

## Bardwell Parish Council

Chairman: David Ruffles Vice Chairman: Andrew Smith

### Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021, commencing at 7pm via Zoom video conferencing - This meeting was recorded

n attendance:

**Parish Councillors:** David Ruffles, Chairman; Andrew Smith, Vice Chairman and Ward Councillor; Ali Compton, John Babraff; Peter Sanderson, Tony Stokes, Geoff Clough.

**County Councillor:** Joanna Spicer MBE

**Clerk/RFO:** Pauline Smith

**Members of the public:** 3

1. **To receive and approve apologies for absence: None.**
2. **To receive and approve declarations of pecuniary or non pecuniary interests relating to matters included within this agenda.**  
Cllr Smith (ongoing) re Clerk's salary – item 13.2
3. **To confirm minutes of the meeting held Tuesday 2nd February 2021.**  
The minutes were unanimously confirmed as an accurate record.
4. **Public participation session.**  
No questions or comments were received from members of the public.
5. **Reports from Suffolk County Councillor**
  - 5.1 **Proposal for Change to speed limit on A143 through Stanton**  
*Details/plans circulated 26<sup>th</sup> February.*  
Cllr Spicer explained the proposed changes to reduce part of the existing 40mph limit to 30mph and to introduce a 40mph buffer zone.  
Stanton Parish Council and Cllr Spicer have been working together to bring this proposal to fruition for 18 months: the expected outcome is that the reduced speed limit will result in the A143 through Stanton being safer along the identified section.  
The majority of the costs are being met by Stanton Parish Council and the rest from Cllr Spicer's highways budget.  
All councillors confirmed their approval for this proposal.  
Bardwell Parish Council is not a formal consultee but, as requested by Cllr Spicer, has agreed to confirm its support for the proposal in writing.  
**Following the meeting an email confirming the parish council's support was submitted.**
  - 5.2 **Allotments:** Cllr Spicer has been very supportive of the inclusion of allotments on the community field from the initial concept of the project, and was pleased to have been invited to attend the allotments association AGM in February. Cllr Spicer will review the balance of her locality budget with a view to assisting with funding towards the sheds and bases. See item 14.2
  - 5.3 **Grass Triangle at Junction of Davey's lane and The Green**  
The 'Triangle' is part of the highway and responsibility of SCC.  
Following the concerns raised at the February meeting Cllr Spicer has visited the location.  
Her assessment of the situation is that this would not be a priority for SCC at the present time as more serious issues exist across the county relating to flooding problems and the winter weather.  
Providing vehicles keep off the Triangle the grass will hopefully grow back in the spring.

It was highlighted that unless a motorist is driving extremely dangerously, it is unlikely that they would drive over the top into the pond.

**Computers for Bardwell School:** Cllr Spicer advised that she has provided £750 from her locality budget to Bardwell School towards the purchase of chrome books.

## 6. Report from Ward Councillor, Andrew Smith

*Please refer to the attached Ward Cllrs report, circulated to Cllrs in advance of the meeting.*

### 6.1 Dog bin emptying:

Following the complaints raised at the previous meeting relating to the fact that there are occasions when the dog bins are not emptied, the Ward Councillor raised this matter with WSC. A detailed survey/review of the dogbin and litterbin provision in Bardwell has been carried out by WSC.

The parish council accepts that there are now more dogs in Bardwell and over the last 12 months, as a result of covid-19, there have been more people at home and walking with their dogs than previously.

WSC is not suggesting that the parish council should implement the outcome of the survey which has been carried out using their knowledge of the area and usage, resulting in recommendations. This survey is a record of the current situation: it is for the parish council to determine whether it wishes to implement the recommendations either in full or in part. There would be costs involved to implement the changes. There is no requirement to do anything if the parish council doesn't wish to do so.

The chairman stated that he would like to meet with Andrew Harvey (WSC) to discuss the survey recommendations.

The normal scheduled day for dog bin emptying in Bardwell is Wednesday.

*Since the meeting it has been arranged that the Chairman will meet Andrew Harvey (WSC) for a site visit on 8<sup>th</sup> April, to discuss the outcome/recommendations of the survey.*

### 6.2 Glass Banks:

The issue of the glass banks being frequently full and residents leaving bottles on the ground/at the base had also been raised with WSC. The report explains there has been increased usage across sites – possibly as a result of lockdown. There are contact telephone numbers on the bins: The contractor is normally responsive when contacted.

### 6.3 Covid-19 Guidance:

WSC has produced guidance for organisers considering events. Details in report.

### 6.4 Road sweeping:

The mechanical road sweeper visits Bardwell on a 12-week cycle. If there are issues in specific locations between visits the clerk can phone WSC with details and request attendance (subject to availability). When necessary, due to shortages of staff (e.g. during the pandemic), drivers of street sweeping vehicles are transferred to undertake duties on bin lorries: this is likely to have an impact on the 12-week street sweeping cycle. Gully cleaning is an SCC responsibility.

## 7. Chairman's report

Cleveland House: The chairman confirmed that he had visited the property and that there is construction work being carried out at the rear of the garage.

Permission has previously been granted relating to a garage/workshop extension at this location, however, the chairman did not view the rear of the property and was unable to confirm what work was being carried out.

Sam Heywood, with whom the chairman spoke advised that it is his intention to clean the highway/area in front of Cleveland House.

**Note: For reference see: DC/17/1724/HH** | Householder Planning Application - Extension to garage | Cleveland The Green Bardwell Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 1AW

**8. Meeting with Stanton and Ixworth Parish Councils re highways issues**

The Chairman and Cllr Stokes attended a meeting facilitated by Cllr Spicer, together with the Chairman of Ixworth (Ben Lord) and Stanton (Francis Hart) Parish Councils, to discuss matters of mutual concern regarding the cumulative impact upon the A143 and A1088 resulting from approved new housing developments and anticipated future developments. Cllr Spicer has written to SCC highways requesting an informal meeting to aid an understanding of the current status of the highway proposals, and how serious the issues are/could be. The three parish councils will continue to liaise as further information becomes available.

**9. Dog fouling issues:** Update and proposal to purchase weather-proof signs using WSC poster design.

The Chairman advised that there has been a spike in complaints regarding dog fouling and owners failing to pick-up'.

Comments received in relation to proposal:

- Responsible people who read the signs already clean up
- Those who don't 'pick up' are unlikely to take notice
- The issue has been highlighted on facebook – which is hopefully making people more aware and reminding them of their responsibilities and therefore perhaps there is no need for too many signs
- It was agreed that a reminder in Bardwell Village News on a fairly regular basis would be appropriate.
- A letter from the Chairman has been included in the March issue of BVN regarding dog fouling along the field edge at Davey's Lane and Knox Lane
- People should be reminded that there is a potential fine £1000 for not 'picking up' their dog's waste.

**Resolution:** The clerk had established that WSC have three posters designs available (no charge) encouraging pet owners to 'clean up after their dogs. Copies of the various designs available had previously been circulated. **It was agreed to request 4 'bag it and bin it' posters.**

*Since the meeting:* WSC delivered the posters, which have now been installed by the Chairman in various locations: see below



Davey's Lane



Knox Lane



Skinners/School Lane



Church Meadow

## 10. Planning Matters

10.1 New Planning Application Consultations for consideration: None

10.2 Decisions by planning authority since February meeting:

DC/20/2162/HH Cedarwood, Low Street, Bardwell	Approved
DC/20/1582/FUL Bardwell CEvc Primary School	Approved
DC/21/0004/HH The Pines, 5 Mill Court, Bardwell	Refused

10.3 Any other planning matters for consideration: None

## 11. Highways matters for consideration: Including outstanding reports to SCC

The chairman highlighted concern over the failure to deal with the blocked drains in Low Street (reported multiple times).

Cllr Spicer, whilst sympathetic to the concerns, reiterated that flooding is prioritised relative to how much damage/danger is being caused, for example if a home is flooded or there is a danger of reaching into a house, if it makes a road hazardous, all of which call for urgent and immediate attention. There is a lot of information on the SCC website explaining how SCC manages flooding.

SCC do have a more reactive approach to blocked gullies, culverts, etc: It is important to know why these are blocked, which it is important to provide full details and report via the website.

### Other outstanding issues:

Quaker Lane: Blocked drains outside Trezelles and Holly Cottage

Legion Rise/Quaker Lane: Broken and loose edging stones and drain covers – SCC map states works ordered 23 February 2021

Legion Rise drainage system: A detailed opinion was given that the drainage system implemented here has been wrong from the outset/since Legion Rise was built (c. 5 years ago).

