

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held in the Reading Room on 9 February 2010.**

Present: R Davidson (Chair)
G Baker (Vice Chair)
G Penning
A Terry
V Styles

Apologies: K McCormick
J Cockerton

Minutes: Approved and signed as read.

Matters Arising: Chairman Davidson welcomed Catharine Toms as the new permanent Clerk.

Public Session: No one present.

Portfolios:

Cllr. Baker reported that he had approached the Brian Lesley Racher Trust in Royston for a Grant for the Reading Room renovations. It had been turned down on grounds of being out of their radius. The application for a Grant from County Councillor Tony Hunter's Locality Budget Scheme is proceeding well.

Cllr. Penning reported that the concrete drum blocking Bridleway 5 was put there by the farmer Tom Duke to prevent 4 x 4 vehicles using it during the shooting season. The farmer will remove it if requested by the Parish Council.

A notice has been put up to prevent people using the village pond platform. Cllr. Penning arranged for Derek Turner from CMS to visit, as the platform was originally installed by them, although it is owned by the Parish Council. He did not consider it in a dangerous state. It was suggested that a volunteer village working party could make some repairs.

The Wagon Wash has been inspected and appears not to have any significant build up of silt. This situation to be reviewed in 3 – 4 months. **GP**

More Walks leaflets have been given to the Tally Ho.

Repair / replacement is needed for the Kissing Gate near Keeper's Cottage. P3 funds will be allocated for this. Estimates to be sought. **GP**

Cllr. Terry reported that he is having trouble getting the wheelie bin emptied from the Pavilion. It is thought that the flood light at the Village Hall car park is causing the high electricity bills for the Pavilion. It will be switched off at the fuse-board from now on, unless otherwise requested.

The repairs to the roundabout have been delayed due to bad weather.

Football pitches currently being used for 3 games per week. Charges per game are £30 adults, £15 juniors and £40 for non-regulars. It was considered that a £5 increase per game could be made for the regular users next season.

Cllr. Terry is investigating the purchase of a mower in order for the Parish Council to maintain the Recreation Ground at more reasonable cost. **AT**

Cllr. Davidson reported that the Pavilion Project cannot progress until plans are drawn up. Roy Rowe to be contacted to progress this. It was noted that a Tree Survey may have to be done. The Parish Plan Questionnaire results identified a need for better sports facilities in the village and a venue for the Youth Club. There may be some funds available for this Project in the future as a result of the NHH development (Section 106) but to have success full plans would be needed.

New Housing – no further forward due to having to have a Tree Survey done. Cllr. Davidson meeting on 12 Feb. with Findlay Wood from NHH and he will be introduced to the Project Manager. By the end of Feb. there should be plans available for the Parish Council to see and for the Village to see by early March.

Cllr. Styles reported that he had established contact with PCSO Chris Brabrook. Increased Police Patrols are being carried out in the Nuthampstead area following a spate of thefts of Red Diesel and batteries. There had also been reported thefts of heating oil and a batch of alloy wheels had been stolen from a garage in Barkway.

PCSO Chris Brabrook had held a Police Surgery in the Reading Room on 4 Feb.

It was reported that the fire at Mr Bysouth's home was not a Police matter but Social Services were now involved. Debris from the fire was still on the verge outside. Highways to be contacted to remove this. **GP**

Cllr. Cockerton, in her absence, reported that Mrs Heinzelmann, Head Teacher of Barkway First School was leaving after having worked there for 20 years.

Emergency Plan: Need to establish village resources for times of crisis. Names of key holders. A list of the more vulnerable people to be made so that they can be checked upon if need be.

