

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON MONDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2025 COMMENCING AT 7.46pm**

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

In Attendance: C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes: C Callen

25/284 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – These were received from Councillors J Mikkelson and A Tebb.

25/285 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.

25/286 MATTERS ARISING –

Councillor Tebb has volunteered to attend the next Central Beds Council Topic Session on Environment issues on 19th November. They will provide an update at the next meeting.

Central Beds Council are consulting on the installation of ‘no waiting’ restrictions on Nicholls Close, south side, from a point approx. 8.5m west of the junction with Bedford Road and extending in a westerly direction for approx. 21.5m. Any comments are to be submitted by 10th December. Councillor Fletcher expressed a non-pecuniary interest as a resident of Nicholls Close. This item will be discussed at the Full Council meeting on 8th December.

ACTION – The Clerk was asked to contact Ward Councillor Childs to ask about enforcement options.

Kerbside collections of coffee pods are ending at the end of the year. Residents who use the service will be advised of alternative recycling locations and also the Tidy Tips will have a recycling bin.

A complaint has been received from a resident regarding the parking of a road sweeper vehicle regularly on Old Road, directly opposite Washbrook Close, damaging the verge and blocking visibility of pedestrians using the gate to Arnold Recreation Ground. Whilst there are no formal restrictions for parking at this point, the Clerk has spoken to the Company who own the vehicle who have advised that the driver has recently moved to the Village. They will investigate alternative parking options.

25/287 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29th SEPTEMBER 2025

A copy of the minutes was provided to all members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of 29th September 2025, **SECONDED** by Councillor Laycock with **4 in favour and 2 abstentions**.

25/288 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE BUS SHELTER INSPECTIONS

The next inspections will be completed on 19th November.

25/289 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE EXPENSITURE FOR 2025/26 AND TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE DRAFT BUDGETS FOR 2026/27

Expenditure for 2025/26 was reviewed. Grass contractual works have been undertaken, with only 14 cuts against a budget of 17 for the year. Hedge works are due to be completed in the coming weeks, in line with the contracts. No bus shelter maintenance work is planned. Any underspend will be reviewed in March 2026 and funds transferred to Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) as appropriate, to save for future projects.

Budgets for 2026/27 allow for an increase of 4% for the Council’s Grounds Maintenance Contract for grass and hedge cutting. Routine bus shelter upkeep is expected to be minimal but additional funds proposed to be transferred into Bus Shelter EMR, towards any ongoing maintenance and

replacement programme. Vandalism costs for replacement Perspex to be held in stock, in case of need. Funds to be put aside in Ear Marked Reserve for bins and trees/shrubs planting and maintenance.

A budget of £1750 to be transferred into EMR towards the next tree survey due in 2026, as well as £1500 for future tree works. £250 to be set aside for the future renovation of the Village signs. At present there is no clear strategy for road calming projects identified in the Village without the support of Central Beds Council Highways department.

Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** the approval of the draft 2026/27 Highways & Environment Income and Expenditure budgets, with a £8,650 committee precept. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Fletcher and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

25/290 TO CONSIDER COST TO REPLACE VILLAGE GATES AND AGREE WAY FORWARD

As previous discussed, the Village Gates at the entrances to the Village are in need of maintenance. Those on Hexton Road and Sharpenhoe Road need replacing. We currently have £800 in EMR. Several suppliers offer recycled plastic options in different designs which last for 25years. Working on these areas is not easy for the Groundsmen due to their location at the side of busy roads. Paint has already been acquired to repaint the other existing gates where possible (cost £19.16+VAT from Screwfix).

Glasdons have provided a quote to replace the existing gates on Hexton Road on a like-for-like basis but plastic option at a cost £2142.48 plus VAT (or £2482 plus VAT to also replace the name signs). Alternative quotes have been requested. In the past, the Rotary Club paid for their signage on the Village gates.

After discussion, Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** a maximum Budget of £2500 be approved to replace the gates on Hexton Road, paid from the Road Calming EMR. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Vale and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

ACTION – Clerk to contact the Rotary Club to see if they are prepared to contribute anything again towards the new gates.

25/291 TO CONSIDER COST FOR TREE PLANTING AT LOVERS WALK AND AGREE WAY FORWARD

Under the terms of the Forestry Commission felling licence, new saplings are required to be planted within 2years on a ratio of 3:1 - Rowan, Hazel, Field Maple, Lime. This means at least 42 saplings must be planted this winter. The Council already have some tree guards to use to protect the saplings (recycled from PX Farms). The saplings are to be maintained for 10 years, and will need regular watering and checking, particularly during the Summer. Unfortunately, Central Beds Council are unable to provide a Tree Grant towards the costs, as the Parish Council has a statutory duty to replant due to the felling licence, which is outside their criteria.

Following discussion, Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval to purchase 60 saplings from the Woodland Trust Shop at a cost of £143.80 including VAT, plus 30 tree wraps and canes at a cost of £51.95 including VAT. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Fletcher and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

25/292 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA

There were none.

Meeting closed at 8.34pm