one of the memorial trees. This is likely to be either a Hawthorn, Hornbeam or for Eddie a Silver Birch. The other tree will be planted along straight path.

It was agreed there was no need to replace or repair the fence along the roadway but that the hedge should be thickened up. The Clerk will ask the contractor to plant some additional hedging. Since the meadow has been cut it has become apparent that there is a lot of litter there. We will ask local residents, via Facebook, if they could help to remove the litter and Councillors will also carry out some litter picking

Lychgate Cemetery

It was agreed to reduce, to bush size, 3 trees along the boundary with Holcarne and remove the fly-tipped waste by the Lychgate.

It was agreed that the maintenance of the 'wildlife area' at the back of the Cemetery will be given to CCTS as this seems to have been neglected of late. They will also push back all the hedges.

Cemetery

It was agreed to push back all the hedges, remove the Elder by the bench and clear the dead Holly.

Village

It was agreed to crown lift the Ash on the green area in front of St Andrews Car Park. To push back hedge in St Andrews Car park, including the removal of the brambles in the top corner.

The raised area, opposite Church Gardens, will also be cleared back.

Action Clerk

8.2.3 To discuss submission to SCC for footway skirting for consideration

The footpath from Sandy Lane north up to the village hall needs skirting. The Clerk will ask CCTS to include this in their work schedule as it was considered unlikely that this would be funded by SCC.

Action Clerk

8.2.4 New residents welcome packs, to discuss progress.

Work on this is nearly complete.

8.2.5 Streetlight Audit, to make response to West Suffolk regarding street lighting in Barningham. Cllr Bull has instigated a review of all the Streetlights in West Suffolk. We were asked to note if there are any lights that no longer serve their original intended purpose, or are otherwise surplus to requirements. **Action**

Clerk

8.2.6 Village sign base.

Works to repair the brick base should start on Friday 5th August

9. Finance.

9.1 The following accounts were approved for payment.

Admin	Various	£1,861.59
Gate and hedges	Countryside, conservation and tree services	£630.00
Grass cutting various	R H Landscapes	£628.80
Internal Audit	Trevor Brown	£220.00

9.2 Bank reconciliation and budget report

The Clerk provided an up to date bank reconciliation, budget report and schedule of payments for the councillor information.

9.3 Budget 2023/24. To discuss items for inclusion in the 23/23 budget.

The Councillors were asked to consider items for inclusion in the 2023-24 budget ahead of the next meeting. **Action All**

9.4 End of year accounts, to note sign off of AGAR for year end 2021/22

There was an issue raised, regarding the figure provided for last year's asset register. This has been rectified.

10. Aggies Piece

See under item 8.2.2

11. Caretakers report Circulated.

Shortly after I wrote my last report I had to remove one of the swings from the Play Area because its anti-wrap bearings had been damaged by the same vandalism which broke the anti-bird spikes. Since then one of the metal sides of the climbing unit has become insecure due to the removal of a single screw; this is, unfortunately, a specialist item which cannot be easily replaced. I have removed one pile of spoil from the cemetery this month. Following consultation with the School I removed an advertising banner which had been placed on the railings in Church Road and was blocking the sightline for traffic emerging from Mill Road.

Despite the dry weather I am doing a lot of cutting back of branches and brambles in various locations including the Sandy Lane footpath. I have also given a serious haircut to the tree on the 'Havebury Triangle' beside the Village Hall which seems to have gone mad in recent years. I was pleased to see that my suggestion of the use of nail varnish remover was successful in getting rid of the offensive graffiti on the table tennis table but I am still waiting to hear if there is a more cost-effective solution available to us for the rest of it.

12. Play area /Cricket Meadow to receive any update.

12.1 Confirmation of request for works to wet pour and roundabout.

These works have been ordered and will be undertaken shortly.

12.2 Report of anti-social behaviour and purchase of anti-wraps for swing sets.

There has been an increase in graffiti, which our caretaker is trying to tackle. The anti-wraps on the swings have been damaged so the Caretaker has removed a swing. Replacement anti-wraps have been ordered.

The Clerk has managed to source a replacement screw for the damaged unit in the play area.

13. Churchyard/Cemetery

13.1 Lychgate replacement, update.

The gate has been removed and the replacement is in hand.

