

BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Barling Magna Parish Council held on Thursday 12th January, 2017, in in The Committee Room, Barling Magna Village Hall, Little Wakering, Essex commencing at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Ashdown, Cohen (Chair), Edmunds, Gardiner, Knight, Pearmain and Steptoe (Vice Chair).

In attendance: County Councillor C. Seagers, J. Watson (Acting Parish Clerk), I. King

MINUTES

1. The Chair to declare the meeting open.

- a. The Chair declared the meeting open.

Council observed a minute's silence out of respect of the late Councillor Laurie Street

2. To receive apologies for absence.

- a. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bond.

3. To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct and with section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

- a. Councillor Steptoe declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 14 and a pecuniary interest in respect of Agenda Item 20.

4. To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 8th December 2016.

- a. Proposed Councillor Steptoe, seconded Councillor Ashdown that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 8th December 2016 be signed as a correct record. Carried.

5. The meeting will stand adjourned to permit Parishioners of Barling Magna to address the Council.

- a. No parishioners were present to address the meeting.

6. To receive a report from the County and District Councillors for the area on any matters of interest to the Parish.

- a. County Councillor Seagers reported that a flood alert was in place in respect of Jaywick and West Mersea.
b. District Councillor Steptoe reported on the District Planning Meeting in respect of the developments in Barrow Hall Road and Star lane.

7. Financial Matters

- a. Proposed Councillor Gardiner, seconded Councillor Edmunds that the cheque payments for December 2016/January 2017 be approved. Carried unanimously.
b. The Acting Clerk reported that the Co-op Bank statements for November 2016 appeared to have gone astray and a letter had been sent to the Co-op

Bank requesting copies. He presented the bank reconciliations for October 2016. Proposed Councillor Ashdown, seconded Councillor Gardiner that these reconciliations be approved. Carried unanimously.

- c. The Clerk reported that, due to the bank statements for November not having been received, he had only been able to prepare the accounts for the period to 31st October 2016. Proposed Councillor Steptoe, seconded Councillor Ashdown that these accounts be approved. Carried unanimously.
- d. The Acting Clerk presented his budget and precept recommendation for 2017/18. This had been discussed with the Chair and Vice Chair.
 - i. It was noted that the budget as presented did not include the repayment of the Public Works Loan Board Loan, which would be £4,500 per annum, plus interest.
 - ii. It was further noted that a 1.99% increase in the precept would mean that, on the figures presented, the Council would have virtually no funds left as at 31st March 2018
 - iii. It was also noted that, with the reduction in the Council Tax Support Grant from £1,662 in 2016/17 to £1,275 in 2017/18 the overall net increase with a 1.99% increase in the precept would only be £332.
 - iv. Proposed Councillor Cohen, seconded Councillor Gardiner that the precept be increased by 5% to £37,960 with the Council Tax Support Grant being additional income of £1,275. Seven for, Councillor Steptoe voting against. Carried.

8. Annual Return - External Audit Report

- a. The Report of the External Auditors as circulated prior to the meeting was noted.
- b. It was unanimously agreed that a vote of thanks be given to Councillor Cohen and to John Watson for the work they had put in to bring this matter to a conclusion.
- c. It was noted that John Watson had donated his time on this matter to the Council free of charge.

9. Public Works Loan Board

- a. Proposed Councillor Ashdown and seconded Councillor Gardiner that the Special Motion that the application for funding to the Public Works Loan Board be increased from £40,000 to £45,000 be approved. Carried unanimously.
- b. The Acting Clerk reported that he had spoken to Messrs Wheeldon & Deacon and had been advised that the Contractors who had previously tendered in respect of refurbishing the Village Hall had indicated that their prices would hold with only minimum increases.

10. Clerk's report

- a. The Clerk reported that he had received two letters and an e-mail thanking the Parish Council for the Christmas Hampers.

11. Website

- a. It was noted that the introduction of the new e-mail addresses would cost the Parish Council in the region of £360.00 per annum. It was agreed that a Special Resolution be prepared for the next meeting so that this matter could be re-addressed.

