

Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Jadi Coe clerk@bartonmills.net 07724 737841

Chairman: Mr A. Harji 01638 510251

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF BARTON MILLS

Held in the Village Hall on Wednesday 29th May 2019 at 7:30pm.

Present: Cllr A. Harji, Cllr N. Horne, Cllr R. Lewis, Cllr C. Miller, Cllr G. Fuller, Cllr K. Flack, Cllr S. Mullender.

Also present: District Cllr B. Harvey, Clerk Jadi Coe and 12 members of the public

Cllr. A. Harji welcomed everyone to the meeting.

APM 19/01 Election of Chair for Annual Parish Meeting if the Chairman of the Parish Council is not present.

APM 19/02 To Approve the Minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting on 1st May 2018

These were proposed as a true record of the meeting held and all agreed.

APM 19/03 Chairman's Annual Report

Cllr A. Harji gave the following report:

I was appointed chairman in September 2018 after the resignation of the previous chairman.

I was then re-elected chairman for the year at the Parish council meeting at the beginning of this month.

The Parish council continue to explore sites to provide affordable housing for local needs as identified by the housing needs survey carried out in 2017. We are liaising with Hastoe Homes and our goal is still to provide one or two bedroomed dwellings. At the present time a site has yet to be agreed, you will receive further information later in the meeting.

The Parish council has employed local gardener Sarah Limmer for two hours per week, Sarah is flexible with the work asked of her, including trimming hedges, to ensure that pathways are kept clear and sweeping leaves from the village hall car park. We are also looking into appointing a local handyman to carry out small tasks around the village as problems arise.

We have purchased two small football goals, these are situated on the playing field and are available to use at all times by the public, it has been a pleasure to see the see the children making use of them.

Once again, the Parish has received monies from FHDC for football coaching on the village green, yesterday and today were one of two sessions with more sessions planned later in the year.

The Parish was very fortunate recently to have some roads in the village resurfaced, hopefully this will help to ensure that potholes are kept to a minimum.

We are very aware of the issues of traffic in and around the village especially since the installation of the traffic lights at Fiveways roundabout. Because of this the PC are planning a meeting with Highways to discuss the A11 and Fiveways.

There will be time later in the meeting to discuss your concerns

Fortunately, we are able to continue our support of a number of local charities such as The Rainbow Club and the Good Neighbour Scheme. The latter has proved to be a valuable village asset since its conception in June 2017.

The Speed Indicator Device continues to be re-sited around the village at regular intervals with more emphasis on the Worlington Road area.

I would like to thank you all for taking the time to attend this meeting. Please feel free to make comments or if you would rather not speak then please see one of us at the end of the meeting.

APM 19/04 District and County Councillors Reports

Cllr B. Harvey passed on Cllr L. Busuttill apologies but informed the public on Cllr Busuttill's behalf that the standard of social care of younger people in the county has improved.

Cllr. B. Harvey reported on the following:

- The recent elections, which has seen a decrease in the number of seats held by conservatives on the District Council
- The merge of Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Council and upcoming changes including new committees currently being formed
- The amount of Locality budget available and the increase the number of Parishes now entitled to the funds

Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Jadi Coe clerk@bartonmills.net 07724 737841

Chairman: Mr A. Harji 01638 510251

- His help towards local schemes including the Peace Garden works and football coaching from last year's locality budget
- He is no longer a voting member on the planning committee but is pleased to continue to offer general advice and help with planning matters, and he can be contacted directly.

Cllr. A. Harji thanked Cllr. B. Harvey for his contribution and attendance at the meeting.

APM 19/05 Financial Overview for Year Ending 31st March 2019

Cllr. A. Harji gave the following report:

The Accounts have been prepared by the clerk and responsible officer Jadi Coe and these were approved at the last Parish Council meeting on 7th May and are now with the external auditors PKF Littlejohn.

Total income for the year £28,469 and the expenditure in the year was £31,245 this resulted in a deficit of £2,776.

However, this deficit was mainly covered by the earmarked reserves for lighting renewals brought forward from the previous year. Street Lighting has cost the Parish in total this year £11,890 of this £8,326 was for renewal of two street lights on The Street including the one at the corner of Church Meadow. The third one was adjacent to Station Road which has improved the lighting on the Worlington Road. The Parish spent a total of £4,913 on the playing field in the year, this includes cutting of the field, work required to trees, planters and keeping the play equipment maintained.

Going forward to the current year 2019/20 the total precept budgeted was £21,380. Expenditure budgeted for the year total £28,280 which includes, £4,900 for further new street lights, improvements in the Village Hall car park, £3,200 on grass cutting and football pitch, this extra expense was to improve the playing fields grass surface as it was very patchy and weed filled. We have been informed of the improvements already.

Any questions on the accounts the clerk will try to answer tonight or she may need to get back to you after the meeting.

No questions were asked.

APM 19/06 Update on Affordable Housing site options

Cllr A. Harji declared an interest in the agenda item and asked Vice Chairman Cllr. N. Horne to take chair before leaving the room.

Cllr N. Horne informed those in attendance that Cllr. R. Lewis would present to them the situation the Parish Council are in and the possible sites available and feedback from parishioners would be appreciated to help the Parish Council move forward.

Cllr. R. Lewis reported the following:

The original affordable housing scheme saw 6 houses built on Church Lane, this was managed by Hastoe Homes and these are now occupied by people with a local connection to Barton Mills.

It was noted after the completion of the existing site that there could be a further need for affordable homes in Barton Mills and the Parish Council asked Hastoe Homes to carry out a local needs survey. The results showed there was a need especially of one and two bedroom bungalows.

Affordable homes are known as exception site schemes and there are rigid rules and regulations in regards to allowable sites. The site must be on the edge of the settlement boundary of the parish, a reason for this is the land is considerable cheaper as it is not general building land but agricultural land.

The Parish Council looked at a map of the village and identified 12 possible sites that could be used to site the affordable homes, these options were then given to Hastoe Homes and West Suffolk planners. The decision from the planners resulted in only two of the 12 sites being suitable, Suffolk County Council land on Church Lane by the existing affordable home site and land owned privately along Church Lane opposite the existing affordable home site.

The land owned by Suffolk County Council was explored as a site and after a meeting with SCC the offer of land looked promising however since this meeting SCC have stated they will not be willing to sell the piece only required for affordable homes as they wish to maximise the land value of this site and are looking into developing the whole site and although this would include affordable homes these would not be limited to local people. However, in the last week the Parish Council have been informed that the chances the planners will allow building on this site are slim as Suffolk County Council did not include this site in a recent Call for Sites. Therefore, SCC may now be willing to sell Hastoe Homes a small piece for affordable homes only. The land owners on the site along Church Lane have generously offered to sell some of their land to Hastoe Homes but unfortunately the piece the land owners are willing to sell, a strip that backs onto Manor View, will upset several local residents and therefore this is not the Parish Council preferred site.

Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Judi Coe clerk@bartonmills.net 07724 737841

Chairman: Mr A. Harji 01638 510251

There is also now the potential of one other site which is land by the corner of the village green. The site was originally rejected by planners due to access to the site, but the Parish Council have instructed Hastoe Homes to ask planners to re look at this site. The land owners have also stated they may sell this piece of land. The Parish Council feel this site would be more suitable as it would have less impact on neighbouring properties.

In summary three options:

Church Lane, backing onto Manor View, available now

Suffolk County Council land off Church Lane, only a possible site at the present time

Land at the corner of Village Green, only a possible site at the present time

Cllr N. Horne stated that there is a need for homes and now the Parish Council need to agree a site and what compromises need to be made to provide affordable homes.

A member of the public queried that the privately-owned site backing onto Manor View was never on the map of original sites identified. It was answered that the original map was not an exact location but of a general location only.

A member of the public asked if it was agreed to go ahead with the privately-owned site backing onto Manor View, could the site plan be altered to allow the road between the new homes and existing homes. It was reported the current layout is a guide only and that the site layout would go through the normal planning process where local residents can have a say. He was also reassured that the Parish Council would take on board residents views on the layout.

A member of the public asked whether land owners of the site backing onto Manor View had applied for additional access points onto their land. The Parish Council said there were not aware of any application in regards to this, and that there may be confusion from when the Parish Council had asked the land owner for a different piece of land and that the Parish Council would consider access point to the farm land if this was the land owners main concerns in regards to the exact site.

A member of the public voiced their concerns that their house value could fall if the site behind Manor View was chosen.

Cllr N. Horne asked that the public appreciate that the Parish Council have tried their best to find an option that has the least effect on neighbouring properties as possible but if it comes to the site backing onto Manor View, the Parish Council would try to lessen the impact on neighbours as much as possible.

