

Barnham Parish Council

Chairman: Cllr John Bauer. Vice Chair: Cllr Ed Wyer

Minutes of the Meeting of Barnham Parish Council held on
Tuesday 10th September 2024, commencing at 7.00pm
Venue: Barnham Village Hall, Mill Lane, Barnham IP24 2NG

In attendance:

Cllr John Bauer (Chair), Cllr Ed Wyer (Vice Chair), Cllr Helen Beck, Cllr Martin Belsham, Cllr Matthew Hawthorn, Cllr Susan Watson, Suffolk County Cllr Joanna Spicer MBE, West Suffolk District Cllr Andrew Smith.

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer: Pauline Smith. 2 Members of the public

1. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies were received from and approved for Cllr Adrian Webb

2. To receive declarations of interests and to consider requests, not already received and determined, for dispensations relating to matters on this agenda: None

3. To approve minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th July 2024

2 amendments were made:

5.1 **Cllr Spicer's report:** Deleted **C633 site** replaced with **North Farm Quarry site**

9.8 **RAF Liaison:** Deleted **Wing Cdr** replaced with **Sdn Ldr**

Proposal: That the Minutes be signed as an accurate record of the meeting:

Proposed: Cllr Wyer. **Seconded:** Cllr Hawthorn. **Unanimously agreed.**

The Chair duly signed the Minutes.

4. Public Forum

North Farm Quarry site: [REDACTED] attended the meeting to raise his concerns that Suffolk County Council will not be enforcing the conditions detailed within the planning consent i.e. that the land must be restored to Heathland. Instead, Suffolk County Council has agreed with the landowner, Elveden Estate, that the bunds will be levelled and the land will be returned to agriculture.

The original deadline of 31st March 2024 was missed due to very wet weather following which, due to protection of the stone curlew, work has been delayed until November 2024.

[REDACTED] highlighted that the "selling point" to obtain planning permission originally was the fact that after the sand and gravel had been extracted the land would be returned to nature/restored to heathland.

[REDACTED] explained his understanding regarding the planning conditions:

Condition 27 says the restoration of the site shall be carried out in accordance with the drawings in the original planning application. The conditions do not say anywhere that if nothing was extracted, 'they' don't have to do the restoration to heathland. What is stated is that: "If less than 400,000 tonnes is extracted, the above drawing and cross-sections shall be revised accordingly to show a shallower valley feature and submitted to the Minerals Planning Authority for approval prior to the commencement of final restoration.

(Clerk's note: extracted from conditions notice for information - Reason: to ensure that the site is reclaimed in an orderly manner to a condition capable of beneficial after-use having regard to the Suffolk Minerals Core Strategy Adoption Version September 2008 and the National Planning Policy Framework and Technical Guidance.)

[REDACTED] considers this means that the restoration (to heathland) must be implemented.

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██████████ considers that it would be appropriate if a variation to the planning permission consent was to be issued for consultation, enabling all appropriate consultees to have the opportunity to review the situation and make comment, including Natural England, Suffolk and Norfolk Wildlife Trusts.

During the discussion ██████████ acknowledged that ██████████ ██████████ – also owned by Elveden Estate) do not object to the use of land being returned to agriculture providing relevant variations to the original conditions are put in place and adhered to in accordance with the agreement.

The Parish Council (as is ██████████) is concerned at the failure of Suffolk County Council to properly follow their own rules, and also that this has created a ‘loophole’ which could provide an opportunity for another quarry application to be submitted. It is believed that if the land was to be returned to nature/heathland this opportunity would be very significantly decreased.

Cllr Spicer advised that the first stage of the next mineral and waste plan consultation has been delayed until 2026.

The original application was granted as an exception site ██████████ ██████████ There is a question to be asked/answered as to whether the site would now be automatically included in the next plan or whether it would be considered as a new site for consultation.

It is understood that Elveden Estate has stated that it will provide photographic evidence (to SCC) of the work to level the bund and return the land to agriculture as it progresses. ██████████ considers that details of the intended work should be explicitly described and that it must be ensured that the work is carried out accordingly. He is concerned that the manner in which the arrangements have been agreed indicate that Elveden Estate will simply be left to ‘get on with it’ which, in his view, is unacceptable.

The parish council concurs with the concerns raised and will contact Suffolk County Council to establish whether the wording of the letter to ██████████ on 5th September, advising that the land is to be returned to agriculture is an error, ie should it have read ‘heathland’ as all present believed would/should be the case? **Action Clerk**

A very significant amount of effort and worry has been expended over the years in relation to reaching the stage of ‘refusal’ for this site, and councillors do not wish for the situation to arise again at a future date.

5. Reports

5.1 **Mr S Telfer: Barnham Heath Residents’ Representative**

It was noted that during the parish council litterpick, a significant amount of flyipping had been discovered within the woodland area.

Mr Telfer had no knowledge of this but will be vigilant re potential future occurrences. Mr Telfer was thanked for attending the meeting.

5.2 **Suffolk County Councillor, Joanna Spicer MBE**

North Farm Quarry Restoration: discussed during public session above.

ANPR data: Barnham data (8-15 July) has previously been circulated.

Cllr Spicer advised that the ANPR camera only picks up motorists driving over 33 mph: it does not provide numbers of vehicles.

10% of motorists were travelling at over 35mph. A low number were picked up over 45mph.

1000s of letters have been sent out to speeding motorists across Suffolk.

ANPR camera is due back in Barnham during October.

5.3 **West Suffolk District Councillor, Andrew Smith**

NRG Appeal: Start date shown as July: No decision date as yet.

Gerda: It is understood that a planning application is being prepared for consultation. Various reports from consultants (including a sound report) are awaited.

The current designation is class B8 which refers to storage or distribution.

Simpler Recycling: New system will be introduced in 2026.

Cllr Smith is concerned at the loss of recycling credits currently received by village halls across the county, when glass is collected from residential properties as part of the new system. (4 in Bardwell Ward – Barnham Parish Council receives the recycling credits for glass banks at Barnham Village Hall) Cllr Smith is raising this at full council on 15th October and will be requesting consideration of some sort of compensatory arrangement.

Clerk's note: The loss to Barnham Parish Council based on 2023/24 would be c.£493.00 annually. The parish council transfers £1000 into an earmarked reserve annually for Barnham Village Hall, which takes into account the income from the glass bank credits.

6. Highways Matters

Footpath from opposite 1 St Martin's Lane/The Street to the Village Green Triangle. To consider concerns raised by resident regarding requisite maintenance of footpath due to overhanging branches and encroaching vegetation. *Additional details circulated with agenda.*

Clerk has submitted a report to SCC

However, Cllr Hawthorne kindly advised that he would arrange for this work to be carried out by Euston Estate in October.

Clerk's Note: Soon after the meeting, yellow marks were noted and work was carried out soon afterwards, presumably by Suffolk County Council.

Tree – top of Church Lane, verge adj Old Parsonage: Concerns about dead branches stretching from tree across the road. **Action Clerk report to SCC**

Footpath verge from Church towards Barnham Heath

Cllr Watson explained that a neighbour has been cutting the verge as he drives from his home on his ride on mower to the church. Councillors expressed their gratitude. It is planned that Euston Estate's contractor will be carrying out work to remove the encroaching vegetation during October (Parish Council to pay a contribution as previously agreed).

7. To receive reports from Parish Councillors:

7.1 **Police Liaison**

Cllr Belsham

To note public meetings "Your Police Your Say" are being held across the County during September/ October and online (6th November) Details circulated with agenda

No further information regarding arrangements for pop up police surgery.

7.2 **Barnham Primary School**

Cllr Hawthorn

Cllr Spicer queried that the money allocated to the Barnham Bunnies from her locality budget has not been called upon. **Action: Cllr Hawthorn will follow up**

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- 7.3 **Community Engagement** **Cllr Helen Beck**
The parish council will have a table at the Village Hall Christmas Fair on 24th November **Action: Cllr Beck and Clerk** to discuss arrangements
- 7.4 **Play Park** **Cllr Watson/Clerk**
Climbing Wall: Councillors resolved that the footholds on the climbing wall will not be replaced immediately. To be reviewed after Christmas.
Diarise/Action: Clerk
Play area safety surfacing: Clerk will be meeting a contractor on 14th September who will visit to provide a quotation.
Tree shading play area – from other side of the fence
This tree is not owned by SCC or WSC. It is not within the play area and therefore is not the responsibility of the parish council.
Clerk is making further enquiries with regards to ownership of the verge/tree: possibly village hall?
- 7.5 **RAF Liaison** **Cllr Wyer**
Report received from Station Engagement Officer, Sqn Ldr Dave Williams
1. A major field exercise will be taking place within the bounds of the base from Mon 23rd to Weds 25th September. Local residents or others passing the base may see smoke and emergency service vehicles in attendance and are not to be alarmed.
 2. Station personnel will be taking part in the annual Battle of Britain parade and service in Bury St Edmunds on 15th September. Station personnel will also be in attendance at other BoB events locally.
 3. There is a Veterans Coffee morning being held in the HIVE on 18th September, 0900-1100 hrs. All are welcome, and a map is enclosed (the HIVE is outside the wire so no passes are required, and parking / disabled access is available).
- 7.6 **Barnham Village Hall Liaison** **Cllr Hawthorn**
Request from Village Hall for parish council to pay for work to parking bays in carpark: £350.00 + vat.
Resolution: Unanimously agreed

Planning Matters:

Barnham Parish Council has received consultation documents from West Suffolk Council for consideration (items 8 and 9)

8. **DC/24/0481/FUL | Honeysuckle Farm Thetford Road Barnham Suffolk IP24 2PA**
Planning application - change of use of land from agricultural land to storage and distribution (class B8) associated with planning permission - DC/23/0445/FUL
Resolution: The Parish Council's previous stance/response (objection) remains unchanged: Unanimous **Action: Clerk**
Cllr Smith will speak to planning officer: Cllrs highlighted that it will be impossible for 2 lorries to pass each other; he will also enquire about the visibility splay and the requirement for vegetation clearance.

