### BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL,** held Thursday, 12th April 2018 in the Barling Mana Parish Hall, Barling Magna, Essex, commencing at 7pm.

Present: Councillors Ashdown, Bond, Clark, Pearmain and Steptoe (Chairman)

Apologies: Councillors Cohen, Edmunds and Gardiner.

District Councillors Efde, Hookway and Hughes

Attending: District Councillors Lucas-Gill and Williams; County and District Councillor Steptoe

I. King (Parish Clerk)

**MINUTES**

**18.50 The Chairman to declare the meeting open.**

1. Councillor Cohen having sent her apologies, Councillor Steptoe took the chair. The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7pm.
   1. **To receive apologies for absence.**
2. Apologies for absence were noted, as set out above.

**18.52 To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Council’s Code of Conduct and with section 106 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**

1. Councillor Steptoe declared an interest in any matters relating to Essex County Council and Rochford District Council.

**18.53** **To agree and sign as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held 8th March 2018.**

1. Proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Steptoe that the minutes be agreed. For 5; against 0; abstained 0.

**18.54 The meeting will stand adjourned to permit Parishioners of Barling Magna to address the Council.**

1. No residents wished to address the Council on this occasion.

**18.55 To receive a report from the District and County Councillors for the area on any matters of interest.**

1. There was relatively little to report, owing to the forthcoming election. District Councillor Lucas-Gill reported that the wedding fair to be held at the Old House in Rochford would now take place on Sunday, 20 May.
2. County Councillor Steptoe reported that the County Council had held its annual meeting. Following the recent winter weather, the Council had resurfaced over 400 miles of roads and repaired over 5,000 potholes. He reminded meeting of the Essex Lottery, with 60% of the sale price of £1 going to good causes.
3. District Councillor Steptoe reported that a date for the consideration of the proposed Rosedene development was still awaited.

* 1. **Financial Matters**

1. A revised schedule of cheque payments for April had been circulated, as below. Proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Pearmain that the schedule be approved. For 5; against 0; abstained 0. A letter of thanks would be sent to Cohen TV for their generous installation of CCTV parish hall undertaken at cost price.



1. A bank reconciliation showing net funds of £34,892.93 as at 29th March 2018 was noted.
2. The recent application to CIF towards renewing the kitchen and toilets had been successful and it was agreed to accept the grant, with thanks. The specifications for works on these rooms were discussed. Councillor Pearmain offered to supply details of a carpenter. He suggested that the specification for the new cisterns should ensure that they would fit before they were ordered. The taps would need to be appropriate to a pressurised, rather than a tank, system. It was proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Clark that the specifications be approved, subject to the points raised. For 5; against 0; abstained 0. It was agreed to explore whether financial regulations would permit the council to take up a generous offer from Councillor Bond for the equipment to be purchased using his firm’s account with Howden’s.
3. The clerk reported on ongoing correspondence with HSBC regarding security checks on the bank account in the name of Barling Magna Parish Hall. It was noted that we had fully complied with their requests by 8 February 2018 although they continued to request that we do so. An email received that day confirmed that it would not be necessary for non-signatories to prove their identity and addresses.
4. It was proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Clark that the following items be agreed:
5. £440 for the 5-yearly electrical wiring check at the Parish Hall (due May 2018);
6. To accept with thanks a donation of £40 for bird feed from A. Leeks and to agree to purchase feed;
7. To agree £300 for wood preservative for the fencing at the Parish Hall;
8. To defer options for the PA system until Councillor Edmunds was present

For 5; against 0; abstained 0.

