

Barnham Parish Council

Chair: Cllr John Bauer Vice Chair: Cllr Ed Wyer

DRAFT Minutes of the meeting of Barnham Parish Council **held on Tuesday 11th July 2023, commencing at 7pm** **Venue: Barnham Village Hall**

Present:

Cllr John Bauer (Chair), Cllr Ed Wyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Helen Beck, Cllr Matthew Hawthorne, Cllr Susan Watson, Cllr Adrian Webb,
Suffolk County Cllr Joanna Spicer MBE, West Suffolk District Cllr Andrew Smith
Clerk/RFO Pauline Smith
Members of the Public: 1

- 1. To receive apologies for absence and requests for approval for absence:** Cllr Belsham
Reason: Holiday – Approval granted.
- 2. To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests,** other registrable interests and non-registrable interests as detailed in Appendix B of the LGA Model Code of Conduct.
To consider requests, not already received and determined, for dispensations relating to matters on this agenda: *No requests were received.*
- 3. To approve minutes of the following meetings (previously circulated):**
Tuesday 23rd May 2023 Annual Meeting of Barnham Parish Council
Tuesday 23rd May 2023 Annual Barnham Parish Meeting
Tuesday 20th June 2023 Extra ordinary meeting of Barnham Parish Council
Resolution: The Minutes of the previous meetings detailed above were taken as read and unanimously approved. *The Chairman duly signed the minutes*
- 4. Public Forum:** Members of the public are welcome to make comments and ask questions in relation to items on this agenda. Any other matters raised may be permitted at the discretion of the Chair.
No questions were raised at this point. It was agreed that Mr Simon Ford, who was present to provide information about the clock would report at item 13.
- 5. Reports**
 - 5.1 Suffolk County Councillor, Joanna Spicer Cllr Spicer had not been present at the May meeting (immediately following the elections) and therefore introduced herself and provided an overview of her role for the benefit of recently elected councillors.

SCC Planning Matters:

SCC/0095/20SE: Mick George Limited - Extraction of sand and gravel and subsequent importation of inert waste material to achieve a beneficial restoration of the site back to heathland on land at North Farm, Elveden Road Barnham IP24 2PH

This application was refused on 7th February 2023. The applicant has 6 months to appeal from the date of refusal. As yet no appeal has been submitted.

It was noted that the site remains in the SCC Minerals and Waste plan.

SCC/0014/20SE/VOC2: Countrystyle Recycling, Unit 6, Little Heath, Barnham, IP24 2SY

Proposal: Variation of condition 1 (compliance with approved plans), 2 (hours of operation), 10 (waste capacity) and 11 (waste types) of permission SCC/0014/20SE.

This application has been withdrawn. The applicant is required to adhere to the existing conditions granted under SCC/0014/20SE.

It is noted that the original planning conditions have not been fulfilled/adhered to. Cllrs are asked to update Cllr Spicer if they become aware of any items 'being stored in the open air'.

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Traffic lights:

Lights are giving priority to vehicles travelling East along A633. Councillors described the potential for accidents due to the lights not prioritising correctly, resulting in impatience and motorists potentially 'jumping' the lights. It was explained that it is very lucky if 2 cars turning from Barnham towards Thetford, get across the road before the lights change.

The matter has been reported to SCC's contractor SWARCO (formerly Dynniq) on 0800 298 6815. SWARCO have indicated that the issue results from damaged sensors beneath the road surface, probably caused when road/pothole repairs have been carried out.

SWARCO advised that they are liaising with SCC but commented that the timescale of repairs will be subject to financial constraints. (Action: Clerk to liaise with SWARCO for progress updates)

Clerk's Note Update 8.9.23 – Spoke to SCC Traffic Lights contractor SWARCO. Works were in the programme with Keir: However Milestone have taken over the contract 1Oct2023 – expectation that all works will be reviewed/prioritised so at the present time not possible to provide timescale.

Flooding at the crossroads is under observation by SCC

The damaged sign on the A1088 is scheduled to be replaced.

5.2 West Suffolk District Councillor, Andrew Smith

Following a question raised by Cllr Wyer, Cllr Smith will make enquiries with West Suffolk Council regarding their Powers (and resources) to cut the grass in churchyards across the District.