13.2 To discuss tree/hedge/grass works to Lychgate and Barningham Cemetery.

See under item 8.2.2

The wheelie bin, at the Lychgate Cemetery, has had a replacement wheel

14. Neighbourhood Plan.

14. To further discuss submission in response to West Suffolk Councils Local Plan consultation.

The following response was agreed for submission to West Suffolk:

Part One – Strategic Policies

Policy SP5 Settlement hierarchy and types of place

Barningham Parish Council notes the continued designation of the village as a Local Service Centre.

The amendment of criteria in the Sustainable Settlements Study from the previous version is noted but, in doing so, we question why settlements with a greater quantity of services, for example more than one shop, are not weighted as being more sustainable than those with only a limited number of services. The Parish Council also suggests that there should be a weighting towards those services and facilities that most residents are likely to use on a day-to-day basis. For example, shops would score more than early years provision and a village with two shops would score more than a village with one. We also consider that the ranking for the level of bus service identified in the Sustainable Settlements Study for Barningham is wrong. Barningham is identified as having “at least an hourly service from 9am to 5pm”.

However, the 337 and 338 service operated by Simonds only runs four times a day towards Stanton and Bury St Edmunds on weekdays, with the last departure at lunchtime; and return trips only total five trips a day.

Policy SP8 Overall housing distribution

The Parish Council notes that a total of 7,134 homes are proposed between 2021 and 2040 in part b. of the policy parameters for Policy SP8, an uplift of 8% over and above the identified minimum requirement. The Parish Council questions the correlation between this 8% uplift and the stated intent, in paragraph 4.70 that “the council proposes to provide at least a five per cent supply buffer to the housing need”. A 5% uplift on the identified housing need would in fact mean that the Plan would need to identify how 6,930 additional homes would be delivered through the Plan, some 204 less than identified in Policy SP08. Paragraph 4.70 also notes that the proposed supply buffer takes account of those proposed allocations “where the indicative dwelling number has not yet been determined and additional supply from windfall sites”.

No allowance has been made in the proposed housing provision for windfall development, despite the West Suffolk Housing Delivery Report (March 2019) identifying an allowance for windfall sites making up for 3% of the anticipated housing supply across the district between 2017 and 2031. We would argue that there is evidence that this allowance would be reasonable to allow for in identifying how the overall requirement is to be delivered. This would amount to some 214 dwellings, the difference between the 5% buffer and the proposed 8% uplift set out in SP08.

Given the strategic approach to the overall housing requirement, the lack of an allowance for

windfall housing and the stated aim to deliver a buffer of at least 5%, we ask that further consideration is given to the level of growth and “non-strategic” allocations in Local Service Centres in general and Barningham in particular.

The level of planned housing growth in Policy SP8 represents, we believe, a considerable uplift from the distribution of additional housing identified in the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy. Given that, we believe, the level of services in Local Service Centres has declined in the 12 years since the Core Strategy was adopted, we question the sustainability of increasing the level of growth in more remote Rural Service Centres, such as Barningham, where access in particular to local employment opportunities is limited.

The Parish Council therefore asks that a review of the proposed housing distribution is undertaken which:

- i. has regard to the stated intent to provide a minimum 5% housing supply buffer;
- ii. takes a reasonable account of the likely levels of windfall housing that has been predicted to come forward by 2031; and
- ii. takes account of those villages preparing neighbourhood plans and to enable local communities to determine the level of and location of non-strategic housing growth.

Part Three: Site Allocations

The Parish Council notes the allocation of a site for 50 houses south of Hopton Road (Site 4.01a). We have carried out a focused consultation with residents to gauge opinion on the amount of growth and the preferred site in the form of a drop-in event at the village hall and a questionnaire. Some 49 residents attended the event, and the questionnaire was also available to complete online.

The questionnaire yielded 79 responses, of which over 82% felt that 50 houses would be too many for Barningham and this is endorsed by the Parish Council. The level of growth is not considered sustainable for the village given the limited level of services, especially sustainable transport options.

In respect to the preferred site south of Hopton Road, the Parish Council makes the following comments concerning its suitability and potential development:

1 The consultation document states that the site has an area of 2.6 hectares. An allocation of 50 homes on this site would suggest development at an overall density of 19 dwellings per hectare. Given the stated aims of Policies NSP 29 (Affordable Housing) and NSP30 (Housing type and tenure), it would seem that such a large site is not required to deliver the required 50 homes, even allowing for the inclusion of on-site sustainable drainage systems and possible amenity open space requirements.

