

**Minutes of Barkway Parish Council Meeting
Held in the Reading Room on 8 September 2009.**

Present: K McCormick (Chair)
G Penning
J Cockerton
V Styles
A Terry

Apologies: R Davidson (Vice Chair)

Minutes: Approved and signed as read.
Thanks were given to Graham Penning for doing these minutes.

Matters Arising:

There were no matters arising.

Chairman McCormick reported on the following:

Catharine Toms was welcomed as the Acting Clerk.

It was reported that the Book Club in the Reading Room was now open and being run by Sue Neilson and Rosemary Willis.

An idea has been put forward by Sue Neilson and Francis Duncan to use an area of the Recreation Ground to create a Memorial Garden. Grants and funds are apparently available for this sort of thing.

It had been asked whether the mud humps in the Recreation Ground could be cleared and brought back into use as a BMX bike track. It is thought that our insurance no longer covers this. KM & CT to check with Zurich Insurance and if not, find out the extra premium involved. Costs would need to be approved before any go ahead.

Cllr. Graham Penning reported on the following:

A Chimney Sweep is coming to assess and quote for sweeping the Reading Room chimney with a view to using it as an alternative to expensive electric heating. If reasonable then Graham will go ahead with this.

Re: FP14 – The dog bin has now been re-attached to the post. A complaint has been received that the path is overgrown. Graham to liase with Sue to find out if Steve Scott has done the necessary cuts.

Re: Walks Leaflet. Catharine to collect this week from CMS in Ickleford. It has been arranged with the Diary that one leaflet will be enclosed with the October edition.

Cllr. Jo Cockerton reported on the following:

PC Brabrook will be doing a cycling proficiency course at the school.
The school Christmas performance will be on 17th December this year.
There is a need for some matting to be placed under the roundabout in the Rec.

Cllr. Vince Styles reported that he has established contact with our local police.

Cllr. Tony Terry reported on the following:

All the playing fields have been cut and all the playground equipment is in good working order.

New cleaning utensils are needed in the Pavilion. It was agreed that Tony will purchase these items and will contact Arthur King to ensure that Pavilion is kept clean.

Concern was raised over the conifers that were being cut at the rear of 'Little Dunstables' bordering the Recreation Ground. Jo to enquire with the owners as to the whereabouts of the boundary and therefore ownership of the trees.

Part of the roofing on the pavilion is broken – but not an urgent matter.

Tony has requested the Clerk to do an income/cost analysis to ascertain whether the football pitches are covering their costs.

Chairman Ken McCormick to arrange a meeting with Senior Planning Officer for North Herts, Richard Tiffin, with regard to the Pavilion Development.

It was suggested that a working party could be arranged to sort out matting under roundabout and (if approved), clearance of the mud humps.

Barkway Mast Open Day

Copies of the poster were given to Counsellors to distribute. Cllr. Bob Davidson planning to do a sponsored climb with new owner Mr Luke Neal. The charity benefiting from any funds raised will be Help for Heroes.

Reading Room / Book Club

Book Club open for 3 weeks but uptake has been slow. Flyers have been printed and distributed. Message needs to be that it is available for everyone – possible need to alter opening times? Tony Terry will talk to the Community Group about this facility.

An idea was suggested that the Reading Room could be used for Counsellor Sessions.

Sue has requested that a new door mat and new mugs be purchased, this was agreed. It is understood that a rug and some curtains were being donated.

It was understood that access to the Reading Room is difficult for some because of the step. It would be possible to put a small temporary step down when required and a hand rail could be permanently installed.

New Counsellor

After a review of Portfolios there is an urgent need now to have a Counsellor in charge of fund raising. A notice to be put on all Boards, a second call inviting applications for a Counsellor to be co-opted until the next re-elections in 2010. It is hoped to appoint someone at the October meeting.

New Code of Conduct

This is a legal document and is part of the responsibilities of being a Counsellor. This will be adopted at the next meeting.

Website

Gordon Baker continues to do a great job. Gordon has now been co-opted onto the Parish Plan Committee.

Planning

Equestrian application. No objection, but size of building was queried.

Golf Course application. The Parish Council has sent a letter of objection. Ian Leech bringing a Committee to view the site on 10th September. Cllr. Bob Davison will be there to represent Barkway PC. The Parish Council has applied to object at the meeting on 23rd September at HCC. It is understood that both NHDC and EHDC have formally objected, as have Counsellors Howard Marshall and Tony Hunter. It is noted that Robert Dimsdale has refused the temporary moving of the bridleways. Cllr. Bob Davison will be asked to try and get as many people as possible from Barkway at HCC on 23rd Sept.

Finance

In future all bills must be authorised by the appropriate Counsellor before submitting for payment.

The Clerk is still liaising with Barclays to sort out the Bank Mandates.

Queries had been raised by Auditors BDO Stoy Hayward following the submission of the Council's Annual Return for the year ended 31.03.09. The Accounts did not add down correctly by £1. This was due to a rounding difference on the 'Total Other Receipts' figure. The Council have agreed to the change of this figure. The Annual Return has now been re-submitted to the Auditors.

A letter has been received from Barkway Chapel asking if a Grant will be made available to them this year for the upkeep of the Cemetery. It was agreed that a Grant would be available. The Clerk will look in to how much has been allowed in past years and report back to the Councillors.

The Reading Room Community Bank Account is overdrawn by £258.87, it was agreed that money should be transferred from The Parish Council Account to address this. The Clerk is investigating and will report back to the Council with a suggested figure to transfer, taking into account any further short-term liabilities.

Cheques signed since June meeting:

Clerk's expenses – stationery £61.32
HAPTC review - £13.50
Fireworks – Music on the Rec - £300.00
Band – Music on the Rec - £1550.00
Cllr. Bob Davidson expenses - £32.19
Tom Bentley – Street Cleaning 5 weeks - £75.00
Sue Neilson Clerk's Salary - £283.00
AVG renewal - £37.17
Philip Hale, decorating Reading Room - £740.00
Gordon Baker, Website hosting fee - £55.06
T Drake, Grass cutting Rec x 5 - £275.00
Jewson Ltd, decorating materials - £49.69
Zurich Management Services, LCAS membership renewal - £109.25

Cheques approved and signed at the meeting:

Playsafety Ltd, Annual inspection of play equipment Rec - £96.60
Nick White Plumbing, repairs in Pavilion - £30.24
Eon, electricity bill Reading Room - £35.95
Steve Scott, Mowing Whiteley Hill Verge - £28.75

Comments by Councillors: the Playsafety bill was considered too much. It was agreed to pay this but a different supplier will be sought for next inspection. The clerk to write to cancel the contract with them.

AOB:

Cllr. Tony Terry has suggested the planting of daffodil bulbs at south end of village.
Cllr. Vince Styles asked if the area of land behind Windmill Close could be researched as to the possibility of having allotments there.
Cllr. Jo Cockerton mentioned that a road sign at the junction between the High Street and Royston Road has been defaced.
The wooden bollards on Royston Road that have been pushed over have been reported by Chairman Ken McCormick to Herts Highways as a danger and a hazard.
Concerns were expressed over the number of 'Save Our Village' signs in the village.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.50pm

Date of next meeting: 13th October 2009, in the Reading Room 7 for 7.30pm

