

**Minutes of the meeting of Bardwell Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st March 2022,
commencing at 7:00pm in The Tithe Barn, Bardwell Village Hall, Up Street, Bardwell IP31 1AA**

In attendance

Parish Councillors: David Ruffles (Chair), Ali Compton, Peter Sanderson, Andrew Smith (Also West Suffolk District Councillor), Tony Stokes; Suffolk County Councillor Joanna Spicer MBE
Members of the public: 1; Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer: Pauline Smith

1. **Apologies** received from Cllr Babraff and Cllr Clough were accepted/approved.
2. **Declarations of Interest.** Finance: Standing declaration from Cllr Smith - personal pecuniary interest relating to approval of Clerk/RFO salary.
3. **Approval of Minutes of the Meeting** held on 1st February 2022 previously circulated were taken as read and approved. The Chairman signed the minutes as an accurate record.
4. **Public Participation.** *The member of the public present raised concerns about the following:*
 - i. **Church Road, Opposite the church:** The verge/mud is encroaching on this section of road which is particularly narrow and needs clearing;
 - ii. **Spring Road, nr Blackwater Farm:** verge on right hand side has been compressed by heavy vehicles causing the ditch to be blocked.
Response: This matter has already been reported.
Clerk's note: since the meeting SCC has rectified this issue.
 - iii. **The Croft/Quaker Lane junction - Inappropriate parking:** Motorists are parking vehicles (cars and a transit van were highlighted) too close to the junction and on the verge, causing a potential hazard as well as damage to the verge.
Action: details to be included in BVN asking for motorists to be park more considerately and in accordance with the highway code.
 - iv. **The Croft** grassed area at entrance: Would the parish council consider replacing the grit bin which could be a barrier to some of the activity resulting in the area becoming a muddy mess.
Response: the parish council has previously considered but dismissed the suggestion of another grit bin in this location. The Chairman advised that the situation would be monitored.
(Clerk's note: Since the meeting more complaints have been received relating to this location and action taken to tidy it up.)
5. **West Suffolk District Councillor, Andrew Smith: Report**

West Suffolk Council is proposing to invest £9 million in a range of green initiatives to help us reach carbon neutrality by 2030;

Barley Homes, the council's housing company, is going from strength to strength and to date has built over 60 homes with more in the pipeline;

WSC is:

Progressing the Western Way Development which will integrate council and government services, the NHS, leisure facilities (including a new swimming pool), an advice centre, third sector organisations and both community and education services as well as delivering new employment space;

Working towards providing over 40,000sq ft of start-up/incubation space for companies in the manufacturing and engineering sector on the Suffolk Business Park to provide more employment opportunities;

Well along the path to creating a new Local Plan the draft of which will be going out for consultation in late May. This is a huge piece of work but is absolutely essential to ensure that we are able to meet the housing targets imposed on us by government and ultimately avoid speculative often inappropriate development.

6. Suffolk County Councillor, Joanna Spicer, MBE: Report

- i. A1088: There will be a weight limit with some overnight closures.
A143: Stanton: Work to implement the lowered speed limit and buffer zone, which is being introduced between Stanton and Ixworth, will be completed by 31st March 2022.
- ii. Shepherd's Grove industrial estate: a meeting to discuss concerns raised by neighbouring villages (Bardwell was not invited) relating to the potential new vehicle processing plant and associated infrastructure has been held. Cllr Spicer does not think that there will be any environmental issues, a proposed £9million Stanton relief road and new roundabout on the A143 at Hepworth will improve road safety. However, the increased vehicle movements and impact on A1088 are potentially more of a concern.
- iii. Ukraine/Russia conflict: Suffolk County Council is cancelling its gas contract with the Russian company Gazprom.
- iv. The SCC website provides useful information about how it supports refugees.
- v. Bridge closure over river Black Bourn at Church Meadow: A bid has been submitted for funding: Awaiting outcome.
- vi. Spring Road: queries raised about markers on SCC's 'report it' site re flooding work to be carried out. *Clerk's note: Since the meeting SCC engineer contacted the clerk, the query has been resolved and the work completed.*
- vii. Low Street Flooding: Cllr Spicer has resent the film provided by the resident last year and acknowledgement has been received. The issue is on the SCC 'radar.'
- viii. Legion Rise/junction Quaker Lane: Additional information/video evidence has been submitted by Cllr Clough. Details previously circulated. Cllr Spicer has discussed with SCC: final outcome awaited.
- ix. Quaker Lane: Damaged grassed area caused by vehicles driving across to access property: Suffolk County Council (enforcement) is dealing with this issue.
- x. Church Road: Steps in front of Havebury property appear precarious. Cllr Ruffles will provide photographs to Cllr Smith, who will establish responsibility and find out whether improvements can be made.
- xi. Flooding across InterUK driveway which is also access to Croft House; blockage preventing water from flowing from ditch outside Croft House causing it to overflow. Blockage is possibly within the watercourse which runs under the driveway and underground in front of The Chestnuts. However, it not known where the outlet is: a suggestion was made by the chairman that it may be connected into the sewer. InterUK has submitted a flooding report to SCC.
Note: Following the meeting the clerk submitted an additional report to SCC (as she said she would during the meeting). Subsequently SCC visited advised that as the issue relates to a watercourse through/under land in private ownership, it is not SCC responsibility. He phoned the clerk with this information but also spoke to the chairman whilst on site.

