

BARROW cum DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 7th December 2020

Present:

Cllr Pearson Cllr M Howard Cllr Cousins Cllr Pettitt	Cllr Holmes Cllr Wesley Cllr Kronbergs Cllr Rawlings	Cllr Ford Cllr Hudson Cllr Bragg Clerk in attendance: Kat Bowe
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Minute Ref		Action
5699	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None	
5700	Cllr Bragg to sign Acceptance of Office Cllr Bragg signed the acceptance of office form in view of the camera. This will be returned to the clerk this week.	
5701	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATIONS None	
5702	<p>PUBLIC FORUM There were six members of the public present.</p> <p>One resident asked when the results of the Neighbourhood Plan (NHP) will be published.</p> <p>Cllr Howard gave a summary of the results: In total there were 375 responses.</p> <p>The questionnaire was divided into five parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demographics: a fair/cross section of the community took part 2. Amenities: there was no great push for particular types of amenities 3. Future development: 83% disagreed or strongly disagreed with future development/new housing. If development had to happen 71.2% would like to see minimal development and 54% would prefer it to be in the North West sector 4. Environment: 90%+ of responses agreed with conserving the environment 5. Infrastructure: the same number of people agreed there was an issue that disagreed. <p>When the councillors were asked if they were disappointed with the number of respondents it was confirmed, there were more than enough respondents to satisfy the planning inspectorate. The questionnaire was released in the</p>	

	<p>middle of the pandemic. Many people had other things on their mind at this time.</p> <p>The results need to be audited by the clerk, they will then be presented to the Parish Council with any amendments for sign off. The full results will be published as part of the NHP process. Everyone will be able to see the full results.</p> <p>Cllr Soons confirmed that Highways have been out to inspect the drainage issues. Site visit to be arranged with Cllr Pearson, Cllr Soons and Highways to discuss the pavement on Barrow Hill and the drainage problems in the village.</p> <p>The water leak on Sharpes Hill has been resolved but remedial work needs to be completed to fix the driveways.</p> <p>Cllr Howard suggested getting an independent engineers' opinion on the drainage issue. It was agreed if the PC does not get anywhere with the Highways meeting this would be considered.</p>	
5703	<p>COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT</p> <p>Cllr Soons confirmed she had received a response from Highways about the drainage issue and a meeting would be arranged. She also confirmed she had received a spreadsheet detailing the S106 monies and how they are to be spent. This will be forwarded to the clerk.</p> <p>Cllr Soons went through her report which can be found on the Parish Council Website.</p> <p>Cllr Pearson disagreed with the email from highways regarding the drainage issues. Meeting to be arranged.</p>	
5704	<p>To receive the Community Police Report</p> <p>The Police report contained much of the same information. It confirmed that the main priorities were antisocial behaviour such as street drinking and county lines. Although knife crime in the area is low there is an amnesty box if needed.</p> <p>Cllr Rawlings offered to be a message cascader, getting urgent information cascaded across the Parish using various contacts from community groups.</p> <p>The latest newsletter can be viewed at https://www.suffolk.police.uk/sites/suffolk/files/ceo_constables_county_dec_-_online.pdf</p>	
5705	<p>Minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>Having been previously circulated, the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2nd November 2020, were proposed by Cllr Holmes and seconded by Cllr Hudson with all Councillors in agreement.</p> <p>Having been previously circulated, the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 16th November 2020, were proposed by Cllr Ford and seconded by Cllr Rawlings with all Councillors in agreement.</p>	

