

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD ONLINE
MONDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2020 COMMENCING AT 8.30pm**

Present: Councillors Mr J Paxton (Chairman), Mr N Day (Vice-Chair), Mr J Roberts, Mr J Selley, and Mrs B Thomas (ex-officio)

In Attendance: Mrs C Callen (Clerk)

Minutes: Mrs C Callen

20/370 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – Councillor Mr L Davison-Williams

20/371 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.

20/372 MATTERS ARISING –

Planning Permission for the tree works in the Burial Ground has been granted.

The Forestry Commission Woodland Officer visited Lovers Walk site on 11th November and has recommended that the felling licence is approved for ‘thinning’ works. This will speed up the process for the urgent works as it will not require public consultation, although they recommend notification is shared with local residents. The licence has now been granted on this basis.

Macauley Tree Services have been instructed to undertake the urgent tree works at Lovers Walk and Burial Ground. They had scheduled the works into their calendar for the last two weeks of November but due to the delays, they are now looking to complete the works from 12th December – all signage, risk assessment and insurance will be provided. The Clerk will ensure that suitable notification is put on Social Media and website.

Reynolds have completed the works at Bedford Rd/Simpkins Drive and Smithcombe Close. Grangers are completing the remaining works required on Bedford Road over the next few days.

The Groundsman has reviewed the tree/hedge overhanging the resident’s fence at the rear of Ravensburgh Close and recommends a contractor undertakes the clearance work required. The Clerk will arrange quotes accordingly.

A tree at Odell’s Pocket has been leaning for some time and its branches were previously cleared from overhanging the footpath by the Groundmen in the Summer. It has recently dropped again, and the Groundsman has managed to cut it back and remove it from the footpath.

The survey of the Bus Shelters to establish a maintenance schedule has been deferred until the New Year, when restrictions allow the Groundsman to accompany Councillors Paxton & Day.

Traffic Management Strategy for the Village to be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

A resident from Church Road reported the parking on double yellow lines to the Central Beds Council Parking Enforcement team after the first weekend of Lockdown. He received a response stating that they will be relaxing the enforcement of parking restrictions in residential streets, car parks and some single and double yellow lines until 2nd December unless there is a safety concern. Members were concerned that safety could be an issue and requested the Clerk contact Councillor Shingler to respond to Central Beds Council on this matter. **ACTION – Clerk to contact Councillor Shingler and Central Beds Council regarding parking enforcement.**

Central Beds Council Highways Department have advised that the delayed replacement of the traffic island at the Hexton Road/Luton Road junction is now scheduled for mid-December.

Councillor Paxton advised that the Christmas Lights Team were co-ordinating a lights switch-on across the Village for 5.30pm on Sunday 29th November.

20/373 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 19th OCTOBER 2020

A copy of the minutes was provided to all members ahead of the meeting. Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of 19th October 2020, **SECONDED** by Councillor Roberts and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

20/374 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE BUS SHELTERS INSPECTION

The inspection undertaken on the 11th November was acknowledged. Everything was in order.

20/375 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE EXPENDITURE FOR 2020/21 AND TO CONSIDER AND APPROVE DRAFT BUDGETS FOR 2021/22

Expenditure for 2020/21 has been impacted by the costs for tree works at Lovers Walk following the Survey undertaken in the Summer. £4,675 has been transferred from Ear Marker Reserves (EMR) towards these urgent costs, with the remainder coming from General Reserves.

Budgets for 2021/22 allow for an increase of 2% for the Council's Grounds Maintenance Contract. Routine bus shelter upkeep is expected to be minimal but additional funds proposed to be transferred into Bus Shelter EMR towards an ongoing maintenance programme. Vandalism costs for replacement Perspex to be held in stock, in case of need.

Funds to be put aside in Ear Marked Reserve (EMR) for new bins and trees/shrubs.

Traffic Calming budget of £2000 to be transferred into EMR for 2021/22 – to be used towards either further works in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire Council, or for the Parish Council to purchase speed management equipment. A further budget of £1500 to be transferred into EMR towards the next tree survey due in 2023.

Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** the approval of the draft 2021/22 Highways & Environment Income and Expenditure budgets, with a £7,740 committee precept. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

Councillor Paxton thanked the Clerk for putting together the budget figures ahead of the meeting.

20/376 TO ACKNOWLEDGE REQUEST FROM RESIDENT TO SUPPORT A PETITION TO CENTRAL BEDS COUNCIL REGARDING THE RIGHT OF WAY BETWEEN TAYLOR CLOSE AND SHARPENHOE ROAD AND AGREE ANY ACTION

A resident from Sharpenhoe Road has written to the Parish Council seeking support to petition Central Beds Council to agree to install a hard-surface footpath from Taylor Close to Sharpenhoe Road. There is currently a grass public right of way over his land to access the Grange Road estate, which can get muddy in wet/winter weather. Members acknowledged his email but felt that they were unable to offer support in this matter, as public footpaths and rights of way are determined by Central Beds Council and not within the Parish Council remit.

Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** that the Clerk sends a letter to the resident to advise him of the Council's decision, **SECONDED** by Councillor Roberts and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

20/377 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE

Members asked whether the Rotary Club would be organising the annual Father Christmas charity float tour around the Village streets in light of current Covid-19 restrictions. **ACTION – Clerk to make enquiries.**

Meeting closed at 9.12pm