

Barham Parish Council
Minutes of the meeting held at 7.30pm on 06 June 2019

Present: Parish Councillors David Wood, John Brooks, Stuart Eccles, Ernie Mullett, Gary Graham and Diane Tatt. Clerk Amanda Sparkes.
KCC Cllr Michael Northey.
Two members of the public.

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 Councillor Liz Minter (away), Parish Cllr Stephanie Hollowday (unwell), and City councillor Cllr Mike Sole.

2. Declarations of Interests – None

3. There has been no formal interest in the vacancy on Barham Parish Council. There was a period to 12 June following the May elections when the parish council had the ability to co-opt. However post 12 June 2019 the vacancy will have to follow due process and be advertised again. The Clerk will continue electoral services post 12 June to start the relevant notice.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 09 May 2019

The Minutes of the last full parish council meeting held 09 May 2019 were approved and accepted as a true record and the Chairman signed them.

5. ACTIONS ARISING from the Annual Electors meeting held on 15 April 2019:

- A dog bag dispenser had been purchased in 2018-2019 with a view to install it alongside a dog poo wormery at South Barham Road. (The bag dispenser is not yet installed anywhere). But the wormery company did not fulfil the order. At the last meeting Cllr Tatt kindly offered to try and source a suitable alternative for a commercial environment that would not need a lot of maintenance, cleaning and feeding. If not, a location at the recreation ground would work for just the bag dispenser.
- Residents suggested having hand-held litter pickers available at the village shop for walkers to use and return. Cllr Wood explained that the shop manager is agreeable to this, and the shop volunteers will take them in each night. The litter pickers will be kept in a plastic container outside, perhaps in something like an umbrella stand. Cllr Graham proposed, Cllr Eccles seconded and all Cllrs were happy that the Clerk now proceed with purchasing litter pickers and a container.
- There has been an increase in the number of TIR lorries using the Elham Valley as a route to get to the Channel Tunnel but the road past Breach towards Elham is totally unsuitable for them. The easier routes for HGVs are the A2 or the A260 through Denton. Cllr Wood suggested that lorry drivers using non-commercial sat navs are being sent down Valley Road. This was the B2650, but Cllr Mullett advised it is now known as the road formerly known as the B2650. Cllr Wood explained that highways officers have suggested that a weight limit being imposed on the road will not be enforced very well by the Police – Cllr Northey confirmed the process to get a weight limit imposed is costly and he suggested that it would be cheaper and act equally well to have signage stating "Unsuitable for heavy vehicles" along the route. The Clerk was asked to put this forward to Cllr Northey as a formal request.
- Item deferred from the last meeting: A lot of the offending lorries seem to come from Gomez – Cllr Cook had previously advised of the offer from the manager of Gomez to speak to all the parish councils locally after the May elections, and this could be a topic. The Clerk will now try to progress this and involve relevant parishes. She will also keep the new city councillor Mike Sole and KCC Cllr Michael Northey updated with progress.

6. New bin requests

The Clerk has chased the request to CCC in February 2019 that the parish council will pay for a new general waste bin at the large layby opposite the junction of Derrington Hill with South Barham Hill as there is a need for a bin here due to the long-standing known problem and issue of rubbish here including human faeces (subject to CCC agreeing this and adding to the Serco schedule to empty it).

Residents had also previously requested a new bin in The Grove. Since the last meeting the Clerk has also put in a request to CCC that the parish council will pay for a bin at The Grove subject to CCC agreeing to empty it.

The Clerk explained that there is no update for either new bin request yet and will chase again.

7. Adjournment for parishioners' questions and comments. After a brief adjournment the meeting continued.

8. CCC Cllr Mike Sole report

Cllr Sole had given apologies but also sent the following report:

I regret that I cannot be with you tonight as I am attending a City Council briefing on Homelessness and Housing.

My first month as city council has been very busy with a lot of training for new councillors, as well as official city council meetings, parish council meetings and meetings and correspondence with various residents and organisations.

I would like to report specifically on environmental issues which are very much in the headlines at the moment. At the recent City Council AGM, where Cllr Terry Westgate was appointed as Lord Mayor, there was a very dignified protest by the group Extinction Rebellion and I also attended the recent Student Environmental Day in Canterbury.

I believe that the City Council needs to use its position to set an example on environmental policies, in particular reducing CO2 emissions that are causing such damage to our planet. For this reason I have proposed a motion that will be debated and voted on at the next meeting of the full council in July. In summary, this wide ranging motion includes for action to be taken for:

1. The declaration of a climate emergency to raise awareness and support the public in taking action
2. A full audit of the council's carbon footprint
3. Improved recycling rates
4. The development of carbon neutral transport solutions in the district
5. The council to consider the environmental impact of any new policy

I very much hope to obtain cross party support for this motion that will create a framework that council will work within to help reduce CO2 levels whilst we still have time to act.

I am serving on four council committees, in addition to the Full Council meetings. These are the Community Committee, Property & Regeneration Committee, Audit Committee and the Rural Forum. You may know that Rural Forum is a less formal meeting that the public are encouraged to attend and take part in the discussions. I hope to see some parish councillors there from time to time.

Other issues that have been keeping me busy in the last month include fly-tipping, housing, missed bins, trees, planning enforcement and parking. I have also been asked to deal with other issues outside of my remit that Michael Northey has kindly taken up including on traffic signs and school places.

Mike Sole

9. KCC Cllr Michael Northey report

KCC Cllr Northey advised that between 08 December 2018 and 24 May 2019 Kent has had over half a million square metres of roadway patched. He explained that preparations for Brexit are continuing. Cllr Northey felt a mention to the unsung work done by KCC was worth a mention. KCC issue Press Releases twice a week and recent ones have included advice to the elderly on how to look after themselves in hot weather; scams; and a presentation to sixth formers on how to stay safe travelling abroad.

Cllr Wood drew attention again to the new charges introduced from 03 June 2019 for the disposal of tyres, rubble and hardcore and plasterboard at all Kent's waste sites. He reminded Cllr Northey that 85% of responses to this proposal's consultation has been against the charges being implemented, which does not encourage people to take part in future consultations. Cllr Northey explained that the Cabinet Member has agreed to review the practices again in six months' time.

10. Cllrs responsibilities

Cllr Mullett is standing down as the parish council representative at the Village Hall Committee bi-monthly meetings. Cllr Eccles proposed, Cllr Graham seconded and all councillors were happy that Cllr Diane Tatt be the replacement with immediate effect. The Clerk will let the hall secretary know.

If an urgent sub committee to deal with a planning application is needed, this will be led by Cllr Minter as the Vice Chairman of the parish council alongside Cllrs Mullett, Brooks, Graham, and Eccles. All councillors will be invited to any sub committee meeting anyway.

11. Finance - the cheques were authorised and signed.

NOTED a payment to be taken by direct debit on 01 July 2019 of £2,791.04 for the six-monthly Public Work Loan repayment due.

NOTED that the Clerk has drawn up an invoice to the Barham Tennis Club for the annual rent of £52 now due for the period 01 June 2019 to 31 May 2020. And that a cheque for this has now been received.

NOTED that following approval of the year end accounts at the May parish council meeting, the Clerk returned the necessary documents to the external auditor PKF Littlejohn on 28 May 2019.

The Clerk will also make arrangements for the exercise of public rights publishing the Notice of Public Rights and Publication of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return on the parish noticeboard(s) and website.

12. Additional Signatory to Bank Mandate

The Clerk had completed an amended bank mandate to add Cllr John Brooks as an official signatory. This was duly signed by existing signatories Cllr Mullett and Cllr Wood, and the following resolution was required to be passed at the meeting as part of the process: "Cllr Tatt proposed, Cllr Graham seconded and all councillors were happy, that the Authorised Signatories in the current Mandate, for the accounts detailed in section 1.3, be changed in accordance with section Authorised Signatories. And the current Mandate will continue as amended (and with any two signatories to authorise a cheque payment.)"

