

BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - HELD THURSDAY 01 JUNE 2017

Present: Parish Councillors David Wood (Chairman), David Tamsitt, Stephanie Hollowday, Ernie Mullett, Liz Minter, John Brooks, Patti Earl and Susie Duke (co-opted at the meeting)

1 resident, Reverend Stefan Thomas (for part of the meeting) and Canterbury City Cllr Simon Cook (for part of the meeting), and Clerk to the Council, Amanda Sparkes.

1. The Chairman's opening remarks and apologies for absence.

Cllr Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Parish Cllr Sarah Goulden (leave) and Kent County Cllr Michael Northey (who has been re-elected at the KCC Elections in May 2017 for another 4-year term).

2. Vacancy on the council –

The Chairman explained that a resident Susie Duke had put herself forward for the vacancy. Susie has lived in Derrington Downs for 16 years, she has two children and has been an assistant teacher at Barham Primary School for 9 years. Cllr Tamsitt proposed, Cllr Hollowday seconded and all councillors were in favour that Susie be co-opted to fill the vacancy on the council. Susie then duly signed the declaration of acceptance of office form. The Clerk explained that she will give her a Declaration of Pecuniary Interests form to complete and return to CCC for publication.

3. Declarations of Interests – Cllr Minter declared a new interest in the parish – she and her husband have purchased a plot of land within the Helios House site in The Street, Barham, CT4 6NZ. Cllr Minter explained that there is a valid full planning permission for a new property on the site, but that she and her husband will be looking to have that modified in due course. The Clerk will give Cllr Minter a Declaration of Pecuniary Interests form to complete with the new information, and for Cllr Minter to then return this to the CCC Monitoring Officer direct.

4. Minutes of the last meeting - The Minutes of the last meeting held on 04 May 2017 were approved and accepted as a true record of the meeting, and the Chairman duly signed them.

5. Adjournment for parishioners' questions and comments. There were no questions so the meeting continued.

6. Reverend Stefan Thomas

Reverend Thomas explained that he is the new parish priest, covering as before the areas of Kingston, Barham, Bishopsbourne, Womenswold and now also Adisham which has been added to the benefice also. He commented that he is very happy to be rooted in a community again, now living in the Barham rectory. He explained he exists not just for church-goers but is happy to assist all residents. His details are on the Barham Downs Church website.

7. City Cllr Simon Cook report – Cllr Cook advised he had little to report. The city council has held its AGM and he is still the elected Leader of the Council. There is a new Mayor – Cllr Rosemary Doyle, and Cllr Colin Spooner is the Sheriff for the year.

Cllr Cook advised that he is to attend a meeting with the Chief Inspector for Canterbury and Dover to discuss lorry parking on slip roads.

CCC continues to look at the possible moving of refuse collection in-house with neighbouring districts. He also offered to attend the Barham councillor surgery on 17 June 2017 if he can.

In answer to a question from Cllr Minter, about the problem of cars in the pedestrianised areas of Canterbury between 10am – 4pm especially around the cathedral roads, potentially posing a threat hazard, Cllr Cook confirmed that the control of vehicles is complicated – vehicles are allowed everywhere outside of the 10-4 time restriction, but some vehicles are allowed entry during the timed restriction such as the Securicor vans. For non-authorised vehicles, CCC enforcement officers are not able to do anything unless the vehicle is stopped – and they do not have powers to actually stop them. Any change to the access arrangements or signage would be down to Kent County Council as the highways authority.

Cllr Wood mentioned that a resident had attended a recent planning meeting to speak on an application but it was 10.30pm before it was heard – can speakers go first? Cllr Cook explained that most

applications have booked speakers. Any application with four or more objectors has to go to committee so the meeting workload is heavy. CCC have more applications at the committee than most districts in Kent, plus they allow generous peaking arrangements by comparison with up to 3 allowed for and 3 allowed to speak against.

Cllr Wood also commented that a recent large application had been granted unanimously by the committee despite the officer recommendation for refusal and the granting going against CCC own policies.

8. Finance – The cheques were authorised and signed.

Other financial matters

RECEIVED the bank reconciliation and bank statements to April 2017 and RESOLVED the signature of a councillor other than the Chairman thereon.

NOTED that the Clerk has added the upgraded street lights, and new speedwatch equipment to the parish council's insurance schedule and the Fixed Asset Register. The insurance company have not charged any additional premium although there will be an uplift in premium at renewal.

