### BARLING MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL,** held Thursday, 13th September 2018 in the Barling Magna Parish Hall, Barling Magna, Essex, commencing at 7pm.

Present: Councillors Ashdown, Cohen (Chairman), Edmunds (from item 18.148), Gardiner, McKillop, Pearmain and Steptoe (Vice-Chairman).

Apologies: Councillors Bond and Clark.

District Councillors Efde, Mcpherson and Williams.

Attending: County and District Councillor Steptoe; District Councillor Lucas-Gill.

 2 Residents.

 I. King (Parish Clerk)

**MINUTES**

* 1. **The Chairman to declare the meeting open.**
1. The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7pm.
	1. **To receive apologies for absence.**
2. Apologies for absence were received, as noted above.
	1. **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.**
3. Councillor Steptoe declared an interest in any matter relating to the District or County Councils. In any planning matter, he reserved the right to change his mind when the matter was considered by the District Council.
	1. **To sign as a correct record the Minutes of the Full Council held 9th August 2018**
4. Proposed by Councillor Cohen, seconded by Councillor Gardiner that the minutes be agreed. For 7, against 0, abstained 0.
	1. **The meeting will stand adjourned to permit Parishioners of Barling Magna to address the Council** *(limited to 20 minutes, 5 minutes per speaker)*
5. Ms S. Glover enquired when the village gates would next be cleaned. Councillor Steptoe would explore this with the District Council – possibly though the Rangers service – and report back.
	1. **To receive a report from the District and County Councillors for the area on any matters of interest.** *(limited to 20 minutes, 5 minutes per speaker)*
6. County Councillor Steptoe reported that August had been a relatively quiet period for the County Council. He reported on urgent repairs to the Army and Navy Roundabout in Chelmsford. His strategic work on the A127 Corridor and the County’s Country Parks was continuing.
7. District Councillor Steptoe had recently attended a briefing to update members on changes to planning regulation. He reported on ongoing work regarding travellers and on the Investment Board for the District. He would be seeking suggestions from local residents for nominations for Tree Preservation Orders. There would be a business breakfast on 19th September for local businesses. Finally, the recent IT and communications problems experienced by the District Council were now resolved; no personal data had been compromised.
	1. **Financial and banking matters – to consider.**
8. Payment requests for September 2018. A revised schedule was tabled by the clerk (as below). Proposed by Councillor Gardiner, seconded by Councillor Steptoe that the payments be approved. For 7, against 0, abstained 0.



1. Bank reconciliation to 31 August 2018. The clerk reported that he was unable to supply a reconciliation at this stage owing to an outstanding statement. The estimated bank balances as at 31 August stood at a total of approximately £52,473.
2. HSBC. A letter of complaint had been issued to HSBC and clarification was awaited.
3. External audit. The clerk reported on a technical reporting error identified by the external auditor, where the local council support grant had wrongly been included in the precept figure declared to the auditor. This was a reporting error and not a material one and there would be a technical qualification to the accounts for 2017/18.

**18.151 Governance Matters - to discuss the following and agree any action**

1. The Council being satisfied that it met the required qualifications, it was proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Gardiner that the Council adopt the General Power of Competence. For 6, against 0, abstained 1.
2. Further to minute 18.129c, the council resolved to propose a joint working party with Great Wakering Parish Council to explore the scope of a campaign to secure the future of the haul road. Councillors Ashdown, Cohen, Edmunds and McKillop would represent Barling Magna. Proposed by Councillor Ashdown, seconded by Councillor Gardiner. For 7, against 0, abstained 0. Councillor Steptoe would suggests contacts for interested parties.
3. Councillors Ashdown, Cohen and McKillop agreed to consider the matter of the grounds maintenance contract due to expire on 31st January 2019 and to bring recommendations to the next meeting of the Council.
	1. **Wildlife Reserve**
4. The Wildlife Reserve Committee held 4th September 2018 recommended the purchase of an A-frame ladder for lopping trees to a height no greater than 2.5 metres from the ground, with due regard to all necessary training and health and safety observance. A specific recommendation would be brought to the next Council meeting. The Committee had also received a 3-yearly tree condition survey and this recommended no urgent action. The Committee recommended that the clerk seek an indicative quote for non-urgent work and that this be staged over two financial years.
5. Acting on delegated authority, the clerk had applied to the Enovert Community Trust for a grant of £22,907.23 to enable the Council to install a new water supply for the Wildlife Reserve and to create a conduit for the future installation of an electrical supply. Proposed by Councillor Pearmain, seconded by Councillor Steptoe that:
6. The action taken by the clerk to apply for this grant be approved;
7. if successful, the Council would commit a contribution of £2,290.72 required under the terms of the Enovert Community Trust;
8. the advice of the District Council would be sought as to whether planning consent for this work was required. If so, the clerk would make an application;
9. the Council note that the received consent of Rochford District Council as head leaseholder for the proposed work was conditional upon securing the approval of the freeholder, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council – and that a letter seeking this approval be sent immediately. For 7, against 0, abstained 0.
10. The clerk reported on the delivery of the two new benches at the Wildlife Reserve, the annual servicing of the fire extinguishers there and the recent servicing of the alarms at the parish hall.