A query was asked about responding to planning applications: No comment v. No objections for example. Cllr Smith explained that it is always helpful for planning officers to receive a response setting out the reasons for a parish council's views, as these are taken into consideration during the process : but views do need to relate to material planning considerations.

5.3 Barnham Heath Management Committee (Steve Telfer)

██████████ was unable to attend the meeting, but a request previously made for a noticeboard to be located at the bus shelter at was discussed.

Resolution: The Clerk/RFO was given authority to purchase a noticeboard: budget £500.

The preference is for a wood effect enclosed board, with a minimum display area equal to 8 A4 pages/posters. Options to be circulated to councillors. **Action: Clerk**

Clerk's note: since investigating options after the meeting, identified that budget would not meet expectations. See update on agenda notes meeting 12th September.

5.4 Police Report: None

5.5 Play Park (Cllr Watson): No issues requiring immediate attention have been raised on the latest play park inspection carried out by WSC.

5.6 Speed Watch: Coordinator required - progress update

No volunteers have come forward to-date. However, ██████████ has expressed a willingness to take on the role, but not until the autumn and only on a short term basis.

Mark Hirst, previous co-ordinator is to be asked to provide details of the speed-watch team (12 members) to enable the parish council to update them regarding progress and also so that further enquiries can be made to establish if there is somebody else willing to take on the role.

The Barnham Speed-Watch project has been very successful, but without a co-ordinator the project will cease.

The Chair does not consider that the coordinator's role needs to take too much time: if nobody else volunteers, he will discuss this further with ██████████.

Action: Clerk to request list of SpeedWatch team members from previous coordinator.

Clerk's note: Update 8.9.23 list of volunteers has been received.

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5.7 **Lorry Watch:** The Lorry Watch Project has now come to an end on the C634.

5.8 **Clerk's report**

Defibrillator: There appears to be a lack of awareness about the defibrillator at the village hall.

Cllr Belsham has suggested a training course for residents to be held at the Village Hall. This will be an item on the September agenda.

Clerk/Agenda point for Cllr Belsham

Clerk's note: Update 8.9.23: Defibrillator item is included on September agenda.

Havebury garages, St Martin's Lane: Repairs have not commenced. If no progress is noted by the end of the week the Clerk will make enquiries with Havebury Housing. *Action: Clerk*

Clerk's note: Update 8.9.23: Work commenced/roofs have been replaced.

Risk register: Clerk has not yet responded to the concerns raised by Cllr Beck but is currently reviewing the register and will provide and update. *Action Clerk*

Village Hall grounds: A complaint raised by a resident annoyed about having been disturbed on a Saturday morning by grounds maintenance being carried out at the Village Hall was responded to by letter. No further comments have been received.

6. **Highways Matters**

To discuss approaching SCC to extend the 30mph limit through the village and implementing a 20mph zone.

Cllr Spicer explained that extending the existing 30mph limit through the 40mph area does not meet any of the requisite criteria and is unlikely to be approved.

Cllr Spicer gave a detailed explanation of the requirements for a 20mph zone through the village, the impact on all roads joining The Street, which would require signage at the junction of each road joining the new speed limit plus a requirement for evidence from multiple traffic speed counters (@£350.00 each with majority of funding from the parish council), the fact that the centre of the village is a conservation area would ordinarily limit the installation of requisite signage and the lack of resources available from police to implement enforcement are serious constraints to this scheme progressing.

As an example of cost Cllr Spicer advised that the change from 40mph – 30mph at Stanton along A143 (funded by Stanton Parish Council) cost £12,000; a change in the speed limit for a short distance in Hepworth cost c. £1,400.

Costs include design and planning, advertising of legal order, any objections must go before committee which adds several hundred £'s, plus signage and legal costs.

It was acknowledged that increased house building in Thetford will further impact upon the traffic problems being experienced through the village and alternative solutions need to be considered.

Alternative traffic calming solutions such as chicanes would not be practical due to difficulties they would cause to tractors.

It was suggested that there could be a 'case' for reducing the speed limit on both the C633 and C634 to 30mph.

It was noted that the ANPR camera project will be returning to Barnham and also the police cam van does visit on a fairly regular basis.