NOTED that on 20 May 2017, the Clerk completed the online Monitoring Form for the £300 KCC grant towards the Queen's birthday events on 12 June 2016 – form ref. AF1721136 (Total spent was £751.78)

Annual Return year ending 31 March 2017

NOTED that the Clerk returned the signed form and all accompanying documents to PKF Littlejohn by recorded delivery after the last parish council meeting.

NOTED the Chairman has made arrangements for the exercise of public rights to inspect the accounts and a template completed by the Clerk is now posted on the parish council noticeboards until 14 July 2017. The Clerk has also posted this on the parish council website with the Sections 1 2 and 3 of the Annual Return for information to residents. (NOTED that the subsequent signed report returned by PKF Littlejohn with the Annual Return must be published on the parish council website by 30 September 2017)

Request for a donation from Barham Church to resurface the Church path

Cllr John Brooks explained this item refers to the path through the church yard - used by the public. Two quotations have been received for £4,700 and £4,100. Cllr Brooks explained that the PCC has also agreed to edge the path with concrete to make it more long lasting and this will add to the costs – a revised quotation is now £7,000.

As the ratio of general public to church users is about 4:1 the parish council is being asked to consider a donation of £3,000. Cllr Wood asked if the Church has considered any other grant options? He explained that he had sent some grant ideas to a church warden and felt that it was easier to get a grant for a capital item like this project, rather than for a revenue item. He would like the Church to explore other grant options first.

Cllr Minter endorsed this, saying that there are lots of charitable trusts that will bridge gaps in funding once other funding is in place. Cllr Wood and Cllr Brooks will meet to discuss options and the request may come back to a future meeting should this be required.

9. Village Survey

Further to the working group meeting on 15 May 2017, Action Plans for both Young People Action; and Action Plan for the Village were circulated to councillors. Cllr Earl proposed, and Cllr Minter seconded and it was RESOLVED that these latest Action Plans be uploaded to the website, to act as feedback to residents. The Clerk will send some text and a web link to Cllr Hollowday and she will publish a link to this on Facebook.

Cllr Wood explained that he will talk about the Action Plan at the annual meeting and if there is anything in particular a councillor wants mentioned then they should advise him.

10. Old Phone Box outside Bell Cottage, Valley Road

At the March 2017 parish council meeting, Cllrs resolved to try and sell the old phone box (and sell it as it is rather than refurbish it.) There has been some interest and one low bid. Research has shown that the value should be £750 plus and up to £1500 as it is a popular K6 variety and with most of its original glass. Cllr Earl commented that it would need specialist lifting gear to remove it from its base – Cllr Wood commented that to do so would make it instantly vulnerable. The Clerk will reply to the bidder and ask if they wish to have a first refusal to increase their offer. If not the parish council may consider selling it on

EBay. Cllr Tamsitt explained that there is a demolition and salvage company at Manston and he offered to make enquiries and let the Clerk know the outcome.

11. Facebook

Cllr Hollowday advised that there was little chat this month. She will upload notifications as appropriate for the action plans and surgery and annual electors meeting.

12. Saturday Morning Surgeries

Saturday morning Councillor surgeries will run from 11.30am to 1pm in the committee room of the village hall for a trial period of 3 months – in addition to the Clerk attending a Coffee Stop once a month. Cllr Wood and Cllr Brooks manned the first one on 15 April 2017. No-one attended. On 20 May, Cllr Minter and Cllr Mullett manned it and no-one came. The final date in the trial is 17 June which Cllr Hollowday and Cllr Duke offered to man.

13. Annual Parish Meeting

NOTED the Annual Meeting for the Electors is now booked for 21 June 2017 in the main hall, from 7.30pm with Guest Speakers Mr and Mrs Simpson from Barham Vineyards.

14. Street lighting

NOTED that there will be a payment from CCC made to the parish council for the annual fixed sum of £2700 for the street light maintenance (separate and additional to the concurrent function grant payment)

Street lighting upgrade

NOTED that as resolved at the April 2017 parish council meeting to go ahead with the final upgrade of all the remaining lights to LED lanterns, the Clerk placed the order for this work on 7 April 2017. The parts are in hand and work is scheduled to start within two weeks.

OPTION TO FURTHER SAVE ENERGY

Cllrs considered further street lighting improvements to 'dim' lanterns and save further energy costs – prices are being determined, but probably in the region of £40 per driver per lantern. Further information had been circulated, and the parish council can have the option to adjust the dimming and the timings of the dimming. Early trial figures on savings are extremely good. All councillors were in favour of opting in for this, at a cost of approximately £2,400. The Clerk will speak to the contractor.

