

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 14th February 2014 at 7.00 pm.

Attendance: Cllr Robert Lewis (Chairman)
Cllr Amin Harji (Vice Chairman)
Cllr Kay Blanchard
Cllr Pamela Boura
Cllr Frances Lewis
Cllr Steve Mullender
Cllr Charlie Peachey
County Cllr James Waters
James Bercovici (Clerk)

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

As several members of the public were present for the first time, Cllr R Lewis outlined the procedure of the meeting then clarified the Parish Council's position in respect of planning applications, namely to record comments but not to make decisions. He commented that whilst some Parish Council comments do have an impact, the decisions are made ultimately by FHDC.

The new parish priest, Sandie Barton, introduced herself.

As most of the public were in attendance to discuss the proposed application in respect of Worlington Road, Cllr R Lewis advised that he was declaring an interest and handed the meeting over to Cllr Harji (Cllrs F Lewis and Mullender also declared interests at this point).

David Little expressed concern about maintaining the danger circles around his ammunition production factory but said this had been allowed for in the plans. He thought it a shame that the gap between Barton Mills and Worlington would disappear.

Another resident said the boundary line crossed her front garden. She said she had bought the property as a rural equestrian house but it would no longer be described as such if 78 new houses were built on the proposed site. Leonard Laker referred to the letter he had sent.

Cllr R Lewis explained that the formal meeting would start and said he wanted to clarify that Bidwells had stated that 'pre-application consultation has been undertaken with the Parish Council'. He said this was not the case; the Parish Council had only been invited to the public display meeting, nothing more. He also said that if, during the meeting, members of the public wished to comment, it would be possible to adjourn the meeting for this.

1. Police Matters

No report.

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

Apologies: Cllr Garry Flack

Declarations: Cllrs R Lewis, F Lewis and Mullender (7a), Cllr F Lewis (6e, 6fiii). Cllr Boura clarified that although she is a volunteer at the CAB and part of the Barton Miller team, she is not involved in the management of either so does not need to make a declaration of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 10th January 2014

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. Cllr Boura advised that John Squires intends to complete this when the weather improves.*

The Clerk had 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. Cllr F Lewis asked that quotes should come to the Parish Council rather than be decided by the Chairman and Clerk. Cllr Peachey said the gate is not properly used. Cllr Boura said it would gradually worsen but that it would be years before it falls to pieces. Cllr R Lewis asked the Clerk to continue to obtain quotes and also ascertain the cost of new gates. It is proving extremely difficult to find a suitable contractor to quote for repair works.

The Clerk has contacted County Cllr Waters who has agreed to a locality budget grant of up to £1,000 towards the cost of new gates. Cllr Boura thought a new gate is not yet needed; rather, she could apply some protector to slow down the rot. Cllr F Lewis thought that if the gate were bolted open it would be better. Cllr Peachey agreed there is no need to replace the gates at this time. Cllr Boura offered to buy appropriate materials and apply them. She said John Squires would sort out the bolts. Cllr Waters said he would need to reallocate the grant and asked the Parish Council to consider other projects.

Cllr Boura wanted to review the subject of matting on the field for the overflow car park and around the tree seat. Cllr F Lewis suggested this could be looked at in March.

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 had obtained a quote for almost £1000 so has drafted one for consideration. He had forwarded this to Colin Brotherton. Cllr Boura suggested a £10 payment for this would be appropriate. Cllr F Lewis asked for clarification of this payment; it was explained that a small payment would be necessary to validate the contract. Cllr Boura said Colin Brotherton is happy with the wayleave and the proposed position of the light.*

Cllr Boura recommended three new lights including the one outside 59 The Street and, also: outside Walnut Tree Farm and either the Street at the end of Church Meadow or Mildenhall Road near the car park entrance. She suggested that, if the position of this light is seven metres from its current position, it would light up the car park better from that end and thought, as such, that this was the better choice. Councillors agreed. Cllr R Lewis asked her to obtain quotes for the three lights. She said she would also make enquiries about the removal of the redundant light on Worlington Road. Pearce and Kemp have confirmed that they will be preparing a quote.

c. 30mph bin stickers - *At the December meeting Cllr Boura proposed buying 250 at a cost of £135: all in favour. However, the Clerk subsequently discussed this with the Finance Committee and it was agreed to increase this to 500 for £210. Cllr Harji asked which houses would receive the stickers; Cllr R Lewis said not Church Meadow etc. Cllr Boura said it should be just the through roads. Cllr Peachey thought something should be put in the Barton Miller about this. Cllr F Lewis thought the Clerk should draft a letter to explain the purpose and use of the stickers to householders. Cllr R Lewis asked the Clerk to bring a map of the village to the next meeting.*

Councillors agreed various sections of the village; the Clerk said he would sort out bundles of stickers (four per household) and a covering letter.