There are no natural traffic calming measures such as on street parking that may otherwise slow traffic down.

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It was suggested that the 30mph could be extended to East Farm.

It was suggested that the existing fixed VAS could be moved to an alternative location – nearer the beginning of the 30mph zone or a second unit to be purchased.

It is unlikely that permission will be granted to locate a VAS on C634.

Action: Chairman will enquire regarding potential of moving the existing VAS to near 30mph limit

Action Cllr Spicer will discuss the situation with the SCC engineer and will enquire about the possibility of a 'flashing' sign.

7. Overgrown vegetation

7.1 Footway along The Street: Reduced width of footway due to encroaching vegetation

Councillors considered the options available

Resolution: The parish council will request [REDACTED] a contractor who has previously carried out this work to a high standard and request him to do so again.

Cllr Spicer offered locality grant funding of £500 towards the cost. **Action Clerk**

Clerk's note: *Outcome: since the meeting [REDACTED] has declined the request: he is no longer taking on additional work. Alternative contractors have been contacted.*

7.2 Overhanging Hedges and Trees

The parish council is increasingly receiving complaints about trees and hedges overhanging footways and roads, resulting in difficulties for other users.

To consider options for responding to such complaints.

Options are:

Report directly to Suffolk County Council

2 Councillors to owners to request them to cut back overgrown hedges

Write to owners with the request that they cut back overgrown hedges

Action: Existing complaint re property in Water Lane: contact to be made with resident.

Action: The Clerk will provide examples of letters sent by other parish councils to residents.

Action taken: *Since the meeting – contact has been made with resident. See update on September agenda notes.*

8. Village Hall

8.1 Grounds maintenance contract

[REDACTED] the current contractor, wishes to end the contract but willing is to continue until the parish council has made alternative arrangements.

Action: Clerk to seek quotes from alternative contractors.

Clerk's note: *Details of work required have been submitted to 3 contractors requesting responses by 20th September.*

8.2 Progress re moles and consideration of rolling the area

There does not currently appear to be any recent mole activity. The pest controller in a recent conversation with Cllr Hawthorne was satisfied that the problem previously experienced is now under control.

Rolling the area: It had been intended to look at the area immediately following the meeting however this was forgotten. **Action:** review prior to September meeting.

8.3 Progress update regarding rebuilding the wall and handrails

A meeting between [REDACTED] (Chair of the Village Hall Committee) is scheduled with the contractor, to discuss progressing the work.

Cllr Wyer highlighted that he has previously proposed that the parking spaces directly in front of the wall should be reorientated. This would reduce the current number of spaces available in that location but would resolve the issue of drivers backing into the wall in the future.

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8.4 To consider request for grant towards cost of wifi

A decision will be taken imminently as to whether or not wifi should be installed.

██████████ (Chair) has identified that out of 100 recent bookings nobody has requested WIFI, raising doubts about its necessity.

8.5 Liaison with Village Hall: To consider how the parish council and village hall could work together to build on the success of the warm spaces events, for community benefit during daytime periods when the hall is less utilised.

Resolution: Councillors agreed that they would be pleased to consider support for future village hall initiatives that enables the building to be used for community benefit.

9. Community Engagement (Cllr Beck)

Initial proposals for consideration (see attached):

Councillors appreciated the proposals put forward by Councillor Beck to increase the parish council's positive engagement with residents, which identify options to identify with a wide-ranging demographic.

Action: Cllr Beck will now provide a more detailed report with suggestions for consideration at the September meeting.

Update: Since meeting - Deferred to November agenda at Cllr Beck's request.

10. Emergency Plan (Cllr Wyr) (see attached)

10.1 Proposal: To review and approve the Emergency Plan (attached)

Councillors appreciated Cllr Wyr's work to produce the new Emergency Plan.

Resolution: The emergency plan was unanimously approved.

10.2 Subject to approval of 10.1: To identify a coordinator and volunteers

Cllr Beck volunteered to act as coordinator

All other councillors present agreed to be named volunteers within the plan.

Action: Councillors to email their preferred contact details for the purpose of inclusion in the emergency plan document to Cllr Wyr.