9. DC/24/1227/TCA | The Old Parsonage, Church Lane Barnham Suffolk IP24 2NB.

Trees in a conservation area notification - a. one Silver Birch (T1) and one Horse chestnut (T6) fell b. two Lime (T3 and T4) remove epicormic growth c. one Silver birch (T2) overall crown reduction by two metres d. one Sycamore (T5) reduce branch growing into liquidambar by up to 2.5 metres e. one Silver birch (T7) overall crown reduction by up to three metres f. one Hazel (T8) overall crown reduction by up to 1.5 metres g. one Ash (T9) target pruning of over extended long limbs by up to four metres h. Group of shrubs (T10) reduce by up to two metres **Resolution: No objection - Unanimous**

Other Planning Matters (items 10, 11, 12)

10. NRG Appeal Update: To note that the decision date is not yet available- see 5.3

11. NPPF Consultation: To note guidance from SALC is expected 7th September.

Resolution: No action required – unanimous decision

12. North Farm Quarry Restoration:

Following the update/report from Cllr Spicer, to consider whether any action is required by the Parish Council at this time: See discussion/details at item 4.

13. Grounds Maintenance Review: Grass cutting – Review of work carried out to-date by Vertas – first year of contract.

Councillors confirmed they are satisfied with work carried out.

14. Moles: To note that the annual contract is now due for renewal (1st September). To review year to date and consider future arrangements. (Details circulated with agenda)

Resolution: After discussion, councillors agreed to renew the contract for another year.

Proposed: Cllr Hawthorn. **Seconded** Cllr Belsham. No objections **Action Clerk**

15. Insurance is due for renewal 1st October 2024. The policy is currently arranged through Clear Councils – the insurer is Aviva Insurance Ltd.

Renewal premium £455.78 (23/24 £368.91).

The Clerk/RFO is seeking alternative quotations despite this being year 1 of a 3 year 'deal'.

Action: Clerk will provide details outside of meeting when received.

Note: Since the meeting the clerk has confirmed to councillors that this policy offers best value and the insurance policy has been renewed with £20.00 discount applied.

**see 18.ii

16. Village Maintenance

Should consideration be given to the formation of a regular village work party? Other villages locally are successfully running such groups to various degrees.

Clerk explained success of regular village working party in Bardwell and other local villages. Work such as clearing debris from bus shelters, cleaning signs as well as litterpicking, and other small but important jobs could be carried out.

A suggestion was made of seeking grants/financial support for equipment. **Action:** Clerk **Action: Clerk to establish level of interest/publicise**

17. Clerk's Report to include Clock refurbishment progress

Concern regarding differences in quotes continue. For clarification following conversation with Cumbria Clock Company the clerk will have a further follow up with Smith of Derby.

Current finances available indicate that subject to satisfactory response, contract for work to refurbish clock face should be able to be placed in near future.

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18. Finance

- 18.i Financial Report: The Financial report was accepted/approved (See attached.)
- 18.ii Invoices for payment:
 - Barnham PCC - Wreath Remembrance Service £ 30.00
 - Vertas – Village grass cutting £120.00
 - O R Grainger - Mole contract £420.00
 - Clear Insurance - renewal £435.78
 - Total** **£1,005.78**
- 18.iii To consider future financial requirements – budget 2025/26
For inclusion in November meeting: Consider inclusion of gov.uk domain

19. Lap Top Computer: To consider replacement purchase (see clerk’s report)

Proposal: 17” HP laptop sufficient for parish council requirements including 1 year’s Norton antivirus and transfer of data from existing lap top, supplied by121 Computers, Diss. **Total cost £529** inclusive of vat.

If agreed the Clerk also requests permission to purchase a protective sleeve or carrying case **Computer reserve balance is currently £900**

Resolution: It was agreed that the clerk will include review of apple laptop for consideration on next agenda. **Action: Clerk**

Printer: to note that the parish council’s HP printer is no longer working.
Does the parish council wish to consider a repair?

Resolution: It was unanimously agreed to dispose of the printer. **Action: Clerk**

20. Correspondence/Diary dates. To note:

- 3rd October: Rural and Community Led Housing (previously circulated)
- 16th October CAB (West) AGM (circulated) – Apologies to be sent: Barnham Parish Council supports Thetford CAB **Action: Clerk**

21. Requests for items for inclusion on the next agenda:

As detailed elsewhere on agenda.

22. Date of next meeting: 12th November 2024

Signed as an accurate record

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Date: 12th November 2024