



**BARNHAM AND EASTERGATE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 12th MARCH, 2024 AT BARNHAM COMMUNITY HALL**

Present: Chris Allington (Chair): Phil Cramp: Andrew Crawford: Heather Kilroy: John Robinson: Sue Wallsgrove: Chris Wells: Penny Wycherley:

In attendance: Alison Crabb (Clerk): Gemma Hindson (Assistant Clerk, Planning): Nina McMaster (Assistant Clerk, Community): Terry Bedford (Chair of BECT) 3 members of the public:

1. Open Public Session

A member of the public took the opportunity to raise concerns about the various issues in the Parish relating to flooding and the impact the flooding has subsequently had on road conditions. Sue Wallsgrove, particularly in her role as District Cllr, was in constant contact with Southern Water and other agencies who are responsible for managing the problems arising from the unprecedented weather conditions of this winter. She explained that until the water table levels dropped the tanker operations would remain in force and some of the road closures for repairs. Gulley cleaning/jetting is a WSCC responsibility and Lake Lane has been placed on their priority list for attention.

2. Apologies for absence

Simon Parkin: David Phillips: James Roberts: County Councillor, Trevor Bence:

3. Declarations of Interest

Members are reminded to make any declarations of person and/or pecuniary interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda or at any time during the meeting should the need arise.

4. County and District Councillor Updates

In the absence of Trevor Bence there were no County Council updates and Sue Wallsgrove reported that Arun District Council had approved the budget with a 4.9% increase in Council Tax.

5. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd January 2024

Resolved:

That the minutes of Barnham & Eastergate Parish Council's meeting held on Tuesday 23rd January 2024 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chair of the Council.

6. Finance

- 6.1** The Clerk had circulated details of payments made since the last meeting in January 2024. Payments for equipment for the CRT and PPS group were noted and costs for the Hall projects. No issues raised.
- 6.2** The Clerk had circulated a summary of the current financial position. The Clerk mentioned that a VAT Refund claim had been submitted for £12k and that an end of year summary of the financial position would be circulated at the beginning of April.
- 6.3** Appointment of Smithe & Co as the internal auditor for the 2023/24 accounts was approved.

- 6.4** Terry Bedford, Chair of the BECT, explained the details of a storage facility project at Barnham Community Hall which would benefit both the Hall, in terms of bin storage, and the Parish Council in terms of storage of equipment particularly for the Village Garden and the CRT equipment. The cost of the facility had been quoted at just under £7k and the request was being made to the Council to fund 50% (i.e. £3,432) from CIL funds. The Chair explained the current position with CIL funds and it was agreed to support the request and make the funds available for the project.

Resolved:

- 1. To note the payments made since 23rd January 2024**
- 2. To note the current summary accounts**
- 3. To approve the appointment of Smithe & Co to undertake the internal audit of accounts for 2023/24**
- 4. To approve the sum of £3,432 to be paid from CIL funds towards the cost of a storage facility project at Barnham Community Hall.**

7. Planning & Environment Committee

Sue Wallsgrove gave an update from the recent meeting of the Committee and firstly explained that she had taken the decision at that meeting to stand down as Chair of the Committee with immediate effect. She would, however, remain as a member of the Committee. The Committee had therefore appointed Chris Wells as the new Chair and Heather Kilroy as the Vice-Chair.

Other issues mentioned included consideration of a 400 Cala homes planning application on the BEW Strategic Site, which the Committee submitted a strong objection to as there would be no investment in the Aldingbourne Parish area.

ADC are now making use of the 'Grampian Condition' when considering applications such as this. The definition of the Condition is as follows:

'Grampian conditions are negative conditions which preclude the implementation of development permitted by a planning permission until some steps required by the condition has been undertaken such as schools, highway improvements etc.

8. Community Facilities

The Assistant Clerk, Community, informed Council that the porch projects at both Halls were almost complete, but there had been significant issues and delays to completion and potential claims against the contract for the delays are being considered. The final funding for the Eastergate Hall project from BIFFA cannot be claimed until the project is fully completed. A potential application to extend the current Lottery Project is being considered following contact from the Lottery Officer dealing with the current project. Barnham Trojans end their use of the Pavilion and field in April and the Eastergate Cricket Club will then take over. Issues previously causing concern between the two groups have now been resolved.

9. Working Party Updates

9.1 Community Resilience Team – Assistant Clerk, Community gave an update in the absence of David Phillips

- First Aid Training Courses at all levels will continue as demand dictates
- WSCC Team training event on 19th February was well attended.
- Equipment purchases of walkie talkie radios and other items have been made

9.2 People, Places and Spaces (PPS) Working Party

Litterpicking – Andrew Crawford reported that a great team of committed volunteers has been established with new people coming through. ADC have now given details of their contracts with BIFFA which will be analysed to see where we might hold them to account for delivery of the contract in our area.

Planting in the Parish – Penny Wycherley reported that planting of approx. 1000 daffodils donated to us by Binsted Nursery was being undertaken at the gateway sign locations and other sites across the Parish. A formal letter of thanks for the donation would be sent in due course. Spring planting of newly purchased lamppost planters has also taken place and the planters have been attached to lampposts in Barnham Centre.

