

**Minutes of the meeting of Bardwell Parish Council held on Tuesday 1st November 2022, commencing at 6.30pm
in The Tithe Barn, Bardwell's Village Hall, Up Street, Bardwell IP31 1AA**

Present at the meeting:

Parish Councillors: David Ruffles (Chairman) John Babraff, Ali Compton, Geoff Clough, Peter Sanderson, Andrew Smith (also West Suffolk District Councillor), Tony Stokes. Suffolk County Councillor Joanna Spicer MBE. 10 members of the public (5 left the meeting following The Tithe Barn presentation).

Clerk/RFO: Pauline Smith

1. **Apologies for absence:** None
2. **Declarations of interest:** Ongoing declaration by Cllr Smith re payment of Clerk's salary.
No other declarations received.
3. **Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 4th October 2022**
The minutes were approved as read and signed as an accurate record by the Chairman.
4. **Public Participation Session**
 - 4.1 **Bardwell Village Hall Refurbishment: Bardwell Village Hall Management Committee**

Andrew Smith, on behalf of the Bardwell Village Hall Committee (Tithe Barn), thanked the Parish Council for the opportunity to present the proposed plans for the refurbishment.

He introduced Sarah-Jane Stebbing, project architect, who provided a detailed overview of the proposals using a power-point presentation. Whilst it would be desirable to complete the entire refurbishment in one fell swoop, it may be necessary to focus on individual elements in phases as finances allow. A professional grant-finder (recommended by West Suffolk Council), who has successfully worked with other local organisations is assisting with the project.

The Tithe Barn is Bardwell's Village Hall. It has not been subject to a major upgrade since being completely refurbished by village volunteers about 40 years ago. The intended refurbishment will celebrate and enhance the unique heritage and timber frame of the building whilst optimising its use.

All of the existing areas: toilets, kitchen/bar, green room (which will be converted into an extra meeting room with its own entrance), entrance, storage, will be upgraded and enhanced; insulation, wiring and heating is a major element of the project.

Subject to funding it is proposed that the existing ceiling tiles will be removed and the roof space opened up; it is envisaged that a pocket garden will be integrated into the outside area making it less utilitarian and more welcoming, whilst at the same time retaining parking space. The intended outcome will be a flexible user layout for community use and external events.

Also being considered is the option to include photovoltaic cells on the south side of the roof, not on the main roof as this is considered too intrusive.

A community consultation event will be held on Saturday 19th November from 10am – 2pm. Residents are encouraged to attend and provide feedback about what they feel about the village hall, what it needs and what they would like to see included. Responses will be welcomed on the day and up to 12th December.
 - 4.2 **Questions on other matters raised by members of the public.**

Grumpy Goat/Bardwell Playing Field - Fireworks Display: What was the final outcome regarding the Fireworks Display? Cllr Sanderson, as a member of the BPFa and one of the Parish Council's representatives to the BPFa advised that the decision was taken that it would not proceed.

The resident expressed concern that apart from a letter he had received from the Bardwell Sports and Community Club requesting £1,500 to cover costs, which were unsubstantiated, there was no dialogue or communication in relation to the suggestions put forward which it was believed could have enabled a

successful fireworks event to proceed. The resident reiterated that it had not been his intention to prevent an event taking place.

5. To receive reports from District and County Councillors.

5.1 Suffolk County Councillor Joanna Spicer has driven around 16 villages with new Community engineer, visiting sites with outstanding matters of concern.

He has been briefed on the proposed works at the junction Low St/Church Lane/Quaker Lane.

Following concerns raised when looking at the deep ditch in Church Road 2 additional bollards were installed within 48 hours.

Cllr Spicer also briefed him on the issues at Legion Rise re flooding and the work that has been carried out to-date: Cllr Clough will monitor the situation.

Bloor Homes have provided a leaflet relating to the application at Stanton opposite the Rose and Crown Cllr Spicer will provide a copy for distribution. Application is still in the system.

Cllr Spicer had taken Matt Hancock MP on a successful visit to Bardwell School, where he had enjoyed meeting with children and staff.

Closed Footbridge Bridge: Cllr Spicer has received assurances from an SCC officer that he will try to ensure that the work is properly programmed.

Clerk's note: Since the meeting the parish council has been made aware that the landowner has been in contact with SCC and the permissive path has been closed due to residents straying across the field/not keeping to the path.

