

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY 10th JANUARY 2022
AT THE VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM

Present: Councillors Mrs B Thomas (Chairman), Mr J Paxton (Vice-Chairman), Mr J Roberts, Mrs G Gardner, Mr J Selley, Mr S Laycock, Mr N Day and Mrs A Miller

In attendance: Mrs C Callen (Clerk), Mrs S Cowie (Assistant Clerk) and 1 member of the public

Minutes: Mrs C Callen

21/421 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs A Vale and Mr A Channon and Central Bedfordshire Ward Councillor Mr I Shingler.

21/422 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were reminded of the procedures regarding declaration of interests. There were none.

21/423 POLICE REPORTS

423.1 To acknowledge receipt of Crime Statistics for November 2021

The Crime statistics for November 2021, taken from Police.uk website, were acknowledged. A total of 17 crimes were reported: 7 still under investigation, 4 where investigation complete, 5 with no further details and 1 where action to be taken by another organisation. The categories for November included: 7 violence/sexual offences, 5 antisocial behaviour, 2 criminal damage/arson, 1 vehicle crime, 1 drugs related, and 1 robbery.

423.2 To consider attendance and priorities for the Community Policing Priority Setting Online Meeting 26th January 2022

As discussed at the last meeting, an invitation has been received to attend the online Police Priority Setting meeting for the Leighton Buzzard Area and surrounding villages 26th January 2022. The meeting will include an update on Crime figures for the last 3 months, and feedback on the progress with last quarters priorities, which were:

- Enforcement of no-parking in pedestrian area of Leighton Buzzard High Street, and
- Anti-social behaviour around Recreation Ground, Barton-le-Clay.

Two new priorities will be set for the next quarter.

Members discussed the increase in violence/sexual offences being recorded over recent months. The Assistant Clerk has spoken to the Community Police who advise the majority are domestic related or verbal abuse. Members felt that crimes should be categorised in more detail, with a breakdown of details.

Councillor Thomas agreed to attend the priority setting meeting to hear what has been achieved from the last quarter's priorities.

423.3 To acknowledge the PCC consultation on the Police Budget for 2022/23 and consider any response

Details of the Consultation were provided ahead of the meeting, with a planned increase of £10 on a Band D property for the year. Following discussion, Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** that the Clerk respond on behalf of the Council to support the Police Budget increase, **SECONDED** by Councillor Miller and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. Members were encouraged to also respond in a personal capacity to the consultation.

A consultation has also been received from Bedfordshire Fire & Rescue Services for their 2022 Budget, where an increase of 1.99% is proposed (£2.04 increase on Band D for the year). Details were provided ahead of the meeting and members agreed to respond individually.

21/424 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A resident was in attendance, having expressed an interest in becoming a Parish Councillor. They provided a brief update on their background and reasons for wanting to join the Council. They have completed an application form and will be considered for Co-option at the next Full Council meeting in February.

21/425 CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE WARD COUNCILLOR REPORT

Councillor Shingler sent his apologies for absence. No written report was available.

21/426 PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORTS/UPDATE

426.1 Matters arising from previous Planning Committee not included within agenda – information only

Re: **Minute 21/344** Neighbourhood Plan – The Clerk and Cllr Miller have reviewed all the back paperwork within the office and retained the relevant information. A new page has been set up on the Councils website. A draft agenda has been drawn up for an initial meeting of the new Group, to be held later in January, to agree the way forward.

Re: 53 Hexton Road – a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development has been issued for the siting of a mobile home and hard standing in the rear garden.

ACTION – Clerk to investigate the rules regarding mobile homes and provide an update at the next Committee meeting.

Re: Land to the East of Barton-le-Clay proposed development, the Clerk has provided the Planning Officer and Leisure Team with copies of the Leisure Strategy Document for use when considering the S106 Funding. The Planning Officer has advised that the Developers are currently considering the comments made during the Outline Planning application process and once they have responded, it will be clearer on whether any further consultation is required for this development.

426.2 Update on planning applications refused/granted

A list of application decisions was circulated to members prior to the meeting. This was noted. The Clerk advised that that the Planning Officer reports are now available on the Planning Portal, which detail the reasons for any Planning refusal, which is very useful.

426.3 Update on Enforcement Notices

No formal Enforcement notices have been received.

Re: Development at 55-57 Hexton Road – no further update has been received.

Re: Development of garage next to Maple House – the building is nearing completion. No further update received.

426.4 To consider new planning applications or delegate authority to respond to committee:

CB/21/05372/OUT, Rear of 113 Manor Road: Outline Application: Erection of 4 new build residential houses in two semi-detached blocks with associated parking and access road.

