### BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** held Thursday, 14 March 2019 in the Barling Magna Parish Hall, Barling Magna, Essex, commencing at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors Bond, Cohen (Chairman), Edmunds, Gardiner, McKillop and Steptoe (from item 19.44)

Apologies: Councillors Ashdown and Pearmain.

District Councillors Williams.

Attending: County and District Councillor Steptoe; District Councillors Efde and Lucas-Gill.

 I. King (Parish Clerk)

**MINUTES**

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

 a. The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30pm.

**19.34 To receive apologies for absence.**

a. Apologies were noted, as recorded above.

**19.35 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. From item 19.44, Councillor Steptoe declared a non-pecuniary interest in any matters relating the County or District Councils. In any planning matter he reserved the right to change his mind when an application was subsequently considered by the District Council.

**19.36 To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held 14 February 2019**

a. Proposed by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor McKillop that the minutes be approved. For 5, against 0, abstained 0.

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

a. No residents were present on this occasion.

**19.38 Financial matters – to consider for approval**

a. Payment requests for March 2019 had been circulated. Proposed by Councillor Gardiner, seconded by Councillor Edmunds that the schedule be approved. For 5, against 0, abstained 0.



b. The clerk had circulated by email a combined report showing the bank reconciliation to 28 February, with a comparison to cashbook entries and bank statements. Proposed by Councillor Gardiner, seconded by Councillor McKillop that the report be noted. For 5, against 0, abstained 0.

**19.39 Governance matters**

1. The clerk provided a briefing on the forthcoming elections. He would circulate a copy of the information he had received to all councillors.
2. Draft revisions to the Council’s asset register for 2019 had been circulated. The clerk was thanked for preparing the revisions. It was noted that there were a few historical discrepancies: the number of street lamps; the freehold asset of the play area and a small number of others. Proposed by Councillor Gardiner, seconded by Councillor Edmunds that the revised asset register be approved. For 5, against 0, abstained 0.
3. Review of progress in addressing the Auditor’s recommendations arising from 2017/18 accounts. The clerk reported that the Council had reflected upon these recommendations (minutes 18.88 c (i) and (ii); 18.150 d) and made key decisions. The clerk had acted to separate the precept from local council support grant in the current year’s accounts.
4. The Independent Panel’s report on councillor allowances and mileage from April 2019 had been circulated. Opinion on whether to accept the recommended increase was mixed. It was agreed to defer a decision until a firm proposal was made.