12. Christmas 2016

- a. The Chair reported that the Christmas Hampers had been distributed. A vote of thanks was given to Dulcie Dobson and Linda Pearmain for their work in this regard.
- b. The Chair reported that the Christmas Lights Competition had been held and the prizes distributed. It was agreed that more publicity should be given to

this competition in future years.

13. Citizen of the Year

- a. The Chair reported that the Citizen of the Year award had been made at the Annual Carol Concert held at the Castle pub. It was agreed that more publicity should also be given to this award in future years.

14. Planning

- a. There were no planning matters to present to Council.
- b. Councillor Cohen reported that she had given a presentation to the Rochford District Council Planning Meeting held on 15th December 2016 regarding the entrance to the proposed development in Little Wakering Road/Barrow Hall Road. The developers' representative had given assurances that he would keep her posted as to any future consultations.

15. Wildlife Reserve

- a. Councillor Knight would present a report to Council after the next meeting of the Wildlife Reserve Committee.
- b. Councillor Knight circulated an e-mail regarding the repairs to the tractor, which confirmed that the belt, which was fitted to the machine, had been fitted correctly and that the machine operates as it should.
- c. It was noted that the fencing quotes were being handled by the late Councillor Street. It was agreed that the Acting Clerk/incoming Clerk would progress this matter.
- d. Proposed Councillor Gardiner, seconded Councillor Knight that the Wildlife reserve volunteers should be given a small gift to thank them for their efforts to a maximum cost of £40. Voting 5 for, 2 abstentions. Carried. Councillor Gardiner agreed to purchase the gifts.

16. Correspondence

- a. The Acting Clerk had not received any correspondence.

17. At the Chairman's discretion to exchange information on matters of interest to the Parish.

- a. Councillor Steptoe mentioned the English Coastal Paths Project, which would be commencing in the Summer. Councillor Cohen reported that she was in communication with Shirley Anglin at ECC who had promised to keep her informed.
- b. Councillor Cohen mentioned the Essex Vision Survey. She had received positive feedback from other Councillors and was awaiting the information pack.
- c. Councillor Edmunds asked the procedure regarding repairing defective lights. The Acting Clerk explained that details of the location of the defective light should be reported to the Clerk who would then report it to the Contractor.
- d. Councillor Steptoe asked that an item re "Survey of Street Lights" be added to a future Council Agenda.
- e. Councillor Gardiner reported that one of the gazebos used at the Teddy Bears' Picnic had been damaged and the Parish Council may be required to make a contribution towards its repair.
- f. Councillor Gardiner mentioned some power/telephone cables, which appeared unsafe. Councillor Steptoe reported that BT would be attending to rectify this.
- g. Councillor Cohen reported that she had prepared and submitted the application for the CIF Response Grant to ECC in the sum of £15,000.
- h. Councillor Cohen mentioned that her report from the November EALC meeting had been circulated to Councillors by e-mail.

18. To agree the date of the next Council Meeting

- a. It was noted that the next Council meeting would be held on 9th February.

19. Exclusion of the Press and the Public

- a. Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was resolved that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and the public be excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

20. Tenders

Councillor Steptoe declared a pecuniary interest in this matter and left the meeting

- a. The tenders received in respect of the maintenance of the Parish Grounds were noted. Proposed Councillor Gardiner, seconded Councillor Edmunds that, in view of their tender being the cheapest, the contract be awarded to Green Gateway Trading Ltd (a branch of Rochford District Council). Six for, one abstention. Carried.

Councillor Steptoe re-joined the meeting

- b. The Acting Clerk reported that only two tenders had been received in respect of the bus shelters. One of these had not split the cost between the four shelters and the other appeared to have confused the bus shelters. Proposed Councillor Cohen, seconded Councillor Ashdown that the incoming Clerk review the specifications and go back out to tender. Carried unanimously.

21. Staff Matters

- b. The position regarding the employment of the Village Hall Manager was discussed and it was agreed that, in view of the financial position of the Council, a Special Resolution be prepared for the next meeting so that this matter could be re-addressed.
- a. The Acting Clerk reported that the previous Clerk had miscalculated her PAYE/NHI deductions and had overpaid herself £322.49. Proposed Councillor Edmunds, seconded Councillor Pearmain that the Acting Clerk write requesting repayment of this some. Carried unanimously.

Meeting closed 9.25

Issued 25th January 2017.