

Barton Mills Parish Council

Clerk to the Council:

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Minutes of the Meeting of Barton Mills Parish Council

Held in the Village Hall on Friday 11th October 2013 at 7.00 pm.

Attendance: Cllr Robert Lewis (Chairman)
Cllr Pamela Boura
Cllr Tim Harris
Cllr Steve Mullender
Cllr Charlie Peachey
PCSO Becky Simpson
James Bercovici (Clerk)

0. Opportunity for members of the Public to speak (3 minute limit, not statutory part of meeting).

The meeting was well attended by residents of Church Lane Close (CLC). Cllr R Lewis introduced the meeting and Lee Webster and Sue Starling of Flagship Housing Association. Lee Webster gave a potted history of the site, explaining that Flagship owns the site and had planning permission, won on appeal, which expires on 24th April 2014 for five units. He said there is currently no central government funding for the project although this could change. There would be three two-bedroom houses and two two-bedroom bungalows.

Lee Webster said the need to look at displaced parking was paramount as were road improvements to CLC and parking on CLC for existing Flagship customers. He acknowledged the access problems as well. A traffic survey plan must be agreed by FHDC before the demolition of the garages could start and any potential contractor would need to demonstrate how it would alleviate potential traffic problems.

Otherwise, work could only be carried out between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday and between 9am and 1pm on Saturdays. Flagship is willing to ensure a local lettings policy operates for the development.

Question: would the lettings policy be similar to that at the Hastoe site? Cllr R Lewis explained that the Hastoe development is on an exception site which means the rules are very rigid. He explained what is meant by "housing needs" and said the Parish Council has requested priority for Barton Mills residents on the CLC garages site. Residents expressed their main concern that someone undesirable would move in.

Question: a Flagship letter in September 2008 said that 210 households were awaiting affordable housing in Barton Mills. Is this figure correct? Lee Webster said this could include anyone in Forest Heath who ticked the relevant box. The Clerk suggested this figure could have arisen out of the parish plan and Cllr Mullender explained further that it may mean that 210 households in the parish had agreed that affordable housing is needed in the village but that is not the same as saying that it is needed for 210 households. Cllr R Lewis said there is no doubt that there is a need for some affordable housing in Barton Mills given the response to the Hastoe development.

Question: what happens to the two houses on Bell Lane backing onto the garages? Lee Webster said that a fence would be erected as soon as work starts.

Question: where are residents supposed to park if there is no longer any off-road parking? Lee Webster advised that solutions would be found for Flagship customers such as installing block paving in front of their houses. However, this does not extend to private owners so contractors would have to determine how to access the site. Cllr R Lewis pointed out that if cars are parked on the road as now, lorries will be unable to access the site. Lee Webster said there were several possible solutions: smaller vehicles could be used, the contractor could carry materials along CLC or kit houses could be built, for example.

Question: Cllr R Lewis asked if any changes to CLC were planned. Lee Webster said widening outside 10 and 11 CLC was included in the plans. Cllr R Lewis enquired about proposed timescales. Lee Webster said the scheme was going out to tender in the next two weeks and prospective contractors would have six weeks to respond. This would be followed by an eight week cooling off period. He hopes to have the traffic management plan by February. There are no plans to add yellow lines on CLC.

Question: Cllr Harris asked for confirmation that, when construction is completed, parking facilities will return to their current position. Lee Webster gave this assurance and admitted there would be some

disruption during construction but said that how this is managed would be paramount. He added that the eight month build must start by May 2014 so completion would be by January or February 2015.

Question: Lee Webster was asked where construction traffic could park if not CLC or Wiggin Close. The layby on the old A11 (Newmarket Road) was suggested. He said that other possibilities were being investigated.

Question: would 16 Bell Lane be demolished as had been suggested at one time? Lee Webster said this had merely been a possibility that had been considered and discounted.

Question: why is the proposed development so different in appearance from surrounding properties? Cllr R Lewis said that both the Parish Council and FHDC had objected to the plans but that Flagship had won approval on appeal and explained that the Parish Council does not determine the rules but merely makes comments. He said the Parish Council now intends to work with Flagship to ensure the best possible outcome as the scheme cannot be stopped at this level now.

David Shipley raised his concern about the external appearance of three properties in the parish (Bridge House, 34 Church Meadow and the barn on Church Lane) which he considered unacceptable. He cited section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which can be invoked to require property owners to make necessary repairs and, otherwise, for councils to carry out such repairs and make owners pay. He asked the Parish Council to take this up with the relevant authority. Cllr R Lewis asked the Clerk to contact FHDC in the first instance.

1. Police Matters

PCSO Simpson outlined PCSO Cowan's report (filed with the minutes).

2. Courtesies. Apologies and Signing of the Register. Declarations of Interest.

Apologies: Cllrs Blanchard, F Lewis, Flack and Harji; County Cllr Waters; PCSO Cowan
Declarations: none

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 13th September 2013

Cllr Boura proposed agreeing the minutes: all in favour.