The Parish Council is concerned that the development of the site would actually result in significantly more than the 50 dwellings envisaged.

2 The site does not have any physical boundaries on the south-east. As such, without significant screening, the development would be likely to have a significant detrimental impact on the landscape setting of the village. The plateau landscape in this area is such that views are long and open and insensitively planned development could be seen from far away.

3 We note that the site wraps around the rear of Lingwood Close. Much of the length of Lingwood Close has been designed as a “shared access” road and accessing further dwellings from this road is likely to exacerbate an already problematic situation where parked cars restrict movement.

4 Should the allocation proceed it should only have vehicular access from Hopton Road, where any new access must include the provision of traffic calming on the B1111 at the entrance to the village. Although the access would be within the 30 mph speed limit, the approach to the village from Hopton is largely straight with long forward visibility which lends itself to speeds in excess of the limit at the point of potential site access.

5 Provision must also be made for an extended footway to serve the site and, given that the village shop, primary school, village hall and public house are all on the other side of Hopton Road, this development should also deliver a safe pedestrian crossing on the B1111.

Barningham Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council's Neighbourhood Plan Group is now in a position to commence the preparation of the pre-submission draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. Given the fundamental issues that we raise in this representation, we seek an early meeting with West Suffolk Council to discuss the housing numbers, the site allocation situation and whether to proceed at this time.

Conclusion

In response to the consultation on the Preferred Options West Suffolk Local Plan, Barningham Parish Council seeks:

1. assurances that a further review of the Settlement Hierarchy and criteria for location of new housing will be undertaken;
2. a reduction in the amount of housing planned for Barningham given the level of services and facilities, including bus services;
3. the further consideration of the suitability and size of the site at Hopton Road (Ref 4.01a);
4. Assurances that, should a site at Hopton Road be pursued in the draft Local Plan, the proposed allocation will:
 - i. make provision for significant screen planting on the south-east boundary,
 - ii. Not permit vehicular access to the site from Lingwood Close,
 - iii. Require traffic calming, enhanced pedestrian footways and a safe pedestrian crossing on Hopton Road, and
 - iv. An early meeting with West Suffolk Council to discuss our representations and how the Parish Council should proceed with the preparation of the Barningham Neighbourhood Plan.

15. Planning

DC/22/1280/OUT | Outline application (means of access to be considered) - four dwellings and construction of access | Land at Barningham Road Stanton Suffolk. Noted.

Concerns were raised about a new property being built along Bardwell Road. It would appear that we have not received a planning application for this. The Clerk will investigate this. **Action Clerk**

16. Councillors reports and items for future agenda

A report was made, on Facebook, of a barking dog. Advice was given to keep a record of the times this is occurring. If the problem persists the resident will be signposted to West Suffolk Council who deal with such matters.

Cllr Baxter will ask the Councillors to sign off on the Emergency plan soon. It was noted that there is going to be some rest centre training held in the village hall in September. Cllr Hammond and Baxter will attend. Cllr Hammond will pass the emergency phone back to Cllr Baxter so it can be checked to make sure it is still working ok. **Action Cllr Hammond/Baxter**

It was asked if we could consider planting a tree, possibly on the green at Church Gardens, to mark the Queens Jubilee. We would need to check with the nearby residents that they would be happy with this and also get permission from West Suffolk Council, as the landowners.

Action Clerk

Cllr Chalmers attended the recent Jaynic exhibition and was concerned to see that the plans seemed to show a lot more development than first indicated. This would mean a substantial increase in traffic in this area and restrictions for movement, particularly for smaller vehicles, which will not be controlled by traffic restrictions. We will continue to keep a close eye on the proposals.

17. Correspondence for information

17.1 Review of Suffolk's Recommended Lorry Route Map, circulated.

Although disappointing, the comments received from this consultation were not unexpected and it was noted that there will be no restrictions on the B1111 through Barningham.

17.2 Council Tax Rebate Grant discretionary scheme. Noted.

18. Date of next meeting 7th September 2022 7pm

19.1 Personal issues. None.

19.2 Legal Issues. None.