After discussion, Councillor Day **PROPOSED** the following objection be submitted, **SECONDED** by Councillor Miller and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**:

OBJECT – The Parish Council strongly object to the proposed development and feel that it would be detrimental to the character of the surrounding area. The high-density development is considered excessive, particularly since the land lies within the current Greenbelt surrounding Barton-le-Clay. There is no justification or special circumstances for encroaching into this area. The access road required to reach the additional back-fill properties would result in a greater volume of traffic moving about the site and entering/exiting from Manor Road. This movement of cars on an already narrow and heavily congested road, particularly given its close proximity to the local schools, would cause a danger to pedestrians and other road users. The visibility achievable at the entrance to the access road is not considered sufficient to allow for safe egress from the site. The Parish Council are also concerned that the building of the road would enable further access to the land behind the neighbouring cottages which could be used for future development and thus create even greater vehicle movement.

CB/21/05407/FULL, The Granary, Rectory Farm, Hexton Road: Single storey rear extension to outbuilding, alterations to provide a window in place of current doors on the front face of the outbuilding

- No comments

(Councillor Roberts left the meeting 8.14pm and returned at 8.15pm)

21/427 MINUTES OF LAST MEETINGS

427.1 To receive and approve the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 13th December 2021

The minutes of Full Council held on 13th December 2021 were circulated to members prior to the meeting. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** the receipt and approval of the minutes. This was **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley with **5 in favour and 3 abstentions**.

427.2 Matters arising outside of committee reports/updates

Councillor Gardner advised that she was unable to attend the Town & Parish Councils Topic Session on the Design Plan in December. The Clerk has now sent out feedback from the session to all members, for information.

The Clerk advised that the Police had been in contact regarding the application for funding from the PCC Road Safety Fund. The Clerk has replied to their queries regarding the proposed vehicle activated speed sign and is awaiting a final decision.

21/428 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

428.1 Announcements as deemed appropriate by the Chairman

Councillor Thomas advised that 'Thank you' letters have been received from Unity Hall and Barton Carpet Bowls for their S137 Grants.

Keech Hospice Care have provided a Grant Report on how they have spent their 2020 Grant.

428.2 To acknowledge the NALC webinars on 'Levelling up the nation and our communities' and 'Working together to make communities safer' and consider any attendance

Details were provided to members ahead of the meeting. No one was available to attend.

21/429 POLICIES & RESOURCES COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE

429.1 Matters arising from previous Policies & Resources Committee not included within agenda - information only

The Internal Auditor has undertaken her interim review during December – the final report has been received and will be circulated and acknowledged at the February Full Council meeting.

The Clerk is currently reviewing the Council's GDPR requirements, using Breakthrough Communications Compliant Councils Hub to support with any actions required. Further information will be provided in due course.

The Clerk advised that she has successfully completed the Cyber Security Awareness e-course she has been studying for six months.

The Clerk advised that Central Beds Council are currently consulting on the use of Village Halls and Community Buildings. A link to the consultation has been shared on Social Media.

429.2 To consider and approve the price increase for IT support, backup and licences

Puzzle Technology Ltd (who provide the Council's IT support & backup) have advised that the cost of their service will be increasing this year. This is due to the Council operating two PC's and now two Laptops. The cost should be £25 per PC/Laptop plus £55 per Cloud Service. Current cost is £75 per month – this will increase to £155 per month (an increase of £960pa).

Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the increased cost of £155 per month, **SECONDED** by Councillor Selley and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

Additionally, Microsoft have also reported that they will be looking to increase their pricing by 20/30% from Q1 2022. They currently provide the licences for the Council email accounts. Further details on the structure and how this could impact the Council are not yet available.

429.3 To consider and approve the purchase of a noticeboard from the Welcome Back Fund

The Parish Council have £1k budget allocated from the Welcome Back Fund bid to use on providing a community noticeboard in the centre of the Village for local businesses to use for adverts. This project needs to be decided by the end of January, or the funds will be re-allocated.

The Clerk has looked at various options and provided details for consideration. Following discussion, Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the board from Earth Anchors Ltd at a cost of £725 plus VAT including delivery, **SECONDED** by Councillor Miller and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. Councillor Miller then **PROPOSED** approval of the wording for the noticeboard to read 'Barton-le-Clay Community Noticeboard', **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

429.4 **To consider HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacon Lighting event**

Notice has been received that the timings for the beacon lighting on Thursday 2nd June 2022 has been moved back to 9.45pm. It is suggested that organisers invite a piper, bugler or choir to perform before the beacon is lit.