13. Housing and a possible Rural Exception Site

Further to a sites search being completed, and an informal meeting held on 20 May 2019 with a representative from English Rural Housing Association and the Rural Housing Enabler, Cllrs now discussed whether and how to progress a Local Needs Housing scheme (landowner agreement permitting) on land at the rear of Crookenden Place and Oxenden Way. The units built will remain as affordable for tenants with a connection to the village, in perpetuity, with no right to buy. Options to progress are one of the following options:

OPTION A : As a Local Needs Scheme, where English Rural will lead and fund the scheme

OPTION B : As a Community Land Trust (CLT) where volunteer residents will need to form a Board and can either fund development themselves or engage a housing association to fund and manage.

Cllr Wood explained that the setting up of a CLT may take up to 12 months and delay the project and the CLT must include members of the community not just parish councillors, who come together to form a board and offer a Lease period of 125 years to a housing association. The CLT option has some benefits in that a ground rent of approximately £2,000 per year would be paid by the housing association to the CLT but which is recovered from the tenants.

After discussion it was agreed unanimously and proposed by Cllr Brooks, and seconded by Cllr Graham, that if the Crookenden Place/Oxenden Way land site may be progressed then Option A would be preferable as it would speed the project up.

If the site cannot be progressed then the parish council should revisit whether to set up a CLT as a wider community input could be perceived as being better.

The Clerk will now speak to the housing association English Rural representative, who will take the lead on this project, with the Rural Housing Enabler, and at no cost to the parish council.

14. Publicity & Communications including website

The Clerk asked to record thanks to Cllr Wood who has spent half a day with her where they revisited and updated the Village Survey Action Plans. There are three documents – one for the Village and the one for Children and young people, and a "Completed/Achieved/Abandoned" list.

The Clerk will now circulate these to councillors and update them on the parish council website.

A separate informal meeting of all councillors and the Clerk to revisit the actions will now be held on Monday 17 June 2019.

Cllr Wood suggested that after the informal meeting if the parish council need to consult with residents, this could be facilitated by having a stall at the School Fete on Saturday 6 July 2019 – he will book a stall.

15. Highways matters

Pending: highways improvement for the Gravel Castle area crossroads

Background: 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. KCC Cllr Michael Northey agreed to fund this from his Members Grant (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.

Since the site meeting and creation of the Highways Improvement Template the dedicated Kent Highways officer has moved divisions and two new officers have been assigned. Cllr Wood and the Clerk met them on 4 June 2019 so that they may familiarise themselves with the parish and the template document. Cllr Wood commented that there was an opportunity to add some new items to the template.

The Clerk will now update this document and circulate it in due course.

Cllr Wood confirmed that there is no update yet on the Road Safety Audit.

Double yellow lines proposal(s) near The Causeway and Railway Hill

Cllr Wood explained that this item is carried forward as although ex-cllr Patti Earl has spoken to residents in the vicinity she was unable to attend the meeting to give feedback. If the parish council does resolve to put in a request for a section of double yellow lines by The Causeway or elsewhere this will be passed to CCC for the formal annual public consultation on requests due in the Autumn of 2019. This item therefore will come to the next meeting.

Street lighting columns testing

The Clerk explained that it has been five years since the street lights had structural and electrical testing. The parish council has made budget provision over the last two years to have the tests done again. Cllr Graham proposed, Cllr Tatt seconded and all councillors were happy that the Clerk now commission these again.

Bollards to protect tree roots at The Shrubbery

Horticultural Society members have written to the Clerk and their comments and research documents circulated to all councillors. They are concerned about compaction of the tree roots at The Shrubbery caused by cars parking by the trees and over their roots.

Cllrs discussed extending the line of bollards in Valley Road.

Cllr Wood commented that to put in more bollards may not necessarily cause displacement of parked cars, as cars already park on the road alongside the existing bollards on The Shrubbery side of Valley Road. The bollards do keep the cars off the verges and in fact parked cars on the road can act to slow down the traffic.

To install more bollards will need Kent Highways permission. After discussion it was agreed to investigate the costing to both purchase and install and report back at the next meeting. The Clerk and Chairman will also bring details of a proposal for a particular length/stretch of new bollards with suitable spacing in between.

16. Open spaces - NOTED that the annual ROSPA play area inspections are booked for both play areas to be undertaken in July 2019.

17. Litter Pick held on Saturday 18 May

Cllr Wood explained that the litter pick had been very successful with 40 or so people attending with many cubs, beavers and scouts also taking part this time. Several bags were collected which Serco picked up the next day. Some other items that had been fly tipped were also reported.

Cllr Wood suggested another litter pick be held in the Autumn and will look at hall availability.

18. Another volunteer working party event – 30 June 2019

Another volunteer working party event is now set for Sunday 30 June between 11am and 3pm at Brickfield Recreation ground to do some more staining of the wooden posts etc. All residents and councillors are welcome to attend. The Clerk will ask Cllr Hollowday to advertise this on Facebook. The Clerk will also devise some posters which Cllr Wood will put up.

19. Footpaths & Rights of Way

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. The Clerk gave Cllr Eccles relevant paperwork and forms and he will now try and make contact with the current landowner to see if he will agree to these replacements and adopt future maintenance of them.

It is understood that as the current stiles are very rickety, the PROW officer has recently revisited the area and also been to visit the landowner and requested that they either be repaired or replaced. A timescale on this is not known however.

20. Village Clubs & Societies

Barham Youth Football Club

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. Cllr Wood explained that a digital and paper version of the Lease agreed with Solicitors Furley Page is now with the Football Club Chairman and the parish council is still awaiting any comments from them. The final document will need the parish councillors names changed as there has been a change in the make up since the May elections.

Cllr Eccles commented that the parish council had previously agreed that £5,000 be provided on the start of the lease – and had discussed that a possible further grant in year two also be considered. The Clerk commented that this was deferred until the May 2019 elections but that a grant could be made by any organisation at any time. The fact that a grant had been made does not preclude an organisation from approaching the council again. And Councillors may discuss this when considering future budget provision.

21. External Organisations

NOTED that the Friends of Barham School are offering free stalls to any community groups who would like to come and tell people what they do at the summer fete this year. The date is Saturday July 6th from 12 noon to 3pm, on the village green.

22. Clerk Report

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

23. Planning Matters

New planning applications:	
03.	19/00921- Days Cottage, Railway Hill, Barham, CT4 6PX Application for listed building consent for external alterations including replacement of cement render to side elevation with lime render.
Notifications	
CA//18/02602/FUL - Derringstone Hill Farm, Derringstone Hill, Barham, CT4 6QD Proposed conversion of farm building to ancillary accommodation. GRANTED by CCC	
CA//19/00522/FUL - Al Kelekele, Greenhills, Barham, CT4 6LE Proposed two-storey rear extension with balcony over single-storey side extension, single-storey front extension and pitched roof over garage following demolition of existing conservatory. GRANTED by CCC	

24. Councillors' items

Missed bin collections in Out Elmstead Lane

Cllr Tatt explained that there have been two weeks of missed bin collections in Out Elmstead Lane.

Change of December parish council meeting date

The Clerk has asked to change the December published date. She will circulate options to all councillors to collate their availability for suitable alternative dates near to it and this will be published on the future agendas and website when finalised.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Future meetings: Full Council: in the Grabham Room in the village hall: 06 June 2019, 04 July 2019, No meeting in August, 05 September 2019, 03 October 2019, 07 November 2019 and a date in or around December 2019 tbc.

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