

9BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Barling Magna Parish Council held on Thursday 14th January, 2016, in St Mary's Church, Little Wakering Road, Little Wakering, Essex commencing at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Ashdown, Bond, Cohen (Vice Chair), Edmunds, Pearmain, Steptoe (Chair) and Street.

In attendance: J. Watson (Parish Clerk).

MINUTES

- 1. The Chair to declare the meeting open.**
 - a. The Chair declared the meeting open.
- 2. To receive apologies for absence.**
 - a. Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gardiner and Knight and from District and County Councillor C. Seagers.
- 3. To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and with section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**
 - a. Councillor Edmunds declared another pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 18.a.
 - b. Councillor Steptoe declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of agenda Item 24.
- 4. To note a recommendation from the Finance Committee in respect of a possible conflict of interest in relation to the internal Auditors and to agree the action (if any) to be taken.**
 - a. The Clerk reported that he had recently commenced working for Auditing Solutions Ltd who were the Parish Council's Internal Auditors. He would not be carrying out any audits in the Rochford District and the audit of Barling would be carried out by the Managing Director of Auditing Solutions who would ensure that Chinese Walls would be put in place to ensure confidentiality.
 - b. The Finance Committee had agreed to recommend to Council that they accept this situation.
 - c. This was unanimously agreed by Council.
- 5. To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th December, 2015.**
 - a. Proposed Councillor Ashdown, seconded Councillor Pearmain that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th December, 2015 be signed as a correct record. Carried unanimously.

- 6. The meeting will stand adjourned to permit Parishioners of Barling Magna to address the Council.**
 - a. No Parishioners addressed the meeting.
- 7. To receive a report from the District and County Councillors for the area on any matters of interest.**
 - a. District Councillor Steptoe reported that District Councillor Wilkins had received a BEM in the New Year Honours List.
 - b. He also reported that the reduction in Government funding meant that Rochford District Council had lost £15 per person per year
- 8. Financial Matters.**
 - a. Proposed Councillor Street, seconded Councillor Ashdown and carried unanimously that the payment requests for December 2015/January, 2016 be approved.
 - b. The schedule of Payments and Receipts for the 8 months to 30th November, 2015 were noted.
 - c. The Bank Reconciliation as at 30th November, 2015 was noted.
 - d. The Accounts statement for the 8 months to 30th November, 2015 was noted.
- 9. 2016/2017 Budget/Precept**
 - a. The budget paperwork as circulated by the Clerk was considered. Proposed Councillor Pearmain, seconded Councillor Ashdown that Council confirm the recommendation of the Finance Committee that the precept be increased by 3% resulting in a precept for 2016/2017 (excluding LCTS Grant of £1,662) of £36,152. It was noted that this would give a total income for 2016/2017 of £37,814, an increase over 2015/2016 of £549.
 - b. Proposed Councillor Ashdown, seconded Councillor Cohen and carried unanimously that the Parish Council apply to the Public Works Loan Board for a loan of £40,000 repayable over a period of 5 years towards the cost of refurbishing the Village Hall.
- 10. Financial Regulations**
 - a. The revised Financial Regulations as circulated by the Clerk were noted.
 - b. Proposed Councillor Street, seconded Councillor Pearmain that the recommendation by the Finance Committee that these Financial Regulations be approved. Carried unanimously.
- 11. Standing Orders.**
 - a. The revised Standing Orders circulated by the Clerk were noted,
 - b. Proposed Councillor Edmunds, seconded Councillor Pearmain that these Standing orders be adopted. Carried unanimously.
- 12. Clerk's Report**
 - a. The Clerk reported,
 - i. He was still trying to arrange the Installation of the Jubilee Bench.
 - ii. As instructed by Council he had approached other electricity suppliers to see if he could better the contract offered by Eon. His investigations confirmed the advice he had given to Council that Eon were the only power supply Company who could offer unmetered supplies was correct. It was agreed that the Clerk

- should go back to Eon to arrange a new contract.
- iii. The Clerk reported that he would not be available during the weeks of the April and May Council meetings. He would put this on the agenda of the February meeting.

13. Neighbourhood Watch

- a. Proposed Councillor Steptoe, seconded Councillor Edmunds that the Parish Council promote a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the general area of Little Wakering, Barling Magna and Stonebridge and that Councillor Street organise this. Carried unanimously.
- b. Proposed Councillor Steptoe, seconded Councillor Ashdown that the Parish Council instigate a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme specifically to cover the Wildlife Reserve, the Play space and the area known as the Parry, Carried unanimously,

14. Village Hall

- a. The Clerk reported that Victoria Marzouki from Rochford District Council would be attending the February Council meeting to discuss funding.
- b. Proposed Councillor Steptoe, seconded Councillor Street and carried unanimously that Councillor Bond be authorised to raise funds for the Village Hall by,
 - i. Approaching contacts to make donations,
 - ii. Sending out letters to likely donors on BMPC headed paper,
 - iii. Investigating the possibility of instigating a “buy a brick” scheme,
 - iv. Considering any other options for raising funds.

