

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

**Present:** R Davidson (Chair)  
G Baker (Vice Chair)  
G Penning  
A Terry  
K McCormick  
J Cockerton

**Apologies:** V Styles

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

**Matters Arising:** Cllr. Baker reported that he would no longer be following up the Racher Trust regarding the Grant application, as the Reading Room was out of their area. Cllr. Davidson reported that Barkway would not be getting a salt bin this year as there was no money left in Highway's budget.

**Public Session:** Mr Frank Turpin and Mr Geoff Reeve were welcomed to the meeting. Mr Turpin was concerned about the poor condition of Church Lane from the gas station to the oak tree. Cllr. Penning informed that it was owned by Highways and would not be considered a priority project at present. Cllr. Davidson suggested that it could be included as an area identified for attention in the Parish Plan and agreed to pursue it with Highways and also to ask Cllr. Styles to take photos of the lane. **RD / VS**  
Mr Reeve voiced concerns over the Wheatsheaf Meadow House redevelopment as he is currently trying to sell his house and this is causing a problem with prospective purchasers.

**Presentation from North Herts Homes regarding the Wheatsheaf Meadow House Site:**

The meeting welcomed Finley Wood and Tim Cork from North Herts Homes and Jonathan Burstow from Vincent and Gorbing.

A housing scheme was presented that would meet the identified housing needs of the village, consisting of 10 units with a mix of 2 or 3 bed houses, plus one 4 bed house, and in addition, two 2 bed bungalows. A Village Garden is also incorporated into the development. The design is aimed to continue the traditional appearance of the High Street along Royston Road. It was noted that North Herts Homes is a registered charity and does not aim to profit from the development. The homes will be available to rent / buy or for shared ownership.

The timescale has now been pushed back to 2011 due to evidence of bats found in the existing buildings and the need to now do an Ecological survey.

The next stage is a pre-planning meeting with NHDC before putting in the final proposed Planning Application. A public viewing of the plans to be held at the Village Hall is hoped to be organised for end of April, beginning of May.

Thanks were given by the Parish Council for the close co-operation from NHH and for attending the meeting and doing the presentation.

The public session now closed.

## **Portfolios:**

**Cllr. Davidson** had no planning to report upon.

Our insurers Zurich were dealing with a recent communication from Mr Lee regarding water leaking into his cellar.

**Cllr. Cockerton** had nothing to report.

**Cllr. Penning** reported that the grass verge had been cleared outside Mr Bysouth's house.

Mrs Heinzelmann to be consulted with regard to moving a dog bin to outside the school (JC).

Still waiting to hear back from North Herts with regard to the Kissing Gate that needs fixing.

**Cllr. Styles** – there were no Police matters to report.

**Cllr. Baker** reported that the website had 1002 hits this year with 600 new visitors. The Barkway Bulletin had received very positive feedback. Thanks were given to Cllrs. Terry and Davidson for delivering them.

Grants and Funding – the Reading Room has a number of sources of possible funding. It was agreed by all to form a Management Committee for the Reading Room, comprising of Cllrs. Baker, McCormick, Davidson and the Parish Clerk. The loft area has now been insulated, funded by monies donated from the village website advertisers. Advice regarding the renovation works had been sought from various sources. It is thought that the total cost could be about £7500 in order to complete all the necessary work. Five stages of work would be needed. Stage 1 – Loft Insulation. Stage 2 – (optional but recommended) damp proofing and tanking. Stage 3 – Rewiring and installation of new heaters. Stage 4 – Dry lining. Stage 5 – Secondary glazing for windows and thermal lined curtains. It was proposed that the works should go ahead providing it can be fully funded without use of the Precept. This was agreed by all.

**Cllr. Terry** reported that the plastics recycling bin was overflowing.

He is also investigating the possibility of buying a mower for the Recreation Ground grass cutting, with a view to maintaining the area ourselves this coming year. **AT**

**Cllr. McCormick** reported that the Book Club that had been using the Reading Room to meet in once a month were relocating to the Church until after the renovations works had been completed. It was suggested that an update regarding the Reading Room should be posted on the website.

The idea of a Village Council had been well received by all village organisations. A date to be set in approx. one month for it's first meeting. **KM**

### **Parish Plan**

The Steering Group plus Volunteers now consist of 14 people. Successful first meeting held. It is hoped for first draft of Parish Plan to be ready for the end of April. At the Annual Parish Meeting at the end of May it is anticipated that it will be announced that the Plan is ready to be submitted. A meeting has taken place with Gary Henning from Highways. It was agreed that there is a traffic problem in Barkway and solutions through the Parish Plan need to be sought.

### **Parish Council Surgery**

This is still on schedule to be held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March, in the Reading Room.

### **Risk Assessment**

It is a requirement that all Parish Councils have a Risk Assessment in place. Cllr. Baker to look into this and circulate a proposed plan. **GB**

### **Internal Auditor**

Mr Richard Atkins has been appointed our Internal Auditor. The Parish Council is required to have a plan for the Internal Audit Procedures. Cllr. Baker to investigate and circulate a proposal for adoption. **GB**

### **Finance Report**

New cheaper electricity contracts have been arranged with Eon until Apr/May 2012 for both the Reading Room and the Pavilion

Parish Council insurance – quotations had been sought from other insurers. Our current insurers Zurich have agreed to lower their renewal quote by 9.6%. It was agreed to renew with Zurich on that basis.

Notification had been received from NHDC that the 1<sup>st</sup> Precept payment for 2010/11 of £6105 would be in the Parish Council Account by 8/4/10.

The Reading Room bank balance is £291.15 of which £170 amounted to donations towards the refurbishment, leaving £121.15 to cover running costs. A regular Direct Debit of £22 per month will now be going out for electricity.

The Parish Council bank balance is £2,875.42 of which £2228.42 is actually available having taken off known liabilities to 31<sup>st</sup> March.

Parish Council Account:

Receipts since the last meeting:

£90 – Football Fees

£2972.21 – VAT refund.

Payments since last meeting: None

Cheques to be signed at this meeting:

£1717.73 Zurich Municipal – Annual Parish Council Insurance

£150.00 SLCC – Training Registration Fee Clerk's Course

£200.00 HAPTC – CiCLA Course for Clerk

£65.00 CommuniCorp – Annual Subscription

£11.96 HAPTC – Parish Councillor's Guide 20<sup>th</sup> Edition

£23.93 Gordon Baker - Expenses

£287.00 Catharine Toms – Agreed monthly Clerk's salary

£60.00 Thomas Bentley – Street Cleaning

**Correspondence:** British Telecom still want to de-list the Telephone Box in the village and remove the facility as not enough calls were made from it last year. It was suggested by BT that they remove the equipment and the Parish Council could adopt the Box for £1. It would then have to be maintained by the Parish Council. Views to be sought on this via the website. **GB**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.20pm

**Date of next meeting: 13th April 2010, in the Reading Room 7 for 7.30pm**