

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE PARISH OFFICE ON
MONDAY 23rd SEPTEMBER 2019 COMMENCING AT 8.30pm**

Present: Councillors Mr J Paxton (Chair), Mr J Roberts, Mr K Taylor,
Mr L Davison-Williams (ex-officio) and Mrs B Thomas (ex-officio)

In Attendance: Mrs C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes: Mrs C Callen

19/236 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillor Mr N Day and Mr J Selley

19/237 TO APPROVE COUNCILLOR TAYLOR'S MEMBERSHIP OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of Councillor Taylor's membership to the Committee, **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas **with 4 in favour and 1 abstention**. Councillor Taylor was welcomed onto the Committee.

19/238 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.

19/239 MATTERS ARISING

As agreed, the contractor has been instructed to cut back the trees behind Simpkins Drive. A date for the planned works is awaited so that the residents can be advised accordingly.

The work to cut back the hedges around the open space on Simpkins Drive has also been instructed, with the contractor to advise when the works will be completed.

The overgrown tree on the corner of Grange Road and Harris Court has now been cut back by the contractor.

Barton Countryside Conservation have advised that the grass amenity areas on Mill Lane have now been added to Central Bedfordshire Council's cutting list. The footpath from Mill Lane to Grange Road has also been added to the vegetation cut for CBC from next April – BCC will cut this year at the end of October.

They have also advised that CBC will be sending out numerous letters to residents around the village requesting that overgrown hedges are cut back. CBC can enforce this and can cut them back and charge the land-owner accordingly if necessary.

Additionally, BCC advised that there has been some vandalism experienced over the weekend on the footpaths off Sharpenhoe Road and Faldo Road, with fencing and posts damaged and tree branches snapped off. There is also evidence of small fires being started in the trees. The Police have been informed.

BCC have requested to have some of the small Beech saplings under the trees on Lovers Walk for replanting. Councillors agreed that this was acceptable.

19/240 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15th JULY 2019

Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of 15th July 2019, **SECONDED** by Councillor Roberts and **with 4 in favour and 1 abstention**.

19/241 TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE THE COST TO REPAIR THE VILLAGE GATES ON HEXTON ROAD AND SHARPENHOE ROAD

One of the village gates on Sharpenhoe Road has been broken for some time and is being stored in the Parish garage awaiting repair. Now the gate on Hexton Road has been damaged and is leaning against the hedgerow. The Full-time groundsman is aware of both gates needing repair and has estimated a cost of £25 per gate post for bolts and post mix cement – he has enough spare wood to repair them. The Hexton Road gate is rather close to the road to work on but the groundsman should be able to undertake the work.

Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of a maximum £150 cost to repair the gates, **SECONDED** by Councillor Roberts and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. It was suggested that the

groundsman parks his van on the road with warning lights on, to give some protection whilst undertaking the installation work.

19/242 TO CONSIDER THE PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE PUBLIC SECTOR PROTECTION ORDERS (PSPOs) CONSULTATION

Details of the consultation were provided ahead of the meeting. The proposed changes relate to rules about walking dogs and drinking alcohol in public places.

The main change regarding dogs is to remove the requirement that dogs are kept on leads in a park which contains a sports pitch. They will not be allowed to foul on sports pitches. A discussion took place regarding the impact this change would have on Arnold Recreation Ground, where dogs are already allowed off lead, and the Luton Road Sports Pitches, where dogs are currently prohibited and must be on lead in the surrounding area. No comment was considered appropriate.

With regards to the drinking of alcohol in public places, the proposal is to remove the existing alcohol Orders from Barton-le-Clay due to lack of evidence as to the need for them. Councillors felt that there was still a need and they act as a deterrent in the village. The Council was not aware of the recently advised reporting system for anti-social behaviour and request that the current orders are left in place, to review again in 12 months time, to allow evidence to be more accurately collected.

19/243 TO CONSIDER, APPROVE AND ADOPT THE TREE AND HEDGE MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Clerk has drawn up a new policy to support the Council in managing tree and hedge maintenance around the village. Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the policy, subject to obtaining clarification on the frequency of independent tree inspections from the Council's insurers. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

19/244 TO CONSIDER PARKING IN THE VILLAGE

Councillor Paxton outlined concerns regarding both the parking in the centre of the village, where there are only 13 spaces available and a clear need for more parking, and by Ramsey Manor Lower School. A discussion took place about how to deal with the inconsiderate and dangerous parking being seen in both areas. It was agreed to investigate ideas and carry this discussion forward to the next Committee meeting.

19/245 UPDATE ON FURTHER ACTIONS REGARDING RURAL MATCH FUNDING SCHEME

At the Committee meeting in June, Councillor Day agreed to provide a draft letter to challenge the methodology for rejecting the Bedford Road request, based on the statistics provided.

Since the completion of the works in Hexton Road, several residents have indirectly enquired about the next phase, notably Higham Gobion Road and Sharpenhoe Road.

It was agreed to defer this item until the next Committee meeting for further consideration.

19/246 UPDATE REGARDING THE SURVEY OF HEDGES AROUND THE VILLAGE

Ahead of the Grass & Hedge Cutting Contracts being reviewed for the year 2020/21, a survey needs to be completed before the autumn of all the hedged areas, to enable accurate information to be provided for tender. At the last Committee meeting it was agreed that Cllr Davison-Williams would work with the Clerk to provide each committee with maps of their areas to review and mark up for the tender process. Unfortunately no progress has been made to date due to issues using the mapping tool and it was acknowledged that this work will now need to be completed for next year's contract review.

19/247 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE – None.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm