

MINUTES OF BARTON UNDER NEEDWOOD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

4 January 2024 – 7.00 pm, Robert Douglas Room, Barton Village Hall

Members Present: -

Cllr E Sharkey (Chairman)	Cllr J Taylor	Cllr S Bedford
Cllr K McNerney	Cllr L Young	Cllr C Walker
Cllr C Allcock	Cllr J Brookes	Cllr S Naylor

In attendance: - Clerk, Mrs S Rumsby; Needwood Ward Cllr J Jones; 1 member of the public.

1. Chairman's Welcome and Record of Apologies for Absence
Cllr Sharkey welcomed all to the meeting.
Apologies were noted from Cllrs I Gilbey, D Lord, J Jessel, B Ashcroft, V Gould
2. Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda
Cllr S Naylor – Item 8 : Temporary Diversion of Footpath 17
3. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 7 December 2023.
It was **resolved** that the Minutes were accepted to be signed as a true record by the Chairman.
4. Parishioners Forum
No comments.
5. Police, County and Borough Council Reports
 1. Police
Daniel Ison had now relocated to another position in the force and our new Chief Inspector is Scott Gidman. Clerk to invite to subsequent meeting to hear his plans for neighbourhood policing.
 2. County Council –
Cllr Jessel is aware of flood issues, particularly at the bottom end of Barton Brook and pressurising St Modwens on their responsibilities in de-silting a retention pond affecting Barton Brook and Full Brook. She will pick this up with Chris Archer.
Priority gully cleaning still unscheduled.
 3. Borough Council –
Cllr Jacqui Jones highlighted the Ward Enhancement Programme £1.5m funding pot. Money to be spent by March 2025. A Ward Cllr would make the bid on our behalf.
The Borough Council are focussing on fly tipping issues.
Cllr Taylor advised the ESBC bin was moved from Efflinch Lane/ Potters Way and needs relocating back to its original position.
Cllr Allcock had reported potholes outside 4 Mill Crescent – SCC matter, keep reporting.
Village Lengthsmen to report on priorities.
Chairman asked for confirmation of the current planning position on the Local Plan Review.

6. Development of Strategic Plan

The Chairman referred to housing needs, allocation and the local plan review. He asked for consideration for a more strategic approach. It was suggested the Council form a brainstorming group to meet early February to come up with say, 12 projects, for short, medium and long-term planning. We can then prioritise a shortlist number of those for a topic paper to bring to our Annual Open Meeting. This could be tied in with a Barton Live event in the afternoon; followed by evening presentations on 6 suggested topics and a Q&A session. A comms exercise would be needed to generate interest. Cllrs were all supportive but felt it would be necessary to generate some ideas beforehand and develop through online consultation.

The Chairman recommended Kim Bedford, an SPCA trainer, be approached to facilitate a meeting and her costs for half a day would be investigated.

7. Committee Reports considered as circulated.

1. Finance

A meeting was scheduled for 8 January.

The precept figures to meet our 2024-25 Budget had been amended following receipt of ESBC tax base calculations and the request will be made for £81,444.47 resulting in a 0% increase.

The Schedule of payments and notifications was referred to - Cllr Brookes wondered if a flat rate would be cheaper for the fishpond electricity charges rather than day and night rates.

Resolved – Precept Request approved

Resolved – financial reports accepted as presented.

2. Planning

Cllr Sharkey referred to the planning comments and objections circulated.

Walton By Pass Scoping opinion – environmental assessment, ecology, flood risk, traffic impact noise, visual impact. Document submitted for agreement to local authority, other subject areas can be studied at local authority request. The Parish Council are mainly concerned with traffic and flood risk which are already being looked at so we have not pressed for any further topics.

24 Causer Road – Oak Tree application, we have strongly objected.

Pear Tree Cottage, tree work granted – we suggested replacement specimens but this seems to have been ignored. A good number of trees behind Main Street have disappeared over the last few years.

3. Parks & Open Spaces

A meeting has been scheduled for the following week.

Gardening Guild would like to plant a commemorative tree. There is scope to put another tree in Ash Tree pocket park but the detail of location and specimen to be considered in more detail. Cllr Walker stressed the importance of the right specimen for its surroundings.

