

# Bardwell Parish Council

Chairman: David Ruffles

## Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

held on **Tuesday 4th May 2021**, commencing at **7.00pm via zoom** video conferencing.

**Councillors Present:** David Ruffles, Andrew Smith (also Ward Councillor), Ali Compton, John Babraff, Tony Stokes, Geoff Clough, County Councillor Joanna Spicer

**Clerk/RFO:** Pauline Smith

**Members of the public:** 2

### 1 Election of Chair

Cllr Clough nominated Councillor David Ruffles as Chair, seconded by Cllr Sanderson

1 councillor objected to the nomination; 5 supported the nomination.

There were no other nominations: David Ruffles was duly re-elected as Chair

Cllr Ruffles duly completed the 'Declaration of acceptance as Chair' which has been returned to, and signed by, the Clerk (copy attached)

It has been confirmed that Cllr Stokes voted in favour of the nomination of Cllr Ruffles as Chairman - not 'against' as Cllr Ruffles believed.

### 2 Election of Vice Chair

*(Cllr Smith, previous vice chair, did not 'stand' for re-election)*

Cllr Smith proposed Councillor Stokes as Vice Chair

There did not appear to be a seconder - subsequently, since the meeting it has become clear that Cllr Compton thought she had seconded Cllr Stokes. (See below)

In the event a vote was held: 2 cllrs voted 'for' the nomination - 4 councillors voted 'against' the nomination.

No other councillor was willing to put themselves forward for the role.

**Resolution:** After a brief discussion councillors decided that Bardwell Parish Council will continue without a vice chairman.

**Explanatory notes subsequent to the meeting :** It transpired, after the meeting, that Cllr Compton thought that she had 'seconded' Cllr Stokes nomination. However, this was not seen on the screen (which appears to be frozen at that point). Cllr Compton was having internet connection and sound 'issues' at the time, and as a consequence did not hear the commentary which would have alerted her to the fact that the councillors and clerk were unaware that she had seconded the nomination. Her vote in favour of the nomination during the vote is clear on the recording.

In the event that it had been clear that there was a proposer and seconder then Cllr Stokes would have been duly and automatically elected vice chairman as a result of there being no other nominations.

However, as a result of the circumstances which transpired at the time, Bardwell Parish Council does not currently have a vice chair.

### 3 To receive and approve (if accepted) apologies for absence: None

### 4 To receive and approve (if appropriate) declarations of interest relating to matters included within this agenda

Cllr Smith: Ongoing interest declared re: Finance - Clerk's Salary

Cllr Smith: Pecuniary interest declared re item 12: Planning Application DC/21/0715/LB (Cllr Smith left the meeting prior to, and returned after, the planning applications item.)

### 5 Appointment of representatives to outside bodies and other relevant appointments

Except where noted, the majority of current representatives on the bodies shown below agreed to, and will, remain in post (no other nomination were received).

Appointments are annual unless stated

#### 5.1 Bardwell Charity Trustees (2) 4 year tenure

Current representatives: Cllr Tony Stokes and Cllr Andrew Smith confirmed that they are willing to continue in post.

## Bardwell Parish Council

Chairman: David Ruffles

- 5.2 **Bardwell Playing Fields Association Committee of Management (2):**  
Current representatives: Cllr Peter Sanderson and Cllr Geoff Clough confirm they are willing to remain in post
- 5.3 **Bardwell Village Hall Management Committee**  
Current representative: Cllr Andrew Smith confirmed he is willing to remain in post
- 5.4 **Suffolk Association of Local Councils**  
After 6 years in post, Cllr Stokes relinquished this post.  
No other Councillor was willing to take on the role.

Outcome: Bardwell Parish Council no longer has a SALC representative.

### Other relevant appointments

- 5.5 **Bardwell Speed watch**  
Current representative: Cllr Ali Compton is willing to remain in this post
- 5.6 **Bardwell Tree Officer: Ongoing role**  
Barry Felton (not a parish councillor) has relinquished this role.

Resolution: Details will be circulated in order to establish how to proceed. Clerk

- 6 **Approval of minutes** of the meeting held on Tuesday 6th April 2021  
The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

### 7 Public participation session

**Cars on the Green 30th May** A member of the public spoke on behalf of the COTG committee about the forthcoming Cars on The Green Show (30th May) and requested contributions to the afternoon tea stall (cakes) and bottles of wine for the water and wine stall.

**Opposition to proposed salary increases** The member of the public expressed her opposition to the suggestion that the parish council should be considering salary increases at this time, drawing on her own professional experience that people have lost jobs and had pay cuts.

This matter is a decision for councillors at item 12.

