

Bardwell Parish Council

Chairman: David Ruffles Vice Chairman: Andrew Smith

**Minutes of a meeting of Bardwell Parish Council held on
Tuesday 3rd September 2019, commencing at 7.30pm.**

Venue: The Tithe Barn (Bardwell's Village Hall), Up Street, Bardwell IP31 1AA

Present:

Councillors: David Ruffles (Chairman), Andrew Smith (Vice Chairman and Ward Councillor), John Babraff, Ali Compton, Geoff Cough, Peter Sanderson, Tony Stokes.
Joanna Spicer MBE (Suffolk County Councillor)

3 members of the public (part of the meeting only)

1. Apologies for absence: None

Cllr Smith had sent apologies for late arrival: Attending another meeting at West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds, prior to this one.

2. Declarations of interest

Cllr Smith has an ongoing pecuniary interest re Finance item 16iii re approval of Clerk/RFO's salary.

Potential interest highlighted re discussions at item 19.i Community Field by Cllrs Smith and Babraff due to both having previously employed the parish council's preferred contractor, The CountyLife Landscapes. No objections re Cllrs Smith/Babraff's involvement in the discussion or vote.

3. Approval of Minutes

a. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 2nd July 2019 were approved and duly signed by the Chairman

b. The Minutes of the Meeting (re Community Field) were approved and duly signed by the Chairman

4. Public Participation Session Members of the public are welcome to make comments and to raise questions in relation to items on this agenda. Other matters may be raised at the Chairman's discretion.

a. **River Blackbourne** A resident raised the issue of the river being clogged with weed and asked whether the parish council could contact the Environment Agency to get something done. He highlighted that this is exacerbated by the farmer/landowner extracting water from the river during the summer months.

The resident had previously raised this matter at the July meeting and prior to than in 2017.

Response: On both occasions the Environment agency had been contacted they explained that the riparian owners are responsible for the maintenance of watercourses that flow through their land. There is a schedule of works carried out by the Environment agency, details of which are on their website.

At the time of the 2017 enquiry the Environment Agency did not have the Bardwell section on their schedule. Work is scheduled to be carried out (on a Bardwell section) during 2019/20 - no precise date is available.

Action: The Clerk will deliver a copy of the response to the resident (not on email).

The Clerk mentioned that during her enquiries into this issue (in view of the resident's concerns re fishing of the river being affected), she had established that a section of the river in Ixworth is maintained by the landowner (not the Environment Agency) in association with Ixworth Angling club.

b. **Churchyard**

A resident expressed concern about neglected/overgrown graves in the Churchyard; he raised the point that the parish council provides financial support for the churchyard maintenance.

Response: This is not a parish council responsibility: the resident should raise such matters directly with the PCC.

Although the Parish Council provides a contribution of £800 towards the upkeep of the churchyard, this does not cover the annual maintenance costs.

The Chairman highlighted that work parties are held when a small group of volunteers go along to help with the churchyard upkeep (not organised by Bardwell Parish Council) and new/additional volunteers are always welcome.

Following the meeting the Chairman has spoken to Dinkie Williamson, Church Warden. It is the responsibility of relations to attend to graves. In the absence of any living relations, the church will carry out the work as and when it has volunteers to do so during work parties.

This response is precisely that which was expected and had been suggested by Councillors during the meeting.

c. **Hastoe Weeds**

A resident raised concerns about the weeds growing in front of the Hastoe Houses.

The Parish Council is already in communication with Hastoe about this matter. Photos of all areas have been previously sent.

d. **Police** A resident raised the impact of the increasing pressures upon the police as a result of the significant building programme, and wants to know where/how the additional money being raised from council tax is being applied, as he does not believe it is being applied to front line policing.

The resident raised this question at a previous meeting and an enquiry has been submitted to the Police.

See item 6a: Rural Task Force – this is an opportunity for residents to 'have their say'. It was suggested to the resident that he should use this opportunity and submit his comments and concerns via the survey document.

Cllr Spicer highlighted that Increased populations/housing bring increased pressures. New Estates are now built to 'design out' crime and take into account the impact of appropriate lighting, walls, hedges.

Cllr Spicer also mentioned the fact that the number of house fires being attended have decreased because all the new houses are much safer.

5. SCC report

a. Traffic Calming – Low Street and Spring Road

During August, Cllr Spicer and the SCC Community Engineer, Francesca Clarke (FC) had visited Bardwell.

Low Street: A report is being prepared (by FC) re the installation of Roundels from the entrance to the Village at Low Street, (one likely to be near the entrance to Chapel Cottage), which will complement the current 'Slow' road markings. There are likely to be up to 3 roundels. Installation difficulties exist where vehicles are regularly parked.

