

**BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD TUESDAY 07 November 2013**

Present:

Parish Councillors David Wood (Chairman), David Tamsitt (Vice Chairman), Val Steer, Caroline Ridgeway, Philip Housden and Ernie Mullett.

4 x residents, and Clerk to the Council, Amanda Sparkes

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Apologies for absence were received and accepted from KCC Cllr Michael Northey (at another council meeting), City Cllr Bill Oakey, parish cllr Liz Minter (annual leave), parish cllr Murray Simpson (family commitments), and parish cllr Andy McElroy (working away).
2. Declarations of interest – None.
3. Minutes of the last meeting held 03 October 2013
Cllr Minter after the last meeting had asked for an omission to Minute No 13. Village Clubs and Societies to now be inserted as follows:

Cllr Minter is to investigate how other villages have provided facilities for young people. She also wished to investigate further the provision of transport for young people to travel from Barham to boxing facilities in Aylesham.

With this addition, these were approved and accepted as a true record of the meeting, and the Chairman duly signed them.

4. A register of Cllrs' interests
The Chairman explained that a book to record all Cllrs interests would soon be created by the Clerk along with an electronic spreadsheet version. All Cllrs were asked to contact the Clerk with their list of interests. This should include all financial interests, and other items such as trustee positions, school governors, membership on any committees or organisations. If in doubt include it. The Clerk will upload the electronic version to the parish council website in due course.
5. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 20 May 2013
The Chairman apologised for the delay in presenting these Minutes, and advised they should be finalised to be received at the December parish council meeting.
7. **The meeting was adjourned for parishioners' questions and comments.**
A resident advised he had attended City Cllr Bill Oakey's surgery where Parish Cllr Minter was also present. He drew attention to a log cabin at Courtlands farm, built without permission. He had originally brought concerns to the parish council in May 2012 which he felt had not been acted upon. He was told the council would contact Canterbury City Council's enforcement team but the resident was subsequently told by them they had no record of an objection or knowledge of the development. At that time they investigated, and the applicant said the cabin was to be used for animals/storage/cottage style workshop. The resident commented that radiators and a bath are not needed for this purpose and he has revisited enforcement officers with recent photographs. Enforcement officers have now halted the development.
The Chairman recalled this issue, and confirmed the council had contacted enforcement at the time, when enforcement officers advised they did visit and at that earlier stage did not have an indication that the cabin would be habited.
Now that it is apparent that it is not for non-domestic purposes Barham Parish Council will write to enforcement officers and raise concerns about it. It was believed that Cllr Oakey has talked to David Symes at the city council since his surgery.
Enforcement case references ENF/12/00332 amd ENF/13/00108 refer.

8. Finance and General Purposes

The cheques totalling £1420.50 were authorised for payment.

Precept for 2014-2015

Cllr Wood explained that a date would be set for the Finance and General Purposes (F&GP) subcommittee to meet to discuss draft precept requirements. He asked all Cllrs to give consideration to precept funding requirements for 2014-2015 around their areas of responsibility, and let the Clerk know. The precept requirement will need to be notified to the city council in December so it was proposed by Cllr Tamsitt and seconded by Cllr Mullett, and RESOLVED that delegated authority if necessary be given to the finance subcommittee to determine and submit precept requirement for 2014-2015 by Canterbury City Council's deadline date. The F&GP meeting will be a public meeting and advertised, and all councillors, not just finance ones, are welcome to attend.

Concurrent grant 2014-2015

For the concurrent function grant under Recreation Grounds and Open Spaces, the parish council asked for £160 towards new signage – but Canterbury City Council have disallowed this as it is a new item, not a repair or maintenance.

This made the eligible application £13,776. The Clerk has looked up the city council's committee report going to the Rural Area Member Panel on 11 November and there are two options being presented, which will see Barham actually receive either £9097.79 or £8706.11. The shortfall will be discussed at the F&GP meeting and likely needed to be added to the precept.

Capital grant 2014-2015

The Clerk reported that she has looked up the city council's committee report going to the Rural Area Member Panel on 11 November 2013. The parish council had submitted an application for street lighting column replacements and it appears that this application's scoring falls within the city council's £20k budget and Barham parish council should receive a grant of £5880 in April 2014.

