

Bardwell Parish Council

Chairman: David Ruffles Vice Chairman: Andrew Smith

Minutes of the meeting of Bardwell Parish Council
held via Zoom on Tuesday 6th October 2020, commencing at 7.00pm

In attendance

Councillors: David Ruffles (Chairman); Andrew Smith (Vice Chairman and Ward Councillor);
Alison Compton: John Babraff; Tony Stokes; Geoff Clough;
Suffolk County Councillor Joanna Spicer MBE
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer: Pauline Smith
Members of the public: 1

1. To receive apologies and approval for absences: None
2. To receive declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest relating to items on the agenda
Cllr Smith: ongoing pecuniary interest re finance item Clerk/RFO salary
3. To confirm minutes of the meeting held on 1st September 2020
Following brief discussion and explanation during which the Clerk explained the reason for the wording of the sentence in item 3 "*The Clerk acknowledged a demand from Cllr Clough that the minutes should be issued within 2 weeks of meetings*" Cllr Clough asked councillors to pass this as a resolution. The request did not progress and the discussion was concluded.
Cllr Smith advised that West Suffolk Council meeting minutes are available 7 days prior to the next scheduled meeting.
The minutes were then accepted as an accurate record to be signed by the Chairman.
4. Public Participation Session: No questions raised
5. To receive report from Suffolk County Councillor, Joanna Spicer MBE
Planning: Cllr Spicer thanked the Parish Council for its input into the Bloor Homes consultation for the properties opposite the old Rose and Crown pub in Stanton.
Flooding update: It was confirmed that the work carried out by Suffolk County Council in the region of the Green and the Bardwell Equestrian Centre has, to date, been successful with no 'issues' having been reported.
Bardwell School: Cllr Spicer highlighted that it is worth visiting the very informative Bardwell School website.
Councillors acknowledged appreciation of being included on the circulation list for the weekly newsletter from Bardwell School.
6. Boundary Commission Electoral Review
Any changes implemented as a result of the review will not be brought into effect until 2025, which is after the next Suffolk County Council elections scheduled for May 2021. There is a period of consultation through to 23rd November 2020.
Although Bardwell is not affected, if it does not wish to submit any detailed comments to the consultation, it is none the less good practice to respond "no comment".

7. To receive report from Ward Councillor, Andrew Smith

7.1 Outcome of enquiries re maintenance of overgrown area in The Croft

Following the complaint received re the area to the rear of 35/36 The Croft, it has been established that the area (grass verge) is owned by Suffolk County Council and maintained by West Suffolk Council. Google shows that the area has previously been covered in shingle (unlikely to have been by SCC).

The area is now overgrown: A decision on what remedial action is needed is awaited, and is subject to funding being available.

7.2 Locality Budget Grant: Decision re Community Field

The Ward Councillor is awaiting a formal written response as detailed at item 11.2 in the September minutes.

He expressed his concern about assumptions being made and funds being applied to 'areas' for which it was not originally intended. **Action Cllr Ruffles**

8. Police Report

None: See emails previously circulated. Visit www.suffolk.police.uk

9. Chairman's Report

9.1 Dog bins The Chairman reported that the dog bins had not been emptied on several occasions during the summer. There had also been occasions prior to the covid-pandemic. The latest occasion was week ending Friday 18th September due to staff sickness: they were emptied on Monday 21st September.

It was proposed that the parish council should request a refund if this happens in future.

9.2 Overgrown hedges The Chairman advised that he had been contacted re overgrown hedges in Low Street and Church Road and asked about suitable letters.

The Clerk advised that she was aware of a letter (possibly SCC) that could potentially be used as a template. **Action Chairman to inform Clerk of precise addresses**

Action Clerk

Note for information: since the meeting the Chairman has advised the Clerk of the two addresses; he has spoken to the owner of one property.

The Clerk has identified the potential template letter on the SCC website: it is not appropriate to the current circumstances.

The Clerk has included an item within BVN November issue asking property owners to be aware of overgrown hedges impacting upon the highway.

10. Planning Applications: New

DC/20/1560/TCA Trees in a conservation area notification. 1 no. Poplar overall crown reduction by 2 Metres. The Green, Bardwell.

Bardwell Parish Council submitted a response in support of this application prior to the meeting. See attached details.

11. Planning Applications

To note decisions by West Suffolk Council since meeting held 1st September 2020:

See attached list. Details were noted. No action or discussion required.

- 12. Glassfield Road** To review progress re removal of mobile home from site (as agreed during meeting 4th August 2020 ref item 13.1
It was noted that the mobile home/caravan has been moved onto the gravel apparently awaiting collection. Date of collection unknown. **Action to review December 2020**

13. Finance

- 13.1 To receive financial report: See attached
13.2 Invoices for approval: Invoices for payment totalling £1,257.78 were approved.

14. Budget To consider requirements for the year 2021/22

The Clerk/RFO provided figures for initial consideration (see attached).
She highlighted the possibility of the tax base being impacted as a consequence of covid-19.
Hopefully the necessary figures will be known before the November meeting.

It was agreed to review the needs of the church with a view to increasing annual churchyard maintenance/grass cutting grant for the financial year 2021/22.

Action Clerk November/December meeting

15. Community Field

15.1 Progress report: See attached.

A quotation for rotavating and spraying the crescent area has been obtained by the chairman £560.00

Cllr Babraff advised that an additional 170 metres of footpath will be required to complete the 'loop'.

Graham Hunt was thanked for his involvement/valuable contribution to the recent work.