15. Wildlife Reserve.

- a. The Clerk tabled two e-mails received from Mr Bines on behalf of the “Friends of Barling Magna Wildlife Reserve”. It was agreed that the response should be as appendix 1 to these minutes and that the Parish Council would await further comments from Mr Bines and his colleagues before proceeding.
- b. The Clerk reported that he was awaiting costings in respect of Brown Tourist Signs in the locality to advise visitors to the area of the location of the Wildlife Reserve. He would report back to the next meeting.
- c. Councillor Street reported as follows,
 - i. He had received a quotation from Jason Burroughs to repair the entrance to the Wildlife Reserve in the amount of £4,455. He considered that, in view of other demands on the Parish Council funds, it would not be appropriate to spend this money at this time.
 - ii. As alternative would be to lay planings at a cost of approximately £500. This would require a licence.
 - iii. Proposed Councillor Pearmain, seconded Councillor Bond that type 1 MOT be laid at a cost of approximately £200.
- d. The recommendation from The Finance Committee that the Parish Council go out to tender for future servicing requirements of the Wildlife Reserve Equipment was considered. Proposed Councillor Street and seconded Councillor Steptoe that this recommendation be approved. 4 for, 3 abstentions. Carried.

16. Employment of Part Time Handyman.

- a. Councillor Street withdrew his proposal that the Parish Council employ a part time handyman to maintain the Council open spaces using the Parish

Council's equipment.

17. Maintenance of Open Spaces Grounds.

- a. Proposed Councillor Street, seconded Councillor Ashdown that the Clerk, with the assistance of Councillor Street, agree a specification for the maintenance of the Parish Council open spaces and, if appropriate, go out to tender to have this work done. Carried unanimously.

18. Play Space/Village Hall Maintenance.

- a. The proposal from Councillor Street that the Parish Council investigate the work required to repair the boundary fence, cut back the laurel trees and clear out the ditch, all to the rear of the Village Hall, and report back to the Council accordingly was considered.
 - i. It was noted that the ownership of the ditches would need to be ascertained and it would probably also be necessary to contact the appropriate person at Rochford District Council regarding the ditches.
 - ii. Councillor Street made a supplementary proposal that the Council should cut back the hedge, repair the fence and survey the ditch. This was seconded by Councillor Pearmain. 2 for, 3 against, w abstentions. Not carried.
 - iii. Councillor Street withdrew his original proposal.
- b. The proposal from Councillor Street that tenders be obtained in respect of work required at,
 - i. Village Hall
 - a. Fence to the front of the hall was considered. Councillor Ashdown reported that her husband had offered to repair the fence free of charge.
 - b. Any other items requiring attention. It was not considered that anything else required attention.
 - ii. Bus Stop outside Village Hall
 - a. Repairs to roof was considered. It was agreed that Councillor Street would prepare a specification for this repair and report back to Council
 - iii. Play Space was considered. It was agreed that Councillor Street would prepare tender specifications in respect of cutting back trees to the north side of the play space, repairs to Chain Link Fence to the bottom of the play space, Inspection with a view to possibly digging out ditch at bottom of the play space, cutting back trees to south side of the play space, re-fixing the upper netting on the fence to the west side of the play space and any other items requiring attention and report back to Council.

19. Waste/Dog Bins

- a. The proposal from Councillor Street that a waste bin and a dog bin be installed in the car park at the Wildlife Reserve was considered. It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain costs from Rochford District Council and report back to Council.
- b. The proposal from Councillor Street that a waste bin and a dog bin be installed in the play space was considered. It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain costs from Rochford District Council and report back to Council.

20. Mentoring for new Parish Councillors.

- a. The proposal from Councillor Steptoe that the Parish Council introduce a mentoring process for new Parish Councillors was considered. This proposal was seconded by Councillor Pearmain and carried unanimously. Councillor Steptoe offered to mentor Councillor Bond.

21. Christmas 2017

- a. The proposal from Councillor Bond that the Parish Council erect a Christmas tree in the vicinity of the Village Hall during the 2016 festive season was considered. It was agreed that Councillor Bond would make further enquiries regarding costs, planning permission and the supply of electricity and report back to Council.
- b. The proposal from Councillor Bond that the Parish Council approach the organisers of the Church Road Frost Fayre with a view to assisting in 2017 event was considered. It was agreed that the Clerk would write to Lynda Edmunds asking if the Parish Council could be of assistance.

22. Parish Plan.

- a. There was nothing to report in respect of the Parish Plan.

23. Meetings of Outside Bodies

- a. Councillor Street reported that he had attended what had been the final Local Community Meeting.

24. Planning Matters.

- a. Planning Application 15/00942/LDC re September Cottage, Barrow Hall Road, Little Wakering was considered. The Parish Council had no comments to make in respect of this application.
- b. Planning Application 15/00951/DPDP1 re September Cottage, Barrow Hall Road, Little Wakering was considered. It was agreed that Rochford District Council be asked to confirm that this development did not exceed the 25% increase in floor area.

25. Correspondence.

- a. No correspondence had been received since the last meeting.

26. At the Chairman's discretion to exchange information.

- a. Councillor Street apologised that he was such a nuisance.

27. Exclusion of the Press and the Public.

- a. Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was resolved that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and the public be excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

28. Village Hall.

- a. Councillor Cohen gave a brief report about the legal issues relating to the Village Hall.

Date of next meeting – 18th February, 2016 – Full Council Meeting.

Issued 10th February, 2016.

DRAFT