John Penny: Having looked after our football pitches for the last 25 years free of charge, it was suggested that a suitable gift should be arranged for him on his retirement, coming up shortly. This was unanimously agreed. **AT**

Reading Room – Project Management: Small heaters and timers had been purchased as a short term measure. The cost of heating amounted to £17 for just one week. It was decided that, regrettably, the use of the Reading Room by the Book Exchange would have to be suspended until better weather. Cllrs. Baker and McCormick are in the process of seeking professional advice on what needs to be done to bring the property back to a useable standard and are investigating possible Grant funding. It was agreed that a Sub-Committee would be set up comprising of Cllrs. Baker and McCormick and One Other to make the decisions regarding this Project. Three quotations had been received for the Electrical Works involved – these were handed over to the Project Management Team. In readiness for works to be done – the Reading Room will have to be cleared of all surplus items. **GB/KM**

Letters to be written to Mrs Peters to thank her for the donation of the curtains, and to Mrs Neilson, Mrs Ellis and Mrs Taylor to thank them for their hard work with the Book Exchange. **RD/CT**

Parish Plan: The Steering Group are now trying to organise a meeting with volunteers to discuss the results of the questionnaire and decide a way forward. Traffic is one of the major issues identified. Gary Henning Area Manager for Traffic visited the village to see what the problems were. He will suggest possible resolves.

Website: A forum has now been added (something that was suggested in the survey), so far 6 people have joined. The website is getting 600 visits per month.

Parish Newsletter: Cllr. Baker has been working hard on this and it is almost ready for publishing. Suggested titles and style formats were offered for opinion and chosen.

Parish Council Surgeries: First agreed date to be Sat. 27th March 10-11am in the Reading Room. Cllr. Penning has offered to hold this one. A book will be needed to record discussions.

Annual Parish Meeting: Wednesday 26th May. Julian Dollar from Newsells Stud Office has kindly agreed to be the Speaker. Invitations now to be sent out to all Village Organisations. **RD/CT**

Finance: It was reported by Cllr. Davidson that the Clerk's current salary is no longer in line with the pay scale offered by other Parish Councils. It was proposed to increase the salary from 01.04.10 to £4200 p.a. This was agreed.

The Clerk requested that she may be allowed to attend a Training Course for new Clerks. The CiCLA Skills Training Course run by HAPTC has been identified at a cost of £200 + £150 registration fee. Cllr. Baker mentioned that in order for Barkway to obtain Quality Parish Council Status, the Clerk should have attended and passed this course. It was agreed by all that this should go ahead. **CT**

Since the last meeting:
Receipts: None
Payments: None

Cheques to be signed at this meeting:

Parish Council Account:

£396.39 NHDC – Emptying of Dog Bins
£60.00 Thomas Bentley – Street Cleaning x 4 weeks
£287.00 Catharine Toms – Agreed monthly Clerk’s salary
£63.02 Clerk’s Expenses – Stationery, Stamps, Refreshments Reading Room
£90.00 SLCC Membership
£30.00 CDA for Herts Annual Subscription.
£50.00 Transfer of funds to Reading Room A/C

Reading Room Account:

Receipt

£50.00 Transfer of funds from Parish Council A/C

Cheques to be signed at this meeting:

£88.77 Robert Davidson Expenses – Heaters and Timers for Reading Room.
£30.52 Eon – Electricity for Reading Room

The Clerk will look into new cheaper contracts for Electricity for both the Reading Room and the Pavilion. **CT**

A VAT reclaim of £2972.21 has now been submitted to HMRC.

The Annual Parish Council Insurance bill has arrived for £1900. The Clerk to look into getting alternative quotes. **CT**

AOB: Barkway is still on the list for a salt bin. **RD**

It was noted that large lorries were coming through the village late at night. It appears that they were delivering salt to Anstey.

It was suggested that the Dog Bin be relocated from the Tally Ho to outside the School.

GP

Barkway Social Club will be holding a Games Olympics over several weeks.

A suggestion that Archery lessons on the Rec. might be popular. **RD**

It was requested that a copy of the Parish Councillor’s Guide 20th Edition should be ordered from HAPTC. **CT**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.50pm

Date of next meeting: 9th March 2010, in the Reading Room 7 for 7.30pm

