

# BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**, held Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> February 2018 in the Barling Magna Parish Hall, Barling Magna, Essex, commencing at 7:00pm.

Present: Councillors Ashdown, Bond, Clark, Cohen (Chairman), Edmunds, Gardiner, Pearmain and Steptoe (Vice-Chairman).

Apologies: District Councillors Efde, Hookway, Hughes and Williams.

Attending: District Councillor Lucas-Gill; County and District Councillor Steptoe  
Mr P. Cohen (item 18.27(e) only  
I. King (Parish Clerk)

## MINUTES

**18.21 The Chairman to declare the meeting open.**

- a. The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7pm.

**18.22 To receive apologies for absence.**

- a. Apologies for absence were noted, as set out above.
- b. A letter of resignation dated 8<sup>th</sup> February had been received from Councillor Ivy Knight. Accepting the resignation, members acknowledged Councillor Knight's many years of service both on the Parish Council and in the Wildlife Reserve. A letter of thanks would be sent on the Council's behalf. The Clerk would notify the Elections Officer of the casual vacancy shortly.

**18.23 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 Cohen declared an interest in item 18.27(e) and she would withdraw from the meeting for that item.
- b. Councillor Steptoe declared an interest in any matters relating to Essex County Council and Rochford District Council. As a member of the RDC Development Committee, he reserved the right to change his mind from any decisions reached by the Parish Council regarding planning matters. He further declared an interest in item 18.28 (c)(iii).

**18.24 To agree and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held 11<sup>th</sup> January 2018.**

- a. Proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Cohen that the minutes be agreed. For 8; against 0; abstained 0.

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

- a. No residents wished to address the Council on this occasion.

**18.26 To receive a report from the District and County Councillors for the area on any matters of interest.**

- a. District Councillor Lucas-Gill reported that, along District Councillors Steptoe

and Williams, he had held a meeting with planning offers regarding the outline planning application for Rosedene (17/001136/OUT). It was not yet known when this would be taken to Development Committee.

- b. District Councillor Lucas-Gill mentioned an early discussion about a potential application to develop a juice processing unit within the parish and he also drew attention to the recently refurbished Old House in Rochford, now equipped as a wedding venue.
- c. District Councillor Steptoe had emailed members regarding road closures on Poynters Lane and Sutton Road.
- d. County Councillor Steptoe informed members that the consultation on the Fair Glen Interchange (A127/A130) was now underway. This was the first step in a major process of reviewing the A127 Economic Corridor from the M25 to Southend town centre. The priority was to see that the A127 was re-trunked. A consortium of south Essex local authorities was now pressing for improvements up to 2050, including linkage to the Lower Thames Crossing.
- e. District Councillor Steptoe reported that the Council Tax would be set by the District Council at a meeting later in February.

## 18.27 Financial Matters

- a. A revised schedule of cheque payments for February was tabled, as below. It was proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Steptoe that this be agreed and that the balance of £56 from the Dog Show raffle would now also go to Dogs Trust. For 8; against 0; abstained 0.

BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL		Issued: 8th February 2018	
Council Meeting – 8th February 2018		Agenda item 18.27 (a)	
Cheque No	Payee	Description	£
200563	Travelling Trends	Booking deposit (approved by Council 11.1.18 and issued subsequently to meet the deadline)	50.00
200564	MPE Alarms & Security Systems	Supply and fit alarm monitoring equipment to hall	729.60
200565	Ted North Plumbing	Emergency plumber call-out to Parish Hall	30.00
200566	W&H (Romac) Ltd	Street lighting repairs	396.10
Direct Debit	E.on	Gas supply to Parish Hall	133.04
Standing Order	Mrs G Gates	Salary	360.00
200567	I.King	Salary	534.36
200568	I.King	Expenses for January 2018	141.91
200569	Essex Pension Fund	Pension contributions - February 2018	182.59
Direct Debit	E.on	Street lighting - power supply	316.46
<b>Total payments</b>			<b>£2,874.06</b>

Supporting documentation will be available for inspection at the Council meeting. All amounts include VAT where applicable.

