

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ONLINE
MONDAY 15th MARCH 2021 COMMENCING AT 7.56pm**

Present: Councillors Mr J Paxton (Chairman), Mr J Selley and Mrs B Thomas (ex-officio)

In Attendance: Mrs C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes: Mrs C Callen

20/622 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillor Mr L Davison-Williams, Mr N Day and Mr J Roberts

20/623 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.

20/624 MATTERS ARISING –

The Keep Britain Tidy ‘Great British Spring Clean’ event has been announced to be held between 28th May and 13th June (incorporating the school half-term). An invitation has been received to attend a virtual launch event on Tuesday 23rd March 2021 2-3pm with several guest speakers. Councillor Paxton advised of a group being set up in the Village to undertake litter-picking. Item to be considered at next Full Council meeting, seeking support of all Councillors.

ACTION – Clerk to send details of Launch Event to Village Group contact.

Minute 20/569 – Reynolds Landscaping have had to postpone the tree works at Baileys Piece due to high wind conditions on 10-12th March. This will now be done week commencing 15th March.

The Clerk has been advised by Central Beds Council Tree Officer that the replanting of the trees on Lime Close has been delayed due to issues with the aftercare service. They anticipate that the trees will be replanted within the two-year specified period as per the Town and Countryside Planning Act (by February 2022).

The resurfacing of the grass Footpath No.9 between Taylor Close and Sharpenhoe Road has been delayed until mid-April due to budget constraints. The landowner has been advised. In the meantime, the footpath is closed for safety reasons.

Wanderbus have advised that they will be resuming their weekly service to Hitchin from 29th March. Details to be posted on Noticeboards and Social Media.

20/625 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22nd FEBRUARY 2021

A copy of the minutes was provided to all members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of 22nd February 2021, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

20/626 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE BUS SHELTERS INSPECTION

The inspection undertaken on the 15th March was acknowledged. Everything was in order.

20/627 TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE STREET LIGHTING ON THE FOOTPATH BETWEEN BROOKEND DRIVE AND SHARPENHOE ROAD

The lack of street-lighting on this footpath has been a concern for several years and has been raised in the past with Central Beds Council Highways department.

As reported at the last meeting, the Clerk has emailed CBC Highways Street Lighting team to enquire if lighting is possible but is still awaiting a response. The Clerk has now contacted the Rights of Way Officer at CBC who has advised that the ‘footpath’ is not a public right of way and would appear to be owned by Persimmon Homes (previously Connolly Homes) and used for access to the electricity sub-station. He has suggested that the only place that a street-lamp could be installed would be on the area adopted by Highways. Following discussion, it was agreed not to pursue this item due to the minimal impact an additional street light on Sharpenhoe Road would have on the footpath. The Clerk was thanked for her research.

20/628 TO CONSIDER TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE VILLAGE

Members agreed last autumn that the 2015 Strategy should now be revisited, particularly since the Central Beds Council Rural Match Funding option appears to have been withdrawn.

At the last Committee meeting, it was agreed that the stretch of Bedford Road between Grange Road and Mill Lane/Manor Road junctions should be the next priority. A local resident has also contacted the Parish Council and flagged this area as a hazard. The Clerk was requested to contact Central Beds Council Traffic Management Team to try and arrange an on-site meeting to discuss possible options with them. The response from the team is that they are “currently revising the Rural Match Funding process and re-evaluating how it should run going forward, therefore at this time they can’t advise. They will come back to us in the future when they have an update”.

Members discussed options and agreed that their preference would be for a zebra crossing to be installed, near to the current island crossing, to assist children on their route to school and residents crossing the busy road.

ACTION – Clerk to contact CBC Highways for information and costings for such a scheme and provide an update at the next Full Council meeting.

20/629 TO CONSIDER TREE PLANTING STRATEGY FOR THE VILLAGE

As discussed at previous meetings, it is necessary to review the Parish Council’s Tree Planting Strategy for the Autumn.

Several Residents have commented on the desire to see more trees replanted around the Village, including at the Sports Pitches and on the amenity grass verges around the Village. Consideration would need to be given to land ownership, neighbouring properties and ongoing maintenance. Tree species would need to be suitable for the area planted.

ACTION – Councillor Selley agreed to contact the Parish Council Tree Warden Volunteer to see if she is still happy to undertake the role and whether she wants to be involved in planning a suitable tree planting strategy. Feedback to be provided at next Full Council meeting.

20/630 TO ACKNOWLEDGE ONGOING PARKING ISSUES IN THE VILLAGE AND CONSIDER WAY FORWARD

Several residents continue to contact the Parish Council on a frequent basis regarding the ongoing problems with parking in the Village, particularly where visitors are accessing the Nature Reserve, Springs and Recreation Ground.

The lack of enforcement of the double yellow lines is an area of frustration. Councillor Shingler has been liaising with Councillor Ian Dalgarno, as the Executive Member for Highways at Central Beds Council, for his support. He reports that Councillor Dalgarno has emphasised again in the last few days to the Central Beds Council Enforcement Parking Team that priority should be given to weekend visits.

During the Lockdown period, the Enforcement teams have not been prioritising residential roads but hopefully we will start to see more frequent visits as the restrictions are lifted.

The Clerk has chased the installation of the missing double yellow lines on Old Road, which will hopefully be able to be installed once the weather improves and the road dries out.

Following the report at the last Committee meeting, the Clerk has contacted Central Beds Highways regarding the possibility of planting shrubs on the verge opposite the property at 27 Old Road, to deter unauthorised parking. No response has been received to date.

ACTION – Clerk to chase Central Beds Council for permission to plant established plants paid for by the Parish Council in this area.

20/631 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE

There was none.

Meeting closed at 8.50pm