Other financial matters

NOTED that the new Clerk is now receiving the parish bank statements direct to her address. NOTED that the Clerk has appointed Kevin Funnell, qualified Internal Auditor to undertake six-monthly audits (one to be undertaken at year end) and NOTED that the he then undertook an interim inspection with the Clerk on 4 November 2013. This included:

- Inspection of the Annual Return to the external auditors
- Inspection of cashbook and payments
- Bank reconciliations
- Insurance
- VAT records and refunds
- Minutes
- Asset Register

The Clerk confirmed she had now received the Internal Auditor's report. Essentially the records are of a good standard and there are no areas of concern. It was RESOLVED that this report be received at the Finance subcommittee meeting and the minor recommendations and queries be discussed and resolved at that meeting, and reported back.

Referendum Principles - RECEIVED via KALC Brandon Lewis' response setting out Government's position on referendum principles. They have not yet decided whether referendum principles will apply this year. The Autumn Statement is due on 4 December, which is usually followed by the Finance Settlement/Report for Local Government, alongside other Ministerial Announcements. The letter says that if they did introduce referendum principles for Parish Councils, they would expect those principles will include a deminimis threshold (to be confirmed) which would exclude the majority of smaller councils from the requirement to hold a referendum.

9. Planning Matters

The parish council had no objection to the following tree works

1. Uppingdene House, Derringstone Hill
 - Reduce a Copper Beech, located to rear of the house, by 30%
 - Remove a Sycamore
 - Remove a Plum tree located on uphill boundary fence
 - Remove a conifer, located next to the Yew
 - Remove a dying Horse Chestnut
 - Re-coppice two Hazel stool
2. Coachmans Cottage, Valley Road
 - Reduce a Elder, Holly and Yew by 30% in height, located close to the house in the rear garden
3. Barham Primary School, Valley Road
 - Crown lift a field Maple to remove all low hanging branches over year 6 classroom, portacabin and neighbouring garden
 - Crown thin a Sycamore by no more than 40% to remove all crossing/rubbing limbs
4. Anton House, Rectory Lane
 - Remove a multi stem Cherry, located in the rear garden

The parish council had no objections to the following New applications

CA//13/01809/FUL – Sunny Downs, Out Elmstead Lane CT4 6HL

Removal of existing roof and proposed additional bedrooms to first floor with new pitched roof to residence. Single storey extension linked to house including day room, garage, gym and swimming pool – RECEIVED but subsequently WITHDRAWN

CA//13/01950/FUL & CA/13/1951/LB - Heaselands, South Barham Road

Proposed single-storey rear extension including internal and external works and the installation of a balcony at first-floor level

Notifications

CA//13/01391/FUL - Sparrow Court, Gravel Castle Rd, Barham

Demolition of existing house and detached garage and erection of replacement house and detached garage. GRANTED BY CCC

CA//13/0916/FUL – Helios House, The Street

Lowering of boundary wall to improve egress REFUSED BY CCC

CA//13/01398/FUL – The Old Post Office, Valley Road

Change of use from mixed residential and retail/commercial to fully residential use incorporating minor alterations and demolition with rear extension WITHDRAWN

Other Planning matters

The Chapel

Michael and Catherine Cox attended Cllr Oakey's surgery to advise they have had planning permission refused to convert the old Methodist chapel into a home. The Vicar wrote in support of change of use – Methodists now have one service a month in St John's. Apparently, Canterbury City Council's objection is that the building should have been offered up for sale for commercial use. Cllrs believe the building was on the market from 2009. The Nailbourne Community store looked very seriously at the building as a replacement post office when the old post office was being shut. The Chapel however was unsuitable because access for the less able was very difficult, walking up hill; there is no parking; and the existence of covenants preventing the sale of alcohol (which was felt prohibitive for a community store hoping to expand). The chapel has therefore been empty since 2009 and is in danger of falling into further disrepair. The parish council commented that it was a shame the application had been refused and the future of the building put at risk. However as the

application has been refused the council cannot do a letter of support or objection – only the applicant can either appeal or potentially reapply with a new scheme.

10. Highways

i) Streetlighting – RECEIVED the report of the meeting held on 10 October between KCC Street lighting and Enterprise managers with the parish council Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Clerk. Barham parish council are working to be able to hand over the total responsibility of the street lights in the village to the county council. At present, their maintenance contract with Ringway expired on 30 September 2013 and the energy bills for an unmetered supply with EDF Energy are far in excess of the concurrent grant received. Before KCC KHS agree to take over the columns they need to look at the condition of the columns and ensure that Barham parish council brings each column as necessary up to a suitable standard to hand over. There will be costs for any future maintenance contract offered.