Fishpond Sub Committee meeting to be scheduled.

Resolved - The principle of planting a commemorative tree was accepted and approved and able to be reported to the Gardening Guild, subject to the detailed arrangements being agreed with the Parks & Open Spaces Committee.

4. Burial Ground -

Request for a memorial bench at the top of Bell Lane received. Following a site visit, it was acknowledged there were obstruction issues if it were placed on existing tarmac pathways or turning areas and it was suggested to locate a bench just inside the entrance to the right of the gates sheltered by the beech hedge. Neighbouring property to be approached due to proximity to their house. Discussions are ongoing.

The gravedigger was commended on handling a difficult recent interment due to water ingress.

5. Human Resources –

A note regarding the Clerk’s recent appraisal will be forthcoming to consider formal acceptance by full Council.

A Draft Policies Workshop consisting of Cllrs Walker, Brookes, Bedford and Sharkey will meet to start drafts for HR Committee consideration and full Council review.

6. Allotments -

We have received a draft renewal of the Lease for the Efflinch Lane allotment land to commence 29/9/24 rent increase from 25/3/25, Clerk suggested Allotment Committee review it followed by the HR Committee at a separate meeting.

7. VEC –

No meeting taken had place. The Christmas tree is to be dismantled.

8. Correspondence

Temporary diversion of Footpath 17 - Public Rights of Way Consultation was referred to. The route referred to is not correct as it was not shown as previously agreed with AI. The Planning committee will respond.

Flood Recovery Framework – No local properties affected by Storm Babet but several by Storm Henk – Cllr Jones will confirm if funding open to those affected by Storm Henk. Once detail checked, we will publicise.

Cllrs to look more closely at any opportunities from the Community Foundation Rural Development Fund.

All Correspondence other noted.

9. Outside Bodies & Special Responsibilities

1. Communications – meeting to be scheduled before end of month to discuss comms around strategic plan – Cllr Bedford to attend if able.

2. Speedwatch – nothing to report

3. Flood Risk Group –

Cllr Sharkey has been busy collecting data on recent events and his detailed report will follow.

Cllr Jessel has been approached for Road Closure signs with permission for the Parish Council to take a view on instituting road closures as necessary, especially on Efflinch Lane where inconsiderate driving is washing flood water onto and into properties.

Other measures include a Flood Alert system with a brook level gauge linked to locally recorded rainfall data. Capital costings would amount to £ thousands, plus ongoing maintenance costs in the hundreds per annum. The EA can obtain levy funding for the Flood Alert System if the Parish Council could fund the maintenance costs. A manual rainfall gauge is already in use in the village but could be replaced with an automated one.

Cllr Brookes felt that that whilst the alert can work, he wondered what effective action could residents take, having been alerted? Flood protection measures can be taken by property owners identified to be at risk; there may be possible allocation of sandbags with funding from Tippers and Mercers for at risk properties.

Flood Group Volunteers will be attending a local liaison meeting with the EA and we are still pressing for reinstatement of the multi-agency Flood Risk Group.

The feasibility of a controlled weir from Barton Brook into the Barton marina lake is being looked at.

4. Walton By-Pass Bridge – nothing to report.
5. Quarries Liaison – Evidence of a Skippers driver working for AI in breach of Quarry traffic routing through the village and reported to AI; the driver had been suspended pending investigation. Awaiting further report from the Quarry company.

10. Councillors & Clerk Reports

1. Clerk reported that Water Plus had now waived the late payment £40 fee on the account and our claim for Non-Return to Sewer charges will be responded to by 8 February.
Resident issue regarding hedge boundary with Bellways land at the end of Mill Lane, clerk in ongoing correspondence.
2. Cllr Walker – junction Dunstall Cross – numerous accidents report by the dip in road, crossing traffic signage issue. Cllrs to engage with Cllr J Jessel for a safety review.
3. Cllr Naylor - reminder to committees to get budgeted projects initiated in good time to achieve projected spend.

11. Dates of Future Meetings:

2024 : 1 February, 7 March, 4 April, 2 May, 6 June, 4 July, 1 August, 5 September

The meeting closed at 20.42