

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL  
ON MONDAY 17<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2024 COMMENCING AT 7.28pm**

**Present:** Councillors J Paxton (Chairman), A Fletcher, J Selley, S Laycock, A Vale and W Rudd

**In Attendance:** C Callen (Clerk)

**Minutes:** C Callen

**24/049 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – These were received from Councillors J Mikkelson and A Tebb

**24/050 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (*Cllrs may make declarations pertaining to the agenda at this point or at any point during the meeting*) – There were none.

**24/051 MATTERS ARISING** –

The Central Bedfordshire Council Active Streets Engagement Officer was due to attend the committee meeting last October but this was cancelled. A new officer has now been appointed and has requested to speak to the Parish Council regarding their Play Streets and School Streets programmes. The Clerk will speak to them and see what date can be rearranged.

Re: **minute no. 23/586** – The bike rack at Windsor Parade is still awaiting installation. The café owner has agreed to complete the works.

Re: **minute nos. 23/396 & 23/487** – The project for additional dog waste bins around the Village will be progressed by the Clerk as soon as possible.

The Rights of Way Officer for the area has contacted the Parish Council to advise that due to financial constraints, works planned for the rights of way network this year will be impacted, mainly vegetation clearance and bridge maintenance. They will endeavour to complete two cuts of vegetation during the year, starting in Mid-June, but the growth is expected to be higher than usual. Works will be prioritised, as necessary. Members were concerned that this could impact public safety.

**ACTION – Clerk to contact the Ward Councillors with the Council's concerns and to consider priority areas to highlight for works.**

**24/052 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22<sup>nd</sup> APRIL 2024**

A copy of the minutes was provided to all members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2024, **SECONDED** by Councillor Rudd **with 3 in favour and 3 abstentions.**

**24/053 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE BUS SHELTER INSPECTIONS**

There have been no inspections since the last meeting. The bus shelters are due to be inspected and washed this week. The Shelters will need re-painting this Summer.

**24/054 UPDATE REGARDING UNAUTHORISED ACCESS TO LOVERS WALK, OLD ROAD**

Following contact from the local farmer regarding unauthorised motorbike/quad bike access to their farmland, the Nature Reserve, Lovers Walk and the bridleway, the Clerk has investigated the situation.

The gate next to the horse gate is broken but could be replaced. However, there is only an old tree trunk next to the gate. Since the tree works in Lovers Walk in February, the area is much more open, pending replanting. The double gates into the old reservoir land are frequently broken open, allowing access to the fields that way.

The Clerk has spoken to the Stables to enquire regarding horse access needed up the bridleway. They have advised that the horse gate isn't accessible for many of their horses and so they use the broken gate opening.

The Clerk has spoken briefly to the RoW Officer from Central Beds Council regarding the bridleway and requested a site meeting with her and the farmer – no response yet received from either party.

Members felt that the Parish Council should fence off the entrance to Lovers Walk, now that the trees have been removed, and this will also protect the re-planting planned in the Autumn. The RoW Officer will need to consider appropriate actions for the gates onto the bridleway.

**ACTION – Clerk to obtain quotes for the fencing work.**

**24/055 UPDATE REGARDING THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE RIGHTS OF WAY FOOTPATHS SOUTHWEST OF THE VILLAGE**

Back in March, Central Beds Council Asset Team contacted the Parish Council regarding proposed changes to FP8 & FP12. The Parish Council responded with their comments and have now received a reply. Members confirmed that they still would like to meet the Officer on site and also invite the Ward Councillors, so that everyone understands the changes planned.

**ACTION – Clerk to request meeting again.**

**24/056 TO CONSIDER CENTRAL BEDS COUNCIL TREE PLANTING SCHEMES AND AGREE WAY FORWARD**

The Parish Council obtained a Tree grant in 2023 for the five trees on Arnold Recreation Ground to mark the Queen's Jubilee. The Clerk has now completed a follow-up survey on the grant scheme and provided an update on how our trees are benefitting the Village, including up to date photos.

The Parish Council will be looking to obtain a grant in the Autumn for saplings to be planted at Lovers Walk. In addition, further trees may be required on Arnold Recreation Ground and by the War Memorial. Members discussed other tree planting opportunities but felt that neither tiny forests nor tree giveaways were appropriate for the Village.

**24/057 UPDATE REGARDING THE BOUNDARY TO O'DELLS POCKET AND AGREE WAY FORWARD**

In March, Cadent Gas undertook some emergency repairs to fix a gas leak on land at O'Dells Pocket. They gained access to the site via the paddock at the rear of the new houses at 113 Manor Road. The works have left the boundary between O'Dells Pocket and the paddock open. It is understood they may have to return in the future to complete further works and they have left some heras fencing on the site. The Clerk requested a site meeting in April but has heard nothing since from Cadent. After discussion, it was agreed to install post and rail fencing along the boundary.

**ACTION – Clerk to seek costings for the fencing works.**

**24/058 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

The Clerk was asked to chase up Central Beds Council regarding the streetlight on Church Road, which is still not working.

Meeting closed at 8.02pm