**19.40 Events and projects – to discuss and take any action**

1. The Fun Dog Show on Saturday 13 July: Councillor Bond reported on work in hand. He would be calling a working party meeting to assign jobs. He would send a copy of the risk assessment to the clerk, along with copies of the insurance cover of participating agencies. The Event Management Plan had been submitted. Posters would be available shortly. There was a request for gazebos. There was a discussion about ice-cream vendor.
2. Defibrillators for the village. It was noted that District Councillor Mcpherson was actively pursuing the installation of these in various locations. Several others were involved in fundraising for the equipment. Council would welcome a further report in due course.
3. Various ideas for community events in the parish hall were shared. Councillor Cohen would explore the possibility of race nights; the Clerk would consider film nights and Councillor Bond was looking into Barn Dances. Gillian Gates would be glad to assist if asked, subject to her availability.
	1. **Wildlife Reserve Committee**
	2. Recommendations from the Wildlife Reserve Committee meeting held 5 March 2019. Council noted with pleasure that the pruning steps were to be donated by a supporter of the Reserve. Councillor Edmunds asked that the insurers be consulted on age limited for volunteers. There was a growing need for new volunteers and a volunteering strategy was needed, to include Duke of Edinburgh Award participants if possible. The new chipper would be ordered shortly using the Enovert donation.
	3. Councillor Cohen had received a telephone call from a resident who had withheld his name. He was upset about the expenditure on the Wildlife Reserve for the water installation as he believed the use of the Reserve was restricted and dog-owners were being unfairly treated by the Council and its volunteers. The comments were noted. He had been invited to come to a Council meeting or a WLR Committee meeting to put his views in person. Members asked whether there was some public uncertainty about whether the asset was a park or a wildlife reserve.
	4. **Planning matters**
4. To consider current planning applications. The only application was 19/00148/LDC for a certificate of lawful development in respect of Kilburn Lodge in Barrow Hall Road. There were no comments.
	1. **Clerk’s report**
5. The clerk’s report had been circulated:
	* 1. Water installation at the Wildlife Reserve had begun. There has been no free time yet to allow for progress in arranging for an electrical supply to the site.
		2. Grounds maintenance - Steven Pavelin had successfully completed the first month’s work. The brambles behind the hall kitchen had all been cleared. It was a very positive start.
		3. Play Area - the fencing work had now been successfully completed. However, other fences there will need attention before long. Mr Pavelin would trim/remove a small tree that is collapsed in the south-eastern corner. The clerk reported on a Facebook request that further equipment be purchased for this site.
		4. Website – the clerk demonstrated the current changes, which were welcomed. Some minor amendments were requested.
		5. Social media - the number of our Facebook ‘friends’ had increased from 83 to 95 since the last report. Twitter was also proving valuable, with our ‘tweets’ being re-tweeted quite often.
		6. The Parry – work on exploring future options was in progress.
		7. Fire precautions – a fire safety training session would be attended by Gillian Gates and Ivan King. Notices were now in place explaining that the hatch should be replaced by no fewer than 2 people.
		8. Rochford 2020 planning – the joint initiative with Sutton with Shopland Parish Council, as a contribution to the list of events planned as part of the tourism venture Rochford 2020, had been postponed.
		9. PAT testing at the Parish Hall - Councillor Edmunds was thanked for repairing the plate warmer, which had now passed its PAT test.
		10. Audit - Work had now begun to close the accounts for 2018-19 and prepare for the audit.
		11. Mobile telephone - at present the Council’s main phone number was the Clerk’s mobile phone. The hall has a landline for emergencies and as part of the broadband package, but we do not publish this number. Council had previously agreed that Council should have its own mobile phone and pay monthly contract, so that the phone can be passed to a councillor when the clerk is on holiday. The Clerk was given delegated authority to arrange a monthly SIM contract for around £8 per month and to purchase a mobile phone up to a limit of £150. He was asked to consult about the best network to use for coverage in the area. For 5, against 0, abstained 0.
6. The clerk reported on a future Essex University Hospital Partnership Trust public meeting on mental health issues.

**19.44 Reports from external bodies**

1. Councillor Steptoe joined the meeting at this item, with apologies for late arrival.
2. The Chairman had attended the EALC Larger Councils Forum, which had received an interesting presentation on the work of the RNLI.
	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 County Council Tax rates. He had been appointed Vice-Chairman of the Essex Flood Forum and would bring a future report arising from a survey of the sea walls. He had attended a meeting of the Essex Waste Forum. The market for recycled plastics had shrunk and, in response, the Government proposed to require 30% of plastics to be recyclable. He informed the meeting that street lamps in Kimberley Road were the responsibility of the County Council. There were some legal challenges currently to the proposed Coastal Path. He would welcome any suggestions about new parking measures to pass on to the South East Essex Parking Partnership. Councillor Steptoe reported on the 3PR initiative to encourage parents not to park cars close to schools. New regulations would enable inconsiderate parking over driveways to be subject to penalty notices.
	3. District Councillor Lucas-Gill reported on the work of the Asset Development Programme which aimed to rationalise the buildings owned and operated by the District Council. The projected savings over 30 years might reach over £8 million. Most functions would be relocated to the Freight House in Rochford. Councillor Cohen enquired whether the Old House in South Street would be retained; Councillor Lucas-Gill confirmed that this would be unaffected. He also reported on the opening of the opening of the improved Cherry Orchard parking facility on the coming weekend.
3. District Councillor Efde reported on recent successful prosecutions for fly-tipping and dog fouling. He urged the Parish Council to contact BT if existing public telephone boxes were to be kept for defibrillators, as they could be bought for £1 but otherwise would be disposed of shortly. In response to a point he raised, it was confirmed that the street lamp immediately outside Abbotts Hall Farm belonged to the Parish Council. Finally, he kindly offered to serve as a licensee for temporary events where alcohol was to be served.
4. District Councillor Steptoe reported that the increase on Band D properties in Rochford District would be 13p per week. The District was looking to enhance play facilities and was actively seeking funding partnerships to replace, update and renew play facilities.
5. The Chairman thanked all guest councillors for their reports.
	1. **At the Chairman’s discretion to exchange information and items for future meetings:**
* The next Full Council would be held on Thursday, 11 April 2019 at the usual time of 7pm. The Chairman offered her apologies for this meeting.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.25pm**

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