(Note: The proposed total annual increases total £33)

**Litter-picking** The member of the public suggested a voluntary litter picking scheme, requiring a Litter Picker Co-ordinator and 30-40 volunteers, for monthly litter picks throughout the year, plus the purchase of Litterpicking equipment.

**Response:** Bardwell Parish Council already owns litterpicking equipment.

(Note: Residents who wish to borrow litter picking equipment on a temporary basis to litterpick independently as they are out walking, are welcome to do so.)

### 8 To receive reports from District and County Councillors

#### 8.1 District Councillor Andrew Smith: see attached

Cllr Smith provided a short review of West Suffolk District Council over the previous year, which has been dominated by the preparations and administration of grants, as well as continuing with the services that West Suffolk provide.

WSC has embraced the use of virtual meetings as have many other organisations. Due to the outcome of the recent high court case WSC is currently making preparations to hold council meetings in much larger venues than the council chamber (within the district council offices) if required to abide by socially distanced regulations. The council chamber is not big enough for the 64 councillors and officers: therefore alternative venues such as the Athenaeum and the Skyliner Centre are being considered. However alternative venues bring their own technical challenges due to the necessity for excellent communications to enable council members to discuss and debate issues and also for any members of the public that turn up.

There were no questions and Cllr Smith left the meeting to attend others at Barnham and Coney Weston, returning to Bardwell later.

## Bardwell Parish Council

Chairman: David Ruffles

### 8.2 County Councillor Joanna Spicer MBE

A number of reports have been submitted to SCC Highways re missing or worn road (slow) markings 'failed' because they do not meet the relevant criteria. Generally the response is that they will be replaced when the road is resurfaced.

#### Action: Clerk

Details re locations of missing or worn out road markings requiring reinstatement to be provided to Cllr Spicer.

Cllr Compton thanked Cllr Spicer for arranging (and paying from her locality budget) for the roundels in Low Street, which she considers are very good and in the right place.

### 9 Chairman's Report

The Chairman advised that there have been further reports of antisocial behaviour in and around Lammas Close, with the police having been called to a specific address on multiple occasions. The housing association is also aware.

### 10 Dog bins review: To receive report and proposal from Cllr Ruffles following meeting with Andrew Harvey from West Suffolk Council (full details within agenda pack).

**Proposal:** That the 3 existing dog waste bins located at i. top of Skinners Lane, ii. Community Field fence iii. Knox Lane, be replaced with 3 x 240ltr wheelie bins on metal frames (multipurpose) at the cost of £887.97

It was agreed that based on the current annual charges and the fact that there would be no charges for emptying the new larger bins that the proposal is acceptable.

Councillors were made aware that whilst there will be no emptying charges levied for emptying the new larger bins, that this could change in the future.

Cllr Clough requested that a contract be agreed with WSC that the free emptying would be in perpetuity or at least 5 years. *It was thought unlikely that WSC will agree to these terms but the request will be raised.* The Chairman thinks that subject to the new bins being in situ that all of the existing bins will continue to be emptied but no charges will be levied.

**Resolution:** Councillors resolved to approve the proposal.

**Action:** The Clerk will clarify the queries with WSC and once resolved bins will be ordered.

### 11 Highways Matters for Consideration

The Chairman noted that the gulleys/drains on Low Street have not been unblocked. Work at the entrance to Legion Rise is awaited.

### 12 Planning Applications

#### Consultations received from Planning Authority for consideration.

#### 12.1 DC/21/0715/LB Lavender Barn, Bowbeck, Bardwell IP31 1BA

Application for listed building consent - replacement external windows

**Resolution:** No objections raised

#### 12.2 DC/21/0770/HH Greenway, Low Street, Bardwell IP31 1AS

Householder Planning Application: Raise roof to rear elevation

**Resolution:** No objections raised

#### 12.3 DC/21/0838/HH Cedarwood, Low Street, Bardwell IP31 1AS

Householder Planning Application a. first floor rear extension b. alternations to front dormer including raising height and rendering c. replace roof with composite slates

**Resolution:** No objections raised

### 13 Community Field: Progress report

Paths: The parish council's contractor, The Country Life Landscapes expected to have completed the hoggin paths by the end of the week, subject to weather.

Two flower beds in two of the seating areas have been completed and a third flower bed is

## Bardwell Parish Council

Chairman: David Ruffles

intended.

The work of all involved is greatly appreciated.

Cllr Sanderson has a photographic record of progress which shows how the bare field has developed and will be displayed to residents whether in Bardwell Village News or as a presentation.

It was also suggested that SALC would be interested.

