### BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL,** held Thursday, 8th March 2018 in the Barling Magna Parish Hall, Barling Magna, Essex, commencing at 7:05pm.

Present: Councillors Ashdown, Cohen (Chairman) and Steptoe (Vice-Chairman).

Apologies: Councillors Bond, Clark, Edmunds, Gardiner and Pearmain

District Councillors Efde, Lucas-Gill and Williams

James Duddridge MP

Attending: County and District Councillor Steptoe

I. King (Parish Clerk)

**MINUTES**

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

1. The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.05pm.
   1. **To receive apologies for absence.**
2. Apologies for absence were noted, as set out above.
   1. **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.**
3. Councillor Cohen declared an interest in item 18.45(e).
4. Councillor Steptoe declared an interest in any matters relating to Essex County Council and Rochford District Council and under minute 18.40 (b) below.

**18.38** **To agree and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held 11th January 2018.**

1. Proposed by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that the minutes be agreed. For 3; against 0; abstained 0.

**18:39 The meeting will stand adjourned to permit Parishioners of Barling Magna to address the Council.**

1. No residents wished to address the Council on this occasion.
   1. **To receive a report from the District and County Councillors for the area on any matters of interest.**
2. County Councillor Steptoe reported on the consultation exercise regarding the Fairglen Interchange on A127/A130. This was part of a wider strategy by south Essex authorities to increase support for the A127 Economic Corridor.
3. District Councillor Steptoe reported on that week’s Flood Forum which he had chaired. The landowner of the stream running from Kimberley Road to Little Wakering Road had been identified.
4. District Councillor Steptoe briefed the Council on recent business at the South East Essex Parking Partnership. A rural clearway had been introduced in Rochford. Gritters and snow-ploughs had been used to good effect in the recent wintry weather and potholes created by recent ice would be filled-in as soon as possible.
5. District Councillor Steptoe informed the Council that the Rangers, which had been managed by the County Council, were now to be housed at Rochford District Council. To avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, referrals would be channelled through parish clerks.
6. District Councillor Steptoe had circulated members with the latest list of planned road closures. In addition, it was noted that Sutton Road would be closed for 3 days from 21 March 2018.
7. In response to a question, District Councillor Steptoe informed the Council that there had been no further public progress on the prospective Rosedene development.

* 1. **Financial Matters**

1. A revised schedule of cheque payments for March was tabled, as below. Proposed by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that the schedule be approved. For 3; against 0; abstained 0.



1. A bank reconciliation would be emailed to members once all the statements had arrived.
2. The water supplier to the hall had advised of an increase in monthly direct debit payments from £5-£185 to recover a debt of £985 which, they claimed, had accrued over the past 18 months. The clerk had negotiated a reduced monthly payment of £100 but was also instructed to get the supply tested.
3. The clerk reported on ongoing issues with HSBC regarding the Council’s account with them and the related matter of the Trust’s account. New signatories had been accepted by the bank, which now also wanted non-signatory members to verify their identity. The clerk had challenged this, given the time and effort required, and a response was awaited.
4. The clerk reported on a recent funding day he had attended, with contact made with various local and national funding sources. It was agreed that the clerk would draft applications for minor grants (under £5,000) as time allowed, for signature by the chairman. These would be reported to Council.

**18:42 Governance matters, for discussion and to agree any action**

1. Council noted the publication of the casual vacancy for councillor. The deadline for ten electors to seek an election would be 14th March. The clerk had circulated a draft procedure for filling vacancies by co-option which had been amended following comments by EALC. Proposed by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that the policy and procedures be adopted and that the clerk be authorised to publish the filling of any vacancy by co-option. For 3; against 0; abstained 0.
2. The draft annual revision to Standing Orders circulated by the clerk. Proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that the revised Standing Orders be adopted. For 3; against 0; abstained 0.
3. The draft annual revision to Financial Regulations circulated by the clerk. Proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that the revised Financial Regulations be agreed. For 3; against 0; abstained 0. A recommendation would be brought to a future meeting to increase the threshold for compulsory tendering, subject to advice to be sought from EALC and the internal auditor.
4. The clerk was asked to bring forward the Code of Conduct policy for review at the April meeting. Councillor Steptoe requested that this be accompanied by the District Council’s Social Media Policy.

