

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting**  
**Held in the Reading Room on 14 February 2011 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** R Davidson (Chair)  
G Baker (Vice Chair)  
K McCormick  
S Alsop  
A Terry

**Apologies:** J Cockerton  
V Styles

**Councillor's Declaration of Interest:** Cllr. Davidson reminded the Councillors present of their duty to declare any interest they may have to any of the items on the Agenda. Cllr. Davidson, as a resident of Periwinkle Close, declared his interest relating to the Wheatsheaf Meadow House redevelopment.

**Minutes:** Approved and signed as read.

**Matters Arising:** None

**Public Session:** Mr Paul Droy was present and addressed the meeting. He reported that he had recently purchased a Victorian water pump and wanted to offer this to the village as an historic feature to be placed in one of the two original water pump locations. The Parish Councillors expressed a great deal of interest in this kind proposal and agreed to investigate the practicalities of the positioning and installation. Mr Droy also asked what was happening with regards to the painting of the milestone, as it had only been partially restored. It was understood from Cllr. McCormick that there was some sort of query over the restoration detail which had delayed matters. Mr Droy was thanked by the Council for attending and he then departed from the meeting.

**Council Administration:** Cllr. Baker reported that the Internal Audit procedure and the Asset Register would be reviewed in time for them to be adopted at the Parish Council meeting in March.

**Election: 5<sup>th</sup> May.** Cllr. Baker informed the meeting that NHDC would be sending out the information packs to the Clerk in early March. The publication of Notice of Election will require to be displayed for 10 days from 25<sup>th</sup> March. An election will not be required if there are 7 or less people willing to stand for election in Barkway. All existing Parish Councillors wishing to continue will be required to submit completed nomination forms, having been proposed and seconded. These will need to be received by noon on 4<sup>th</sup> April.

**Section 106 Projects:** Cllr. Davidson reported that he had received assurances from Stuart Izzard at NHDC that he was working hard to get as much money as possible safely allocated for Barkway. There was to be a meeting with Mary Caldwell taking place later in the week.

**Fundraising:** Cllr. Davidson reported that the planned Casino Night, with proceeds going towards the Sports Pavilion and Youth Facility Fund, was now booked. Auction prizes would be needed.

A second fund raiser event in the form of a Quartet Evening was being investigated. A proposed date was 17<sup>th</sup> September. The Clerk to check availability of the Village Hall.

#### **CT/RD**

Other suggestions for fund raising events included a Bingo Night and a Children's Disco.

#### **Portfolio Reports:**

**Planning** – There had been no new planning applications received.

Wheatsheaf Meadow House (WSMH) – Cllr. Davidson reported that as a result of Government cutbacks and reduced funding to Natural England, it would now not be possible for North Herts Homes (NHH) to obtain the necessary work licences in time, before the bats return to WSMH, nor to begin redevelopment in the Springtime as originally intended. NHH are pushing on with all preparatory work possible, with the intention to begin dismantling the building in late August/September, as soon as the bats have left the roost once again. Security hoardings around the site would be being erected shortly. The Parish Council would be keeping the village informed of all progress via the website.

It was reported that development at the end of Windmill Close was still a possibility. However, due to cuts in Government spending, there were likely to be a lesser number of affordable homes, so other ways were needed to be looked at to provide the much needed affordable housing for people in the village.

Cllr. Davidson reported that he had been contacted by Pelham Construction who were the Contractors involved with redevelopment of the Mast site. It was learned that NHDC were viewing the site as Brownfield only and were wanting the existing buildings to remain. The owners were now needing to see some sort of return on their capital invested but plans could not be agreed. Cllr. Davidson invited them to meet the Parish Council at the earliest opportunity to discuss possible options.

It was reported that Barkway Golf Club had been issued with a Planning and Contravention Notice by an Officer from NHDC following reports of further activity down there involving a large volume of soil.

It was noted that with the new Localism Bill due to go through later this year, it will give more powers to Parish Councils and the community with regard to planning.

Cllr. Alsop raised concern over the number of vehicles from Walsh's Garage that were still being parked along Royston Road. It was noted that they also had vehicles parked in Periwinkle Close and that once the redevelopment of WSMH started that the problem along Royston Road would get much worse. It was agreed by all that this was a serious safety issue and suggested that the Parish Council should communicate their concerns. The Parish Plan results had already identified this area as a major danger spot, a copy of which had been sent to Highways. The Parish Council to chase for a response from Highways. It was suggested that the residents of Nos. 8-14 Royston Road might be encouraged to write a letter of complaint.

**Young Persons Affairs** – Cllr. Cockerton reported in her absence that Barley School's OFSTED report had been done. Barkway School were still having difficulty getting a permanent Head Teacher. There was a possibility of sharing a Head Teacher with Barley School. The School Governors were planning to vote on this matter.

The School were currently looking at planning relating to the new Tree House Building.

**Environment** – Cllr. Alsop reported that Herts County Council had now cleared the Right of Way at the end of Church Lane (The Tunnel).

He reported that he had attended an annual meeting with Countryside Management Services. It was noted that there were still funds in the budget to get further works done.

Diversion Order - The letter received recently was regarding the correcting of a map relating to FP3 (path from the Church to Royston Road).