**14 Finance : To receive draft accounts 2020/21**

Deferred to June meeting

**15 Finance: Salaries and Wages**

To consider approval of annual salary increases as per budget for Clerk/RFO and Litterpicker wef April 2021.

(Increases, although included within the 2021/22 budget must be formally approved prior to implementation.)

**Resolutions**

Increases to Litterpicker (£7.00 annual increase) and Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer (£26.00 annual increase) for the financial year 2021/22 were approved during exempt session (see item 28).

*In view of the opposition voiced by a member of the public to any increases being paid to the Clerk/RFO or Litter picker, the Clerk/RFO stated that she was happy for discussion relating to own her salary review to be held in public (as opposed to during the exempt session at item 28). However, this was not agreed.*

**16 Finance:** To receive financial report (see copy attached)

To approve invoices for payment

Resolution: Invoices (retrospective) totalling £1,854.88 were approved.

Revenue grants of £1,763 to BPFA and £1,000 to the Tithe Barn were approved.

*Note: These are internal transactions within the accounts from the Bardwell PC account to the Bardwell PC BPFA and Bardwell PC Tithe Barn accounts.*

**17 To note receipt of signed copy of Legal Agreement:** Contract between

West Suffolk Council and the Committee of Management Operating as Bardwell Playing fields Association and The Custodian Trustee Operating as Bardwell Parish Council:

Contract for the supply of heat and electrical plant and energy to the Bardwell Pavilion.

Cllr Sanderson was thanked for his work in bringing this contract to fruition.

**18 Clerk's report**

18.1 Review of Financial Regulations Deferred June Meeting

18.2 Review of Standing Orders Deferred June Meeting

18.3 Review of Asset List Deferred June Meeting

**19 Virtual Meetings after 7th May:** Outcome of Legal case regarding virtual meetings and implications for Bardwell Parish Council meetings

Parish Council meetings held from 7th May must be held in person. Zoom meetings will be unlawful.

Bardwell Parish Council does not currently have the appropriate resources to enable hybrid meetings ie to enable members of the public who do not wish to attend in person to access meetings remotely. Therefore all necessary Covid-19 requirements to ensure the health and safety of those attending will be required and implemented.

**20 Annual Village Meeting: Scheduled for 25 May via Zoom**

This meeting will now be held in the Tithe Barn with all necessary Covid-19 requirements in place.

## Bardwell Parish Council

*Chairman: David Ruffles*

- 21 Quiet Lanes**  
21.1 Consultation letter for approval (previously circulated)  
The Consultation letter was approved and will now be distributed  
**Action:** Clerk
- 21.2 Update received regarding costs  
A request for a payment of £50.00 towards signage has been received.  
Resolution: Councillors will not give approval for this sum at the present time.  
Councillors will discuss this when they decide whether or not to support the Quiet Lanes Application. (June meeting)
- 22 To receive reports from Councillors**
- 22.1 BPFA - Cllr Sanderson**  
AGM will be held on 24th May 2021 via Zoom at 7.30pm
- 22.2 Bardwell Village Hall - Cllr Smith**  
The Tithe Barn remains closed for hirers apart from SCC elections on 6th May and The Bardwell Annual Village Meeting on 25th May, and Parish Council meeting on 1st June.
- 22.3 Bardwell Speed watch - Cllr Compton**  
A session had been held during April: No motorists were recorded above the speed limit.  
Speed data has been collated for the period January - March 2021 by Cllr Stokes and a summary previously circulated.
- 23 Police Report:** It is hoped that the new Police Community Support Officer, PC Lee Andrews-Pearce will be able to attend the June parish council meeting.  
**Action:** Clerk
- 24 Correspondence** requiring discussion: None
- 25 Future dates/Meetings** for noting and reports from any meetings attended.  
25 May 2021 Annual Village Meeting via Zoom  
27 May 2021 Quiet Lanes Public Meeting at Stanton Village Hall
- 26 Questions to the Chair**  
Litterpicking: Autumn village litterpick - date to be decided: June agenda item
- 27 Next Meeting** Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June, 7pm
- 28. Confidential Session.**  
**It was resolved under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.**
- Salary Increases:** It was resolved that the proposed salary increases for the litter picker and Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer be implemented with effect 1st April 2021 as per budget. Combined total annual increase £33.00
- Antisocial behaviour:** Councillors were appraised of recent concerns relating to antisocial behaviour in Lammas Close.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm

**Confidential page - Not for public disclosure**

**28. Confidential Session**

**It was resolved under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that the public and press be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.**

Councillors ratified the annual increase to the Clerk/RFO Mrs Pauline Smith as per the previously agreed budget.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
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Councillors ratified the annual increase to the Litterpicker Mrs Maz Endicott as per the previously agreed budget.

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