11 Finance (Clerk/RFO)

11.1 Financial Report:

Bank balances as at 11 July 2023:	Current Account	£19,823.03
	Deposit Account	£ 4,944.69
	Total	£24,767.72

11.2 Invoices for payment: Payments totalling £1,227.41 were approved – see attached

11.3 Review of contingency fund - Details of reserve balances attached:

Village Hall:	£ 3,000.00
Village Clock:	£ 885.00
Computer:	£. 700.00
General reserves:	£20,182.72
Total	£24,767.72

11.4 Authorised signatories : Arrangements to add Cllrs Bauer and Belsham are progressing, together with online banking access arrangements.

Action: Clerk is monitoring progress, including for existing Cllr Wyr to on line access.

Clerk's note/update: 8.9.23 – Clerk, Cllrs Wyr and Bauer have online access, awaiting confirmation re Cllr Belsham

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- 11.5 Access arrangements for councillors to Scribe accounts system.
Councillors will have access to view only, which provides the ability to run reports.
Action: Clerk to provide individual access details.
Clerk's note: Update 8.9.23 – Passwords created/ready to be supplied to councillors.
12. **General Power of Competence and CILCA.** See details as circulated in agenda pack (attached)
To consider the benefits and cost to the parish council of a CILCA qualified clerk and the ability to adopt the General Power of Competence. The cost of CILCA qualification is currently: £775.00. (Qualification: £450.00 training: £325).
Resolution: Defer to September meeting. **Action:** Clerk
13. **Clock:**
- 13.1 **Cancelling service contract:** Outcome of conversation with company
The contract may be cancelled without penalty up to one month prior to the next scheduled visit (February 2024). Regular maintenance contract rates are significantly lower than they may be in the event of ad hoc call out charges. However, [REDACTED], who looks after the clock, is confident that he is sufficiently able to carry out the routine maintenance required.
- 13.2 **Clock Face restoration:** *Request the clock face to be refurbished*
Whilst mechanically sound, the Clock face is in a poor state of repair. The shutters on the church tower are being replaced which will draw further attention to the poor state of the clock face. **Resolution:** It was agreed to seek a quotation for the work to be carried out from Smith of Derby. **Action:** Clerk
Clerk's Note: update: Since meeting - Quotation received: Faculty and grants required. See notes with agenda for September meeting.
14. **Planning Application Consultation Documents** – Details previously circulated in agenda pack
- 14.1 **Any new application consultation documents** for consideration received from West Suffolk Council. None for consideration during the meeting.
- 14.2 **To note responses** to consultation documents received since 23rd May 2023
Responses were noted as per details in agenda pack previously circulated.
- 14.3 **Decisions** made by West Suffolk Council since 23rd May 2023 were noted
15. **Dog bins:** (Cllr Webb)
To consider request for review of existing arrangements or purchase of additional bin.
Funding of new bins is the responsibility of the parish council. However, West Suffolk Council is undertaking a review of its arrangements for bin emptying and is not currently accepting requests for new bins to be emptied.
A request for a review was withdrawn. **Resolution:** No further action required
16. **Correspondence:**
- 16.1 **6th June 2024:** D-Day 80th Anniversary (previously circulated)
To consider participation by the Parish Council: Note the parish council owns a portable beacon for use on such occasions *and if agreed:* request for a councillor willing take responsibility for organising the event.
The parish council agreed that it would participate in the occasion.
Resolution: Cllr Beck volunteered to take on the responsibility for arranging the event.
- 16.2 **Any other correspondence** requiring attention received since issuing the agenda: None
17. **Diary Dates:**
- 11th July Town and Parish Form – WSC and SALC - (clashes with this meeting)
Apologies submitted.
- 19th July Planning (Development) Training – Online Teams –WSC 6pm – 8pm
Councillors to advise Clerk if they wish to attend.

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18. Exempt item:

It was resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that, the public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed: Employment matters. Approval of contract for Clerk/RFO.

Resolutions:

[REDACTED]

Summary of Resolutions for publicly accessible minutes: The terms and conditions of the Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer's contract were unanimously agreed.

19. Next Meeting

Tuesday 12th September 2023, 7pm

Venue: Barnham Village Hall, Mill Lane, Barnham

Minutes of the meeting held 11 July 2023

Signed as an accurate record by Chairman:

Date: