

## BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL** held Thursday, 10 December 2020, through online conferencing under s78 of The Coronavirus Act 2020.

Present: Councillors Ashdown, Bright, Cohen (Chair), Edmunds, Gardiner, Glover, McKillop and Steptoe (Vice Chair)

Attending: County and District Councillors McPherson and Steptoe, M Power (Parish Clerk)

Apologies: District Councillors Efde and Williams.

### MINUTES

- 20.185 The Chairman to declare the meeting open.**  
The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.05 pm.
- 20.186 To receive apologies for absence.**  
Apologies were noted, as recorded above.
- 20.187 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 an interest in any matters relating to the County or District Councils. In any planning matter, he reserved the right to change his mind when the matter was considered by the District Council.
  - b. Councillor Cohen declared an interest in item 20.190 b. as one of the payments for approval would be to reimburse her for expenditure. She further declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in item 20.195 a. by virtue of being related to the director of one of the companies that had quoted for the work to upgrade the CCTV system at the parish hall.
- 20.188 To approve the minutes of the Council meeting 12 November 2020**  
It was proposed by Cllr Ashdown, seconded by Cllr McKillop that the minutes of the meeting held 12 November 2020 be approved.
- 20.189 The meeting will stand adjourned to permit Parishioners of Barling Magna to address the Council**  
No parishioners attended the meeting on this occasion.
- 20.190 Financial matters**
- a. The bank reconciliation as at 30 November 2020, which had been circulated to Members, was approved.
  - b. The following table of payments had been circulated to members. It was proposed by Cllr McKillop, seconded by Cllr Steptoe that the schedule be approved.

	Payee	Description	£
Direct Debit	E.on	Street lighting power	310.75
Direct Debit	E.on	Parish Hall electricity	16.07
Direct Debit	E.on	Parish Hall gas	106.47
Direct Debit	Wave	Water bill	126.20
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Combined broadband and mobile	55.42
BACS	G Gates	Salary	424.42
BACS	M Power	Salary	1,053.66
BACS	M Power	Expenses 13-11-20 to 10-12-20	26.40
BACS	Eurocube Oil	Gas oil	19.43
BACS	HMRC	Quarterly salary deductions	367.92
BACS	W&H Romac	Street lighting repairs	299.40
BACS	Reliable Fire Protection Services	Service of Fire Extinguishers village hall	95.27
BACS	M Cohen	Christmas Hampers/COTY Certificate	56.26
Debit card	Brand Identity	Hi vis jackets	117.40
Debit card	Zoom	1 month subscription due 2.11.20	14.39
		<b>Total payments</b>	<b>£2,963.26</b>

## 20.191 Recommendations from the Finance Committee

- a. Draft budget for 2021-22. It was proposed by Cllr Ashdown, seconded by Cllr Gardiner and carried unanimously that the draft budget dated 10 December 2020, that had been circulated to Members, be approved.
- b. It was proposed by Cllr Ashdown, seconded by Cllr Gardiner that the precept be increased for 2021-22 by 12% to £61,732 (estimated at £10.86 annually / 21p per week, per household), to take account of increased general running/maintenance costs and the cost of increasing facilities in the parish.
- c. Replacement Bus Shelters. The shelters were in a bad state of repair. A better price could be obtained by replacing the three shelters at the same time; external funding would be sought to assist in the cost of the replacement of the three shelters. Proposed by Cllr Gardiner and seconded by Cllr Edmunds, it was:

**RESOLVED** to seek the approval of the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government to apply for a Public Works Loan Board loan of £20,000 over the borrowing term of 10 years to assist in the funding of the replacement of three bus shelters in the parish. The annual loan repayments will come to around £2,500.

It is not intended to increase the council tax precept for the purpose of the loan repayments.