As the Ringway maintenance contract has expired with no hope of renewal the Chairman and Vice-Chairman discussed a maintenance contract with Amey at the meeting and everyone present felt that the best way was to progress this with Amey as to the end of the current financial year on a one-off spot arrangement contract at £45.72 for each one-off call out excluding any replacement parts required, and to then negotiate a new maintenance contract from 1 April 2014 for a one-year period for 2014-2015 with Amey

The inspection of all 55-60 columns in Barham's inventory, is hoped to be undertaken before Christmas. Any columns that are found to be unsafe will be immediately cut down. The cost for this inspection report is £12 per column. The Parish Council would need to pay for any replacements.

KCC also urge the parish council to consider other options such as replacement of lantern / Conversion to LED lights – this would save energy costs by 61% - Part night lighting where lights go on at dusk until midnight and then back on at 5am for a while. The five hour night time break would mean energy significant savings.

RESOLVED that this report be moved to the F&GP meeting to look at actions and the way forward, and the necessary precept provision for street lighting in the future.

ii) Crookenden Way salt bin – The Clerk explained Kent Highways offered to drop a one tonne bag of salt if the parish council provides salt bins at Crookenden Way. However she explained to an officer that there is nowhere to store a bag and that other salt bins in the parish are filled by Kent Highways and has asked that new bins be added to the existing schedule. Their reply is awaited.

iii) Highways concerns around the Gravel Castle/Church Lane crossroads

The Chairman explained he had met KCC Cllr Michael Northey regarding highways concerns around the Gravel Castle/Church Lane crossroads. There have been several recent accidents with six instances of a vehicle ending up in a resident's garden. KCC Cllr Northey felt signage changes, priority changes, or a reversal of the one way system were all potential options and asked Kent Highways to look. Kent Highways recommendation is that they are not able to reverse the system due to egress at Rabbit Hole needing a lot of work and the cost would be prohibitive. They did however recommend better signs and 'slow' on the road. KCC Cllr Northey has kindly agreed to pay for this work from his Member Highway fund, the cost is in the region of £5k. The parish council asked to record thanks to Cllr Northey for this support and assistance.

iv) Double Yellow lines outside the houses opposite the Duke of Cumberland

The Clerk had been contacted by the city council about a proposal for double yellow lines here. A previous proposal two years ago had not been voted for by Members, but a resident has urged a review of this decision on safety grounds. KCC Cllr Northey was supportive of this suggestion prior to the meeting, and Parish Cllr Minter had also given written support. All Cllrs at the meeting were happy to support the suggestion and ask that the city council

review this request asap. The road is extremely narrow there and with access to the pub opposite it is important that part of the road is kept free for turning and passing traffic.

v) Drains – Cllr Ridgeway advised that the drains outside the old post office have been cleared and did not flood in heavy recent rains. However Cllrs discussed other areas that had flooded and Cllr Howsden agreed to give full details to the Clerk to onwardly report.

vi) Branch in road on Rabbit Hill Road – Cllr Mullett advised that a branch has still not been cleared. A resident at the meeting kindly agreed to try and deal with this.

vii) The Clerk has circulated Kent Highways annual survey re satisfaction with the condition of roads, pavements and street lighting, plus issues relating to highway safety, and levels of congestion. Cllrs felt that flooding concerns should be included, and a comment about delays in filling in potholes is disappointing, and the fact that the repair gets washed out again so quickly. All Cllrs were asked to email the Clerk with any other observations or comments. The Clerk and Chairman agreed to complete the survey.

viii) A resident commented that traffic through the village 'on rat runs' has increased over the last five years – this includes HGVs. The Chairman commented that this is not due to a specific development just an overall increase in traffic.

11. Open Spaces

NOTED that the Clerk has asked Serco to undertake the annual inspections of the play areas at Derrington Green and Brickfield Road. She will ring the contact to make sure this is in hand.

12. Police & Ambulance

The Chairman advised that the current PCSO Elaine Cannadine is staying in post, but for the three villages she covers, a new PCSO Ben Headley-Smith has also been recruited to assist.

13. Publicity & Communications including website

The Chairman advised that the parish council has a desire to improve communications with residents – and this will be looked at under precept provision at the F&GP meeting.