5706	<p>COVID-19</p> <p>a) Christmas Rev'd Lynda contacted the Parish Council asking if anything can be done for isolated/vulnerable people in the village, a meal/gift. 40 people have been identified and the Parish Council has spoken to Barrow Good Neighbours about using some of the grant provided in this way.</p> <p>b) Random Acts of Kindness It was agreed that there are many people in the community already carrying out random acts of kindness and providing support to vulnerable people.</p> <p>All the painted rocks have been collected and once the weather is better they will be set in concrete with a clear resin over the top outside the Town Estate Room.</p>	Clerk
5707	<p>Village Infrastructure</p> <p>a) Sharpes Hill Water Leak This has been resolved but repairs need to be completed.</p> <p>b) Christmas Lights Cllr Pearson thanked Cllr Wesley and a local resident for putting the Christmas lights on the tree. There have been lots of positive posts on social media. The timer is not working but this will be resolved this week. The lights will be on between 4-10pm. Cllr Pearson calculated the cost of this to the resident providing the electricity. A sum of £10 was agreed. Clerk to arrange payment. Total cost of the lights £407. This was proposed by Cllr Wesley and seconded by Cllr Holmes. Cllr Houlder has applied to fund this through his locality budget.</p> <p>c) The Green Risk Assessment The risk assessment was sent to the insurers who happily accepted it. The matter is now closed.</p>	Clerk
5708	<p>Eco-Church The Diocese is keen to make churchyards more eco-friendly. The churchyard is owned by the Parish Council so any changes to its maintenance need to be approved. Rev'd Lynda would like to see special places for wildflower and wildlife set aside to encourage butterflies/bees/birds/insects etc. The Parish Council was asked if part of the church yard could be used in this way and if bird boxes/insect boxes and swift boxes could be installed. The rectory is turning part of its garden into an environmentally friendly meadow.</p> <p>Maintenance would still be needed, and it would be important to balance between making it neat and allowing the environmental areas.</p> <p>Rev'd Lynda hopes to encourage the children of the village to be involved with planting etc and is interested in obtaining the Eco Church award.</p> <p>It was agreed that burial areas would be kept tidy and any areas to be set to wildflower must be agreed with the Parish Council. Suffolk Wildlife Trust would be involved to ensure it was a success.</p>	

	<p>Denham Church are looking into a similar idea. Cllr Kronbergs and Cllr Hudson agreed to liaise with the church and be the Parish Council points of contact regarding the initiative.</p> <p>Rev'd Lynda to put together a proposal for Parish Council approval.</p> <p>It was pointed out that it would need to be done sensitively as we are often complimented on the immaculate condition of the church yard and cemeteries. Cllr Wesley mentioned the issue of drift (of dandelions etc) and said it may lead to added costs to spraying. He also recommended planting fruit trees.</p> <p>It was agreed to move forward with this. The clerk will put Rev'd Lynda in touch with Cllr Hudson and Cllr Kronbergs.</p>	Clerk
5709	<p>Highways</p> <p>The drainage issues are an increasing issue in the village. Cllr Howard suggested getting a civil engineer to look at the issues. It was agreed this could be an option if it can not be resolved with Highways. The water outside the shop was pumped away into a drain that is not running. Green Farm pond needs dredging. Cllr Wesley to arrange a quote for the pond. There is money set aside for this. Highways need to come and empty the drains.</p> <p>The drains outside the hairdressers are fully silted up. Highways have been informed. The parking area has degraded again. Clerk to contact the contractor to discuss as it should have more longevity. Cllr Pearson, Kronbergs and Wesley to meet.</p> <p>Ongoing drainage issues opposite the village hall. Cllr Soons to arrange a meeting with Highways. Clerk to circulate the date.</p>	Clerk
5710	<p>Duke of Edinburgh Volunteering</p> <p>The Clerk has received a request for suggestions to help a local resident complete volunteer hours for her Duke of Edinburgh Award. Clerk to find out timescales and will speak to Barrow Good Neighbours re helping with the Christmas gifts. She could also help with the Eco Church initiative if the time scales fit.</p>	Clerk
5711	<p>Fishing Regulations</p> <p>The finalised permits were circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed the clerk would print 50 of these. This was proposed by Cllr Holmes and seconded by Cllr Kronbergs.</p> <p>Cllr Ford to arrange vinyl overlays for the fishing signs.</p> <p>Permits to be purchased from the Post Office.</p> <p>Cllr Pearson to price up official stamp.</p>	Clerk RF JP

5712

Neighbourhood Plan

a) Clarifications on Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Howard provided clarifications on the neighbourhood plan, see appendix 1 for report.

The housing needs assessment numbers are a minimum so the NHP or local plan must show how these number will be exceeded. It is not clear what would be considered a maximum number. The NHP could have a policy within it to state how these number would be exceeded for example by infill.

Questions were raised over how sensible it was to start allocating sites as the Parish Council withdrew support to the site South of the village.