Cllr Waters had advised that he had a 'Quality of Life' budget which could help towards the cost of a flashing speed sign. He said he would investigate this.

d. Scarecrow Festival 2014 - 7th/8th June.

e. Litter pickers - *Cllr F Lewis is investigating prices which look to be around £10 each.*

f. Local History recorder. Following the recent death of Olive Jennings, John Berrett has volunteered to take on the role of Local History Recorder for Barton Mills.

g. Affordable Housing. Cllr R Lewis has learnt that single people and couples are only eligible for one bedroom properties and, consequently, they are ineligible for the rental-only houses being built for

Church Lane although the restriction is not applicable to shared ownership properties. However, Cllr R Lewis has learnt that Hastoe could apply to have the restriction lifted and suggests that the process be stalled whilst this amendment is sought. Paul Turner of Hastoe has confirmed that Hastoe has requested that FHDC (via the Choice Based Lettings scheme Home-Link) readvertise the rented properties in Barton Mills with the ability to consider applications from households under-occupying by one bedroom against the standard needs assessment. He advises that the advert is likely to go out on 21 February and close on the 26 February. Cllr R Lewis said the intention was for Hastoe to let no more than one additional bedroom per household so, for example, a couple would be eligible for a two-bedroom property (there will be two 3-bedroom homes and four 2-bedroom homes). Cllr Boura pointed out that if applicants were on benefits they would not receive enough to cover the rent.

- h. Parish Forum. Cllr Boura said the next meeting is in Worlington on 25th February. She said that, as Cllr R Lewis is unable to attend, there is space if anyone else wants to go.
- i. Strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA). Magnus Magnusson at FHDC, who is overseeing the process, has advised that the timetables have slipped back. The Parish Council should receive notification by the end of February with an eight week consultation process (for site specific choices/options). Cllr Mullender expressed concern that, perhaps, he should not say anything in respect of this given his earlier declaration of interest in respect of development outside the development line but suggested that the village should be able to grow in a controlled way and that the Parish Council should consider whether other developments were needed.
- j. John Wiggin memorial bench - this is ready for delivery but the company has advised that the seat will be bolted to a pallet and a socket set will be needed to unbolt the seat on delivery. The vehicle will have a tail lift to off load and manpower will need to be provided to move the seat which weighs 150kg prior to installation. Cllr Peachey said it could be delivered to his house; Cllr Boura said she would be able to help if this was on a Friday afternoon. Cllr R Lewis suggested asking local contractors for quotes for a concrete base.
- k. Playing field. The contractor is looking at early March for filling in the trench to try insure the best start for the grass seed. He asked if the Parish Council wants a price for fertilising the whole playing field or just the football pitch and aimed to look at it before the February meeting. Cllr F Lewis suggested the Clerk could apply to the Burrell Trust for any shortfall in funding for this.

5. Reports from the County Councillor

Cllr Waters outlined the county council budget.

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

- a. £280.00 J Bercovici (clerk's net salary, January 2014) – chq. 1273
- b. £70.00 HMRC (PAYE, January 2014) – chq.
- c. £22.90 J Bercovici (clerk's expenses January 2014) - chq. 1273

Special payments for approval (inc. VAT)

- d. £3,421.38 Suffolk CC (street lighting maintenance and energy, year to 31/03/14) - chq. 1274
- e. £76.50 Barton Mills Village Hall (hall hire, October to December) - chq. 1275

Cllr Boura proposed agreeing all the payments: all in favour except Cllr F Lewis who abstained.