Spring Road was not included within this review.

As previously, the various options available to encourage traffic to slow down were discussed.

Village gateway and white lines: A suggestion of a village gateway on the approach into the village along Spring Road would normally be considered, however there is not a sufficiently wide verge for the installation in this location.

Speed humps: As previously explained, SCC would not consider Spring Road to be a suitable location for speed humps.

Chicanes are the preferred option for locations such as Spring Road: these are most effective for slowing traffic and reinforcing speed limits.

However, it is unlikely to be able to fit a chicane at Spring Road.

Speed Cam: A request has been submitted and acknowledged. However, whilst Bardwell is 'on their list' it is not a priority: No date for attendance/carrying out monitoring has been provided.

Traffic Data Collection from Bardwell's Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) was provided by Cllrs Stokes and Compton

Cllr Stokes provided traffic data collected re vehicles travelling in excess of 30mph over the previous 3 month period. Full details have previously been circulated to Councillors and will also be made available on the website.

it was highlighted that: The peak time for traffic is 8am; the highest proportion of vehicles exceeding the speed limit occurs around the time that children are going to and from school.

The Vehicle Speed Watch team is only able to submit data recorded whilst they are onsite: the VAS does not record registration numbers.

Details/registration numbers of vehicles (recorded by the speed watch team) exceeding the speed limit are submitted to the police, who write directly to the motorists concerned. Once submitted, the information is destroyed (legal requirement).

The police provide a monthly report stating how many letters have been issued.

The information is not sufficiently detailed to identify numbers by village/location.

Information will be included within the October issue of Bardwell Village News (AC/TS)

Ongoing considerations: Cllr Spicer has a limited budget for traffic calming.

Risks are at junctions and entrances: When assessing traffic calming measures and requirements SCC look at the numbers of traffic movements in and out of the junctions/entrances which are the critical point at which you need to be slowing down traffic.

Q: How many accidents have occurred in the Spring Road location

A: None

It was suggested that finding ways to enhance the actual entrances of the community field and playing field to ensure they are entirely clear, might be an effective way to calm through traffic.

b. **Land at Glassfield Road**

A planning contravention notice has been served on the land owner/operator

c. **Lilac House, Quaker Lane – Pothole/deteriorating verge**

A report has been submitted to SCC. This was reviewed by Cllr Spicer with Francesca Clarke during their visit to Bardwell during August. The issue has been logged (for rectification) but is not considered a priority.

Cllr Clough described having been present on one occasion when a vehicle had driven past resulting in dirty water being thrown into the boot of an open vehicle on the pathway of Lilac House.

The Clerk will forward photographs illustrating the issues to Cllr Spicer (*actioned*)

(*Note: Since the meeting the work has been completed*)

d. **SCC – Work to resolve flooding** issues at The Green and in the vicinity of Bardwell Stud.

Work carried out in the vicinity of the Stud appears to have been beneficial. It is not known whether this is complete.

SCC were previously linking the 2 jobs. Cllr Spicer will follow up re further information.

6. **Ward Councillor report - see report attached** *Due to the late arrival of Cllr Smith from a meeting at West Suffolk House re the West Suffolk rural Task Force this item was discussed after item 12.ii*

a. **West Suffolk Rural Task Force**

Survey: The intention is to communicate with every individual/organisation and umbrella organisations such as the NHS. The links within the survey are aimed at residents and businesses.

Regional Meetings: The survey is being supplemented by 4 regional meetings. The nearest to Bardwell is being held at: Stanton Village Hall on 18th September, from 5.30pm – 7pm

Whilst Cllr Smith does not believe the times will suit everybody it is hoped that the range of times and locations will enable as many people as possible to attend.

Events will be preceded by a presentation, followed by break out groups sat around tables to discuss issues raised.

It is a chance from a qualitative perspective to put our organisation's views as a parish council and individual views.

Andrew has opted for his ward to use parish clerks subject to the parish council's agreement that all organisations would be invited to comment.

This is probably the only opportunity we will have for many years to take some of the best ideas and hopefully implement them, and whilst there are matters that the District Council has no direct authority over, there may be people who can champion the issues.

Action: Clerk to request hard copy of survey

Action Cllr Smith: Details of the survey will be included in October BVN.

