

Barham Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30pm on 04 April 2019

Present: Parish Councillors David Wood (Chairman), Stephanie Hollowday (Vice Chairman), Ernie Mullett, John Brooks, David Tamsitt, Stuart Eccles, Patti Earl (for part of the meeting), and Liz Minter. Clerk Amanda Sparkes.

Five members of the public.

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

Cllr Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting, the last before the May elections. He explained that Barham has an uncontested election and the new council will take effect from 08 May 2019. He advised he would like to thank all the councillors for all that they have done and in particular thanks to the three who are standing down – Cllr David Tamsitt who has served 4 terms including a long period as vice-chairman, Cllr Sarah Goulden who has served one term and Cllr Patti Earl who has served one recent term and a previous stint on Barham Parish Council.

Apologies for absence were received from Parish Cllr Sarah Goulden (unwell), KCC Cllr Michael Northey and Canterbury City Cllr Simon Cook.

2. Declarations of Interest - No new declarations of interest were declared.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 07 March 2019

The Minutes of the last full parish council meeting held 07 March 2019 were approved and accepted as a true record and the Chairman signed them.

4. The meeting was adjourned for parishioners' questions and comments. The residents present had no questions so the meeting continued.

5. KCC Cllr Michael Northey report

KCC Cllr Michael Northey had sent apologies for the meeting but also the following email:

"For those retiring from the parish council this time please will you give them my thanks for being good colleagues and for all they have done.

Otherwise the only thing to add are the latest pothole repair figures from 8 Dec to 29 March. Canterbury District has had the highest number done of all the 12 districts of Kent, at 2921. Kent total, 20352. The patching area for Canterbury District is 20164 sq metres, and the total for Kent is 325169 sq metres."

Cllr Northey had also followed up on the KCC Waste consultation and implementation of charges for rubble etc, since the last meeting. Two emails from the KCC Cabinet Member had been forwarded to all councillors by the Clerk.

6. KCC Cllr Simon Cook report

Cllr Cook had given apologies to the meeting but provided the following report:

"We'll be starting the litter pick of the A2 next Monday which will run until Easter.

I had a meeting at the end of last week with the Kent/Sussex operations manager of Highways England. They agreed that there are a lot of sign frames and traffic cones still out that don't need to be, and will be asking an inspector to check the A2 and surrounding roads to get the redundant ones removed as soon as possible. We are also working with them to deal with litter on their land which isn't highways, such as by the Womenswold junction. He also highlighted that they will be significantly increasing investment in the Kent network including the A2 as they recognise the significant increase in use.

As this is the last meeting of this council I'm particularly sad not to be there (although I hope to be at the annual meeting). Thank you very much for all your support and help - it's been a pleasure to work with you all, and thank you for all that you do for the parish.

I've spoken with officers regarding the suggested bin on Derringstone Hill. The issue here is that the lay-by here is unofficial and KCC in particular are resistant to bins in such lay-bys and don't want to set a precedent - although this lay-by is regularly used, there are others that aren't but

might be if they were acknowledged by having a bin. Happy to hear the views of the council on this and take them back.

Separately, a resident has proposed a bin on The Grove where it passes over the Nailbourne. I would be interested to hear the views of the parish on this as I understand a nearby bin may have been removed in the past following representations from residents."

The parish councillors present had no historic recollection of a bin at The Grove, but would support one as there is rubbish and filled doggy bags left in the area. Cllr Wood will check with an ex-chairman of the parish council, resident in The Grove, about any known history of a previous bin.

The parish council will revisit this and the bin request for Derrington Downs with both the city and county councillor if present at the next parish council meeting.

7. Finance - the cheques were authorised and signed.

The bank balances were noted. Cllr Wood reminded everyone that the parish council has authorised and committed expenditure not yet paid, such as a £5,000 grant to the Football Club.

RECEIVED the bank reconciliation and bank statements for March 2019 and RESOLVED a Cllr signature thereon other than the Chairman.

NOTED that on 28 February 2019 the Clerk completed and uploaded a VAT refund claim for the period 1 May 2018 to 31 January 2019 totalling £3,980.41, which has since been paid by HMRC by BACS.

NOTED that the Clerk re-charged the water bill for the allotments to BAA for £25.25 covering the period 4 September 2018 to 21 February 2019 and the cheque payment for this has also just been received.

Pension Year End Return - NOTED that on 04 March 2019 the Clerk completed and uploaded the Year End 2018-2019 balancing form to the KCC Local Government Pension scheme.

Rents to be received – Cllr Wood proposed that the rents to be received from the Football Club, The Tennis Club and Barham Allotments Association should be allocated to The Social Fund in order to build this back up for things like community events. This proposal was seconded by Cllr Hollowday and when put to the vote seven councillors were in favour, with one abstention.

8. Publicity & Communications including website

The Village Survey Action Plans – one for the Village and the one for Children and young people, and a "Completed/Achieved/Abandoned" list are on the parish council website. There is no update this month.

Facebook page for Barham parish council – Cllr Hollowday continues to monitor posts from residents. There were none relevant to the parish council this month.

Cllr Wood explained that the Clerk will have several website updates after the May elections to update parish councillor details and so on.

9. Highways matters

Pending: highways improvement for the Gravel Castle area crossroads

It was resolved at the 07 February 2019 parish council meeting, that a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit be undertaken in the first instance, at a cost of £1,170. The Clerk has progressed this request. She also contacted KCC Cllr Michael Northey to request if he would fund this from his Members Grant and he agreed to do so (but will not be able to commit any further funds if this project progresses further). So this Audit will not cost the parish council any money. At the March 2019 parish council meeting Cllrs voiced strong concerns about a reversal and the possibility of this causing accidents and issues for tractors. Whilst the Stage 1 audit has been set in motion a reversal is not yet decided. The Audit will highlight any potential problems and concerns with the possibility of a reversal of the one-way system and may result in it being impossible to progress. The Audit may also make suggestions and recommendations for further highways improvements. This item did get progressed as a result of residents' concerns following an accident at Gravel Castle last summer. The decision on whether or not to implement a reversal (if possible) will be revisited again anyway – as there are further costs involved to do so. The parish council will revisit the options once the Audit results are known and decide to proceed with anything further. There will be no perfect solution.

Poor parking at Railway Hill by The Causeway and resident's request for yellow lines

The Clerk had provided the following background to this item in the councillor paperwork:

A resident of Railway Hill has contacted both CCC and the parish council about the increasingly frequent times that lorries, vans and cars are parking at the road junction of Railway Hill, Derrington Street, South Barham Road and The Causeway. This often means that the resident has his own access blocked and is unable to gain sufficient safe access to use his own vehicle, and he and other residents have complained about being unable to access The Causeway.

Sometimes vehicles park with a wheel on top of the water company's equipment of which one element being the "pressure relief valve" (because the mains water pressure is higher than the legal limit for home connections) which in the event of difficulties within the house would not allow the resident to turn off the water supply.

The resident advises that CCC have previously taken a one day survey of the difficulties on a day which had no vehicles parked and decided that there wasn't a case to restrict parking. The resident states that the parking being undertaken contravenes Highway Code 242 (for obstruction – RTA 1988 Sec. 22 and CUR Reg. 103) and 250 (RVLR Reg. 24 and CUR Reg.82 (7)) with regard to parking within 10m of a road junction. The former is also often repeated at the "Valley Road end" of Derrington Street.

The City Council has no enforcement powers over illegal or poor parking of the sort referenced. These powers are currently reserved to the police.

PCSO Gavin Dodwell has advised: "From the Police side we have powers to deal with any obstructions ie roads blocked to stop traffic flow or a driveway is blocked if someone is attempting to get off their drive only. Poor parking but a clear roadway or if it makes the road a bit narrow but traffic is still moving, isn't for the Police. If vehicles are on double yellow lines then parking enforcement via the Canterbury City Council are the ones who will deal."

The resident has asked for a formal request to be considered by the parish council for double yellow lines here - or instead of a total ban on all parking - it could be restricted to house owners and a badge made available for placement on cars?

The parish council may or may not support such a proposal (it has been discussed previously, with Minutes being printed in the magazine. There was some division here. There is a concern about displacement of vehicles, and some residents contacted the Clerk after the magazine article against the idea, and the parish council did not take the request forward formally).

But any individual can ask CCC to add the suggestion/request for yellow lines to the annual consultation. The current batch is already out to consultation so it would be this time next year that the request would be put out to formal consultation. Then following consultation, all requests go to the Joint Transportation Board for a decision on whether to implement them.

Cllr Earl had explored this with the Chairman since the last meeting. A proposal for yellow lines by The Causeway had been marked out on a map and this was shared with both parish councillors and residents at the meeting.

Cllr Wood explained that maintaining a wide enough access for service vehicles and the safety aspects of poor parking are Barham Parish Council's primary concerns. Parking across The Causeway is undesirable and parking at the corner in front of the footbridge loses the 13 foot access.

He explained that the proposal has tried to minimise the amount of yellow lines being proposed.

The parish council felt that a small stretch of yellow lines by The Causeway would be helpful although Cllr Hollowday voiced concern that parking is not easy in the area and there would be concern about the displacement of parked cars if the proposal is supported. Cllr Earl will do an informal consultation with residents in the vicinity and feedback. The parish council will then revisit this at their next meeting to see if the parish council wish to put in a formal request to CCC which would then be part of the public consultation by CCC at the end of 2019 and then following that be put to the Joint Transportation Board for a decision in 2020. The Chairman gave a reminder that any individual can put in a request directly to CCC for a proposal anyway.

KCC trees on Valley Road

After the last meeting the Chairman and Clerk inspected the KCC owned trees along Valley Road. On 15 March 2019 the Clerk logged six tree maintenance reports. The six trees in the stretch from the village

hall to Brickbat Cottage are all trees planted 1-2 years ago and are all in wire cages. The Clerk asked that they all receive urgent pruning from the base up to the height of the cage.

Hedge at the junction of Mill Lane and Derringstone Hill

The re-tender of open spaces contract revealed that the parish council has been cutting the hedge at this junction, but it should perhaps be the responsibility of the landowner. The Clerk made a land ownership enquiry to Kent Highways on 31 January 2019 and officers have undertaken map searches. The hedge is actually on 'no man's land' and in such cases Highways have a duty to undertake hedge cutting when required to maintain sight lines. They are not able to add this to their routine maintenance schedule but will allow the Clerk to log a request on each occasion that the hedge needs cutting back. Cllr Tamsitt kindly agreed to advise the Clerk on each occasion in the future.

10. Open Spaces

The Community Litter pick to be held on 16 March 2019 was cancelled due to high winds. The Chairman explained that he had checked the hall availability and the earliest Saturday for a new date is 18 May 2019. Whilst this is very late, and ideally the event would have been held earlier before the vegetation grows up the parish council resolved to run with this. The Clerk will inform the insurance company and book the equipment from CCC, and Cllr Hollowday and Cllr Wood will arrange Facebook posts, parish magazine entry and posters.

11. Another volunteer working party event

Another volunteer working party event will be set for the Brickfield Recreation ground to do some more staining of the wooden posts etc. Cllr Hollowday and the Clerk will agree a date in June and when another date is set, Cllr Wood will advertise this in the magazine and Cllr Hollowday will advertise again on Facebook.

Next six-monthly councillor visual inspection of the two play areas

Cllr Hollowday and Cllr Eccles have now undertaken the informal inspection. The next one will be Cllr Hollowday and one other councillor for September/October time.

The Clerk will now book the formal ROSPA annual inspections for both play areas for the summer.

It was NOTED that the wet-pour repairs for three items at the Valley Road play area are scheduled for 8 May 2019. The Clerk will give information to Cllr Hollowday for a Facebook post.

Cllr Wood questioned the need and charge from the play company for fencing as the play area gate may be locked. The Clerk will go back to the play company and question this.

Wet pour repair quotes for the Valley Road play area

The Valley Road play area has three items requiring remedial action where there is shrinkage/separation of the wet pour safety surfacing giving rise to a potential trip hazard. The parish council considered quotes for wet pour repairs and resolved to proceed with Option A at £2,963.35 which will give edge band repairs for all 3 areas – a six inch band around all edges to be cut out and wet pour refilled to bond with the existing edge; Heras fencing and signage for the duration of contract (needed to allow the wet pour to dry and not get damaged) and a water bowser required for duration of the contract. The Clerk will instruct the play company to proceed with these repairs.

Blackthorn hedge at Gravel Castle by Sparrow Court

Cllr Wood explained that blackthorn has grown above the height of the hedge and a resident has asked him if they may prune this at their own expense down to the height of the hedge. Blackthorn has no value, and the parish council was happy that the resident do this after the bird nesting restriction period has passed. Cllr Wood will explain this to the resident.

12. Crocuses on Valley Road

Cllr Minter commented that the crocus bulbs on the stretch of Valley Road from the School to The Shrubbery look lovely, and thanks were recorded to the anonymous donor. Cllr Minter felt that the stretch from the School to the shop could be done too and Cllr Wood offered to do a magazine article encouraging others to donate and/or plant more.

13. Footpaths & Rights of Way

Cllr Minter and the Clerk are to walk some of the public rights of way and subsequently report any issues with stiles or overgrown areas as appropriate.

C/fwd: Resident offer to replace stiles – A resident has kindly offered to replace the three old stiles with a self-closing pedestrian gate each on the footpaths CB227 and CB228 heading from Out Elmstead towards The Street. The Clerk contacted the KCC PROW department who are happy for this to proceed. KCC will supply the gates at a reduced rate.

Cllr Eccles explained that the residents who were to be the potential new landowners are now not proceeding with the purchase, but it is understood there is a new landowner buying the field instead. Until the transfer of ownership has been completed this item cannot proceed until the new ownership is completed and it is known if the new landowner will agree to these replacements and adopt future maintenance of them.

14. Village Clubs & Societies

Barham Youth Football Club lease

At the 6 December parish council meeting a formal 30 year lease was agreed for Barham Youth Football Club for use of the old cricket field. (and £5,000 has previously been agreed to be provided on the start of the lease.) Cllr Wood recorded thanks to Cllr Goulden and explained that the Lease has now been agreed with Solicitors Furley Page. The Solicitors have been asked for a version without amendments showing and when this is received Cllr Wood will take it to the tenant Mr Tony Julien and talk it through with him.

Tennis Club Lease

The previous lease agreement was taken out in 1998 and expired January 2019. The Clerk prepared a letter and revised Lease for signing and these were delivered by hand to the Club Secretary address on 21 March. The Club Secretary was present at the meeting and gave the Clerk a new signed Lease with an accompanying note.

At the last parish council meeting a new rent for the first four years was agreed at £52 per year with a review every four years to tie in with the parish council elections.

15. Clerk Report

The Clerk report had been circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. Items are incorporated elsewhere in the Minutes.

16. Annual Electors Meeting for 2019

The Annual Electors Meeting is now set as Monday 15 April 2019 from 7.30pm, in order to be ahead of the parish council elections on 02 May 2019 in case the set of councillors changes. Cllr Wood advised that there will now be a guest speaker – David Tamsitt is to speak about the Nailbourne Community Foundation.

17. Planning Matters

New planning applications:
CA/19/00522 - Al Kelekele, Greenhills, Barham, CT4 6LE Proposed two-storey rear extension with balcony, single-storey front extension and pitched roof over garage following demolition of existing conservatory. The parish council has no comments.
Notifications
CA/18/02602 - Derringstone Hill Farm, Derringstone Hill, Barham, CT4 6QD Proposed conversion of farm building to ancillary accommodation together with first-floor extension. WITHDRAWN
CA/19/00315 – Apple Cottage, Out Elmstead Lane, Barham, CT4 6PH Listed building consent for internal alterations including conversion of utility room into shower room. WITHDRAWN

18. Councillors' items

Fallen tree in Brickfield Rec

Cllr Wood advised that a tree has come down in the recreation ground during the recent high winds. Cllr Hollowday advised her husband will deal with this.

Kerbstones for The Shrubbery

Cllr Minter advised a resident in The Shrubbery has asked if highways can install and extend the existing kerbstones to stop people parking on the grass. Cllr Wood suggested that more posts could be installed instead and would be cheaper and that this could be an item for the new council post May to consider.

The old churchyard

Cllr Brooks advised that The Fifth Trust and Barham Primary School, courtesy of the Nailbourne Community Foundation, have undertaken a collaborative venture and planted more flowers and shrubs and two new Cherry trees in the old churchyard.

Defibrillators for the village

Cllr Tamsitt explained he is now in receipt of two defibrillators for the village donated by The Kent Community Safety Team. The hall and shop have agreed a location and the defibrillator now needs a cabinet which will hopefully be funded by the Nailbourne Community Fund. It does not need power – its battery lasts for about 5 years with a replacement cost of about £300. The new parish council will need to consider taking on the future maintenance and supplies for the defibrillators, such as replacement batteries and pads.

History Society bat and trap event on the village green

Cllr Wood explained that the History Society has asked for permission to hold a bat and trap evening on the village green in July. The parish council felt this was a good idea and had no problem agreeing this request.

The meeting closed at this point at 8.20pm. The members of the public and the Clerk were then excluded and left the room for the following confidential item.

19. Confidential item: Staffing matters

The Profile of the Clerk role has been revisited and an uplift to new spinal point 26 (old spinal point 32) was agreed. The salary uplift is to be backdated to 01 December 2018 to run in the May salary as discussed by the council at budget setting discussions last November. The Clerk will be asked to prepare a new contract of employment to reflect this for the Chairman to sign.

Future meetings: Full Council: in the Grabham Room in the village hall: 09 May 2019 (Changed to a later Thursday than usual because of elections on the first Thursday); 06 June 2019, 04 July 2019, No meeting in August, 05 September 2019, 03 October 2019, 07 November 2019 and December 2019

And F&GP meeting dates *should these be required*: in the committee room: 20 May, 17 June, 15 July, 19 August, 16 September, 21 October, 18 November and 16 December 2019.

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