New electricity/energy supply fixed term contract

The Clerk has been trying to negotiate better rates with the current supplier now that the bulk of the lights have been upgraded to LED lanterns – and also get an alternative supplier's quotation. This is now going to go on hold in view of the decision above – which should alter the charging regime from unmetered to actual usage.

15. Highways

Resident's suggestion for a Bus shelter for Derrington Hill - A bus shelter on Derrington Hill will initially be subject to highways permission to site one there. A KHS officer should be asked to visit the area with Cllr Tamsitt and the Clerk to look at options – the steward for Barham is believed to still be on long-term sick leave. The Clerk will ask if another highways officer can be asked for a site visit instead.

C/wd: Flashing MPH signs Valley Road Barham - It is thought that the speedwatch group and resulting statistics will strengthen the case for a flashing sign. Survey responses show strong support for one or more of these. The item is expensive though and proper budget consideration will be necessary to progress it.

C/fwd: KCC devolution of the grass cutting of highways verges/hedges to Barham Parish Council

KCC are offering to devolve hedge cutting and grass cutting of highways verges to parishes, which would come with a small devolved financial sum to parishes to undertake this. There is no commitment to go ahead nor to keep the responsibility for ever. Maps and information enabled the parish council's contractor to give a quote for a potential takeover. The Clerk contacted KCC but they are now mid-year in their award to contractors and the earliest Barham could now partake would be 1 April 2018. Apparently interest has been low with only 3 parishes showing interest. Also prices for the urban and rural cuts are going to change and are not yet known. The Clerk will deal with this when able.

Wooden tubs at top of Derrington Hill

Cllrs Wood and Tamsitt met the Fifth Trust representative for a site meeting on 28 April 2017. The two tubs on Derrington Hill are now in situ. However they make little impact where they are positioned and are not located as per the verbal agreement. Cllrs Wood, Tamsitt and Minter will speak to the Fifth Trust and ask

that they be moved to the Crookenden Place and Fox Way locations instead. The Clerk reminded Cllrs of the need for watering volunteers being found for those locations.

Gateway signage

The Clerk had prepared a risk assessment for the Derringstone tubs which had been circulated to councillors but this will now be filed pending their move of location. Linked to this, the Clerk will add suggestion of “welcome to Barham Village/Please drive slowly” type signage to the next agenda – to go on separate poles at the gateway markers to the village at the top of Derringstone Hill (and subject to Kent Highways giving a licence for these)

Speedwatch

The speedwatch equipment delivery has now been received. More volunteers are still welcomed and Cllr Wood will mention this at the annual electors meeting. Initially three volunteers are recommended on sessions – this will drop to two when they become experienced – one records speed and time, one records first half of vehicle index, and the third records the second half of the vehicle index and make and colour. The Clerk has prepared a pack and forms for the ‘go live’ and hi-viz jackets are on order. The Clerk has had seven locations approved by Kent Police. More can be requested at any time online. Cllr Wood expressed a concern about the weight of the equipment, which he is still storing. He agreed to undertake an initial speedwatch session with two volunteers and get the rota rolling – and with a view to doing this prior to the annual electors meeting in order to report back about it. Cllr Hollowday will advertise the initiative on Facebook.

Bollards at The Causeway

At the April 2017 there was discussion about the bollards at either end of The Causeway that are not disabled friendly – there is particular difficulty for wheelchairs at the Railway Hill end. A small wheelchair can negotiate through okay but it is tight on the riverbed side. Are the bollards needed – modern cars cannot negotiate here nowadays anyway? A bollard could be removed at one end only, but that could cause problems if a vehicle entered and had to reverse. Cllr Northey suggested a request to highways to move them nearer to the road edge to enable wheelchair access should be done to the relevant KCC councillor once the May elections establish who that will be. The parish council resolved that this request be submitted to Cllr Northey now, as he has been re-elected.

16. Open Spaces

NOTED that the Clerk has requested the annual play area inspections for Brickfield Rec and Valley Road play areas – and these will be carried out sometime during July 2017.

New play equipment quotes

Quotations for various play equipment offerings, and outdoor gym package have been obtained. Cllrs resolved to carry out publicity and an informal vote with residents for which item would be favourite at the School fete on Saturday 1 July 2017. Cllr Wood offered to book a stall, Cllr Mullett offered a gazebo and Cllrs Mullett, Minter, Hollowday and the Clerk will man the stall for the event.

New benches

The Clerk explained that there is the possibility of two benches at The Fifth Trust at £115 plus VAT each. The parish council discussed these and felt they could make use of them both, and discussed three possible sites – The Shrubbery as a replacement for the old one there; the back of the village green where another bench did exist but was removed recently as it was dangerous; and the recreation ground by the allotments/junior swings where another old bench was removed as rotten.