Cllr. R. Lewis reported that the homes would be mainly of low-level bungalows and that the land owners of the site backing onto Manor View are aware of the effect on neighbouring properties and are positively inputting these views to Hastoe Homes.

One member of the public voiced concerns that if the land was sold then the agreement for bungalows could be overridden and big houses could be built and building on this site could also encourage the development of further properties on the remaining land.

It was reported that Barton Mills is a secondary village and current planning policy does not allow for large development in secondary villagers.

A member of the public spoke of his views that his home on Church Lane now is beginning to feel like it's in the middle of an estate due to the new homes in the area.

It was reported there are lots of people to try to satisfy when looking at sites for development.

The members of the public were thanked for their input and it was reported hopefully a site could be agreed soon.

APM 19/07 Update on Fiveways, A11 and local traffic including parishioners' concerns

Cllr A. Harji gave the following report in Cllr. P Boura's absence:

The Parish Council haven't heard anything since two Councillors attended a meeting in June last year. Since then, the traffic lights have, of course been installed.

At that meeting, we were told that Highways England were looking for funding to carry out a full traffic survey at the Chalk Hill/Herringswell Rd junctions with a view to increasing safety there. These junctions had not been considered as part of the work on Fiveways. This might include installing a slip road.

The traffic lights are only an interim solution for the roundabout. Construction of a long-term solution has been put forward as part of RIS2 road improvement programme. As far as I know, we are still waiting for an announcement on

Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Judi Coe clerk@bartonmills.net 07724 737841

Chairman: Mr A. Harji 01638 510251

which roads will be included in this. If a scheme for the A11 at Fiveways is included in the programme, then all options will be considered again. The most expensive but best option is a by-pass to the east of the present road. It is important to continue to press for this solution.

Cllr A. Harji asked the public in attendance if they had any views and opinions that they wished for the Parish Council to pass onto Highways at the upcoming meeting.

One member of the public provided Cllr. A Harji with a written report which he then read out to the public. The report included concerns of the increase in congestion on the A11 especially on a Friday afternoon, this being the first year the congestion has been at this level. Congestion is also seen on Newmarket Road, The Street and Station Road, as road users are using the village to attempt to decrease their journey time.

Opinion that the lights should be reassessed, as it appears traffic from Mildenhall towards Fiveways have benefited but not the traffic on the A11. Finally, it includes concerns of a local Facebook page in regards to Fiveways in which she has been informed is a group for opinions from local residents to be given back to Highways but feels if a person's opinion is negative it is dismissed and not passed onto Highways.

It was agreed by the member of public that Cllr. A Harji could keep the report along with the photographs and maps and this could be passed onto Highways.

Members of the public voiced their concerns and opinions on the following:

- Satellite Navigation is sending vehicles through the village and one member of the public has been stopped several times on The Street and had been asked directions back to the A11.
- Only Mildenhall traffic has benefited
- More dangerous now as traffic is at standstill on the A11 Northbound approaching the roundabout, with vehicles coming behind them at over 70mph
- The roundabout is not big enough for lights on the actual roundabout, which has seen lorries frequently blocking lanes on the roundabout
- The lights are too close together, which is backed by having seen a motorcyclist going through a red light as they were taking note of the next set of lights
- The lights need to prioritise A11 Northbound traffic more and the lights mid northern side of the roundabout are not required
- Speed limit signs approaching Fiveways on the A11 from Newmarket need to be set further back or an interim speed limit need to be added
- If the two crossing points on the A11 were closed this would cause more traffic at the roundabout
- Local residents' voices not considered at the initial public consultation
- The traffic that in the past built up at Eleveden has now moved to Barton Mills
- Highways website was directly traffic through Barton Mills to avoid slight traffic build up on the A11

Cllr. A Harji thanked everyone for their input and would report back to the Parish following the meeting with Highways.

APM 19/08 Any other issues that parishioners' wish to raise

Cllr B Harvey reported that although the District Council had now merged, the planners are still the same but if anyone is having trouble to contact anyone at the District Council, then he is happy to help.

A member of the public asked if a local land owner had got permission to make a new access point on their land.

Cllr. B. Harvey reported that no application had been made, and whether or not the new access was better an application still had to be made.

The clerk reported that this was reported earlier in the month following the previous Parish Council meeting.

The meeting closed at: 8:45pm