Cllr Ford stated that his understanding, from previous statements made was that Barrow Ducks was formed to oppose all future development in Barrow. It was confirmed that there is no option to reject all development, since the UK Planning Inspectorate would reject the neighbourhood plan. Concerns were raised over the NHP not passing a referendum and it was suggested that the importance needs to be fully explained to parishioners prior to the referendum, the consequences of not having a NHP need to be highlighted.

Planning Direct will have no decision-making powers. They will provide an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the sites and make recommendations. The Parish Council will decide which site/sites to include within the NHP. The Parish Council will put the best possible plan to the Parish.

Order of events:

- Gathering data phase – needs to be finalised.
- Analysis, the data will be passed to Planning Direct for analysis
- Arrange meeting with Planning Direct so they can explain the analysis process.

There is a danger that the NHP will be rejected at referendum stage due to people being opposed to overdevelopment/unsustainable development. It is unrealistic to propose no development. Without the NHP the Parish Council would have no control over future development location/design/numbers.

Barrow has been designated a Key Service Centre. If further development must happen it was suggested that some sort of payback for the village should be secured.

Some councillors felt uneasy about allocating sites and the question (in the public consultation questionnaire) which asked parishioners to state where they would prefer to see future development. It was explained that if the Neighbourhood Plan is to allocate sites, then that question was required for evidence to support any relevant policies.

Cllr Rawlings stated that currently we do not know how many dwellings we are talking about. Cllr Howard confirmed that the housing needs assessment and the housing requirement had been discussed and we are waiting for a report from Planning Direct to confirm the number. Houses currently under construction/in the pipeline will be included in future calculations.

	<p>Bloor Homes have requested a meeting regarding land South of Bury Road. It was agreed this would be an agenda item for the next meeting and they would be given the chance to present to the council.</p> <p>A separate meeting will be set up with Planning Direct.</p> <p>b) Newts See report in Appendix One.</p> <p>Newts cannot stop development. Cllr Wesley suggested getting an ecologist to complete a report, or whether it was possible to obtain reports that have been completed in the past for other developments as this could provide stronger evidence.</p> <p>c) Design Code Previous comments have been feedback, if the changes are not made or the Parish Council are not happy with the design code, the Parish Council are able to accept or reject the report in its entirety.</p> <p>d) Parish consultation This needs to be audited by the clerk prior to it being published.</p> <p>e) Barrow Business Park Part of one of the sites that has come forward in the call for sites has already been allocated as part of the current local plan, Rural Vision 2031 for a Barrow Business park with a clause stating they must take into consideration the needs of the Primary School if the business park was to go ahead. There is also a clause stating if a business park is not viable the site could be allocated to housing. Given the COVID pandemic there could be an argument that the business park would no longer be economically viable.</p>	
5713	<p>WSC SHELAA</p> <p>The Parish Council responded to the last consultation with a none site specific letter. The options this time are to send an updated version or to write a new site specific one with a RAG analysis. Local residents can submit their own site-specific comments. Clerk to circulate previous letter to all councillors along with the draft RAG analysis which was carried out last time but not submitted.</p>	
5714	<p>DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORT</p> <p>Cllr Houlder was unable to attend. The Clerk confirmed that a locality budget application had been made for the Christmas lights and a VAS post.</p>	
5715	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p>a) To receive the council's current financial statement Adoption of the Accounts were proposed by Cllr Wesley seconded by Cllr Kronbergs with all Councillors in agreement.</p> <p>b) To confirm payments</p>	

PAYMENTS TO BE PRESENTED AT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 7th DECEMBER 2020

2020/2021 Accounts

EXPENDITURE

Cheque No.	Payee	Amount	Notes
BACS	RH Landscapes	£822.00	Grass cutting October

VERSE £342.10 (Autumn Newslink)

The payments were proposed by Cllr Wesley and seconded by Cllr Kronbergs with all in agreement.

e) To approve budget

The budget was approved with an extra £3,087 being added to the pond budget. This was proposed by Cllr Ford and seconded by Cllr Cousins.

f) To agree precept for 2021/22

It was agreed not to increase the precept. The precept will remain at £34.65. This was proposed by Cllr Holmes and seconded by Cllr Hudson. Cllr Pearson to include this in the spring edition of Newslink.