The Clerk will speak to the Fifth Trust about delivery of them or collection by Cllrs Wood and Mullett. Cllr Mullett kindly agreed to arrange the installation of them. As explained at the last (May) meeting, Mrs Callan may donate a bench – Cllr Minter offered to try and contact the crematorium for details of whether they have any surplus benches.

Dogs at recreation ground

At the last meeting (May 2017) the Clerk was asked to arrange signage to dog walkers, at both entrances, to pick up after their dog as the ground is used for sheep grazing and dog mess is dangerous for sheep. The Clerk and Cllr Mullett have measured up. The text needs ratifying – and this will be done by email after the meeting and the orders placed.

Cllr Earl reminded everyone of the dog ban on the land imposed some years ago by CCC at the recreation ground and village green. Cllr Wood confirmed that the Clerk has (literally) been trying for years to get this ban reconsidered and lifted. The Clerk said she had chased again last month with a CCC officer, but would chase again re the situation with the dog bans/ getting the dog bans from certain land areas lifted with CCC.

The councillors need to look at the future uses of the Brickfield recreation ground in the context of the village survey results etc. Cllr Hollowday had, at the Chairman's request, sent her written proposal to the Chairman and he apologised for not sending it on to councillors for consideration. The Clerk will ensure it is on the next meeting agenda for discussion.

Allotments at Brickfield Recreation Ground

There is planning approval on CA/16/01292/FUL and BAA signed a seven year tenancy agreement from November 2016. The Chairman dealt with the turning on of the water supply and read the meter – he will read it again and advise the Clerk. Cllr Mullett will also show the Chairman where the tennis court second meter is too. Periodic meter readings will continue.

The Clerk was asked to contact the Water Company and advise them of the allotment site now in operation and that the water supply is now in use, and ask them to check the billing frequency and perhaps bill more frequently in future.

The Clerk and Cllr Mullett have completed a risk assessment now that the site is operational, which had been circulated. Actions arising from this:

- to consider signage to advise that the site is an allotment garden, who to contact for enquiries, and rules to respect the area, etc – wording to be approved with the BAA committee before being made up.
- Barham Parish Council to ask that the BAA undertake their own risk assessment for the site too;
- the parish council to continue to periodically read the water meter
- the parish council add that a cursory visual inspection of the allotment area also be done if the parish council is at the adjacent play area to undertake a periodic play area inspection.

Stones are being found by the parish council's contractor in the vicinity of the perimeter of the site, and which have not been a problem before. It is considered that they might be from plot holders as they are turning their plots over and removing them. However the stones are potentially dangerous and could cause damage to the contractor's equipment, so the Clerk will contact the BAA Chairman and advise.

Electricity supply to the village green

The Clerk is progressing the resident suggestion that the parish council arrange a lockable cabinet with an electricity supply to the village green – this could be really useful for events etc. The Clerk has completed an application for a quote to UKPN. The Clerk and Chairman will hopefully meet an engineer to discuss options.

Flood improvements/management for vulnerable areas of the village

Cllr Wood explained there is now a replacement flood warden for The Street – resident Mike Evans, of Dane Cottage, who will take over from John Reynolds. The Chairman will give the Clerk his contact details for the Flood Plan document to be updated.

Actions from arboriculture survey – Replacement/New trees on parish council land

Trees needing attention have conservation area permission until 2018 from the arboriculture survey undertaken previously. Trees removed from the old cricket field or the village green will need to be replaced with the same / similar species in roughly the same location as they are in a conservation area.

Rabbit Hole and the old cricket field trees: Cfd: The Men of Trees will give new trees for the cricket field - as replacements in October/November for planting (as the best time to get established) – and with rabbit proof guards. For species to request as replacements, Cllrs Wood and Mullett will speak to Cllr Goulden.

Cllr Tamsitt commented that the village is looking very attractive now with all the new trees that have been provided.

17. Footpaths

The parish council has talked again recently to try again to find a solution for a safe footpath for pedestrians from Barham to Kingston. A previous attempt's position statement of 2012 has been previously circulated to all councillors. After the April meeting, Cllr Mullett spoke to the Goddard family as landowners of part of the

stretch - they said they would not approve a path on their land. C/fwd: For the field with horses in it, Cllr Mullett offered to try and speak to the other landowner informally in the first instance.

Cllr Minter advised that Christine and Neil Bacon of the black weather boarded cottage behind the Duke of Cumberland, have, at their own expense, replaced stiles to access the public footpath behind their property, and are to be commended for this action.