- b. To receive a bank reconciliation. It was too early in the month for all statements to be available. The Clerk would email a reconciliation later in the month.
  - c. Financial report for year to date and annual review of standing order and direct debit payments. This document had been circulated by email. It was proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Clark that:
    - (i) The financial report for 10 months to 31 January 2018 be noted;
    - (ii) The review of regular standing orders and direct debits be noted and approved;
    - (iii) The recommended changes to the authorisation of payments be agreed.
- For 8; against 0; abstained 0.

- d. Annual review of asset and investment register for 2017/18. This has been circulated by email. This revision included photographic evidence of assets and a new-for-old estimate of replacement costs at January 2018 prices. Subject to minor amendments to the PAT Testing notes and a query to be raised with the Council's solicitor regarding the listing of the Parish Hall, it was proposed by Councillor Pearmain, seconded by Councillor Gardiner that the asset and investment register for 2018 be approved. For 8; against 0; abstained 0.
- e. CCTV at the Parish Hall (Minute 12e of 14.12.17 refers). The Chairman, Cllr Mrs Cohen, having declared an interest in the firm offering to supply the equipment, withdrew at this point and the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Steptoe, took the chair for this item. He welcomed Mr Paul Cohen, who addressed the meeting. Knowing that the Council was concerned to improve security at the Parish Hall, Mr Cohen proposed to install 6 infra-red external cameras. These would be motion-triggered and would record up to a fortnight's recordings on a 1TB system, which would be of evidential quality. Notices would have to be displayed to advise the public of the cameras. The firm would supply instructions, the means to pass evidence to the police and a 12-month warranty. The 1½ day installation could take place around one month after order. The full standard price of the equipment and fitting would be £1,330+VAT for 6 cameras but Mr Cohen's firm would offer a reduced price of £700+VAT. The Vice-Chairman thanked Mr Cohen for his presentation and he then withdrew. It was proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Pearmain that the offer of £700+VAT be accepted. For 7; against 0; abstained 0. Following this item, Councillor Mrs Cohen returned and resumed the chair.

**18.28 Governance matters, for discussion and to agree any action**

- a. Information for the audit of 2017/18 accounts. The Clerk presented a short report on known changes for the forthcoming audit.
- b. Councillors' periodic check that bank reconciliations accord with cash-book figures and bank statements. It was proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Steptoe that bank reconciliations and statements for the period ending 29 September 2017 and 29 December 2017, which had been examined by all councillors, be noted as the required review of financial management procedures for the year. For 8; against 0; abstained 0.
- c. Annual risk assessment for 2018 – this 31-page review had been circulated in advance of the meeting. The Clerk was asked to:
  - (i) Investigate the maintenance of incident logs and training records at both the parish hall and the Wildlife Reserve;
  - (ii) Ensure we hold current insurance cover and procedures of all external firms contracted to the Council;
  - (iii) Explore with Brunel the reasons why a former Council website was still appearing on internet searches;
  - (iv) Bring forward a Social Media Policy, possibly drawing on the District Council template.

Subject to the above, it was proposed by Councillor Pearmain, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that the risk assessment for 2018 be agreed. For 8; against 0; abstained 0.
- d. Annual review of standing orders and financial regulations. The Chairman would supply the Clerk with amendments previously agreed. Revised drafts would be brought forward for the next meeting.

- e. A question was raised at the recent EALC meeting as to whether Councillors should use Council-issued email addresses for Council communications. Further information will be issued by EALC.