ACTION – Assistant Clerk to approach the Barton Community Choir and bugler who performed at Remembrance Day to see if they would be able to support the event in Arnold Recreation Ground.

Members then discussed the suggestion for tree planting to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee. It was suggested that trees could be planted in a circle with a bench at the top of the Recreation Ground. Councillor Paxton and the Assistant Clerk will investigate funding options with Central Beds Council at their next Town & Parish Councils topic session on 12th January.

429.5 **To consider and approve renewal of Clerks membership to The Society of Local Council Clerks**

The Annual membership renewal is now due. This is required to access the Clerks support network/reference material, etc. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the cost of £270 to renew the SLCC subscription, **SECONDED** by Councillor Day and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

429.6 **To consider response to Central Bedfordshire Council's Budget 2022 Consultation**

Details of the Consultation and questionnaire were provided to members ahead of the meeting. Responses are required by 31st January 2022. Historically the Parish Council have not responded to the consultation. Councillors agreed that individual responses should be sent. The Clerk has advertised the consultation on the Parish Noticeboards and Social Media to encourage residents to respond.

21/430 BURIAL GROUNDS COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE

430.1 **Matters arising from previous Burial Grounds committee not included within agenda - information only**

Re: **Minute point 21/144.4** The tree work in the churchyard was completed on 16th December.

DEFRA have been running a consultation on "*Proposed Amendments to the Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 as applied to Groundwater Activities and Related Surface Water Discharge Activities*".

They are proposing tighter controls and a permit system for cemeteries and burial grounds to protect ground water sources. The majority of the proposed controls are already in practice however, it is suggested that the overall grave size for full burial should be increased to 5m² (at the surface). If the Bill is successful, the grave size will need to be increased, which will impact the number of empty grave spaces left and the number of years before the Burial Ground becomes full.

The ICCM and NALC have submitted their responses to the consultation and raised concerns regarding the proposed new grave size which will impact the viability of smaller parish cemeteries, many of which are already low on burial space. This item will be discussed further at the next committee meeting, along with the Burial Ground strategy.

430.2 **To acknowledge the Burial Ground and Churchyard inspections**

The Burial Ground and Churchyard inspections undertaken on 14th and 21st December and 3rd January were acknowledged. Everything was in order with the exception of the marked-up headstones and the outstanding cutting of the box hedge by the Garden of Rest.

430.3 **To acknowledge the War Memorial inspection**

The War Memorial inspections undertaken on 14th and 21st December and 3rd January were acknowledged. Everything was in order.

430.4 **To acknowledge complaint regarding unauthorised parking in the Burial Ground**

A letter of complaint was received on 4th January. The resident has provided the registration numbers of 3 vehicles parked in the Burial Ground car park where the owners were seen taking their dogs for a walk up the hills. The letter was acknowledged. Signage is already in place to advise the gate should be kept closed and only used for people visiting the Burial Ground.

Councillor Thomas then raised the flooding issue on the road outside the gates at the top of Church Road. Central Beds Council have previously looked at this and were unable to do anything to improve the situation as the water is running off the fields and private gardens.

ACTION – Assistant Clerk to liaise with Central Beds Council Highways department again.

21/431 HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE

431.1 **Matters arising from previous Highways & Environment committee not included within agenda - information only**

Central Beds Council (CBC) have forwarded a copy of a complaint to the Parish Council from a resident of Manor Road. They claim that there is an area of land which is overgrown and regularly being used as public toilet outside their property. The land does not appear to be on the CBC maintenance schedule. CBC have referred the matter to their Environmental team to see what action can be taken as the land is privately owned.

The Clerk met with the new Reserve Manager for Barton Hills National Nature Reserve at the end of November, to look at the areas where Ash Dieback has been identified. They are planning to fell several trees over the next few months, where they are in danger of falling onto footpaths.

431.2 **To acknowledge the Bus Shelters inspections**

The bus shelter inspections on 21st December and 3rd January were acknowledged. Everything was in order.

431.3 **Update regarding the Central Beds Council Treescape Fund**

CBC Tree Officer has confirmed that 44 tree have been earmarked for Barton-le-Clay. A rough map of the intended locations has been provided. The locations were selected during a recent tree survey and are limited to Highways verges and maintained land. They are currently working through the underground utilities data to confirm the sites, before planting.

ACTION – Clerk to clarify exact locations and types of trees to be planted with the Tree Officer.

The Parish Council can apply for grant funding from CBC for additional trees for its land, particularly as part of the Queens Green Canopy Celebrations, if required. This topic is being discussed at the next Town & Parish Councils Workshop on 12th January that Councillor Paxton and the Assistant Clerk are due to attend, and an update will be provided at the next meeting.