**18:43 Planned events and projects – to review progress and agree any action**

1. Travelling Trends (22nd May): publicity had been created and tickets were being sold. Councillor Cohen would circulate electronic copies so that they could be used on the website and in social media.
2. Library boxes – report deferred to a future meeting. Proposed by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that an initial budget of £200 be agreed to support this initiative. For 3; against 0; abstained 0.
3. Barling in Bloom. At the February 2018 meeting, the shortage of volunteers had been thought to be a serious issue. It was agreed to explore two complimentary options. Firstly, to ask if any residents were willing to have their gardens visited on specific dates. Secondly, to create a heritage trail of the two local mediaeval churches, the wildlife reserve and possibly some other sites too. The clerk would contact South-East Essex Ramblers to seek their advice.
4. Feature dinghy – Councillor Pearmain and his volunteers would await better weather before proceeding.
   1. **Emergency plan for the parish – to discuss and agree what needs to be done**
5. The clerk would liaise with the District Council’s Emergency Planning Officer and with Great Wakering Parish Council and bring a draft to a future meeting for discussion. The plan would need to include Potton Island and some of the more remote dwellings within the parish.
   1. **Parish Hall and other building works – to receive reports and agree any action necessary**
6. The second-round CIF application had been submitted towards the costs of refitting the kitchen and toilets. Councillor Steptoe reminded the Council about the County’s crowdfunding initiative.
7. The chairman reported on the driveway. Subject to a satisfactory quote from Broomway Construction falling below the £1,000 + VAT threshold and including reinforcement, it was proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that the chairman and clerk be given delegated authority to engage the contractor. For 3; against 0; abstained 0.
8. It was agreed that the intended works to the Mucking Hall Road bus shelter should be treated as two separate contracts. The first would be to remove the old base and create a new platform. The second was to supply and install a new bus shelter. The matter had been out to competitive tender at least 3 times in 18 months. Proposed by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that:
9. The clerk should offer both the planning authority and Essex Highways a nominal 7 days to comment on the proposed works;
10. The quotation from B&C for clearing the site and installing a new concrete platform, at £1,300+VAT be agreed;
11. The quotation from B&C for the new shelter for £4,136 + VAT be approved. For 3; against 0; abstained 0.
12. The clerk reported on a continuing minor leak in the heating system at the hall. The engineer had visited and would introduce more sealant into the system.
13. A visit by electricians to rectify problems with the emergency lighting system, the quinquennial circuitry check and some non-essential electrical works had been postponed owing to the snow. The clerk would reschedule this as a high priority.
14. Councillor Cohen renewed her declaration of interest in the installation of the approved security camera system at the parish hall, which she reported was expected to commence shortly.

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

* 1. 18/00127/FUL, in respect of Kingsmead Cottages. The Council had no comments to make on this application.
  2. **Correspondence received – to note and agree any action**
  3. The clerk reported on a letter from Mid-Essex Hospital Services NHS Trust regarding a consultation meeting on 26th March 2018 to which Parish Councils were invited.

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

a. The clerk’s printed report was noted. He would consult Councillor Steptoe shortly on options for the siting of the new salt bin in Barrow Hall Road. Various street lighting matters were raised. The honours boards in the committee room were to be updated. The matter of securely destroying sensitive Council paperwork was raised for the next agenda. The clerk would write to all current and recent Council members inviting them to deposit sensitive papers with him for safe destruction.

* 1. **At the Chairman’s discretion to exchange information and items for future meetings**

1. The next Full Council is scheduled for Thursday 12th April 2018. The Chairman sent her apologies for this meeting.
2. The May Council meeting would on Thursday 10th May. This would also be the Annual Parish Meeting and would be publicised as an informal “Meet your Parish Councillor” event, ahead of the Annual Council Meeting to follow immediately afterwards.
3. It was agreed to hold a quiz night on Saturday 27th October 2018. The clerk had previously contacted Mrs Knight; the chairman would contact Mr & Mrs Carlow-Bunton. If neither was available to organise the event, the Vice-Chairman would be willing to suggest alternative options.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9:45pm**