**18.29 Future events and activities – to review and agree any action to be taken**

- a. Barling in Bloom, plus the dinghy now located at the Hall. Councillor Bond reported that if Barling was to achieve excellence in this project it would require 15-20 committed volunteers able to play an active role. He was not yet sure that this number could be realised. It was agreed to seek interested volunteers in the next community newsletter. It was also suggested that Rayleigh Town Council had some useful experience to offer. It was agreed to locate the dinghy to the right-hand of the porch as seen from outside, with some minor excavation of earth, the fitting of weed-control membrane and granite edging. District Councillor Lucas-Gill was willing to donate the membrane. It was important to avoid risk to the damp-proof course. It was proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Ashdown to release up to £200 towards the costs of making this an attractive display. For 8; against 0; abstained 0.
- b. Travelling Trends (Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2018). The ticket price would be £5. We would apply for a temporary alcohol licence and sell wine by the glass. Donations would be sought for refreshments.
- c. Library boxes – a proposal from Councillor Bond. Members were enthusiastic about this project and Councillor Clark would offer contact details for the supplier he knew. Around 10 boxes might be created. The Clerk was asked to write to Ms Vanessa Cox, to acknowledge that we were extending her idea to Barling parish.
- d. At the suggestion of Councillor Gardiner, there was a discussion about the provision of crockery, glassware and cutlery at the Parish Hall. Some further reflection and investigation of options was required, including matters around washing-up and costs of purchase.
- e. Spring Quiz-Night: it was agreed to ask Ivy Knight if she would be willing to manage this quiz night and Ann Carlow-Bunton if she also wished to be involved. Councillor Steptoe would explore with his contacts if they might be willing to facilitate the event. It would be held in June.

**18.30 Parish Hall – to receive reports and agree any action necessary**

- a. Urgent electrical work required. It was proposed by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor Steptoe that the Chairman and Clerk be given delegated authority to commit up to £1,000 to ensure that the emergency lighting and external lighting at the parish hall was brought up to required standards. For 8; against 0; abstained 0. The Clerk was asked to check on whether the Hall Manager maintained a fire testing log.
- b. Sound system: Councillor Edmunds kindly agreed to examine issues with the existing system and to explore how much it might cost to have a permanent PA (but not music) system installed at the hall.
- c. Driveway issues: it was agreed that the temporary measure of the shingle driveway was unhelpful for people with disabilities and that the shingle tended to move into the hall. Councillor Cohen offered to explore the costs of further excavating the drive and then having it concreted. This offer was accepted with thanks. The shingle could be reserved for use around the

dinghy.

- d. Central heating problems: the Clerk reported that there was another leak in the system and he would be bringing in the contractor again.
- e. The Chairman exercised her discretion to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

**18.31 To consider planning applications received and to agree any action to be taken:**

- a. ESS/38/16/ROC, correspondence dated 17 January 2018 from Essex County Council about the landfill site. Councillor Steptoe urged the Parish Council to start lobbying for the retention of the Haul Road after the eventual closure of the landfill site, as this would require topping up. If the Haul Road closed, the only access was by Church Road and Mucking Hall Roads. He offered to open a discussing with the two land owners.

**18.32 Correspondence received.** Councillors noted:

- a. The many cards and letters of thanks received in respect of Christmas hampers.
- b. A letter of thanks from Dogs Trust dated 12 January 2018.
- c. The generous offer and request made by Mr T Norman in his email of 19<sup>th</sup> January, regarding damaged fencing at the Reserve. The Clerk would write a further letter acknowledging this.
- d. James Duddridge MP had written regarding poppies on lamp-posts. The Council was agreeable to the proposal in principle. The Clerk would clarify if the owners of the telegraph poles would accept the poppies. They would need to be removed afterwards.
- e. A letter from Castle Point and Rochford Clinical Commissioning Group, regarding the "Your care in the best place" consultation (deadline 9 March 2018) as well as three public meetings.
- f. The Grade II listing of the war memorial in All Saints churchyard.
- g. Approaches by various commercial firms re: fundraising and hall-hire. It was agreed that these should be routinely disregarded.

**18.33 To receive a circulated report from the Clerk on progress with work in-hand**

- a. This was noted.

**18.34 At the Chairman's discretion to exchange information and items for the next meeting,** scheduled for Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Wildlife Reserve Committee is due to meet Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2018.

- a. The CIF application for the kitchen would progress to round 2;
- b. The Chairman was working on updating staff contracts;
- c. The Chairman reported on ongoing progress on the Mucking Hall Road bus shelter. She would continue to seek the best and most economic deal.
- d. Reports on recent EALC and Rochford Hundred meetings had been circulated.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10:20pm**