- 15.2 Fencing for Play Area:** It was resolved that (prices ex vat)
the fencing will be purchased from FH Brundle (£3,265)
gate from **Ixworth** (£987)
Installation to be carried out by Ivan Bailey (£950)
Proforma invoices to be sent to Clerk/RFO for payment
Arrangements for delivery of goods to be made to a secure location

Action Cllr Sanderson to progress

15.3 To consider financial requirements in order to progress the installation of benches

It was resolved that the Chairman should obtain the necessary fitments to secure 3 the benches, together with preservative.

It was resolved that a third bench should be ordered from KDM International Limited (*same model/type/style to be ordered*)

Action Clerk/RFO

- 15.4 To consider response to Baby and Toddlers Group** following an approach to the Chairman by a representative of the group advising that the group has closed and that they wish for the balance of the funds (understood to be c.£300) to be used for the benefit of equipment for toddlers on the community field. It should be noted/taken into account that unless the funding is able to be put towards the cost of the fencing, the play area and equipment is the responsibility of the BPFA, not the Parish Council.

Cllr Sanderson confirmed, in his position as Chairman of the BPFA that it (the BPFA) will be

pleased to accept the funds to be ringfenced for a suitable piece of equipment for the play area when additional funding is available. It was resolved that Cllr Clough will contact the representative of the Toddler Group to explain the position and provide relevant BPFA contact details for the funding to be paid, subject to the group's agreement.

- 15.5 An email expressing interest in quoting for work** at the community field had been received. Unfortunately, this arrived too late for consideration. Contactor's details will be held on record for future relevant work. Response to be sent accordingly **Action Clerk/RFO**

16. Bardwell Playing Fields Association: Energy Agreement with West Suffolk Council

It was resolved that the documents will be signed by 2 Councillors (Cllrs Ruffles and Babraff). In view of the clerk being away from Bardwell, Cllr Compton will witness the signatures.

However, on the day following the meeting the Clerk advised that (as per standing orders it is a requirement that the signatures are witnessed by the Clerk, as Proper Officer. The Clerk will notify Cllr Sanderson when she is expected to return. Subsequently, enquiries have been made with SALC and it is hoped to be able to make arrangements for the Clerk to witness the signatures via zoom.

Reports

- 17. Bardwell Playing Association:** Previously circulated by Cllr Sanderson. See attached

It was noted that Public Space Protection Orders banning dogs from the enclosed play areas at the playing field and (when installed) at the community field, have been successfully applied for.

- 18. Bardwell Community Speed watch:** Previously circulated by Cllr Compton. see attached
Details about Quiet lanes have been circulated. It was considered unlikely that there are any roads that would be appropriate for this scheme in Bardwell.

- 19. Suffolk Association of Local Councils,** provided by Cllr Stokes

19.1 There is currently a Government **Planning White Paper** consulting on major changes to the planning system with wide ranging implications e.g. there are serious concerns that the idea of localism may disappear and that it would be very difficult to object to large scale developments. Essentially, it appears that the intention is to completely replace the existing planning system. Deadline to respond to the consultation is 29 October 2020. Councillors are recommended to view the webinar providing more details available on the Birketts website.

19.2 **Sunnica Solar Energy Farm and battery storage facility,** connecting to the Burwell National Grid substation (consultation): This is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. It is concerning to note that villages such as Islam and Freckenham will be surrounded by panels under the current proposals. It was agreed that although not directly affected, Bardwell Parish Council will submit a response of objection based upon the size and impact of the proposal and concerns about the lithium battery storage. **Action: Cllr Stokes**

19.3 A presentation was received about **County Lines**. It is very concerning to note that Bury St Edmunds is the worst affected place in Suffolk due to the combination of available market and vulnerable people.

20. Tithe Barn - Bardwell Village Hall.

Cllr Smith explained that the process to complete the new lease is almost finalised.
Covid-19 impact: There is currently no date for reopening the Tithe Barn.

21. Clerk's Report

The village litterpicker has reported on her first visit to litterpick at the community field, during which the main items collected included a significant level of cigarette packets, filter papers and packets, alcohol cans and bottles and several coke cans, together with a considerable amount of black gaffer tape.

22. Covid-19 Parish Council to consider how/whether it should be responding to recent developments

The same arrangements remain in place as at the outset, including prescription collections for elderly/vulnerable people.

It will be necessary to contact those who previously offered to be on the volunteers list to ensure all are still willing.

Action Clerk

A survey has been sent to councils and volunteer organisations by WSC asking for confirmation of services being offered: Clerk to respond accordingly.

Action Clerk

23. Remembrance Service at Bardwell Church

Subject to circumstances, the Chairman will attend and lay a wreath. (Wreath has been ordered and paid for). See attached details of arrangements currently in place – previously circulated.

24. Correspondence of note not detailed elsewhere on the agenda requiring attention or not previously circulated.

24.1 Sunnica Energy Farm – see19.2

24.2 West Suffolk Local Plan issues and options consultation
Action Cllr Sanderson to attend 12 November
(note was previously 5 November but subsequently changed)

24.3 Query about wild flowers at community field raised by resident (see attachment)
Action: Tom Hoblyn to respond

25. Questions to the Chair/Matters for consideration as agenda items at next meeting

It is noted that the vegetation in the ditch along Spring Lane has been well cutback exposing a significant level of bottles and cans.

Meeting ended at 9.24 pm

Next meeting: Tuesday 3 November 2020 via Zoom At 7.00pm