

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE PAVILION, LUTON ROAD SPORTS FIELD  
ON MONDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 2025 COMMENCING AT 8.11pm**

**Present:** Councillors J Paxton (Chairman), S Laycock (Vice-chairman), A Fletcher, J Selley, A Vale, W Rudd, A Tebb and J Mikkelsen (ex-officio)

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

**Minutes:** C Callen

**25/064 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – There were none.

**25/065 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.

**25/066 MATTERS ARISING** –

Ward Councillor Childs has collated a petition re 20mph speed limit around Ramsey Manor School. This will be put forward to Central Beds Council (CBC) Traffic Management for consideration.

The Clerk has arranged to meet with the CBC Rights of Way Officer and a local resident on 17<sup>th</sup> July regarding the issue with gates/fencing at Lovers Walk. Several residents are concerned about the open area and also the impact the works at the Old Reservoir may have. The Council also need to consider protecting the replanting planned for the woodland this Autumn.

Re: **Minute no. 25/028.3** - Councillor Paxton and the Clerk have inspected Baileys Piece, following a previous complaint from a resident regarding overhanging trees. The resident has now arranged for the trees behind their property to be cut back. There are several areas where the self-set trees have now grown too close to the residents fencing in this area. The Clerk will obtain quotes for some maintenance work in this area to be completed in the Autumn.

The Parish Council have been advised that the resurfacing works on Sharpenhoe Road will be undertaken 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> September.

**25/067 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2025**

A copy of the minutes was provided to all members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025, **SECONDED** by Councillor Vale **with 7 in favour and 1 abstention**.

**25/068 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE BUS SHELTER INSPECTIONS**

The inspections completed on 23<sup>rd</sup> June were acknowledged. Everything was in order and the shelters were washed.

**25/069 UPDATE REGARDING THE MAINTENANCE OF THE FOOTPATHS IN THE VILLAGE AND AGREE WAY FORWARD**

The Clerk met with Ward Councillor French and the Rights of Way Officers from CBC on 16<sup>th</sup> June to discuss the state of the footpaths around the Village. They provided a map which shows the footpaths they currently grass cut twice a year – they no longer weed spray. The cutting back of vegetation at the side of footpaths/verges is the responsibility of Environmental Services and can be reported via FixMyStreet (they do weed spray). CBC are reviewing the situation, with a view to transfer responsibility for all urban footpaths to Environmental Services from 2026. NFU are looking into the situation with footpaths on farmers land, following the removal of the CBC funding scheme in 2023.

It has been suggested that the Village set up a P3 Group again (Parish Path Partnership), with volunteers taking on the responsibility of maintenance of Rights of Way around the Village. CBC provide training, equipment and insurance and co-ordinate the P3 Groups.

Members were disappointed that CBC seem to be washing their hands of the situation due to lack of funding and were very concerned about the risks of inviting volunteers to undertake the hedge and path clearance within the Village. They felt that there could be strong feeling in the Community that this work should be provided as part of the Council Tax funding. As a result, Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** to decline involvement in the P3 project and not to endorse this as a solution to the issues. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Tebb and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

**25/070 TO CONSIDER TREE WORK AT THE TOP OF ARNOLD RECREATION GROUND AND AGREE WAY FORWARD**

Councillor Paxton and the Clerk have inspected the area of trees to the North of the stream at the top of Arnold Recreation field. There are a few dead trees/branches that have come down and are lying across unofficial, but well used, pathways through the woods to the Springs. These are causing a danger to pedestrians. The Clerk has obtained approval from the CBC Tree Planning Officer that they can be felled without seeking further Planning Permission. Jempsons Tree Services have visited the site with the Clerk and been asked to provide a quote for the works. Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** to approve Jempsons Tree Services Ltd to undertake the necessary work as soon as possible, given the risk to safety, at a cost of £450 plus VAT. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Mikkelson and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

Councillor Fletcher requested that the area be inspected again before the winter, with a view of spreading chippings on the pathway to reduce slip risk in wet weather.

**25/071 TO ACKNOWLEDGE CENTRAL BEDS COUNCIL TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND AGREE WAY FORWARD**

Following completion of the Traffic Survey on Bedford Road in March, the results were received in May. These showed an average daily traffic usage of 7646 per day (compared to 3-4k in Silsoe where limit is 20mph), and an average speed of 28.4mph. The initial response from Central Beds Council is that no further action is required to address the situation.

Ward Councillor Childs has now set up a petition, to reduce the speed limit on Bedford Road and add safety measures (cameras, speed humps, pedestrian crossing), to take back to CBC for further consideration. It has been suggested the Parish Council should book a slot to lobby the CBC Executive at their Sustainable Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee into considering the situation further in Barton. Councillor Fletcher agreed to consider this action further and will look at the date for next meeting.

**25/072 TO CONSIDER REQUEST FOR USE OF METAL DETECTOR AT LOVERS WALK WOODLAND**

A member of the Public has contacted the Parish Council to request permission to use a metal detector on the land at Lovers Walk and Barton Gravel Pit. They hold a valid National Council for Metal Detecting membership, including public liability insurance. They state that they will follow the Code of Conduct and law, including the Treasure Act 1996, and would not dig any deep holes, ensuring that any disturbed ground is restored to its original condition. Additionally, they are happy to pick up any rubbish in the area when they are on site.

Following consideration, Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** to decline this request, given the land is a designated Country Wildlife Site and not considered suitable for this purpose. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Fletcher **with 6 in favour, 1 against and 1 abstention**.

**25/073 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

Councillor Tebb was concerned regarding the lack of watering of the recently planted trees around the Village in the current hot weather. As in previous years, residents are encouraged to adopt a tree and water it as the CBC contract will not provide sufficient frequency.

Meeting closed at 8.43pm