- b. **The Birches:** The Enforcement Officer is arranging to meet the landowner on site to establish whether there have been any breaches of the planning conditions.
- c. **Sunnyside:** The owners intend to remove the mobile homes from site, but the time frame is currently unknown. Due to the number of open cases (300 – 400 at any one time) West Suffolk Council Officers cannot currently state when this will be followed up.
- 7. **Police report :** None
- 8. **Chairman's report:**
The Chairman had accepted an invitation to, and attended to the Induction of, the New Rector.
- 9. **Planning:** Nothing to report
- 10. **Highways**
- i. **Winter Gritting Arrangements:** See attached letter from SCC highways. No comments received.
Action: Clerk will be submitting location plan of existing bins and requesting refilling where necessary - *Actioned*
- ii. **School - Zig Zag lines outside school**
The original zig zag lines have been reduced in accordance with legislation (see attached email).
The Parish Council has been asked its opinion on installing either a single or double yellow lines from the extent of the new lines to the extent of the previous zig zag.
This information had only been received on 2nd September, therefore not formally included on the agenda.
Councillors considered that a single yellow line would be appropriate – with the option to review its decision at a later date should it become necessary.

Note: Following subsequent comments from Cllr Spicer who had left the meeting prior to this item being discussed, and who has highlighted the fact that reviewing this at a later date would not be a simple process and extremely expensive to implement (change of traffic regulations etc) – this issue will be included for discussion and decision at the October meeting.

11. Bardwell Community Speed Watch

As previously agreed, data will be presented to the Parish Council on a 3 monthly cycle.

A list of planned dates/locations for the VAS has been circulated to Councillors. (copies attached)

As previously agreed, the speed watch team carried out a session in Low Street outside Thatcher's End.

No vehicles were recorded exceeding the speed limit, and therefore there is no data to provide to the enforcement team as evidence for speeding in this location.

It was highlighted that the fact the speed watch team is present does (generally) slow people down.

As previously detailed, the 'Speed Cam' enforcement team will be attending Bardwell: date to be advised.

A recently witnessed incident was described in relation to the difficulties experienced by large vehicles approaching Up Street, the Green from Stanton Road:

An articulated lorry trying to turn right down Stanton Road gouged out large areas of the traffic island and the Green having taken approximately 20 moves to manoeuvre round.

This is not an isolated incident, others are regularly seen driving through the 'no entry' sign due to such difficulties.

Other vehicles such as large agricultural vehicles often have problems getting through the village – e.g at Up Street, due to traffic parked on both sides of the roads.

This has been/is an ongoing situation: No solutions were proposed.

12. Bardwell Playing Field

i. BPFA report – see attached.

The BPFA report provided an update about the pavilion Project, Tennis Coaching and Annual Quiz, that will take place on Friday 11 October 2019

ii. Proposal submitted by Cllr Sanderson requesting that Bardwell Parish Council give consideration to contributing to the installation of a temporary provision of a WC at the Bardwell Community Field Car Park.

Proposal: "It is proposed to demolish the old pavilion shortly to make way for the ground work necessary for foul drainage.

This means there will not be any toilet facilities on the site. A temporary toilet has been arranged for delivery to the construction site in the next few days.

At the BPFA meeting on Monday (19th August) we (BPFA) discussed the implications for football activity on the Community Field. In view of recent events we consider it would be prudent to provide one toilet there too, probably positioned in the corner of the car park.

The cost is £90/month which will probably be for 3 months and it was agreed that I should ask the PC if it would make a contribution towards this installation. Obviously, it would only be a temporary arrangement but available for use by the general public during that time."

During the discussion about this proposal a concern was raised that as there is a later agenda item included which includes a suggestion of cutting existing expenditure to reduce the parish council's budget costs, that the parish council should not – at this point - be agreeing to additional expenditure that will increase its budget costs. It was suggested that the costs of temporary toilet facilities should form part of the new pavilion costs. However, the majority consensus of the meeting was that it was acceptable to proceed.

Resolution: Following a vote the majority decision was in favour.

It was resolved that the Parish Council will provide a contribution to the BPFA's costs of providing a temporary toilet on the Community Field Car Park for up to 3 months. It understands that the cost will be £90.00 per month: The Parish Council is willing to provide a contribution of £50.00 per month towards this cost for a maximum period of 3 months.

Cllr Smith arrived/joined meeting – Item 6 was discussed here

13. Community Field

a Provision of Water Supply:

Anglian water requires 2 inspections. The first has been carried out:

1. Pipe laying Inspection: Passed
2. To confirm adherence to water regulations: Inspection awaited.

It is likely that a cupboard will be required to surround the standpipe: **Action: Cllr Smith**

- b. Proposal to install appropriate signage at the location of the Water Pipe**, identifying its location across the ditch: Estimated cost £20

Resolution: The Proposal was unanimously agreed. Action Chairman.

c. Remodelling of wildlife/wildflower/sensory area – work carried out 17th/18th August.

Proposal: That grass seed should be purchased and the area previously covered by the soil heap should be seeded now.