Other

- f. Donations (2013 donations in brackets)
 - i. Rainbow Playgroup (goods to the value of £110 plus VAT)
 - ii. Citizens Advice Bureau (£130) - chq. 1276
 - iii. Barton Miller (goods to the value of £100 plus VAT)
 - iv. Suffolk Accident and Rescue (£110) - chq. 1277
 - v. East Anglian Air Ambulance (£160) - chq. 1278

Cllr Peachey proposed maintaining the donations at the same levels as in 2013: all in favour except Cllr F Lewis who abstained. Cllr R Lewis enquired about the donations total for the year (£894).

7. Planning.

General and for consideration:

- a. DC/13/0927/OUT - Land South Of Worlington Road: Outline application - residential development of up to 78 dwellings with creation of new vehicular access (Major Development and Departure from the Development Plan). *Note: plans had not been received in time for the January meeting. Cllrs F Lewis*

and R Lewis declared interests. Cllr Boura suggested that if the plans were the same as those discussed in December, the comments submitted by her and Cllr Harji could be submitted to FHDC but, if they are different in any way, an extension could be asked for. Cllr R Lewis thought the plans should be considered properly at the next meeting. He thought the public should be notified of this in the Barton Miller and that the plans should be available for the public to view from 6.45pm before the start of the meeting. The Parish Council has received strong objections from some local residents: Leonard Laker of Worlington Road and David Little of the Old Station.

Note: this item was brought forward to the beginning of the meeting (after item 0). Cllr Boura thought there are two independent issues: the development of the field, creating a suburb of Mildenhall, linking Barton Mills with Worlington. Second, the plans themselves. Cllr Peachey said he opposes the proposal as it is outside the development line (Cllr F Lewis said the Parish Council had agreed this policy several years before). Cllr Peachey said, also, that this is good agricultural land which is needed. Cllr Harji thought that if other proposals had been rejected because they are outside the development line then this should be rejected as well; on the other hand, he could see the need for more houses. One local resident commented that she had applied for permission to develop on her land and had been told 'no' categorically. Cllr R Lewis outlined FHDC's need to build outside the development line if there is a strategically good reason. Cllr Waters said FHDC has no 5 year land supply and will find itself 700-800 houses short. The Clerk outlined Mr Laker's letter objecting to the application. Mrs Laker expressed particular concern about the pedestrian access. She said she had witnessed three accidents on Station Road in the last three years.

Cllr Boura proposed that the Parish Council objects to the application on the grounds that it would create a suburb of Mildenhall within Barton Mills, it would link Barton Mills to Worlington, there would be considerable issues with both traffic and pedestrian access and it is outside the development line: all in favour.

Cllr R Lewis encouraged members of the public to write in to FHDC with their objections.

- b. DC/14/0146/FUL - 36 Mildenhall Road: Erection of a one-and-a-half storey dwelling and alterations to vehicular access. Consultation deadline 6th March. Cllr Boura suggested asking for an extension.

Awaiting Forest Heath decisions and pending appeals

- c. DC/13/0877/FUL - Land Between 4 And 6 Wiggin Close: Change of use of existing grassed area to 2 parking spaces. Cllr Boura proposed no objections: all in favour.
- d. DC/13/0817/FUL - East Of England Ambulance Service, Fiveways: Erection of a single storey extension to provide a new workshop bay. Removal of existing showroom windows and replacement with smaller windows and erection of a new modular building for office/store. Note: plans had not been received in time for the meeting. Cllr F Lewis proposed that Cllrs Boura and R Lewis consider this application and decide an appropriate response on behalf of the Parish Council. The response reported was 'no objections'.

Forest Heath Decisions

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

- a. Barton Miller. Cllr Peachey asked what the cost to the Parish Council is for the colour printing. Cllr Boura replied that it is around £700 per year. Cllr Peachey said it is not worth it. Cllr R Lewis said it could be reviewed at some point.
- b. Cooption. Cllr Mullender asked if Cllr Harris intended to continue as a councillor now that he had moved out of the village. Cllr Boura outlined the co-option process; in particular, Cllr Harris must resign in writing before the process can begin. A member of the public, Keith Fuller, had attended the meeting and expressed an interest in joining the Parish Council.
- c. Biker Fest. Cllr R Lewis explained that a weekend music concert was being arranged to take place on Nigel Warin's field. He said the organisers were keen not to upset anyone. He said the stage would face towards the A11 and that it would be held on 11th-13th July. He said the event would, in part, raise money for charity. Cllr Harji asked how many attendees were expected.

9. Date of next meeting: 14th March 2014