School Lane: Parking near the school entrance close to the zig zags: Vehicles being parked opposite Mill Paddock are creating access problems for residents and delivery vehicles. The previously agreed double yellow lines have not been provided. Enquiries are in progress and it is hoped that this omission will be rectified as soon as possible.

5.2 West Suffolk District Councillor Andrew Smith advised that there is no news on the potential development on School Lane. The next consultation will be after the May 2023 elections.

6. Chairman's report: Cllrs Ruffles and Babraff met with Bardwell's Police Community Engagement Officer, PC Andrews-Pearce, during which a number of issues of concern to residents were discussed. Whilst in the village PC Andrews-Pearce spent time in Spring Road monitoring traffic, during which he noted several speeding motorists.

7. Highways Matters: Overgrown hedge and vegetation along Low Street.

Over the years there has been an ongoing dispute regarding ownership and responsibility i.e. whether the adjacent landowner or SCC. Several residents have been cutting the hedge and vegetation back over a period of about 5 years but this arrangement is not sustainable.

SCC have recently looked at the location and advised that they do not consider that work is currently necessary, but that the site will be monitored.

Cllr Spicer advised that if the parish council wishes to arrange for the hedge to be cut then she may be able to consider a 'one-off' grant, to enable this to be carried out. However, it will be necessary to first establish ownership and then to obtain the permission from the owner.

The Chairman will make enquiries by the next meeting.

Concerns have been raised by two residents regarding commercial vehicles parked near the corner of Church Road causing difficulties for other motorists due to the proximity to the junction with Quaker lane and Low Street. There are no white lines at the junction.

Action: Chairman/Cllr Spicer The Chairman and Cllr Spicer will discuss/visit the location.

8. Planning

8.1 **Bardwell Playing Field:** DC/22/1578/ADV | Application for advertisement consent - three illuminated freestanding signs at the entrance of the playing fields | Queen Elizabeth II Field Spring Road Bardwell Suffolk IP31 1AB

Resolution: It was decided that the parish council would not make further comment as it has submitted the application

8.2 **The Warren:** DC/22/1731/HH | Householder planning application - replacement front boundary wall and gates | The Warren School Lane Bardwell Suffolk IP31 1AD

Cllrs noted that the Conservation area is at the kerb in front of the proposed fence and considered that the proposal is more suited to an urban area.

Resolution: Object: It is considered that the proposal is inappropriate for the setting.

8.3 **Poppies Low Street:** DC/22/1815/HH Two storey rear extension

Resolution: No objection

8.4 **Land East of Firsfield:** DC/22/0445/FUL | Planning application - ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays together with substations, inverter/transformer stations, grid connection infrastructure, grid cable route, site accesses, access gates, internal access tracks, security measures, storage compound, and ancillary infrastructure, landscaping and biodiversity enhancements | Land East Of Firsfield Bowbeck Bardwell Suffolk

A re-consultation had been required due to a change of cable route around Euston Park. However, Cllrs considered that the previous response should remain. And that no objection would be submitted to the revised cable route.

This was a majority decision, with one objection and one abstention as previously.

Resolution: No objection.

Councillors are however in agreement that if legislation was imposed requiring the use of commercial and new build domestic roofs that there would be no requirement to utilise farmland, which would benefit users directly and retain farmland for food production.

8.5 **DC/22/1905/TPO | TPO 302(1973)** Tree preservation order - one Ash tree (A1 on plan, G1 on order) - fell | Croft House The Green Bardwell Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 1AW

Response: Subject to the West Suffolk District Council Tree Officer's opinion, if it is considered necessary to fell this tree, the Bardwell Parish Council would appreciate a condition that an appropriate replacement should be planted in the same location.

8.6 **Considered *between meetings***

DC/22/1840/TCA | Trees in a conservation area notification - one Field Maple (M1 on plan) overall crown reduction by four metres | Croft House The Green Bardwell Suffolk IP31 1AW

Resolution: No objection

9. **To note: Planning application decisions made by West Suffolk Council since October meeting.**

None reported

10. **To receive updates on any other planning matters**

10.1 **As part of his watching brief on The Birches** as agreed by the parish council: An email received from WSC had been circulated to councillors and was read at the meeting. (Copy attached.)

