

## BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN BARHAM CHURCH HALL, ON MONDAY 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2025, 7.00pm

**PRESENT:** Chairman Casey Wooltorton, Cllr Julie Gregory, Cllr Brenda Mitchell, Cllr Paul Fenn, Cllr Marilyn Lesley, Cllr Bonnie Head, Cllr Graham Head & Cllr Ian Woods.

**Also present:** BMSDC and John Whitehead, SCC Cllr Chris Chambers, BMSDC Planning Representatives, Mr Paul Bryant, Mr Bradley Heffer and Mr Andrew Stringer, the Clerk and 4 members of the public.

#### OPEN FORUM

**BMSDC John Whitehead** report has been distributed to all prior to the meeting.

The main issue is Devolution, reorganisation of the district and county councils. Creation of a Unitary Council, to be headed by a mayor of the new authority. Norfolk and Suffolk combined elections to take place May 2026.

Mid Suffolk has set it council tax budget, a freeze on council tax for the 3<sup>rd</sup> year running.

A consultation is taking place in the planning department to make a decision to continue to send out letters to advise residents that planning applications have been applied for by a neighbouring property.

#### **The Chairman welcomed and introduced**

#### **BMSDC PAUL BRYANT, BRADLEY HEFFER & ANDREW STRINGER - PRESENTATION ON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING.**

Neighbourhood plans are a fundamentally new tool to give communities more control over the type, location, size, pace and design of development in their area. Town and parish councils and communities all over the country have either started developing neighbourhood plans or applied to their local authority for designation of neighbourhood areas or forums. These plans, developed by a parish council or neighbourhood forum, become part of the development plan for the area once passed by an examiner and ratified by the community through a referendum. Planning application decisions in those neighbourhoods will then be made taking into account the policies set out in these very important plans. Having good, clear, useful plans can help build community confidence that new development will suit their needs, encourage investment in community infrastructure and underpin the strategic policies of the local plan. It is a document that works along side the BMSDC joint local plan. Its content and policies must relate to "land use planning matters".

List of policies might include for example landscaping, local green spaces, housing mix. Also, advisable to include an "Allocations Policy".

Identify areas within the village suitable to build new homes and therefore gives the PC more control to preserve areas of the village in the future. Planners have to by law take a Neighbourhood Plan into consideration when making planning applications. Currently Barham receives 15% CIL money from the district council, with a neighbourhood plan the PC would receive 25% so would be a financial benefit.

A neighbourhood plan is a regulated process and can take 2/3 years to complete, guidelines have to be met. Community engagement/volunteers must be encouraged to form a working group as the plan is for the benefit of the community and takes great time, effort and commitment.

Locality grant funding is available, up to £10,000 to help deliver the plan. A planning professional consultant can be employed to work with the parish council/working group to help prepare a neighbourhood plan.

**Suffolk County Councillor Chris Chambers** reported also on devolution, they have put forward a proposal for a single unitary council. A new cabinet member will oversee the reform.

£1.6 million has been budgeted for to help improve the fire and rescue services.

Suffolk Library Services is to be brought back in house and the 45 libraries in Suffolk will remain open. Mobile libraries will also be brought back.

Also reported on the impact to Suffolk which will be caused by the proposed new energy infrastructure.

The Chairman informed that there is a huge amount of rubbish along the A14, Cllr Chambers advised that this is the responsibility of National Highways and he will report the rubbish to them.

*Chairman's initials.....*

### **1.03 APOLOGIES**

- a. Apologies for absence.** – BMSDC Cllr David Penny, prior engagement.
- b. Consent/non consent to absence.** N/A

### **2.03 COUNCILLORS DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

- a. Declaration of interests with regards to any item on the agenda – None.**  
(Councillors who are on the Barham Picnic Site Community Charity have previously been granted dispensations relating to Barham Picnic Site, to July 2028).

### **3.03 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 20<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2025**

The minutes were approved correct, proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr Fenn, signed by the Chairman.

### **4.03 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.**

#### **a. Work Plan**

Cllr Whitehead advised that he now has a reference number for the damaged Pesthouse road sign. The sign infact reads "Leading to Lower Crescent".

Cllr Chambers still to investigate the missing barrier on the Coopers Way footpath.

The steps leading down from the A14 to Barham Lakes, safety barrier in need of repair. Now being dealt with by the PROW officer. Also sign 2 directional signs needed at top and bottom.

Cllr B Head informed that she has again communicated with the county council regarding cleaning and painting of the bus shelter, they have advised that work will be completed in April.

Cllr Whitehead advised that the planning officer who dealt with the original planning application at the site of the old doctor's surgery is now looking into the issue of the 2 street lights which the developer wants moved. PC will not give a decision until a plan of the proposed relocation has been seen.

Kirby Rise play equipment, the Chairman advised that further to the ROSPA report 2 new "Use at your own risk" signs have been purchased to be erected at the play area. He also reported that he has met with Sovereign at the site. The advice they gave regarding the matting under the swings is that it can be left for another year. Therefore, it was agreed by all to do so, proposed Chairman seconded Cllr Gregory.