18. External organisations

Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator

The volunteer resident Jane Graham is now set up and her details will be promoted at the annual electors meeting. Cllr Hollowday will also publish her details on Facebook to try and get as many residents as possible to sign up to the relevant alert emails.

Match-funding of parking signs with the school - no update as yet from the school nor governing body.

AONB review

The Kent Downs AONB Unit are to undertake a review of the Kent Downs area of outstanding natural beauty – the first review for 20 years. They are holding a workshop on 19 June 2017. The Clerk will speak to Cllr Wood and Cllr Tamsitt and one of them will attend and report back.

Canterbury City Council to carry out a Community Governance Review

Canterbury City Council is to carry out a Community Governance Review which is the opportunity to look at whether the current parish council arrangements are working in the best possible way. The review could decide to change current parish boundaries, change the number of parish councillors or to merge, abolish or create new parish or town councils. More information on the process will be published on the CCC website by mid June. The review is due to formally start in July and CCC is currently engaging with key stakeholders to inform the first stage of consultation. All parish council chairs and clerks have been invited to a meeting on 26 June in the Guildhall in Canterbury. The Clerk will attend and report back.

Cllr Wood thought there were two anomalies to the current parish boundary to consider – one, the field on the A2 behind the parking layby on the right hand side towards Dover, by the airstrip, and secondly, the finger of land near Kingston digging in to Barham. Any properties within these areas may have a view though.

19. Clerk report – the Clerk report had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. Most items are incorporated elsewhere in the Minutes.

Write-up of the KCC Highways and Transportation Tracker Survey.

In September - November 2016, KCC Highways and Transportation promoted completion of their Tracker Survey. See the Report at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/transport-and-highways-policies/highways-transportation-and-waste-tracker-survey-report>

Clerk at Coffee Stop - The Clerk usually attends a Coffee Stop session on the third/fourth Tuesday of each month to provide a surgery between 10.30 and 11.30.

20. Planning

New planning applications:
- CA/17/00809/FUL - Arter Brothers, Eagle Motor Works, Old Dover Road Proposed 10 two-storey dwellings following demolition of existing commercial buildings. TO NOTE Barham Parish Council comments in support of this application (as agreed at the 04 May parish council meeting) were uploaded to the CCC planning portal on 9 May 2017 - CA/17/01133/FUL - Derringstone Hill Farm, Derringstone Hill, Barham, CT4 6QD Proposed conversion of existing barn to single-storey dwelling.
Notifications CA/17/00607/FUL – Silver Birches, The Grove Proposed single storey rear extension following demolition of existing extension. GRANTED by CCC
CA/17/00507/FUL and CA/17/00508/LB – The Red House, Old Valley Road - Proposed conversion and extension of garage to living accommodation and log store. GRANTED by CCC

Elham Valley Caravan Park – Ongoing concerns re operation and latest incidents

The parish council continue to keep a watching brief on the caravan site in Elham. Some of the caravans have now moved on.

Other planning matters

Cllr Wood commented that it would be a useful to have a further member on the planning sub committee of councillors, especially as work goes on between meetings and there is the need for site meetings when an application may be contentious – currently this includes Cllrs Tamsitt, Brooks, Minter and Mullett. Cllr Earl volunteered but Cllr Wood thanked her for offering and suggested Cllr Hollowday may be better suited to the role.

21. Cllr items – None this month

22. STAFFING MATTERS - LGPS – pension for the Clerk

The parish council has a staging date of 1 July 2017 for auto-enrolment purposes. Barham Parish Council has joined the Local Government Pension Fund with effect from 1 April 2017 so is compliant. The Clerk will complete the compliance to the pension regulator in July when able.

NOTED that the Clerk will also complete a new starter spreadsheet, which will be sent to the pension section by the Chairman as an independent person, when able to and the scheme is set up on the KCC website.

NOTED that as per the agreement at the May parish council meeting, the Clerk sent a copy of the required Parish Council policy covering several pension scheme matters to KCC Pensions on 8 May 2017, following the pro-forma on the KCC LGPS website.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Future meetings of the Full Council: in the village hall. 6 July, No meeting in August, 7 September, 5 October, 2 November and 7 December 2017. (And F&GP/Planning sub-committee dates: if a meeting should be required: in the committee room of the village hall - 19 June, 17 July, 21 August, 18 September, 16 October, 20 November and 18 December 2017)

Signed..... Chairman, Barham Parish Council

Date

Please note these Minutes remain as draft Minutes until they are approved by the parish council at their next parish council meeting