Village Garden – preparation works including Stage 1 tree works (Stage 2 works will be programmed for Autumn 2024), and the installation of the water supply have now been completed. After discussion on the buffer zone which confirmed that the plans were as approved previously, despite some comments to the contrary, it was agreed that an urgent meeting would now be arranged by the Assistant Clerk, Planning, with Penny Wycherley, Terry Bedford (as Chair of BECT) and Rob Sparrow (Grounds Maintenance Contractor) in attendance. The purpose of that meeting would be to discuss the finer details and specific requirements so that quotes could be obtained for the works for approval by the Clerk and, if necessary, the Chair of the Council. The works would then be programmed to take place as swiftly as possible.

The Chair reported that the ‘Engage Barnham’ Project bid to ‘Your Station Your Community Improvement Fund’ to improve the seating area by the Station Car Park failed to receive support to proceed.

9.3 Communications Working Party

In the absence of James Roberts (Chair) the Assistant Clerk (Community) presented his update as follows:

Two meetings of the group have taken place with more regular meetings planned for the rest of 2024. The main areas of focus have been agreed as:

- Internal communications – volunteers, starting with litter picking volunteers and in future will look at other cohort of volunteers too
- Annual newsletter (end of calendar year)
- Increase in social media – focus on Facebook firstly
- Regular monthly parish council update/bulletin that people can sign up to receive

There is an action plan behind each of these and further updates/decision requests to proceed will be brought to Council. Immediate requests for approval are:

- Are Councillors happy for a Photo and profile paragraph to be placed on the Council’s Website?
- A request for one contribution a month from each of the Working Parties/Committees to be included in the proposed monthly newsletter.

Resolved:

1. **The Council agreed to Photo and profile paragraph to be placed on the Council's website**
2. **The Council agreed a monthly newsletter trial with contributions being made from Working Parties/Committees.**

9.4 Murrells Field Improvement Project Working Party

Terry Bedford gave a brief progress report having kindly taken on the Chair of the Working Party. Three meetings have taken place with Councillors, Larch Landscape and Design, David Seaman and Rob Sparrow present. The discussions so far have focussed on the drainage options potentially available with TB informing the professionals involved that the budget of £200k is the upper limit and therefore the scheme agreed for development in due course must be within the budget available. Michal Zarzechi (Larch) has involved a local company called AMS who specialise in sports field construction and land drainage associated with it. The first phase will be sorting out levels, followed by the drainage and simple solutions will be investigated.

One other element of the S106 funding received was the construction of a path from the Angel's Nursery site to the trim trail around Murrells Field. A quote for the work has been received from Rob Sparrow in the sum of £3950 and approval was sought from the Council to this element being taken forward as soon as conditions allowed.

Resolved:

That approval of a spend of £3950 from the S106 funds be given for Rob Sparrow to provide a 2m wide path from the Angel's Nursery gated entrance to the trim trail around the Field.

10. Outside Body Meetings

- 10.1 Multi-agency Team meeting on anti-social behaviour** arranged by ADC was attended by Sue Wallsgrove. ASBOs have been issued to several youths and arrests and charges made against others. Patrols have been increased in the area and the Police and British Transport Police are working together. Residents are urged to continue to report incidents to the Police as the more reports received the more resources may be allocated to the area.

10.2&3 Arun Flood Group and Parish Council Cluster Meetings

Both of these meetings focussed on the recent flooding issues across our Parish and neighbouring Parishes with no resolutions agreed except to keep pressing those authorities responsible to bring forward resolutions to the problems as soon as possible. No dates for further meetings were scheduled.

- 10.4 Andrew Griffith MP Meeting** – The Chair reported that he felt the MP spoke well and in particular was pleased to hear him say he would tell Arun to sort out their Local Plan.

11. Annual Parish Assembly 30th April

It was agreed that this year the Assembly would take place at Barnham Community Hall commencing at 7.15 p.m. following the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council. The format would follow previous years with local groups and organisations to be invited to have an

exhibition stand. The Communications Group have also potentially secured attendance by a WSCC Highways Officer still to be confirmed and may have some other ideas to pursue to increase attendance and engagement on the day.

The Chair will prepare and present the highlights of his Annual report but will focus on our achievements particularly around the investments we have made in the Parish and other issues that we have dealt with such as flooding, anti social behaviour, support for the new bus route etc etc.

12. Report by the Chair of the Council

The Chair had no further issues to report that he had not already covered during the meeting.

13. Report by the Clerk of the Council

The Clerk mentioned the following matters:

- Fingerpost repairs – contact has been made with a retired gentleman who has assisted other Councils with this work in the past. He has been given the details of our requirements and will look to provide us with a quote in due course.
- Nursery Close/Farnhurst Road grass areas ownership – The Clerk sought and received agreement to spend a small sum on legal advice as to how these areas can be registered as Council land as currently they are in the ownership of either the liquidators of the original developers or the Crown.
- Anti-social behaviour on the Field impacting properties on Yapton Road due to boundary issues and access. Agreed to instruct Rob Sparrow to erect a fence to protect the properties.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 30th April 2024 at 6.30 p.m. The meeting will be the Annual Parish Council meeting and there will therefore be no Open Public session.

At this point the Chair closed the meeting to the public as it was RESOLVED that Pursuant to Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 because of the nature of the business to be transacted the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of all items within Part Two of the Meeting

15. Staff Matters

Following the annual appraisal process the Council **resolved** to award annual increments to the Clerk and Assistant Clerk (Community).

- 16.** The Chair sought and received approval to action being taken in relation to the Hall Porch extension projects.

The Meeting Closed at 9.38 p.m.

Signed by:

Chair, Barnham and Eastergate Parish Council