Telephone Box – It was proposed and agreed by all that the Parish Council should adopt the Red Telephone Box, as it stands, for £1. Cllr. Davidson to contact BT. **RD**

Village Pond – Cllr. Alsop reported that he had been talking to people in the village about the pond. Most people were against the idea of a barrier around it. The vegetation around the area needed to be managed and a natural appearance retained. A possibility is that a log wall could be constructed. It was suggested that a site meeting with concerned residents should be arranged. **SA**

It was noted that a Street Cleaning Team from HCC had been seen working in the village. The Clerk to contact HCC/Veolia to establish what arrangement exists. **CT**

**Police** – Speedwatch – Tony Harris had reported that the Police Vetting process was now complete. Pass cards were to be issued along with further training for the Volunteers. He was hoping to hear the result of the Grant application later in the week. They were hopeful to commence activity in 3 weeks time. It was agreed that publicity for this event should be sought. **RD**

Crime – there had been 2 attempted break-ins to garages in Periwinkle Close. There had also been a break-in at Bond's Garage but nothing had been stolen. This indicated ongoing problems and a need for continuing vigilance.

It was noted that there were no planned cuts for the Policing Team in our area.

Police Surgery – the next one due to take place on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> February in the Reading Room 10.30 am to 12 noon.

**Grants and Communication** – Cllr. Baker reported that the website had appeared on Facebook, indicating a wider awareness. He expressed a desire to revamp the website and ideas were invited for improvements.

Barkway Bulletin – next edition still to be finalised with planned delivery on the weekend of 26/27 February.

Grants – Cllr. Baker reported that he was still waiting to hear from NHDC regarding the £50k PACIF grant applied for the Pavilion Project. It was noted that some difficulty had been experienced when applying for grants as the Pavilion did not have a postcode as it did not have a secure mail box. It was proposed and agreed by all that a mail box should be purchased and installed at the Pavilion. **AT**

**Leisure** – A complaint had been received about the condition of the surface beneath the children's roundabout. Cllr. Terry had since cordoned off this equipment until the area can be repaired.

Pavilion – Cllr. Terry reported that the shower equipment was not working well. However this was considered a simple job for a Plumber to fix at low cost.

Football – the teams had been contacted regarding the rubbish left on the Recreation Ground following games.

Fly tipping in the Village Hall car park – further to that incident, Arthur King had removed the rubbish and some address details found had been forwarded to NHDC to assist them with possible prosecution of the offender.

Cllr. Alsop suggested that it might be beneficial to our chances of successful grant applications for the Pavilion Project if we could encourage the set up of a permanent football team for Barkway. Cllr. Terry agreed to approach our regular football teams for a commitment to play regularly in Barkway and to help with funding. **AT**

**Special Projects** – Cllr. McCormick gave special thanks for all those involved with the recent opening event of the Reading Room. Very positive feedback had been received. There were now 8 volunteers willing to be involved with the Reading Room on a regular basis. Various village groups had expressed an interest in using the renewed facility. To finish the refurbishment it was hoped to purchase a kitchen cabinet and work top. A fridge was to be reclaimed from WSMH.

A meeting with Charles Lee had been organised in order to get a further quotation to install secondary double glazing.

Cllr. McCormick expressed his thanks to Paul Covill for fitting the new notice board.

## **Finance Report**

### **Parish Council Account:**

The Parish Council bank balance at 14.02.2011 was £5,309.02

Receipts since the last meeting:

£152.67 – Parish Plan Steering Group, transfer of surplus funds

£132.51 – Reading Room A/C for small items of equipment and refreshments for the opening event.

Cheques paid since the last meeting:

£75.00 – Tom Bentley – Street Cleaning x 5 weeks

Payments since last meeting:

£21.00 – Eon - Direct Debit Electricity Pavilion

£10.00 – Veolia – Direct Debit Water Pavilion

Cheques to be signed at this meeting:

£350.00 – Catharine Toms – Clerk's agreed monthly salary

£94.78 - Clerk's Expenses – Refreshments RR opening, stamps and stationery items

£56.56 – Staples – Blotter and notice board for Reading Room

£13.27 – Good Clean Company – Reading Room cleaning

£129.74 – R Davidson Expenses – PC Embosser and mileage for S106 meetings NHDC

### **Reading Room Account:**

Bank Balance at 14.02.11 was £243.64

Receipts since the last meeting:

£10.00 – Donation – Website advertising

£15.00 – Donation – Website advertising

Payments since the last meeting:

£132.51 – Transfer to Barkway Parish Council (re: Reading Room items purchased)

£24.00 - Eon Direct Debit for Electricity

The Clerk mentioned that the Parish Council's insurance policy was shortly due for renewal. Quotations were being sought. The results of which would be reported at the next meeting.

**Correspondence:**

1. Letter received from CPRE inviting Barkway to enter the competition for Village of the Year 2011.
2. Letter received from NHDC regarding new tender arrangements for the Charity Textile Recycling Banks.
3. Letter received from NHDC regarding the Draft Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Consultation which will take place between 14/02/11 and 25/03/11. Handed to Cllr. Davidson. **RD**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm

**Date of next meeting: Monday 14th March in the Reading Room at 7.15pm for 7.30pm start.**