

BARKHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of meeting of the Barkham Parish Council held on 12th May 2009
in Barkham Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

Present: Mrs P. Stubbs (in the Chair), Mr F. A. Scott, Dr. R. Loader, Mr L. Heath, Mr. S. Goldring, Mr. R. Newman, Mr. D. Oxbrough, Mr. C. Heyliger, one member of the public and the Clerk.

Apologies:

Declarations of Interests

None

09/292 **Minutes** of meeting held on 14th April 2009 were approved and signed as a true record. The Planning Meeting which was due to be held on 28th April did not take place as there were no planning applications for consideration.

09/293 Election of Chairman

Proposed: Mr Newman

Seconded: Mr Scott

Mrs Stubbs was duly elected as Chairman.

Unanimously.

09/294 Election of Vice Chairman

Proposed: Mrs Stubbs

Seconded: Mr Goldring

Mr. R. Newman was duly elected as Vice-Chairman.

Unanimously.

09/295 Appointment of Representatives

All appointments by unanimous vote

Barkham Village Hall Management Committee - Mr. Oxbrough

District Parish Liaison Conference – Dr. Loader and Mrs Stubbs

BALC – Dr. Loader and Mrs Stubbs

WDALC – Dr. Loader and Mrs Stubbs

Parish Planning Control - Mr. F.A. Scott, Mr. S. Goldring, Mr. C. Heyliger and Mr. L. Heath

Finance Committee – Mr Goldring, Mr. R. Newman, Mrs. P. Stubbs and Mr. C. Heyliger

Parish Footpaths - Mr. D. Oxbrough, Mr. L. Heath and Mr. C. Heyliger

Trustees for Barkham Charity Trust - Mr. Clark, Mrs Stubbs, Dr. Firth, Rev Bickersteth and Mr. C.

Barrows.

Neighbourhood Action Group – Mr. Newman, Mr. D. Carter (BVRA) and Mr. D. Hogg

Area Youth Committee – Mr. Newman and Mrs Stubbs

Veteran Tree Project – Mrs J. Firth, Dr Loader, Mr J. Shepherd

Meeting adjourned in order that any members of the public could address the Council on any matters or concerns relating to Barkham

09/296 Report from the Villages Youth Project Worker

Report attached.

09/297 Planning

The Planning Committee reported to the full Council:-

Variation of Goods Vehicle Operators Licence for A1 Wokingham Wet Waste Ltd. Highlands Ave.

Notification has been received from WBC of an application for the variation of a GVOL

Decreased authorisation at existing operating centre: Silver Birch, Highland Ave. New authorisation at this operating centre will be 9 vehicles and 4 trailers. New operating centre: Wessex Recovery Ltd. Bath Road, Halfway, Newbury, new authorisation at this operating centre will be 2 vehicles and 0 trailers.

Mrs Stubbs enlightened the Council with her knowledge of the site. There would appear to be many subsidiary companies based at this site and no restriction on the hours of use and the times the lorries can enter and leave

the site. It would appear that lumps of metal occasionally fall off the lorries if they are not properly netted, residents should take the registration number of the lorry and report it to the police. Also it would appear that the waste from the portaloo is not being disposed of correctly, this would be an issue for the Environment Agency to deal with. Mrs Stubbs will speak to the Borough Councillor for Evendons Ward where this site is located to see if there is anything that can be done.

09/298 Highways

Vehicle Activated Signs – Mr Goldring brought to the attention of BPC an article he had read in the E Bulletin which suggested that Parishes may like to purchase their own mobile Vehicle Activated Sign at a cost of approx £5000, in the past Parish Councils have been able to hire the unit for the day and position it where speeding is a problem and then analyse the results. Clerk to write to WBC Highways to ascertain if the service that Parish Councils have been able to in the past will still continue.

WBC have confirmed that a works order has been issued to re-fresh the white lines in Bearwood Road (this work has now been carried out) and the remaining two items that were reported to WBC last month being :-

- 1) The footpath sign BA7 from Barkham Street next to the White House has disappeared and
- 2) The road sign at the junction of School Road and Barkham Road is completely obscured by over hanging vegetation requires attention.

The remaining two matters have been passed to David Rixon the Highway Inspector who is currently off sick but he will attend to them on his return to work.

Details of the “Part Night Lighting Trial” were received last month from WBC, BPC are in favour of the scheme and suggested that if half the lights were turned off at night this would still provide adequate lighting.