## 20.192 Recommendations from the Wildlife Reserve Committee

- a. It was noted that Cllr Bond had resigned as Chair of the Committee. Cllr McKillop had been elected as Chair of the Committee, with Cllr Edmunds as Vice-Chair.
- b. A request had been received from the Reserve volunteers for a socket set, a selection of screwdrivers and boxes of screws for use in undertaking ongoing work at the Reserve. Proposed by Cllr Edmunds, seconded by Cllr Gardiner that an amount up to £80 be approved for the purchase.
- c. Car park locking issues. Replacement signs would be purchased that stated that the Reserve would open at 9 am and close at 6 pm or dusk, whichever is earlier. The signs should be durable and would be placed at the pedestrian entrance and at the main car park entrance. Proposed by Cllr Edmunds, seconded by Cllr Gardiner that the sum of £50 be allocated.
- d. A sign would be printed with the three words “tell.spots.laws” that identify the Wildlife Reserve on the What3words app; the sign to be displayed at the gates to the Reserve.
- e. The option of purchasing solar panel lighting (a 160-watt solar panel with an inverter, controllers and battery, including the cost of cabling up) would be investigated. It was proposed by Cllr Edmunds, seconded by Cllr Gardiner, that a maximum expenditure of £650 be allocated.
- f. Pathway – Cllr Cohen would liaise with the head volunteer on the options available. Cllr Cohen would make enquiries about any grant opportunities available.

## 20.193 Governance Matters

Following consideration by Members, it was agreed that all general information and bulletins received should continue to be circulated to councillors.

## 20.194 Events and projects

- a. **Beautiful Barling Calendar 2021.** The Chair reported that she had sold five calendars at the Frost Fayre, three would be included as Christmas lights competition prizes and some would be given as tokens of thanks for those who had assisted in the arrangements for the Christmas hampers.
- b. **Photography Competition.** The Headteacher of Barling Magna Primary Academy would be asked if she would be willing to judge the entries received. It was noted that the process for deciding which photos to include in the calendar was distinct from choosing the winners of the competition. The Clerk would provide Members with copies of all of the entries in advance of the meeting of Full Council in January so that a decision could be made as to which photographs would be included in the 2022 Beautiful Barling calendar. (Cllr Glover declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of her son having entered the competition.)

- c. **Christmas hampers.** The Chair reported that most of the hampers had been delivered.
- d. **Christmas lights.** The Chair would liaise with Councillors as to who should be asked to judge the entries this year.
- e. **Defibrillator**  
Funding of £2,000 from Cllr Steptoe's county councillor fund to cover the cost of purchase and installation of a defibrillator to be placed on the outside of the Barling Magna village hall had been approved. Three companies had provided prices. A charity called London Hearts had quoted a price of £1,425 for the defibrillator unit (which came with a 10-year warranty), a five-year battery pack, two sets of pads and an external locked cabinet in which to house it. It was proposed by Cllr McKillop, seconded by Cllr Ashdown that the Clerk be authorised to place an order with London Hearts and to check the availability of dates for installation. The Clerk would also establish the cost of an electrician to install the unit.

#### **20.195 Parish Hall**

- a. CCTV system. (Cllr Cohen left the meeting during discussion of this item.) Three quotations had been received for supply and installation of an upgraded CCTV system at Barling Magna Parish Hall. It was proposed by Cllr Ashdown and seconded by Cllr Glover that the contract be awarded to Cohen TV Aerials at a cost of £750 plus VAT. Carried unanimously.
- b. Hire of the Committee Room. Both for economic and security reasons it was decided that the committee room should not be let but should remain locked. Full Council on 14 January 2021 would review the internal locking system to the Committee Room and establish a set of rules; it would also consider the cost of replacement locks to the Committee Room and new blinds. Interim works had been undertaken to ease opening and closing of the doors, but it was agreed that replacement was necessary. At the same time hooks and a canopy could be added; the costs of these works to be investigated. (Cllr Edmunds declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item by virtue of having hired the room for meetings of the Barling Boating society).
- c. Flagpole outside the hall. It was proposed by Cllr Gardiner, seconded by Cllr Glover that white anti-climb paint for the flagpole and an accompanying sign be purchased.
- d. A "Please do not obstruct this entrance" sign for village hall would be purchased.

#### **20.196 Planning matters**

20/01089/DPDP1 Burton's Farm, Barling Road – prior approval for single storey rear extension. The Parish Council had no comment on this application.