A resident 'phoned Cllr Smith to advised that the large mobile home has been removed from site today *(and since the meeting the remaining touring caravans have also left site.)*

Frustration was expressed by Cllr Sanderson relating to the time being taken to resolve the issue, in view of the fact that an injunction had previously been obtained. In response to a question, it was noted that the legal firm LSR, who previously acted on behalf of WSC, is no longer operating. Cllr Smith advised that it isn't feasible to get a direct response during the investigation which is somewhat similar to a police investigation.

- 10.2 **Mallard View:** Officers visited the property on 19th October. The owner/owners have been asked to clarify the position re their understanding of the planning consent and conditions. If there is no response within an appropriate length of time WSC will issue a planning a planning contravention notice.
11. **Finance: Consultation from West Suffolk Council**
To consider response to: Proposed changes to the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme. (Details previously circulated/copy attached).
Councillors considered that an appropriate response is to provide an increase to the maximum available discount to those eligible households i.e. 100% for the financial year 2023/24.
12. **Finance: Initial draft budget for consideration 2023/24**
The clerk provided an initial draft budget which would require allocating £2,000 from reserves (copy attached) in order to retain the council tax at the same level as 2022/23, although this is not sustainable in the longer term. Cllr Sanderson suggested several alternative options.
The budget will be reviewed further and discussed again at the December meeting.
13. **Finance:**
- 13.1 **Financial report and invoices for approval.** See attached.
Payments totalling £864.07 were approved.
- 13.2 **To consider review of bank account options in view of increasing interest rates.**
It was agreed that the Clerk/RFO will investigate the possibility of short term investment for part of the parish council's reserves at a higher interest rate than Barclays currently offers.
- 13.3 **Barclays review of accounts requiring ID from all councillors.**
Details have been circulated to councillors and the clerk/RFO explained that she has discussed the requirements with Barclays who have confirmed that the parish council is required to complete and submit the form.
14. **S137 Donations:** The Clerk/RFO will provide details of any charities who have requested assistance to date together with details of charities supported during 2021/22
15. **Community field: Update on recent activities and to consider future requirements.**
25 new tree guards have been installed around trees where additional protection is required. The grass has been cut for the final time this year.
It was agreed to purchase an additional 50 tree guards and stakes **Action Clerk/RFO** (ordered from Sandy Lane Nursery).
Dead Apple Tree: The apple tree that was replaced last year has not survived. Sourcing the same variant is providing difficult, it was therefore suggested that an alternative be chosen. Action: Clerk/RFO (*Update: Aldeburgh Beach Apple has been ordered from Botanica Nursery Campsea Ashe.*)
Grass seed has come on well.
Additional daffodil bulbs have been planted and since the meeting Cllr Babruff has replanted the Jubilee planter.
16. **Clerk's report:** All matters reported elsewhere.
17. **Emergency Plan:** In progress – will be December agenda item.
18. **Correspondence requiring consideration:** All matters dealt with elsewhere on the agenda

19. Reports from parish council representatives to other organisations

19.1 **Speedwatch:** The VAS is now back in operation. The speed watch team will carry out several sessions this month.

19.2 **BPFA:** Nothing to report on playing field.
Fireworks not going ahead (BSCC decision): Not practical to do.

19.3 **Bardwell Charity Trustees** continue to await a date from UK Power Networks relating to felling the dead Willow close to Booty Hall. The commemorative Oak will be planted soon. The Lifebelt by the round pond has been repaired and reinstated and a "Deep Water" sign has been installed on the back edge of the pond.

Despite the long dry summer the Green looks in good shape heading into the winter

An article has been placed in the latest BVN, outlining grants potentially available for those in need of financial support. (Full report attached).

19.4 **Bardwell Village Hall Management Committee (Tithe Barn)**

The recent performance of The Raven by Common Ground Theatre Company was very well received and provides much needed funds for the refurbishment project.

19.5 **SALC:** Nothing to report

20. Service of Remembrance in Bardwell Church: The Chairman will lay the wreath on behalf of the parish council.

21. **Questions to the Chair**

Cllr Sanderson provided a copy of a Surviving Winter Appeal (Suffolk Community Foundation).

There is help for those in need as well as information for those who wish to donate money to the appeal.

To be included in BVN and also on social media.

(Clerk's note: Following the meeting the Clerk contacted Suffolk Community Foundation to request an electronic version for online use: she was asked not to put online yet, but ok to include in BVN and on village notice board, which has been done.)

22. Next meeting: Tuesday 6 December 2022, 7.00pm
The Tithe Barn, Bardwell Village Hall, Up street, Bardwell

Meeting closed at: 9.20pm