Sovereign is still looking into the issue of a proposed safety barrier for the steps on the slide. if it is found that a safety barrier is needed then the fire man's pole could be removed and the steps could be relocated there, making the slide safer to use. However still awaiting clarification of this from Sovereign.

### **5.03 REVIEW OF PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING LIST DISCUSS NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.**

- a. DC/24/04646 The Lodge, Barham Lakes, Pesthouse Lane, Barham.** Refused by BMSDC.

### **6.03 TO CO-OPT A NEW MEMBER ONTO BARHAM PARISH COUNCIL.**

The Chairman informed that one application has been received from Mr Tom Carr, his resume has been forward to all ahead of the meeting. It was agreed by all to co-opt Mr Carr onto the Parish Council, proposed the Chairman seconded Cllr Mitchell.

The clerk will advise BMSDC of the newly elected councillor as he will be required to register his interests within the next 28 days.

### **7.03 TO CONSIDER BARHAM CARRYING OUR A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN, further to the presentation received.**

It was agreed by all that the PC now needs time to go away and think about this. To make a decision at the next meeting in May.

### **8.03 TO AGREE TO RENEW THE STREET CLEANING CONTRACT WITH THE CURRENT CONTACTORS SHADES.**

It was agreed by all that the contractors Shades, have been doing a good job during their first year. Therefore, to renew their contract for a further year, proposed the Chairman seconded Cllr Fenn.

### **9.03 FINANCE**

#### **a. Monthly Payments – to agree the payments for January & February 2025.**

January, payments £1,668.60, receipts £1093.45, approved by all, signed off by Cllr Mitchell.

February, payments £1604.80, receipts £0.00, approved by all, signed off by Cllr Mitchell.

*Chairman's initials.....*

**b. Monthly reconciliation – February bank reconciliation.**

As at 29/02/25 the Current Account £59,075.84. Business Account £55,206.78. The accounts are holding reserves of £88,630.96 CIL money of which £88,000.00 is ring fenced for the picnic site. £15,000.00 for road repairs (Brett Aggregates) Signed off by Cllr Mitchell.

**c. To approve the list of annual payments the Parish Council will make throughout the year.**

The Clerk has prepared the list of regular payment for the forth coming financial year, these payments can be authorised and payment made out of meeting under Section 5.6 of the Council’s Financial Regulations. All have received a copy ahead of the meeting. The annual payment list was approved by all and signed by the Chair, proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr G Head.

**d. To consider making provision in the forthcoming budget to give a donation to Barham Church towards maintaining the churchyards.**

A request for a donation towards the maintenance of the church yard for the forthcoming financial year has been received from the PCC. Expected cost likely to be £16000, therefore requesting a grant of £800 from both Barham and Claydon Parish Councils for 2025. Barham PC was unable to make a grant towards these costs last year due to lack of funds so the cost was borne by Claydon PC and those who give in the Church collection.

The Clerk advised that the PC has budgeted £1000 for donations in the forthcoming year. It was therefore agreed by all that the church will be granted a donation of £800 out of the 2025/26 budget. Proposed Cllr Fenn seconded Cllr G Head.

**10.03 TO REVIEW THE INTERNAL CONTROL STATEMENT**

This has been reviewed ahead of the meeting by Cllrs Mitchell and Lesley and received by all for consideration. The review of the document was approved by all, signed by the Chairman, Clerk, Cllrs Mitchell & Gregory. Proposed Cllr Mitchell seconded Cllr Gregory.

**11.03 REPORTS – Councillors to report on any meetings that they have attended since the last meeting.**

The Chairman advised that it has been reported to him that the damaged fence at the Shrubland Estate along Sandy Lane has still not been repaired and it is an eyesore. When the PC previously contact the owner regarding this, they were informed he was awaiting an insurance claim for the cost of the damage to the fence. Clerk to go back to the owner to ask if the fence could at least be removed for the time being.

Cllr B Head informed that a hard standing area has been installed at the gatehouse entrance to the estate at Shrubland and that trees have been felled. BMSDC Cllr Whitehead will investigate to see if a planning application needs to be applied for.

The Chairman reported that after a recent meeting with Taylor Whimpey, they have advised that where the development meets the corner of Church Lane, this area will be re turfed.

Cllr G Head asked when the footpath along the Norwich Road will be cut. Chairman advised that NSK will carry out 2 cuts a year, the first to be done within 6 weeks time.

The Chairman informed that the PC has been contacted by the Claydon & Barham Village Hall Committee asking for a representative from the PC. He asked the Councillors to give this some thought, a representative to be elected at the Annual General Meeting.

**12.03 DATE OF NEXT MEETING.** Monday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2025, Annual Parish Meeting 6.30pm, followed by the Annual General Meeting. To take place in Barham Church Hall.

The meeting ended at 8.55pm.

**Chairman .....**

**Date .....**