Gully Cleaning: The comment was made that if the gullies were regularly cleared this would significantly reduce blockages and flooding issues.

Cllr Spicer advised that SCC clean the gullies annually, a comment received indicated that this was not believed to be the case in Bardwell.

Cllr Spicer is willing to follow up on the concerns. However, at present her focus is on flooding of dwellings in three other villages that she represents.

## 12. Correspondence

**Bardwell School:** The parish council discussed the content of a letter from Bardwell School, describing difficulties faced as a result of traffic regulations preventing two taxis from parking outside the school gate at any time. As safety of all children is paramount, the parish council considered that there could be two potential solutions to this problem, either of which could be immediately implemented. If there were to be a decision to consider to rescind or change the existing traffic regulation, this would require consultation, significant expense and would take at least 12 months to implement.

The parish council's suggestions are:

- 1. That provision is made to enable the taxis to access the school grounds
- 2. That the taxis be permitted to use the Tilian House car-park, accessed from Skinners Lane.
- 3. A conversation between Cllr Spicer and Mr Francksen, Executive Head would be appropriate.

### 13. Finance

#### 13.1 Financial report

Bank balances: closing bal 2 March 2021	£
Bardwell PC Community Account	1,262.18
Bardwell PC Community Tracker Account	14,332.69
Community Field Account	1,086.16
Community Field Deposit Account	854.36
BPFA Community Account	279.14
BPFA Tracker Account	502.11
Tithe Barn Account	4,065.25

#### 13.2 Invoices/payments for approval

	£
Community workshop – BVN printing March	196.59
CPRE Annual membership	36.00
P Smith Clerk/RFO	220.00
Litterpicker	63.75

Prior approval received for S137 payments of £50.00 to  
Ixworth Patients Association  
East Anglian Air Ambulance  
Friends of Ixworth Library  
Suffolk Accident Rescue Service  
Suffolk West Citizens Advice  
Victim Support

Request to reimburse Clerk/RFO for defibrillator battery £216.00  
Request to reimburse Clerk/RFO for 6 x zoom meetings £86.34  
2020: October/November/December  
2021: February/March/April

**Resolution: All payments were unanimously approved.**

(Cllr Smith did not vote re payments for Clerk/RFO – pecuniary interest previously recorded)

### 14. Community Field

#### 14.1 Wildflower seed has been sown

30 Birch and Willow trees provided by Tom Hoblyn have been planted

#### Ward Councillor's grant for sensory plants

This funding should be utilised by the end of May 2021.

Cllr Sanderson has written to Tom Hoblyn asking for suggestions of appropriate plants.

#### 14.2 Allotments Association AGM – 25<sup>th</sup> February

Cllr Smith and the Clerk attended the AGM which was held via Zoom

This element of the community field project is very successful and the tenants are enjoying their allotments.

There are currently 3 Bardwell residents on the waiting list.

2 existing tenants have offered to relinquish 50% of their plots: the resulting 2 additional plots will be offered to the first two on the waiting list.

A member of the allotments association has identified a metal shed as opposed to a wooden construction which is likely to be more secure and provide more longevity. Further consideration is to be given to this suggestion.

From the outset it has been stated that all sheds will be of uniform height and design to ensure the area remains visually pleasing.

Subject to finances permitting the sheds (8x6) will include guttering and down pipes.  
Bases: the option of using an alternative to concrete bases or slabs was discussed and received a favourable reaction: quotes are being sought.

**Q: Who will own and maintain the sheds?**

Response: Details are to be finalised over the arrangements but providing the parish council retains ownership it (the parish council) has an insurable asset, which will be included within the pc insurance policy. However, the tenants will be required to insure the contents. Strict arrangements will be included within the tenancy agreements detailing maintenance requirements to ensure longevity.

By retaining responsibility for the sheds the pc will ensure that it retains a level of control over the maintenance and therefore longevity. It will be necessary to include a small increase in the rents to allow for depreciation and ultimately the cost of replacement over x number of years.

- 14.3 Funding towards the cost of allotment sheds:** A grant application has been submitted for £1000 to Cllr Smith's Ward Councillor Locality budget. A request to Cllr Spicer's locality budget will also be submitted.