20/01073/FUL 316 Little Wakering Road. Conversion of bungalow to a 4-bed two storey house and single storey side and rear extensions. The Parish Council had concern that the development would be out of keeping with the street scene.

## **20.197 Clerk's report**

The Clerk reported as follows:

- a. Parish clerks had had a meeting with Angela Hutchings, the interim Managing Director of the District Council. Discussion included the RDC asset development programme, the forthcoming May local government elections and how polling stations would be made COVID secure.
- b. A request received from PC Warren Lamb, the Community Safety & Engagement Officer for the Rochford District, asking for use of the parish hall for holding beat surgeries, which allowed members of the public to come and meet the police over a 4-hour period, was approved.
- c. Meeting with the Rochford District Council planning policy team on the local plan - Members requested that a date be agreed for the new year.

## **20.198 Street Lighting**

There were no reports from Councillors of faulty streetlights.

Lighting reported to the contractor

- Little Wakering Road, outside no 408
- Little Wakering Road, outside no 398

## **20.199 To receive a report from County and District Councillors for the area on any matter of interest**

- a. Cllr Steptoe reported that he had now received some of the data regarding injury/accidents in Barrow Hall Road; this showed nothing exceptional. Essex County Council had been given the evidence; however, records would be minimal because they are only provided when emergency vehicles are in attendance and do not include the many near misses, clipped wing mirrors and cars going down into the ditch. Cllr Steptoe has requested a meeting with Sanctuary regarding the discharge of condition 45, which was to deter vehicles from turning left into Barrow Hall Road. There are meetings of Full Council at ECC and the Local Highways Panel coming up. Cllr McPherson added that there would be no grounds to refer the application back to Rochford District Council Full Council. Condition 45 could not be used as it would not stop cars turning left into Barrow Hall Road, which was a public road. Additional cars from the housing development using this road would serve only to increase the likelihood of more incidents.
- b. The Police are aware of issues raised by residents in The Evergreens in Kimberley Road. Food parcels had been offered to residents in the ward.

## **20.200 At the Chair's discretion to exchange information and items for future meetings:**

- It was agreed that the next Full Council meeting would be held on Thursday 14 January 2021.

**20.201 Exclusion of the Press and the Public**

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.

**20.202 Contractual Matters**

Members considered the recommendation from the Finance Committee on 23 November 2020 relating to tenders received for the replacement of the three wooden bus shelters in the Parish. Cllr Gardiner proposed, Cllr Ashdown seconded that, subject to the grant of a PWLB loan, the contract would be split into two components (i) the supply and delivery of the shelters (ii) the dismantling and disposal of existing shelters and installation of new shelters, including new bases if necessary. The matter would be reconsidered at the meeting of Full Council on 14 January, when it was hoped that the necessary finance would be in place.

**20.203 Awards**

a. Citizen of the Year. Councillors considered the four nominations received for the award. It was agreed that the prize would be gift vouchers to spend at the Castle Inn in Barling Magna. The Chair would provide a certificate and buy the voucher. It was resolved that, in recognition of their valuable contribution to the community, Christine and Roger Brabbing be awarded the Citizen of the Year award.

In accordance with the Council's standing orders, at 9.55 pm the Chair used her discretion to extend the meeting beyond three hours in order that the remaining business could be conducted.

**20.204 Wildlife Reserve request**

A request from a resident to scatter a relative's ashes and plant a tree in their honour was approved, subject to the agreement of the type of tree that would be appropriate and the location. The clerk would liaise with the resident.

An amount of £60 was approved for the purchase of a gift for each of the wildlife reserve volunteers as a token of thanks from the Parish Council for all the work they do throughout the year. The Parish Council recognise that the volunteers donate much of their time to the upkeep of the Reserve and their contributions to the maintenance and improvements of the Reserve are a benefit to the community. (This would be subject to being in line with relevant regulations.) Cllr McKillop would organise the purchase and distribution of the gifts.

It was noted that Cllr Shaun Bond had resigned as a Member of the Council. The Council would send a letter of thanks to Mr Bond to thank him for his service on the Council.

**20.205 The Chairman to declare the meeting closed.**  
Councillor Cohen declared the meeting closed at 10.15 pm, thanking Members for their attendance.

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CONFIRMED