Councillor Keith Baker has replied stating that this trial will turn off all lights along a recommended street unless it falls under the exemption criteria.

The Clerk had reported to Highways Dept at WBC that the A Board outside the turkey farm at Barkham Manor had again been positioned on the verge. Their reply stated that Highways Department’s current guidance was that unless an A Board is causing an obstruction to Highway users it is unlikely that action would be taken to have the board removed. The board has now been removed.

There is a pot hole in The Woodlands opposite no. 9 where an existing repair has sunk into the road creating a large hole, Clerk to request that this is attended to.

It was noted that very large tanker lorries from BP McEefry are using Barkham Street which has a width restriction of 6 feet and 6 inches, it could be that they are visiting local farms with deliveries of fertilisers, Barkham Street is unsuitable for these very large tankers, Mr Oxbrough will take down their registration numbers and find out if this is the case.

Highways Wish List for 2009/2010

Councillor Keith Baker, the Executive Member for Highways and Transport at WBC has requested an updated “Wish List” for the new fiscal year 2009/2010. Clerk to reply stating that BPC wish to pursue completing the work at the junction of Barkham Street and Church Lane with the section of new pavement and repositioning the bus stop. This work is currently being looked at with £15,000 of S106 monies towards the cost of the work. Also, BPC wish to retain the request for a small section of pavement to be laid between Hayes Lane and Coombes Lane in order that pedestrians can walk to The Coombes without having to keep crossing the road. The guidelines stipulate that any wish which has been previously submitted in 2008/09 and dropped should not be submitted again within a 3 year period.

09/299 Litter and Parish Cleanup Report

A very successful Parish Cleanup took place on Sunday 26th April, 24 volunteers turned out equipped with black sacks for general rubbish and orange sacks for rubbish which could be recycled. A total of 64 bags of rubbish were collected thus leaving Barkham free of litter for the time being. WBC have awarded Barkham the prize for the most unusual item found, that being the set of coffee mugs complete with tea bags, found in the ditch along Langley Common Road, WBC wish to give us an environmentally friendly prize such as a water butt, composter or green cone. The Clerk to contact The Coombes School to see if they would like any of the items mentioned. The Clerk wished to thank Louise Goldring and Marian Heath for manning the kitchen and supplying everyone with refreshments, which were gratefully received. It was suggested that next year’s Cleanup should be done earlier in the year so that the nettles and long grass are not covering up the rubbish.

09/300 Finance

J.P. Neuhofer – Food for Parish Cleanup	181	£36.58
Barkham Village Hall – rent January – April	182	£84.00
Neat Ideas – stationery	183	£49.39 (£42.95 exc VAT)
A.J. Harland – internal audit fee	184	£212.75 (£185.00 exc VAT)
Came & Co. – annual insurance premium	185	£971.53
Standing Order for Clerk’s salary for May		£572.64
Standing Order to Royal Bor. Windsor – Pension Fund for Clerk for month of May (Employee & employer contribution)		£127.84

Copies of the accounts for the year ended 31.3.09 have been circulated to all councillors, two copies of the accounts have been signed by the Chairman and the Clerk as the Responsible Financial Officer.

The Clerk reported that Mr. Harland the Internal Auditor had audited the accounts and everything was in order. Two points arose from the audit:-

- 1) The percentage applied to an employee’s salary for contributions to the local government scheme is determined by the full time equivalent salary, not the actual amount payable. Hence, the employee’s pension contribution had increased to 6.5% (previously 5.5%) and therefore the standing order in favour of the Pension Fund has been increased to £127.84 and the standing order in favour of the Clerk has been reduced to £572.64 with effect from 1.5.2009.
- 2) The accounting guidance in the most recent Practitioner’s Guide (issued in 2008) states that long term investments should be treated as fixed assets rather than part of a local council’s cash resources. The Council’s War Stock has therefore been excluded from the balance sheet via the accounting entry in the year’s expenses and included in the total of fixed assets in the accounts notes.

He commented about risk assessment. The Clerk noted that the Council needed to minute formally the discussion regarding risk assessments that had taken place earlier in the year, when the insurance renewal was being considered. The Council’s annual return included that the Council had considered its risk assessment policies and processes, and further guidance on the ways which risks were identified and then managed was provided in the Practitioners’ Guide to the new audit process. It was acknowledged that the Council’s annual budget was small and that the Council did not have any public facilities. Most of its expenditure was on administration and enabling grants to community organisations, and income other than precept, interest and the VAT refund was minimal. Overall risk levels were considered low.