**18:57 Planned events and projects – to review progress and agree any action**

1. Travelling Trends (22nd May). The Council had applied for a temporary licence to serve alcohol. The event was being marketed by means of posters, flyers, Facebook and the council’s website.
2. Library boxes: Councillor Bond was thanked for making three boxes which looked highly attractive. The first would be positioned outside the parish hall; the second outside Councillor Steptoe’s home. Insurers were aware and approving of this concept if the physical state of the boxes was inspected annually.
3. Barling in Bloom – Councillor Bond reported on a successful meeting with a representative of Anglia in Bloom who was enthusiastic about Barling’s prospects. It was agreed to launch a project beginning this year with the intention of showcasing Barling in 2019. The various elements would include the new dinghy, flowers adjacent to road signs, hanging baskets, plant sale, vegetable growing and the wildlife reserve. It was agreed that there should be a task force of volunteers led by Councillor Bond. Alongside the item already placed in the GWCA News, the clerk would issue a press release. Councillor Steptoe felt that it would further enhance the attractiveness of the village if the hedge at the junction of Barling Road, Church Road could be trimmed to waist height, as this would reveal a new vista. The meeting thanked Councillor Bond for his work on this project so far.
4. The Dinghy – two 15-litre bags of compost would be purchased and added to the topsoil. It was understood that the chairman was in discussion with the school about a planting project. It was noted that Mr Peter Shaw and Mrs Ivy Knight would be interested in assisting with planting. Councillor Pearmain offered to install an external tap at some point in May.
   1. **Governance matters, for discussion and to agree any action**
5. Casual vacancy – the deadline was noon on Friday, 13th April. To date there had been four applications. In accordance with the Council’s new policy on co-options, these would be circulated to councillors after the deadline along with a draft list of interview questions. Proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Pearmain that a separate meeting be held to interview the candidates. For 5; against 0; abstentions 0. The clerk reminded members that this matter could not be resolved in a private and confidential session.
6. Proposed by Councillor Pearmain, seconded by Councillor Clark that the draft calendar of meetings for the year 2018-19 be approved. For 5; against 0; abstentions 0.
7. Proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Clark that the Councillors’ Code of Conduct, containing minor amendments to punctuation, be adopted for 2018-19. For 5; against 0; abstentions 0.
8. Proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Clark that the text of the Rochford District Council Social Media Policy should be edited by the clerk and that it should be added to the code of conduct. For 5; against 0; abstentions 0.
9. Data Protection:
10. The clerk had acted to renew the annual Data Protection licence.
11. A draft Data Map had been circulated to councillors with the intention of identifying all relevant personal data held by the parish council, to prepare for the imminent General Data Protection Regulation. This was noted and council would receive further advice as the next steps became clear.
12. The secure disposal of documents bearing personal data being a key element in data protection, it was proposed by Councillor Clark, seconded by Councillor Pearmain that the council would buy a crosscut heavy-duty shredder at a cost not to exceed £100 plus VAT. The clerk had formed all members as well as former Councillor Mrs Knight that he would be willing to collect and supervise the safe destruction of council documents in their possession. The crosscut waste could be recycled.
    1. **Parish Hall and other works – to receive reports and agree any action**
13. The emergency lighting at the parish hall was now tested and functioning. Internal lights at the parish hall had also been repaired and the external lights would be rectified shortly. The new reinforced concrete driveway would be installed early in May. Councillor Pearmain requested that the edges should not have sharp 90° angles but should be rounded to avoid concrete shearing off through wear and tear. The order for a new bus shelter at Mucking Hall Road had been placed and installation would take place as soon as possible. It was agreed that the shelter uprights should be in a green colour.
14. It was agreed that the chairs and tables at the parish hall could be loaned to Mrs Judith Smith for a charity coffee morning to be held on 9 June, subject to Mrs Smith arranging for the safe collection and return of same.
15. It was proposed by Councillor Clark seconded by Councillor Ashdown that the council should purchase a sufficient stock of plain white crockery, either new or second-hand, in order to enhance the attractiveness of the Parish Hall to potential hirers. For 4; against 1; abstentions 0. Mrs Jackie Gardiner would be asked to advise on this. Councillor Clark, declaring an interest in that a relative owned a firm dealing in industrial catering equipment, offered to investigate the costs of installing a new of used industrial dishwasher.
16. The clerk reported that there was a welcome in interest in block bookings for the parish hall, including pony parties and dog training (subject to the trainer supplying appropriate mats to avoid damage to the floor). Councillors with Gmail accounts could now view an online booking’s diary see forthcoming bookings.
17. A fire and evacuation statement was to be written, to be read aloud at the start of all events. Options for escape from the toilet area in the event of a fire on the stage or in the meter cupboard should be investigated.
18. The availability of the hall on the council’s website needs to be improved, alongside be a thorough review of our requirements to move to a lively and dynamic one website. Councillor Clark offered to explore some options and the clerk would prepare a draft specification for discussion. District Councillor Williams commended the Rochford Parish Council website, which was easy to maintain and inexpensive.

**18.60 To consider planning applications received and to agree any action to be taken:**

* 1. 18/00196/FUL Extension to 336 Little Wakering Road. No comment.
  2. **Correspondence received – to note and agree any action**
     + 1. Mr John Aldiss of Barling Hall Farm had enquired whether the council would be willing to sell the play area in Little Wakering Road as his children’s football team were looking for an alternative site. It was agreed to invite Mr Aldiss to attend a future meeting to see whether it might be possible to rent his team sessional use of the play area, although concerns were expressed about adequate consultation with the neighbours and a review of any restrictive covenants on the site.
       2. Mr Nick Beattie had emailed the council with a request that something should be done to protect the pond at the wildlife reserve from entry by dogs. The ground conditions being right now for the installation of the low fence agreed previously, the clerk would ask Mr Shaw and the volunteers to move forward with the installation.

**18.62 To receive a report from the Clerk on progress with work in-hand**

A short report highlighting current pressures was tabled by the clerk. He would meet with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to review priorities. One of current issues identified was the disconnection of the water supply to the Wildlife Reserve. We would ask Essex and Suffolk Water, as our suppliers, to act to restore the supply.

**18.63 At the Chairman’s discretion, to exchange information and items for future meetings**

* 1. The next Council meeting will be held on Thursday 10th May. This will comprise the Annual Parish Meeting 7pm, to be publicised as an opportunity for the public to share their thoughts on the Council’s priorities for the coming year; this to be followed at 7.30pm by the Annual Council Meeting.
  2. Councillor Clerk introduced the concept of a Net Park – an interactive app for smart phones which might be used to good effect in the Wildlife Reserve. He was invited to explore the matter and bring forward any proposals.
  3. Councillor Steptoe suggested an annual Barling photographic competition, for under-16s and 16+ categories. Mr Leeks the local photographer might be invited to be a judge. The matter would be on a future agenda.
  4. The streetlamp adjacent to No 289 Little Wakering Road was out.

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.11pm.**

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