5716

PLANNING

DC/20/1972/HH Belvedere Barrow Hill Barrow IP29 5DX Householder planning application - one dormer to front elevation

No Objections

5717

To note the following planning determinations

None

5718

Extended site hours – Hopkins Homes

COVID-19 Legislation enables developers to make applications to alter site times. A response from planning must be received within 14 days. The Parish Council are not consulted. A compromise was agreed. Site hours to be extended to 7am – 8pm with strict conditions including external work to be carried out during the hours of daylight only. No extra outdoor lighting is allowed. Anyone witnessing a breach in the conditions to make representation to the planning department. This change expires in March.

5719

Confirm Dates of Next Year's Meetings

The meeting dates were circulated prior to the meeting. All dates were confirmed and will be uploaded to the website.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be confirmed nearer the time.

5720	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>05/11/20 Karen Soons unsolicited call about gravestones this morning For information</p> <p>06/11/20 West Suffolk Council Communication to all Stakeholders from West Suffolk Council Re: Covid-19 and Business Grants For information</p> <p>06/11/20 Karen Soons Lighting to footway north of Beale Road For information</p> <p>16/11/20 Bloor Homes Bloor Homes site - land south of Bury Road For information</p> <p>18/11/20 Local resident Flooding at Premier Store For information</p> <p>20/11/20 West Suffolk Council Parish and Town Forum - 04.11.2020 For information</p> <p>20/11/20 West Suffolk Council Message from Cllr John Griffiths, Leader of West Suffolk Council, to Town & Parish Councils For information</p> <p>21/11/20 Local Resident Land East Off Barrow Hill For information</p> <p>23/11/20 Local Resident Hopkins Homes application to amend working hours, Land east on Barrow Hill, Barrow For information</p> <p>24/11/20 Local Resident Local Plan Consultation For information</p> <p>26/11/20 Local Resident Sharpe's Hill Barrow water leak - CR 294913 For information</p> <p>26/11/20 Good Neighbours Donation from the Parish Council For information</p> <p>27/11/20 West Suffolk Council Precept resolutions -impact on Band D tax For information</p> <p>01/12/20 Local Resident Site extension of working hours For information</p> <p>01/12/20 SALC Good Neighbour Schemes For information</p> <p>01/12/20 SALC SALC Member Survey</p>	
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	<p>For information</p> <p>02/12/20 Stop Stansted Expanding Planning Appeal DATE. 20/00094/REF NB For information</p> <p>02/12/20 Karen Soons December Newsletter For information</p> <p>Various SALC SALC e-bulletin For information</p>	
5721	<p>DATE OF NEXT MEETING Monday 1st February 2021, virtual meeting via Zoom at 7.15pm.</p> <p>The meeting was closed at 9:40pm</p>	

Signed: (Chairman) date.....

Neighbourhood Plan Report

Clarifications

I listened to some of the comments at our previous meeting and I think it would be useful to recap and clarify 4 points – this might also be useful to the new councillors.

Firstly, the Neighbourhood Plan is not mandatory. There is no statutory requirement for the Parish Council to do a Neighbourhood Plan.

It will be easier if we don't do it – meetings will be shorter and nobody will give us a hard time about things they don't agree with; some people will prefer us not to do it; some people don't care – they have other priorities; some people think it's important. In spite of the difficulties, I am more certain of its importance now than when I first proposed it and I will go on to explain why.

There are only 2 future scenarios – either we have a Neighbourhood Plan or we don't. If we don't, then West Suffolk's new Local Plan will apply. Major planning decisions for Barrow and Denham will be made by West Suffolk Council.

Secondly, any power that a Neighbourhood Plan has does not come from the Parish Council's powers. The Parish Council does not decide to enact or 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan. Any power that the Neighbourhood Plan has comes from a parish referendum to accept or reject any plan that's put before it.

The Plan will probably be a long and wordy document. Its key elements will be around 10 or so policies. The UK Planning Inspectorate audits the plan to see if the policies are evidenced based and that they have been arrived at fairly and reasonably. The UK Planning Inspectorate will only allow a fair and reasonable plan whose policies are based on evidence, to be put to the parish for a referendum.

The Parish Council's job in a Neighbourhood Plan is to come up with what it believes to be the best possible plan (or least worst depending on your perspective) – considering all the various pressures, constraints, opportunities, data etc. - and to put it to the UK Planning Inspectorate and then eventually to the parish.

It's important to remember that the ultimate decision to accept or reject the Plan lies with the parish, not the Parish Council.