The Practitioners’ Guide indicated three areas for managing risks:

1. **Using Insurance** – the Council was required to have the mandatory insurance cover for public, employer and similar liabilities, and the other principal risk to be covered was property damage to street furniture and office equipment. Insurance had therefore been effected for these areas. Fidelity insurance was considered not to be necessary as cash handling was minimal and procedures for approving expenditure and signing cheques were considered strong.
2. **Working with third parties** – this was not appropriate for the Council.
3. **Self-management of risks** – the Council considered the internal controls in place, notably the approval of all payments by the Council; the accounting systems maintained by the Clerk; the budgetary review process; and the annual review by internal audit. The Council considered that existing controls and procedures were appropriate for the annual expenditure levels.

Risk management arrangements were therefore considered appropriate.

To date 879 books have been sold, an income of £4594.24, thus leaving 121 unsold, and the Council is now in credit to the amount of £628.57.

09/301 Borough Councillor's Report

Mrs Stubbs reported that the young people had been unsuccessful with their application to the Youth Opportunities Fund, however WBC have allocated £4000 to Barkham from S106 monies which must be used for the benefit of the young people. Therefore the proposal is to utilize these funds with the £6000 that BPC had budgeted for in the last financial year to purchase the youth shelter from Monster Play Systems. The shelter will have three sides, have a solid base, be solar powered and with a bin at the entrance. It will be positioned away

from the bushes at the far end of the park to one side of the goal post as agreed by the police as the best location which can be seen from the hammerhead. The Clerk to speak to Louise Morris the youth worker to see if the young people would be willing to assemble it and choose the colour and also to speak to Arborfield Parish Council who have recently purchased a youth shelter from the same supplier. A vote was taken for this proposal, 7 in favour, 1 abstention, carried by the majority.

09/302 **Correspondence**

- a. Thames Valley Police – invitation to attend a police feedback event on 19th May at the Oakwood Centre, Woodley. Mr Newman to attend.
- b. Community Safety Team – Reports of off road bikes. In response to issues around anti social behaviour involving off road bikes the police are encouraging the public to report any incidents to them with as much information as possible i.e. colour/type of bike, name of person and address and where/when it is happening. These bikes are again being ridden in The Coombes and are causing a disturbance, the Clerk to write an article for the BVRA magazine and also put up posters on the notice boards encouraging people to report them to the police.
- c. Mr & Mrs Neville – letter of appreciation with regard to the Annual Parish Cleanup.
- d. Mr & Mrs Neville – Youth Provision in Barkham, each councillor was personally given a copy of the letter. Mrs Stubbs and Mr Newman will speak to Mr and Mrs Neville.

Distribution

WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Personnel Board 23.4.09.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 6.4.09 – 10.4.09.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 13.4.09 – 17.4.09.
WBC Staff Bulletin Issue 8.
WBC Agenda for An Extraordinary Meeting of the Service Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 28.4.09.
WBC Agenda for An Extraordinary Meeting of the Service Development Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 30.4.09.
WBC Agenda for Meeting of the Planning Committee on 29.4.09.
Public Sector Equality Duties.
WBC Children's Services – Notification of determined admission arrangements 2010 – 2011.
WBC Transformation Update Issue 2.
WBC Agenda for an Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee 13.5.09.
WBC Planning Applications Input & Decisions Issued for the period 20.4.09 – 1.5.09.
WBC Agenda for The Annual Meeting of the Council on 14.5.09.
WBC Agenda for A Meeting of the Standards Committee on 18.5.09.

09/303 **Councillors Forum**

Mr Heath thanked the Parish Council for writing to Mr French and himself showing their appreciation for the work they had done in response to the Core Strategy.
Mr Newman explained that the results from the questionnaires from the NAG Group which were distributed with the BVRA magazine, although a disappointing response, showed that the main concern of the residents of Barkham was speeding, and the group will endeavour to tackle the problem.
Mr Oxbrough asked Mrs. Stubbs if she could find out why WBC were not offering free swimming sessions for the over 60's, the neighbouring Councils were all providing this service, Mrs Stubbs will find out and report back.

Meeting closed at 9.56 p.m. .

Next meeting of full Council will be held on 9th June at 8 p.m.

Next meeting of Planning Committee will be held on 26th May 2009 at 7.30 p.m.