

Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Jadi Coe clerk@bartonmills.net 07724 737841

Chairman: Mr A. Harji 01638 510251

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF BARTON MILLS

Held remotely on Zoom on Tuesday 4th May 2021 at 7:00pm.

Present: Parish Council Chairman - Cllr N Horne, Cllr A Harji, Cllr R Lewis, Cllr K Fuller, Cllr. M. Colsey, Cllr S. Mullender, Cllr. C. Miller, Cllr A Potts, the Parish Council clerk Jadi Coe, and four members of the public

The Parish Council Chairman Cllr N Horne welcomed everyone to the meeting

APM 21/01 Election of Chair for Annual Parish Meeting if the Chairman of the Parish Council is not present.

Not applicable

APM 21/02 To Approve the Minutes from the Annual Parish Meeting on 1st May 2019

The minutes of the meeting held 1st May 2019 were proposed and agreed that they were a true record of the meeting held.

APM 21/03 Chairman's Annual Report

In what has been a difficult year the Parish council has continued to meet via Zoom. While not ideal it has allowed us to continue with parish business. During this time, we have welcomed 2 new members to the council. Every member plays an active role in serving the community. In the past year we have continued to maintain public services despite some challenges. The play area and the village green have seen an increase in use in recent months. As a result, we commissioned essential repairs to our Play Area equipment. This was completed with generous support from The Burrell Trust. We have been thankful for the support of the entire community in keeping the village tidy. We have begun an extensive 2 year program of street light repairs and refurbishments. We continue to support the Good Neighbour scheme, which is now the award-winning good neighbour scheme, being given a Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk Outstanding Service award. We thank the committee for their tireless work during the pandemic. In the next year we hope to erect a new village sign in a new location as we continue to enhance the look of the village. We are exploring the possibility of creating a Neighbourhood Plan. This will allow us to have a greater influence on how our village may develop in the future. The creation of this plan will require community involvement. We hope get this started in the next few months. As well as advertising in the Barton Miller we have increased our presence on several social media platforms to allow us to engage further with the community. Our major project for the next year continues to be the development of an affordable housing site for people with a village connection. We have a statement to follow. As we slowly return to some sort of normality, we hope to return our meetings to a public forum in the village hall, possibly by June. I am very fortunate to be the current Chair of a group of people who are committed to serving the community and I thank them for all their hard work.

APM 21/04 District and County Councillors Reports

None

APM 21/05 Financial Overview for Year Ending 31st March 2021

The Accounts have been prepared by the clerk and responsible officer Jadi Coe and these are to be approved at the Annual Parish Council Meeting following this Annual Parish Meeting. Once approved by the Council the Annual Governance and Accountability Return will be sent to the external auditors PKF Little John.

Total income for the year was £31,599 and the expenditure in the year was £21,927 this resulted in a surplus of £9,671. The reason for the surplus is that some expenses were budgeted in the year but the expense has been delayed, these amounts will be carried forward to 2021/22. For example, £3,720 was budgeted for play park repairs, but some of the expense was paid in April 21, so £2,350 will be carried forward from 2020/21 to 2021/22.

Included in income was an amount of £2,546 from the Burrell Trust. The Burrell Trust kindly donated this to the Parish Council for park repairs and there is a further £454 available when further work is required.

Going forward to the current year 2021/22, the total precept budgeted was £25,736 and other expected income totalled £3,185. Expenditure budgeted for the year totals £43,781, this includes reserves brought forward from the 2020/21 year. Expenditure includes, £9,060 for the playing field, including grass cutting and park repairs, £2,800 for other gardening costs including footpath clearing and £12,050 for new street light., There are several street lights that need replacing in the village and the Parish Council are in the process of obtaining quotes for this Any questions on the accounts the clerk will try to answer tonight or she may need to get back to you after the meeting.

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APM 21/06 Update on Affordable Housing site

In 2017, the Parish Council formed the view that there would be a further requirement for an exception site scheme within the village to provide affordable housing for residents with a connection to the village. Hastoe housing then conducted a housing needs survey within the village, and this established the need for 10-15 affordable homes. We then began the search for a suitable site.

This was found to be extremely difficult. Our first choice on Church Lane did not proceed as Suffolk County Council did a U-turn on the availability of the site. Our second choice on Church Lane unfortunately came to nothing as we were unable to agree a suitable shape/layout with the landowners. We finally settled on the corner of the car boot sale field and work on this scheme is now underway. The legal acquisition of the site is advanced, the Parish Council have had some initial input in the scheme which aims to provide 15 1,2 and 3 bedroom properties which will be a mix of social, rental, and shared ownership, all for people with a local connection.

We are now at the initial planning consultation and have had some slight problems with West Suffolk planners not being convinced of the housing need. The Parish Council conducted some investigating for potential occupiers, and this is now being presented to the West Suffolk planners as conclusive evidence that there is a housing need. We are therefore expecting that a formal planning application will be submitted in the next couple of months, with construction commencing late 2021, and properties available mid-2022.

If anyone has any questions or queries, please do come forward to the Parish Council, who will be happy to advise and update.

One member of the public voiced her concerns on the proposal, her questions were answered in full, these confirmed:

- If SCC build homes on their land on Church Lane there would be a mixture of homes including some affordable homes but these homes are general affordable homes and would go to those highest on the housing register determined by WSDC and not to people with a village connection as homes on an exception site would.
- A straw poll was taken which resulted in 16 people confirming their need for a home, their Barton Mills connection
- Bungalows are not preferred by planners or the housing association.
- Residents would have the opportunity to comment on the proposals as the scheme moved forward

APM 21/07 Any other issues that parishioners' wish to raise

None

The meeting closed at 7:27pm.

N Horne

Mr. N. Horne (Chairman)