**18.153 Events and projects – to report progress and agree any action**

1. Preparation for the quiz night on 27th October. The Chairman reported that 61 of the 100 tickets had been sold. The Frying Pan could supply vegetarian (and by October possibly gluten-free options). Councillor Edmunds volunteered to check the sound equipment.
2. Barling in Bloom. Council was reminded that there was an initial budget of £200 for this project. Councillor Bond had purchased some bulbs for planting around the village sign and the memorial bench and the clerk would check with the District Council that their workers would be able to work around these on the verges.
3. Christmas: it was unanimously agreed to provide Mrs Dobson with a float of £450 for hampers and awards for the Christmas lights competition. The clerk would issue invitations to residents to nominate a Citizen of the Year. The Parish Hall would offer toilet facilities once again for the Frost Fayre on Saturday 8th December. The clerk would obtain a sign advising the presence of toilets inside the building.
4. To receive an update on the Barling Photographic Competition. In view of the low number of entries, it was agreed to extend the deadline to 30th November and to invite digital-only entries, which would be judged on the day of the Frost Fayre.
5. Proposal from Councillor Bond to discuss the village fair. This was deferred. The Chairman congratulated the organisers of the August Bank Holiday weekend fair for their work. Despite very wet weather around £500 had been made to support elderly residents. There would be a Christmas Fair at the parish hall, organised by the same team, on 20th October.

**18.154 Public relations - to receive reports and agree any action**

a. The clerk reported on the latest steps taken to market the Parish Hall to potential hirers. Key to this was the Council’s presence on Facebook and steps were being taken to recover control of the Facebook page bearing the parish council’s name. The next most useful tool would be the new Parish Council website and the Chairman would seek a progress report on when this might be available.

**18.155 Planning Matters - to consider any action required, including the following**

1. Barrow Hall Road development – update on contact with Great Wakering Parish Council. Following informal contact, the clerk would now write to the clerk of Great Wakering seeking a shared approach to dealings with Sanctuary Housing.
2. Application 18/00781/FUL sought minor amendment to consent granted in 2017 for work at 1 Kingsmead Cottages, Barling Road. The Council had no comment to make on the current application.
	1. **Matters relating to external bodies**
3. Essex Association of Local Councils: the Chairman had circulated her notes of a recent meeting. She encouraged members to attend the AGM. The EALC August County Update had included coverage of the presentation to Ivy Knight on the occasional of her standing down from the Council.
	1. **At the Chairman’s discretion to exchange information and items for future meetings:**
4. The date of the next Full Council was noted as Thursday 11 October
5. The clerk was asked to propose either 24th or 25th October for an Extraordinary Council meeting with the Deputy Leader and the Managing Director of Rochford District Council – to be confirmed.
6. It was noted that the January Council meeting would now be held on 17 January 2019.
7. Street lighting and related items: Councillor Edmunds reported a flickering street lamp outside No 2 Church Road; Councillor Steptoe reported that the lamp opposite the former telephone box in Barling Magna remained non-functioning. He requested a letter to be sent to the occupiers of Pear Tree Cottage at Stonebridge asking them to clear the vegetation occluding the lamp there. He also said that the first lamp post at the western end of Barrow Hall Road continued to be obstructed by tree growth. The clerk had written to the owner’s agent previously; he was now requested to seek advice about the Council’s powers to insist that the lamp be cleared of vegetation or, failing that, the Council to commission the work and charge the owners for the costs.
8. Councillor Steptoe reported that both former public telephone boxes in Little Wakering Road no longer had working equipment but were still illuminated. The clerk was requested to write to British Telecom and explore the future use of the kiosks. Advice would also be sought as to whether one might house a defibrillator.
9. The clerk reported that there was an invitation to a meeting to discuss the Discover 2020 events, to be held 11th October at the Freight House. The chairman and he would be attending.
10. Following the Council’s registration, Essex County’s solar energy partner had come back with a quote for fitting solar panels to the parish hall roof, with an estimate of 12 years to recover the capital costs. It was agreed not to proceed.
	1. **Exclusion of the Press and the Public**

Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was resolved that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest that the press and the public be excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

* 1. **Proposed work to the kitchen and toilets at the parish hall**
1. Proposed by Councillor Pearmain, seconded by Councillor Gardiner that:
2. the bid from Elite Plumbing for the kitchen and bathroom refurbishments be approved in principle, to a maximum cost of £8,095+VAT;
3. the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, should negotiate on minor changes to the specification, with a view to a reduction in costs;
4. the funding for this work from the Essex County Council Community Initiatives Fund had not yet been drawn down and this might now take place.

For 7, against 0, abstained 0.

1. Proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that a roller-blind be purchased to a maximum cost of £250 for the kitchen hatch. For 7, against 0, abstained 0. Councillor Pearmain kindly offered to fit the blind.
	1. **Personnel matter**
2. Following successful discussions with the Hall Manager around a revised job description and contract of employment, it was proposed by Councillor Steptoe, seconded by Councillor Ashdown that:
3. these should come into operation immediately following signature of the contract by both the employee and the Chairman, on the Council’s behalf;
4. changes to this post’s salary previously agreed by Council should take effect from the next pay day following signature of the contract.

 For 7, against 0, abstained 0.

**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.20pm.**

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