7. Highways matters

- 7.1 Updates following visits of Cllr Spicer with Chairman to various locations. See item 6.
- 7.2 Spring Road: See 6.vi.
- 7.3 Legion Rise – ongoing issue: See 6.viii

8. Chairman's Report

Since the February meeting, the Chairman had visited a number of locations with Cllr Joanna Spicer – details are included within Cllr Spicer's report above.

The chairman acknowledged that Bardwell is not unique in having an aging drainage system, which we will have to 'grin and bear'.

Parking issues are a problem, but again, not unique to Bardwell: General parking 'issues' are not a material consideration when responding to planning applications.

9. Tree Wardens

Unfortunately, neither of the tree wardens, Sue Grey or Peter Newson, were able to attend the meeting, but Sue had provided a very detailed report – attached.

Councillors suggested that whilst unfortunately not being in a position to meet the suggestion of purchasing land on Knox Lane, the Tree Wardens could be asked to review the trees planted on the community field.

10. Community Field Play Area: Wicksteed inspection report attached.

The parish council reviewed the suggestions made by the Wicksteed Inspector during his site visit on Thursday 17th February 2022, which was attended by Cllrs Ruffles, Sanderson and Stokes.

Signage: Signage on the play area fence was originally produced by WSC. It was suggested that new signs to include what3words identifier together with postcode could be useful as postcodes cover a wide area and so could delay an emergency response.

Action: Cllr Smith will discuss amended signage with WSC

Roundabout: Cllr Sanderson had explained proposals to resolve concerns about the roundabout with the Inspector, who seemed satisfied.

Cllr Sanderson will confirm agreement for changes to the roundabout and submit the order to the contractor (Bright Flooring Solutions). Work on the roundabout will be carried out when the weather has improved/is appropriate.

Matting/ground requirements: **Action** Work to resolve the issues raised will be carried out when the weather improves.

Meeting the costs:

A discussion about how the costs would be met ensued.

Cllr Stokes suggested contributions from the BPFA and Trustees;

Cllr Sanderson confirmed that the BPFA is unable to provide any financial assistance towards improvements/repairs to the play equipment;

The Chairman suggested using parish council reserves.

Cllr Smith, in his role as District Councillor, offered to provide £1,000 from his locality budget to meet the costs of implementing the necessary changes/repairs.

Resolution/Action: Cllr Smith was thanked for his offer of a grant which was accepted.

Cllr Sanderson will complete the necessary sections of the application form (provided by Cllr Smith).

In summary: Having considered the costs, how these costs would be met and the work required, it was resolved that:

All of the work identified within the report will be implemented.

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With the exception of the barrier, which will be sourced locally (**Action** Chairman), and roundabout, all other items identified within the Inspector's report will be ordered from Wicksteed, supply only: to be fitted/work to rectify issues carried out by volunteers.

The roundabout: An appropriate contractor(Bright Flooring Solutions), identified by Cllr Sanderson, will carry out the work to resolve the concerns relating to the roundabout.

Safety requirements relating to the matting/ground will be carried out when the weather is suitable.

Items to order from Wicksteed: It was agreed to order all of the items identified within the report with the exception of the barrier, which the chairman considers he can arrange at a lesser cost.

Action: Clerk to place order with Wicksteed for items as agreed.

Schedule: All works will be carried out as soon as possible: subject to weather permitting.

Transfer date: It was **resolved** that the date of transfer will be **1st April 2022**.

Bird Guard and maintenance items: It was agreed to reimburse Cllr Ruffles (Bird Guard) and Cllr Sanderson (play area maintenance items) purchased during January 2022. The bird guard has replaced the nails along the top of the swings.

Invoices to be forwarded to Clerk/RFO.

Gratitude was expressed to everybody who has been involved in the maintenance of the play area and equipment to-date and for those involved with meeting with the Wicksteed Inspector and the resolutions reached.

11. Community Field: Allotments

Cllr Smith advised that the orders for 4 sheds, bases and associated items have been submitted. Following the recent storms, various options to anchor the sheds to the ground are being researched.

12. Street Lighting: As agreed at the February meeting, Cllr Smith has arranged to meet with a street lighting engineer from SCC on 16th March 2022 to discuss the feasibility of lighting along Spring Road in the vicinity the Hastoe properties to the Community Field car park.

13. Litterpick: 26th March 2022 10am - noon

Meet at the Tithe Barn

Charity breakfast (9.30am – 10.30am) in aid of Alzheimer's society being organised by Dinkie Williamson

A3 Warning signs are being produced by the Clerk and printed/laminated by Community Workshop: 2 'proper' signs are being borrowed from Sicon Foundation.

Event being promoted in BVN and social media; plus posters (similar to last year's design, kindly produced by Toolbox Marketing.

14. Queen's Jubilee: A suggestion of a jubilee picnic has been received.

This would require a lead person/organiser: A further request will be included on the various village facebook pages.

Cllr Smith (as District Councillor) has offered a grant of £300 towards this event through his locality funding: application to be completed.

15. Bardwell Charity Trustees: (Tony Stokes) It is likely that the fair will arrive several days earlier than planned. This will not have any impact on the planned opening dates or leaving dates.

- 16. Bardwell Playing Fields Association:** (Peter Sanderson)
The AGM will be held in May
Fete planning is underway: 18 June
Pavilion: Energy costs – A fixed 3 year tariff was arranged during July 2021 through Energy Utilities United, who work on behalf of voluntary groups, has proven to be very beneficial in the current climate of increasing energy prices.
(Action: Cllr Sanderson will provide details of energy company to Cllr Stokes as may be beneficial for Village Hall)
- 17. Bardwell Speed watch:** (Ali Compton): The batteries have been replaced and the VAS unit has been moved to the community field side of Spring Road. It is thought likely that water ingress had been the cause of some unusual speed activity registered previously: data extracted at the end of January has not shown a repeat of the unusual readings registered during the early hours shown in the previous report.
- 18. Tithe Barn – Bardwell’s Village Hall:** (Andrew Smith). The AGM was held on 23rd February. Bookings are beginning to pick up and thoughts have returned to the refurbishment and improvements.
- 19. Planning Application Consultations received:** The parish council considered the following applications: no objections were raised. Action: Clerk to respond to WSC accordingly.
- DC/22/0219/TCA Maple Cottage, Up Street, Bardwell – Trees in a conservation area notification:**
a. one Sycamore (T4) remove large lateral limb to East hanging over the barn and small front facing lateral limb and reduce limb behind by two metres
b. one Oak (T1) remove lower branches Crown lifting to a height of five metres over driveway, remove damaged low lateral limb over the road and crown reduce remaining lateral limbs over the road by two metres, remove small lateral limb hanging over driveway and Acorn Cottage by 1.5metres
c. five Cypress lawson (T2) reduce by four metres
d. one Holly (T3) fell.
- DC/22/0166/VAR: Booty Hall, The Green, Bardwell - Planning application - Variation of condition (2) of DC/21/0506/HH to enable the use of amended plan for the annexe to side of property (following demolition of garage/outbuilding)**
- 20. Planning Application Decisions since February meeting**
DC/21/2361/FUL and DC/21/2362/LB Barn 1 Barningham Park Bardwell Approved 10/02/22
DC/21/2365/HH Trezells, Quaker Lane, Bardwell – Approved 8/02/22
DC/21/2293/HH Hillcroft, Quaker Lane, Bardwell – Approved 4/02/22
- 21. Annual Parish Meeting** is scheduled for 9th May. Information has been included in the March issue of BVN. Refreshments will be provided – details to be confirmed at the April meeting.
- 22. Police report:** see attached.
- 23. Clerk’s Report:**
- i. Defibrillator training – it was agreed that an evening session (possibly 2 sessions subject to demand) should be offered towards the end of April, subject to the availability of trainers.
Action: Clerk
 - ii. Platinum Jubilee lamp-post plaques: it was agreed to purchase 25 plaques from Royal British Legion Industries.

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- iii. Suffolk County Farms - Estate valuation: Bruton Knowles has been appointed to carry out the valuation (valuation date 1st April 2022), and may contact the parish council to request access to the community field.
 - iv. Contact number for Bardwell School keyholder outside of school hours – ie most relevant during holiday periods. None available to parish council.
Vertas Property Management deal with urgent repairs outside of school hours.
SCC has a list of key holders but without consent cannot provide details to parish council: consent has not been granted.
(Another reason for asking for a local keyholder was that previously the school was included as an emergency centre in the event that the Bardwell emergency plan was activated. However, due to the school being unable to provide an out of hours contact/local keyholder, the school building was removed from the emergency plan some while ago as a temporary measure: there are no plans to reinstate the school as an emergency location in the Emergency Plan at this time.)
- 24. Finance:** See attached
Invoices totalling £622.09 were approved
- 25. Correspondence:** Green Ixworth/A143: Concerns about the impact of new housing.
See letter attached.
It agreed that the parish council does wish to be involved/kept updated.
Action: Clerk to confirm to Roger Spiller
- 26. Questions to the Chair**
An e-scooter has been seen being ridden around the village.
The chairman believes he knows who this is, but will make enquiries.
- 27. Next meeting 5th April 2022**
Time: 7.00pm Venue: Tithe Barn, Up Street, Bardwell