4. Matters arising and pending (italicised text refers to historical background)

a. Playing Field - various issues:

i. Jubilee gate. *The Clerk had suggested that the gate needs attention but wanted to know how far councillors want to take this. He was asked to find a suitable contractor. Cllr R Lewis had thought sleeves (two per gate) are needed for the bolts. The Clerk had asked John Squire to do this but is looking for a suitable alternative. He has arranged to meet a local handyman next week.*

The Clerk has requested quotes for the repairs to the gate. Cllr R Lewis had said that if three similar quotes were obtained, the Clerk should have authority to select the most appropriate in liaison with himself and Cllr Boura: all in favour except Cllr Peachey (abstained). The Clerk has tried to contact Matt Wilson again and other local specialist woodworkers. No response from Woodworx and Trevor Chapman has advised that the present gates are not really worth repairing and it will cost a great deal to do it all properly but has refrained from providing a quote.

ii. Soakaway in the car park. *Quotes have been received from Dave Wickin (£1454), also for re-levelling the field and from Mitchell & Mayle in Isleham (£1455). Cllr Waters suggested digging the area out and filling it in to make a natural soakaway. The Clerk has met with James Waters who advised the meeting he will quote for this. Cllr Boura proposed that, if the new quote is the lowest, the Clerk should order this work immediately, using the field parking fund to pay for it: all in favour.* The Clerk reminded James Waters who has provided a quote for £1168 including VAT. It was decided to defer consideration of this to the November meeting.

iii. Swings. *Cllr Boura asked if the Clerk could obtain quotes for painting the toddler swings. The Clerk had asked John Squires to quote for this.* He has arranged to meet a local handyman next week.

iv. The Clerk has requested a quote from the groundsman for re-seeding and general treatment of the field. No response to date so the Clerk will remind him about this.

b. Street lighting. Cllr Boura asked if the Clerk could investigate a wayleave to erect a street light at 59 The Street. The Clerk notes that wayleaves are unpopular devices and has obtained a quote for almost £1000 so has drafted one for consideration. He is liaising with Cllr Boura in this matter.

c.. Church Lane Close garage site. *Cllr R Lewis had noted that the planning application is set to expire in April 2014.* Flagship has advised that, subject to costs/budget, building work will commence in March 2014 on five new houses (three x two-bedroom houses and two x two bedroom bungalows) with parking. Eight alternative parking spaces will be provided before the demolition of the existing garages to replace the loss of the parking situated on the development site and meet the planning conditions. Flagship contends that traffic levels from the new homes are expected to be less than when the garages

were being utilised. It is suggested that it is too early to determine a local lettings policy.

- d.. Car boot sales 2014. *It was agreed to hold a meeting for the organisations to agree a proposal for 2014 on Tuesday 5th November starting at 7pm in the church room.* Cllr F Lewis has forwarded a request from Newmarket Youth for Christ which would like to be considered for a car boot sale in 2014. Cllr R Lewis proposed that Newmarket Youth for Christ should not be considered for a car boot sale but that the Parish Council could consider making a donation: all in favour.
- e.. Affordable housing. There will be an open meeting in the village hall on 30th October. Cllr R Lewis said it would be good if all councillors could attend.
- f. Parish Forum report. Cllr Boura offered to defer this to the November meeting.
- g. Safety at the A11 Chalk Hill junction. Cllr Boura had been asked to organise a petition but felt there was a danger that this could result in the crossing being closed. It was decided to defer this to November.
- h. SALC meeting. Cllr Boura is unable to attend either this or Remembrance Sunday. Cllr R Lewis asked the Clerk to email councillors to see if anyone can attend.

5. Reports from the County and District Councillors

Not present.

6. Finance - Standard Payments for approval (inc. VAT)

- a. £280.00 J Bercovici (clerk's net salary, September 2013) – chq. 1258
- b. £70.00 HMRC (PAYE, July/August 2013) – chq. 1259 (£210 re. July to September)
- c. £25.60 J Bercovici (clerk's expenses September 2013) - chq. 1258

Special payments for approval (inc. VAT)

- d. £20.65 Tradesignz (re. fixings for car park signs, payable to the Clerk) – chq. 1258
- e. £150.00 Old Parsonage Garden Services (grass cutting, August 2013) – chq. 1260
- f. £15.30 Suffolk ACRE Insurance Services (additional premium re. football goals) – chq. 1261

Cllr Harris proposed agreeing all payments: all in favour.

Receipts

- g. £6557.25 FHDC (precept)
- h. £1565.00 FHDC (s106 contribution re. football goals)
- i. £7914.03 HMRC (VAT repayment)

7. Planning.

Note - *ITALICS: Parish Council comments passed to Forest Heath DC.* **Bold: Forest Heath DC decision**

General and for consideration:

- a. DC/13/0250/HH – 24 Mildenhall Road – erection of single storey side extension – consultation on application received. *Cllr Boura proposed no objections: all in favour.*

Awaiting Forest Heath decisions and pending appeals

- a. F/2013/0416/HOU/BH - 22 The Street - erection of car port and creation of additional vehicular access. *Cllr Peachey proposed no objections: all in favour.*
- b. F/2013/0417/FUL/SD - Walnut Tree Farm, Bell Lane - Re-submission of planning application F/2013/0224/FUL - Conversion of barn to form new dwelling and erection of extension to rear (following demolition of large storage building to rear) and creation of new vehicular access (Departure from the Development Plan). Cllrs R Lewis, F Lewis and Mullender left the meeting for this item. *Cllr Boura proposed no objection to the principle of this application as it would preserve an existing building: two to one in favour. She then proposed to comment that the south elevation gable end should be preserved intact with roof lights providing natural light rather than the proposed gable end windows: this was agreed.*

Forest Heath Decisions

8. Any other business (with consent of the Chairman)

- a. Olde Bull. Cllr Boura asked the Clerk to check with FHDC if planning consent is required to change the external colour of a listed building.
- b. Hedge at 4 Bell Lane. More complaints have been received. Cllr R Lewis advised that Mark Hayward has instructed a contractor. Cllr Peachey said that the hedge at The Willows (Hassall's Corner).
- c. Playground repairs. Cllr Boura suggested her husband could be approved for repairs as John Squires is unable to undertake them now.
- d. Play area. The ground by the pedestrian gate is worn and paving slabs are needed. Cllr Mullender offered to provide some. Cllr R Lewis said this job could be offered to the new handyman.

9. Date of next meeting: 8th November 2013