Notable, there is no referendum for West Suffolk's Local Plan.

Thirdly, site selection is not a mandatory part of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Again it will be easier if we don't do it. I think that our job should be to find the best (or least worst – depending on your perspective) site or sites for the parish and to present it to the parish as part of the Plan.

If we decide not to include what we believe to be the most appropriate site or sites in the Plan, from the gathered data and expert advice, West Suffolk will do it for us. The decisions don't go away – they will just be made by people from outside the parish.

Fourthly, this is a bit complicated. There is a subtle but important aspect of the housing numbers that we have discussed previously. In retrospect, the significance of this has been clear to me and Zigurds for some time – but I have probably failed in explaining how important it is.

The housing numbers that we have previously discussed are minima. In other words, either the Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan has to show how the numbers will be exceeded.

If West Suffolk's Local Plan is in place, how they will exceed the minimum housing numbers and by how much is not clear to me. I am not aware of what West Suffolk consider to be the maximum for housing numbers in Barrow and Denham. However, our current level of new housing development shows that they (St. Edmundsbury) were happy to exceed what the Planning Inspectorate considered proportionate for Barrow under Rural Vision 2031.

With the Neighbourhood Plan, given the responses in the recent questionnaire, I will argue for the calculated housing numbers to be in the Plan and then for them to be exceeded by infill. Over the

last 20 years, records will show that planning permissions have been granted for a small number of houses each year to be built as infill developments. Over 20 year timeframe of the Plan the figure mounts up to a substantial figure that would ensure the housing numbers are exceeded. The mechanism and amount by which the housing numbers are exceeded *might* be the biggest (and possibly the most important) difference between the Neighbourhood Plan and a new Local Plan from West Suffolk.

Newts

I have circulated a draft report on information gathered to date. In summary:

- There is good evidence for great crested newts and smooth newts
- Both are protected – great crested newts have much greater levels of protection. They are a European Protected Species.
- Both aquatic and ground habitat is important – not just the ponds – but with >30 ponds in the parish it *might* be considered suitable for what's called a 'metapopulation' of great crested newts
- The reports of newts are from across all 4 sectors of the Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Newts don't stop development – basically a developer has to pay for any negative effects to be made positive. If one pond, with a few newts is distant from a site then the costs are small, if there are several (highly suitable) ponds, with lots of newts close to or within a site, mitigation costs could be substantial.

The recommendations are:

- That the note is sent to AECOM and Planning Direct for their consideration
- We seek advice from AECOM as to whether some form of species or habitat registration is advisable with either West Suffolk Council, Wildlife Trust or Natural England (the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation for GCNs).

I am happy to take any questions or comments on the draft.

Design Code

I have fed back the comments from the previous meeting to AECOM and we await their revised draft.

Note we can decide to accept or reject the report but we can't instruct AECOM to change the report – we can provide comments – but ultimately they are the authors.

Parish Consultation

The audit is not yet complete but, hopefully, can be scheduled soon.

Barrow Business Park & Call for Sites

The Call for Sites generated a lot of data. Zigurds has checked that the draft data and sketch map previously circulated to the PC are accurate and has suggested one typographical change. I will amend and re-circulate.

One of the sites (adjacent to Barrow School) stated that part of it has already been allocated as part of the current local plan, Rural Vision 2031. Zigurds and I have checked this and confirm that policy RV4 has already allocated land north of the school for a Barrow Business Park for class B1 use (i.e. offices, R&D facilities, light industrial).

RV4 also states that the master plan for Barrow Business Park 'will need to take into account the requirements for the future expansion of the primary school'.

Notably, clause 10.1 of RV4 also includes provision for the Barrow Business Park allocation to be converted to housing if it is not viable. It is conceivable that such an argument might be made.

The site plan for Barrow Business Park is not in RV2031 and so the situation as to what is included or excluded in the Call for Sites submission was unclear to Zigurds and me. Hill Residential were contacted and I have circulated their response to councillors.

My understanding is that the site submitted will use the previously allocated land for school expansion, possibly parking, and the further land for residential development of up to 100 homes.

[[We have very recently received a request from Bloor Homes regarding the land south of Bury Road and they've asked for a meeting to present the latest plans. Given the timing of the letter it was not possible to include this as an agenda item.]]