431.4 **To acknowledge request for a monthly volunteer litter pick and agree way forward**

A resident has approached the Parish Council to request consideration is given to have a regular monthly litter pick by volunteers around the Village, as a Community Project. Litter pickers and refuse sacks would be provided by the Parish Council who would need to co-ordinate volunteers/locations, etc. The request was acknowledged and will be taken to the next Committee meeting for further discussion, alongside arrangements for the next Great British Spring Clean event planned for 25th March – 10th April 2022.

It was noted that several residents already do informal litter picking on a regular basis and their efforts are appreciated by the Parish Council.

21/432 LEISURE COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE

432.1 **Matters arising from previous Leisure Committee not included within agenda – information only**

The Assistant Clerk reported that two separate incidents have occurred at the Allotments during December, resulting in damage and theft from the tenants Plots. The tenants have been advised to report the incidents to the Police and asked to inform the Parish Office if any further problems arise. The ongoing concerns regarding security at the site will be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

432.2 **To acknowledge weekly Playground and Fitness Equipment Inspections**

The Arnold Recreation Ground playground, Fitness Equipment and Norman Road play area inspections for the 14th, 21st December and 3rd January were acknowledged. Everything was in order with the exception of the bench in Arnold Recreation Ground by the basketball net where it has been damaged with a knife.

21/433 **SPORTS FIELD COMMITTEE REPORT/UPDATE**

433.1 **Matters arising from previous Sports Field committee not included within agenda - information only**

Re: Minute point 21/416.3: the additional speed hump sections were received before Christmas and the groundsman has installed the 2nd speed hump, close to the Luton Road entrance gates.

Several signs at the entrance to the sports field were vandalised on 4th January. The Police were called to the incident and arrested a man for causing damage. The signage was provided and paid for by the Parish Council in 2015 and the Clerk has contacted the original supplier who has quoted £385.73 plus VAT to replace the three signs. Due to mental health issues, the Police have recommended a Community Resolution, with the cost for repairs covered by the accused. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** that the Council agree not to press charges but accept the Community Resolution as recommended by the Police, **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

21/434 **MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

434.1 **To receive and consider Balance Sheet, Income & Expenditure Account, Creditors & Debtors Reports for month 9**

The monthly financial reports for December month-end were received by members. No issues were raised.

21/435 **APPROVAL OF PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

435.1 **To consider and approve payment of accounts as listed within the schedule or added at the meeting for January**

The payments for January were provided to members prior to the meeting. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the payments for January, totalling £56,451.01 (including transfers from savings accounts), **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

Councillor Miller queried the mileage rate paid to the Groundsman.

ACTION – Clerk to check with NALC on the current rates for Casual and Essential users and provide an update at next Full Council meeting.

21/436 **TIME ALLOCATION FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

436.1 **Dates available for committee/sub-committee meetings –**

17th January – no meetings.

24th January – Burial Grounds committee to be held at the Village Hall, start time 7.30pm.

31st January – Planning, Highways & Environment and Policies & Resources committees to be held at the Village Hall, start time 7.30pm.

21/437 **ITEMS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA**

Councillor Roberts provided details to the Clerk of a Community event being run in Maulden on 31st January to see if something similar is planned for Barton-le-Clay. The Clerk spoke to the event organiser from Central Beds Council's Safer Central team before the meeting, and provided an update on this trial event. It was agreed that the Clerk and Councillor Roberts would attend the Maulden event and then report back to Council, to see if something similar would work in Barton.

Councillor Gardner advised that she had been approached by residents from Gale Court following an incident outside one of the flats last week. Someone gained access to the building and attempted to start a fire. Both the Fire Service and Police attended. The residents are now concerned regarding further unauthorised access to the premises threatening their safety. After debate, it was agreed that the residents should be advised to contact Central Beds Council directly with their concerns and, in the meantime, the Clerk would email the Senior Independent Living Officer to advise them of the residents' concerns.

The meeting closed at 10.01pm

I certify these minutes are a true and correct record of the Parish Council meeting held on 10th January 2022