14. Village hall

The Chairman advised that the Heritage Lottery decision is still awaited.

15. To receive Clerk report including correspondence

CORRESPONDENCE

- (a) Canterbury and District's Neighbourhood Watch autumn copy of the Association's electronic Newsletter, "Watching Brief"
- (b) KALC meeting Minutes
- (c) Action with Communities in Rural Kent electronic newsletter

Publication and supply of the revised Electoral register

NOTED The revised register is normally published on the 1 December every year. This year the Government has delayed the publication of the register due to the start of Individual Electoral Registration (IER) in 2014. Canterbury City Council have just started the annual canvass and the revised register will be published on 17 February 2014. Copies of the revised register will therefore not be available until after this date.

Trees with a tree preservation order in Barham

At the October parish council meeting the Clerk was asked to find out which trees had a TPO on them in Barham. She was advised of the following:

<u>TPO NO</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
TPO No 1, 1951	Barham Court, Barham
TPO No 1, 1953	Broome park/Walderchain Wood, Barham
TPO No 5, 1982	Old House, The Street, Barham
TPO No 6, 1985	South Barham Farmhouse, South Barham Road, Barham
TPO No 14, 1989	Mill Field Shaw, Barham
TPO No 21, 1990	Hoath Wood, Barham
TPO No 9, 1991	Valley Road, Barham
TPO No 1, 1992	Elham Valley Railway Line, Barham
TPO No 6, 1994	White Cliffs, Valley Road, Barham (Now "Millers Cottage")

The Chairman advised that in addition to TPOs all trees in conservation areas are 'protected'. There are five conservation areas in Barham – Broome Park, Out Elmstead, Derringstone, the railway line and Barham main village. The Clerk agreed to bring an information sheet about special controls for trees in conservation areas.

Electoral Review of Canterbury City Council

Earlier this year, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) concluded the first stage of the Electoral Review of Canterbury City Council and announced that, following the next election in May 2015, there should be 38 councillors elected to represent the council (a reduction from the current 50). The next stage of the review will be to create a new pattern of Wards that reflects the council size from 2015. The Clerk attended a meeting at The Guildhall on 21 October 2013 and her separate report had been circulated. Further details available at <http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/south-east/kent/canterbury-fer>

LGBCE are independent of Government and political parties. Their recommendations from this review will be implemented by Parliament. The aim is to get a pattern of wards that has an equal number of electorate per councillor. LGBCE are looking at this with the current electoral register numbers plus a five-year forecast to 2019 (in time for the next election). Canterbury City Council did not pass a single member wards resolution – so there can be a mixed pattern of wards in the future with mix of either single, two or three member wards. These will be measured against the commission's criteria.

This consultation runs to 10 December 2013. LGBCE will then publish draft recommendations 11 March 2014. Consultation on those draft recommendations to 20 May 2014. LGBCE to then publish final recommendations which get implemented by an Order in the Houses of Parliament. Crucially, these final recommendations cannot be changed by anyone. Parliament cannot amend recommendations – they can choose to accept them in full or refuse them.

A further public meeting concerning the reduction in Cllrs is to be held on the 12th November 2013 @ 10.00 in the Kent and Canterbury Club Old Dover Road, Canterbury concerning the reduction in the number of City Councillors. The meeting will be chaired by Professor Church. Anyone interested is welcome to attend.

East Kent Housing estate inspection

East Kent Housing will be carrying out the Barham Formal Estate Inspection on 12 November 2013 starting at 14:00 from the far end of The Grove. Estate inspections are useful for any issues or concerns on the estate to be identified and discussed by all those involved in the estate; they also are important for residents to see the various agencies and representatives working together. Cllr Wood as Chairman agreed to attend the inspection and invited any other interested Cllrs to also attend.

Standing for Election in the UK

The Electoral Commission is consulting on "Standing for Election in the UK" at http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/162659/Standing-for-election-consultation-paper.pdf This is an opportunity to comment on how the rules around standing for election can be better standardised and the impact this could have on simplifying the system. KALC will draft a response, to include the motion on the eligibility requirements to stand for election. The consultation also provides an opportunity to take forward the motion, if passed at their AGM next month, on casual vacancies. That motion calls on Government to change legislation to require 10% (ten percent) of the Parish Electorate to sign a petition to call an election to fill a casual Parish Councillor vacancy (in place of the current requirement of 10).