Resolution: The proposal was unanimously agreed Action DR to arrange reseeding

Action Clerk: Seed to be ordered - 20kilo bag from Barenburg. Same mix as previously utilised on community field.

- e. **17/18th August:** TH had drawn out area to be worked and DR and GH spent 15 hours successfully undertaking the remodelling work. More had been achieved in the time than had been anticipated.
- f. **Grounds maintenance** – update – any matters requiring consideration
Water bottles being left at community field: Action Dr will talk to MB and ask that the football club ensures that these are removed/appropriately disposed of after each match.

14. Community Field: Dogs – Review

Contrary to the arrangements at the playing field, dogs have been permitted on the community field from the outset of the project.

The Parish Council has previously agreed that this arrangement is to be kept under review, with the provision that such permission could, and would, be rescinded or amended subject to circumstances.

The Chairman advised that as a regular dog walker across the field, he is unaware of there being an issue of dog fouling in this location. GH has confirmed that he has not identified any issues since undertaking the regular maintenance.

Resolution It was agreed that the current arrangements are satisfactory. This will be reviewed again in September 2020, or sooner if any issues arise in the meanwhile.

15. Bardwell Tithe Barn

Cllr Smith reported that there is now progress in finalising the lease.

16. Finance

i. Audit

a. **Audit 2018/19:** *Completion of Limited Assurance Review for the year ended 31 March 2019 - Letter dated 20 August 2019, received via email 21 August - previously circulated to Councillors.* PKF Littlejohn LLP (Auditor) has confirmed that the annual review of the Annual governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) has been completed.

b. The signed External Auditor Report Certificate (section 3) states that: "On the basis of our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the AGAR is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the authority: None"

c. In accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 (SI 2015/234) The Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been published on the Parish Council website www.bardwell.onesuffolk.net together with the certified AGAR (sections 1,2,3)

ii. Financial Report – See attached

Details of payments and receipts during the period 1 July – 4 September together with bank balances as at 3 September and comparison of expenditure against budget to date, were provided to councillors.

It was noted that the lottery grant £10,000 has been credited to the community field account (2 August 2019)

iii. **Invoices** for approval/payment 3 September 2019 totalling £500.62 were approved for payment

17. Clerk's Report: to include request for financial support to attend training

No report: All matters dealt with elsewhere.

Financial support for training request withdrawn.

18. Correspondence received requiring action/decision

a. **To consider whether/how the Parish Council wishes to respond to the following surveys (previously circulated)**

i. Rural Opportunities and Issues Survey (see item 6)

ii. Car park Users Survey – Councillors to respond individually if wish to do so.

iii. Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2019

No requirement to complete: Cllr Smith will be attending a meeting at WSH on 3rd October at which the content of this document will be discussed.

b. **VE Celebrations: 2020: request from Stanton PC asking whether Bardwell Parish Council has plans to take part in the celebrations and if so what event it will be running.**

Action Clerk: Response: Bardwell Parish Council is not organising any events but will be pleased to be kept informed of Stanton's events which it will be pleased to promote and support.

c. **Ben Lord: Atrial Fibrillation (AF)/Stroke Prevention programme: See attached.**

Action: Clerk to invite Ben Lord and Dr Cannon to hold a similar presentation for Bardwell residents.

d. **SALC : Area Meeting 10th September**

Cllr Stokes (SALC representative) will be attending. Any other councillors who also wish to attend will be welcome.

19. Closed Item: It was resolved that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

1. Community Field – to discuss quotes/costs for path and boardwalk

Financial details had previously been circulated to Councillors.

a. Footpaths

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed in to accept the quotation from The CountryLife Landscapes for the extension to the existing path from the 'hockey stick' but with some adjustments to the original plan so that the path goes in a slight curve from the hockey stick junction to the school corner.

The Hoggin path will be 1.5metres wide.

Action AS to discuss amendment with TH and The CountryLife Landscapes.

b. Separate trench for water pipe

Resolved: It was agreed that a separate trench will be dug for the water pipe in preference to it being laid underneath the path (for ease of access). GH will be asked to dig this.

11000 volt underground cable :

Action – AS to confirm location – this will require marking and the area in the vicinity to be dug by hand

c. Boardwalk This is an essential element of the design, however, concerns were raised about the longevity and maintenance of wood.

Action: AS to discuss with TH re his opinion of a composite material as an alternative and to obtain comparative costs.

2. Staffing Matters: Costs and contractual details

The Parish Council, as an employer, is required to adhere to relevant legislation and legal guidelines. No changes will be made to the existing staffing arrangements.

20. Questions to the Chair: None

21. Next Meeting: 1st October 2019

The meeting ended at 9.50pm