Dated this the 14th February 2022

B Thomas

**COUNCILLOR B THOMAS
CHAIRMAN**

PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS
January 2022

FOLIO No	PAYEE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	VAT DUE	TOTAL	ACC. No.	MUTIPLE INV. TOTAL	CHQ No.
21/0397	Central Bedfordshire Council	Council Tax - Parish Office (Jan)	£ 240.00	£ -	£ 240.00	4137		DD
21/0398	Central Bedfordshire Council	Council Tax - Sports Pavilion (Jan)	£ 489.00	£ -	£ 489.00	4811		DD
21/0399	Peninsula Business Services	H&S Support Services - Jan 2022	£ 100.60	£ 19.00	£ 119.60	4151		DD
21/0400	Cawleys	Skip Emptying - Burial Ground (Dec)	£ 41.44	£ 8.29	£ 49.73	4314		
21/0401	Cawleys	Skip Emptying - Office Recycling (Dec)	£ 5.78	£ 1.16	£ 6.94	4134		
21/0402	Cawleys	Skip Emptying - Allots (Dec)	£ 122.50	£ 24.50	£ 147.00	4134	£ 203.67	DD
21/0403	Scottish Power	Electricity - Parish office (01/12/21-31/12/21)	£ 57.14	£ 2.86	£ 60.00	4137		DD
21/0404	Crown Gas	Gas - Pavilion (01/12/21-31/12/21)	£ 93.80	£ 4.69	£ 98.49	4812		DD
21/0405	British Gas	Electric supply Pavilion (01/12/21-31/12/21)	£ 83.70	£ 4.18	£ 87.88	4806		DD
21/0406	Puzzle Technology Ltd (Antechs)	IT Support maintenance & Backup - Jan	£ 105.00	£ 21.00	£ 126.00	4142		DD
21/0407	Puzzle Technology Ltd	IT Support Licences - Jan	£ 56.80	£ 11.36	£ 68.16	4142		DD
21/0408	Virginmedia	Fibre Broadband Office - Jan	£ 45.00	£ 9.00	£ 54.00	4105		DD
21/0409	Telefonica UK Ltd (O2)	Monthly Mobile Subscription	£ 12.00	£ 2.40	£ 14.40	4105		DD
21/0410	NEST	Pension payments December 2021 (Paymt due Jan)	£ 1,002.40	£ -	£ 1,002.40	526		DD
21/0411	HM Rev & Customs	Mth 9 PAYE	£ 845.00	£ -	£ 845.00	525		
21/0412	HM Rev & Customs	Mth 9 Nat. Emp'ee NI Contribution	£ 512.69	£ -	£ 512.69	525		
21/0413	HM Rev & Customs	Mth 9 Nat. Emp'ler NI Contribution	£ 614.43	£ -	£ 614.43	525	£1,972.12	FP
21/0414	I Nicholls	January Salary	Salary	.	Salary	4002		FP
21/0415	S Cowie	January Salary	Salary		Salary	4001		FP
21/0416	C Callen	January Salary	Salary		Salary	4000		FP
21/0417	J Fitzgerald	January Salary	Salary		Salary	4003		FP
21/0418	K Small	January Salary	Salary		Salary	4004		FP
21/0419	S McConville	January Salary	Salary		Salary	4004		FP
	TOTAL SALARIES		£ 5,599.11	£ -	£ 5,599.11			
21/0420	J Fitzgerald	December Mileage 116 miles @ 60.1p	£ 69.72	£ -	£ 69.72	4107		FP
21/0421	J Fitzgerald	Expenses - ratchet for speed ramps	£ 20.83	£ 4.17	£ 25.00	4604		FP

21/0422	TeamViewer	Annual subscription for Remote Access - Clerk	£ 198.00	£ 39.60	£ 237.60	4142		Dcard
21/0423	TeamViewer	Annual subscription for Remote Access - Assist Clerk	£ 198.00	£ 39.60	£ 237.60	4142		DCard
21/0424	Barton Village Hall	Hire of Village Hall for meetings - November (x4)	£ 144.00	£ -	£ 144.00	4112		FP
21/0425	Society of Local Council Clerks	Clerk Annual Membership	£ 270.00	£ -	£ 270.00	4108		FP
21/0426	Fenland Leisure Products Ltd	Concrete Table Tennis Table & Safety Surface	£ 3,681.00	£ 736.20	£ 4,417.20	4654/362		FP
21/0427	MJ Granger Grounds Maintenance	Hedgecutting - Arnold Rec	£ 344.22	£ 68.84	£ 413.06	4652		FP
21/0428	D2D Distribution Ltd	November Newsletter distribution	£ 360.00	£ 72.00	£ 432.00	4124		7546
21/0429	Jempsons Tree Services	Works to tree in Burial Ground	£ 160.00	£ -	£ 160.00	4310		FP
21/0430	Nationwide Building Society	Transfer from 45DN Savings Account	£ 30,000.00		£30,000.00	n/a		45DN
21/0431	TSB	Transfer from Savings Account	£ 10,000.00	£ -	£10,000.00	n/a		TF
		TOTAL JANUARY 2022 PAYMENTS	£55,472.16	£1,068.85	£56,541.01			