

# Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Jadi Coe [clerk@bartonmills.net](mailto:clerk@bartonmills.net) 07724 737841

Chairman: Mr N. Horne 07590 672963

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of Barton Mills

held in the village hall on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023 at 7:00pm

In attendance: Parish Cllrs N Horne, M Colsey, T Newman, S Mullender, R Lewis, E Jarvis. County Cllr L Stanbury, District Cllr D Taylor, clerk Jadi Coe and four members of the public.

### **APM/23/1 Election of Chair for Annual Parish Meeting if the Chairman of the Parish Council is not present.**

The Chairman of the Parish Council Neil Horne was present and chaired the meeting

### **APM/23/2 To Approve the Minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022**

It was resolved to approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022, proposed by Cllr R Lewis, all in favour.

### **APM/23/3 Chairman's Annual Report**

It is the councils' responsibility to take care of everyday concerns. As a team we oversee the mundane tasks, keeping services and utilities functioning, but we also consider and develop more interesting projects.

During the last year we are pleased to have completed a thorough review of our street light system culminating in an extensive program of repair and replacement. This was the beginning of a series of projects we will be undertaking to improve the look of our village.

The second of these that has also been completed was to landscape the island in front of Trego House that some will remember as the Dog and Partridge pub. The area was cleared of weeds, with stones and plants laid as well as a new village sign. This project was funded by the council but also received generous donations from members of the village. We plan to identify and improve other neglected areas.

We are also happy to report that after several years absence, football will be returning to the village green. Barton Mills football club has reformed. Supported by the council and Mildenhall Town football club the long history of our village team looks set to continue. The clubhouse has been renovated thanks to support from the Burrell Trust. We look forward to the start of the season in August and hope to see you all pitch side.

We have celebrated two Royal occasions in the last 12 months. Both were organised by a team of councillors and enthusiastic members of the community. Both were a huge success and represented the very best of our village. I would like to thank councillors new and old who worked tirelessly to make the Platinum Jubilee and Coronation a royal success.

We finally began the first stages of developing our Neighbourhood Plan. At this moment we await news of funding allocations to allow us to proceed further. This is a project that will rely heavily on community involvement. It is a plan that will help shape the future of our village in many ways. The council have initiated the first steps but we need volunteers to drive it forward.

Not all our endeavours have been rewarded. The most significant project that has occupied much of our time has proved to be the most frustrating. Our plans for an affordable housing "exception" site have stalled. The aspiration was to build 15 homes that would be available only to people with a village connection. This is a unique project and would be the second such development we hoped to have built. After a fantastic public response to a Havebury Homes consultation evening a successful planning application was expected. However planners and environmental agencies have placed unreasonable restrictions to our plans. We hope that new surveys may still support our development but this will take at least a year.

In conjunction with our developer Havebury Homes we, as a council, have done everything we can to push this development to completion. It is right to say that the parish council have faced unreasonable and nonsensical obstacles at every stage of the application. At times we have been misled by planners and support from district and county councillors has been disappointing.

At a time of a national housing shortage to refuse planning permission to build 15 houses that would benefit both young and old in our village is baffling. That Natural England (an environment agency) object based on the possibility of a bird nesting on a field that hosts car boot sales and horses by the A11 is farcical. That planners hide behind that objection is a disgrace.

As a council our sole function is to serve our community. We are all volunteers, our only reward is

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to improve our village. Our aim is to respond as quickly as possible to any concerns raised by you. It is therefore important that the good people of Barton Mills engage with and challenge us to get the things you want done.

On behalf of the parish council, I would like to thank each and every one of you for supporting us so, we may serve you.

## APM/23/4 District and County Councillors Reports

Cllr David Taylor introduced himself as the newly elected District Councillor for the Manor Ward. Cllr D Taylor confirmed he is an independent councillor and not affiliated to any party, with his aim being to help the community. He has noted similar issues within his parishes and hopes to resolve these by being pro-active.

Cllr L Stanbury reported the following:

-thanking Brian Harvey the outgoing District Councillor

-95% of children were given their first-place primary school placement for 2023/24

-locality budget available

-Highways issues, noting the importance of collecting the correct data as evidence

Cllr L Stanbury was asked if he could find out if SCC had any influence over Sat Nav routes, as it appears when the approach to Fiveways gets busy then Sat Navs direct vehicles through the village. Cllr Stanbury to look into this.

It was agreed to write a letter to Brian Harvey thanking him for his assistance and attendance as District Councillor for the Manor Ward.

## APM/23/5 Financial Overview for Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

The Parish Council clerk gave the following report:

The annual accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 have been produced and have been reviewed by the Finance Committee and the appointed internal auditor Anthony Preece. Once these are approved at this evening's Parish Council Meeting, these will be published online and go to the external auditors PKF Littlejohn.

The accounts show total income of £33,380, the majority of these comes from the precept and VAT claims, grants and donations. Locality grants were received to fund costs to celebrate the Queens Jubilee and speed counters. Included in the total income was £300 which a resident kindly donated which helped fund some of the works carried out improving the island at Chestnut Close.

The accounts showed total expenditure of £27,567. The largest expenses included clerks' salary, insurance costs, street light energy and maintenance costs, new street lights, grass cutting and the works on the island at Chestnut Close.

This resulted in a surplus in the year of £5,813. Reserves held at the year end totalled £27,479. Of this £12,873 is to be carried forward to the 2023/24 budget.

## APM/23/6 Any other issues that parishioners' wish to raise

A member of the public reported her concerns on the relocation of the disabled footpath to Mildenhall at Old Mill Lane. It was confirmed that the Parish Council suggested an alternative footpath within the public consultation and that the applicants have been contacted directly to ask if they would consider this.

A member of the public thanked Cllr L Jarvis and K Fuller for their work in the Kings Coronation celebrations. She also reported that £100 was raised from sale of refreshments and the dance group KATS were asked to choose a charity to donate this to.

Cllr L Jarvis thanked two residents for their help with the celebrations especially with their help setting up the wigwam and music system.

*N Horne*

Mr. N. Horne (Chairman)