Temporary Road Closure – Derringstone Street – 11 November 2013 - 2 weeks

NOTED partial closure of Derringstone Street, Barham from 11 November 2013 for up to 2 weeks. Derringstone Street will be closed in the vicinity of the junction with Railway Hill. Access will remain from Valley Road, but there will be no through access. The alternative route is via Railway Hill, Green Hills and Valley Road. The closure is to allow sewer repair works to be carried out by Clancy Docwra, working with Southern Water. Due to the nature of these works, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside the working hours

Closed Burial Grounds

At the October 2013 parish council meeting the Clerk explained that a burial ground becomes "closed" when it is full and no more burials may take place. Without being able to sell plots or undertake burials churches are then not able to have an income stream to cover maintenance and other associated costs. The Chairman asked the Clerk to research how and if the parish council may hand over responsibility for the parish's closed burial ground to the local authority. The Clerk has made enquiries with the burial grounds officer at Canterbury City Council who has advised she needs to wait for their legal department to come back to her with a response. This is awaited.

Meeting about forming a Community Rail Partnership

Fewer people have been using rural stations in East Kent while numbers travelling by rail nationally have been rising year-by-year. The decline dates from 2009, when high speed trains were introduced. Cllrs are invited to a meeting to gather support for setting up a Community Rail Partnership that will act to halt the decline of rural stations and help the railways do more to offer better access to work, leisure, shopping and education in the surrounding rural areas. The lead speaker will be Nigel Whitburn, from the award-winning Kent Community Rail Partnership (CRP) active in Medway and Sheerness. The meeting is hosted by campaigning group "Railfuture" at 2pm on Saturday 16 November 2013 in the Friends Meeting House, 6 The Friars, Canterbury, CT1 2AS. Community Rail Partnerships work as a bridge between local communities and the rail operator, involving local people in dialogue with rail managers and often bring together a wide range of interests along the line to initiate projects that make rail services more attractive to residents and visitors alike. Some partnerships have brought in external funding and helped achieve increases in use of rail through improved services, better station facilities and innovative marketing. Their work includes improving bus links to stations, developing walking and cycling routes, bringing station buildings back to life, art and education projects and organising special events which promote the railway and its relevance to the community.

Find out more: <http://www.trains4deal.com/promote-our-line.html>

Chris Fribbins and Ian Killbery, chris.fribbins@railfuture.org.uk ian.killbery@railfuture.org.uk
Joint Secretaries, Railfuture Kent Division. Website: www.railfuture.org.uk

Lord Mayor's Christmas Hampers

The Clerk had been contacted by city Cllr Oakey asking if the parish council would like to nominate a needy or elderly person to receive a Lord Mayor's Christmas Hamper. Last year three Barham residents received one. The Chairman agreed to ask the previous Chairman who had received a hamper last year and determine 2-3 nominations to give to Cllr Oakey. Some councillors commented however that it may

be better to suggest a hamper gets donated to an institution instead rather than an individual.

A draft Statement of principles on dealing with a concern or complaint

A second draft document had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk will make further amends and bring a third draft to the F&GP meeting. This document is now proposed as a front sheet with the robust full complaint processes as an adopted policy available if ever required.

The front sheet simple to understand and use document will also include a pro-forma reply.

Parish councils' Powers as set out in the Local Government Act 1972

RECEIVED a copy of a parish council's Powers as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 – the Clerk explained this was as a reminder to all Cllrs and would also form part of the Cllr Information Pack being prepared as an ongoing piece of work and to be presented in future

A Parish Council "Compact"

The Clerk had drafted this document – A Compact is an informal agreement setting out what Cllrs may expect from the parish council and what the parish council may expect from a Parish Cllr. It was RESOLVED that this would be discussed at the F&GP meeting and progressed.

Future meetings: Thursday 7 November, 5 December 2013, No meeting in January, 6 February, 6 March, 3 April, 1 May, 5 June, 3 July, No meeting in August, 4 September, 2 October, 6 November, 4 December 2014 – all commencing 7.30pm in Barham Village Hall

The dates above may change if hall works goes ahead. A potential alternative venue would be Barham Church.

A date for the Annual Parish Meeting in 2014 is dependent on hall availability. It has to be between 1 March and 30 June – the Chairman will ideally get a free date for April 2014.