**Since the meeting** locality budget grants of £1000 from Cllr Smith and £994 from Cllr Spicer, towards the cost of bases and sheds for the allotments, have been confirmed.

**15. Community Speed-watch - Cllr Compton**

The Community Speed-watch team is not currently permitted to operate due to lockdown. Once the rule of 6 applies, they will be able to go out again.  
The VAS continues to operate and is being moved to alternate locations intermittently.

**16. BPFA Report - Cllr Sanderson**

Subject to restrictions being lifted as anticipated the MUGA will reopen at the end of March.

**17. Tithe Barn Report - Cllr Smith**

The Tithe Barn remains closed though will be utilised for the elections on 6<sup>th</sup> May.  
The committee is keen to consider how they can begin to open up safely and incrementally at the appropriate time.

**18. SALC – Cllr Stokes**

SALC continues to keep parish councils up-to-date with relevant information.  
The consultation for the Government white paper on planning closes on 27<sup>th</sup> March – or for those who wish to respond to NALC they need to do so by 12<sup>th</sup> March.  
The Chairman expressed the view that Cllr Stokes has the parish council's support if he wishes to submit a response.

**19. Cars on the Green**

Cllr Ruffles requested the parish council's agreement for a road closure for this event, scheduled to take place on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2021, or another date during the year if it is necessary to reschedule due to covid-19 restrictions.

The difficulties of organising this event during current circumstances were highlighted, particularly as there are still restrictions in force on the proposed date.  
Cllr Smith advised that the Covid Events Guidance described within his Ward report has already been provided to the COTG committee, which explains that events need to be referred to the safety advisory group, which is made up of a broad range of professionals.

Cllr Ruffles – who is also chairman of the Cars on the Green Committee – acknowledged the constraints and explained that the committee is currently looking into this and taking advice.

**Resolution: The Parish Council unanimously agreed to the request.**

**20. Police Report**

The police have stressed the importance of witnesses reporting crimes/antisocial behaviour: don't assume that somebody else will do it. Visit the police website which has a wealth of advice and contact details: [www.suffolk.police.uk](http://www.suffolk.police.uk)  
As well as using 101 or the website crimes can be via crimestoppers.

Cllr Spicer advised that the new area commander for Suffolk Police, West Area is Janine Ratan who was formerly a borough commander with the Metropolitan Police. When conditions permit, she is keen to meet with parish councils to listen, answer questions and learn what people think should be the priorities for rural policing.

**21. Clerk's report**

Annual Parish Meeting: 25th May 2021 – via Zoom.

Organisations are invited to submit reports by 1<sup>st</sup> May, these will be collated and made available online in advance of the meeting. Reports will not be read out at the meeting. Attendees will have the opportunity to raise questions about any village matters and put questions to other organisation representatives.

It is hoped that the emergency legislation permitting meetings via zoom will be extended beyond the current end date of 7<sup>th</sup> May.

**22. Diary Dates: 25<sup>th</sup> May Annual Parish Meeting, 7pm**

**23. Confidential item:** Resolved that in accordance with the provision of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 5 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Meetings and Access to Information)(England) Regulations and Paragraphs 2, 3 and 7 of the Council's Access to Information Rules, the public and press be excluded during consideration of this item.

**Outcome:** The parish council does not itself have the power (authority) to require a resident to take specific action with regards to the matter discussed.

**24. Questions to the Chair**

Q. [REDACTED] **Skinner's Lane** - A substantial amount of hedge cutting is being carried out, does anybody know why and by whom?

A. **Work being carried out by the resident; Reason unknown.**

Q. [REDACTED] Concern raised about abusive language relating to dog fouling being used on community covid-19 facebook page, querying how this happened knowing that 2 of the admins are the chairman and clerk.

A. The chairman removed the facebook post as soon as it was seen. He believes it was probably visible for about 1 hour. The clerk had not seen it. The chairman described it as atrocious behaviour, which will not be tolerated. There have been several sarcastic comments previously, however this type of abuse is unusual on the page. Although there are 3 administrators it is not possible to monitor the page 24/7.

**25. Next meeting: Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021, 7.00pm via zoom**

**Meeting ended at 9.09pm**