

BARMING PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10th MAY 2023 at 7pm

AT THE PARISH HALL, TONBRIDGE ROAD

PRESENT: Cllr Gooch in Chair, Cllr Manser, Cllr Doe and Clerk Mrs N Attwood.

Cllr Vizzard joined the meeting at 7.20pm and Cllr Passmore joined the meeting at 7.21pm

IN ATTENDANCE: Three members of the public and two representatives from Barming Youth Football Club.

BPC were informed that the missing hedging along the Tonbridge Road had still not been rectified and also the street light at the bus stop by the Fountain Lane junction was not working. Cllr Gooch will contact KCC regarding both of these issues.

ACTION: Cllr Gooch

1. APOLOGIES

County Cllr Simon Webb and PCSO

Under the six-month ruling Cllr Williams has now been disqualified. The Clerk will inform MBC and complete the relevant paperwork.

ACTION: Clerk

2. NOTIFICATION TO BE RECEIVED FOR INTENT TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH OR RECORD ANY ITEMS.

No intent to record any items.

3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Cllr Doe nominated Cllr Gooch as Chairman; this was seconded by Cllr Manser.

Cllr Gooch proposed no Vice Chairman and suggested that all members help out accordingly thus leaving the position vacant. This was seconded by Cllr Doe and will be revisited next year.

4. APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr Manser proposed Cllr Doe to continue as the Internal Auditor and this was seconded by Cllr Gooch.

Cllr Manser no longer wishes to continue as the Booking Clerk therefore, this position will be covered by the Clerk and Chairman until a suitable replacement is found. Cllr Gooch will meet with Cllr Manser for a complete handover and to arrange a cut-off date for Cllr Manser to finish her responsibilities as Booking Clerk. The Clerk reminded Cllr Manser that she will have to arrange a new email address for council business as the Barming Bookings email will eventually be taken over by the new Booking Clerk. The new representative will need to be informed regarding data protection and have full training. Cllr Gooch thanked Cllr Manser for all of her hard work and for all of the years that she has held the post.

Cllr Gooch nominated Cllr Passmore as Allotment representative; this was seconded by Cllr Manser with all in favour.

Cllr Gooch proposed to continue for the time being as the editor of the Barming News until BPC find out what will happen with the parish boundary. Cllr Vizzard proposed to accept this and Cllr Manser seconded with all members in favour.

Cllr Gooch will act as the KALC representative with Cllr Vizzard helping with any cover that is needed. This was proposed by Cllr Passmore and seconded by Cllr Manser with all members in favour.

Cllr Gooch will act as the Medway Valley Community Rail Partnership representative and Cllr Passmore will deputise. This was proposed by Cllr Vizzard and seconded by Cllr Manser with all members in favour.

Cllr Gooch and Cllr Vizzard will act as the representatives for the police liaison meetings; proposed by Cllr Doe and seconded by Cllr Manser with all members in favour.

5. COUNCILLOR DECLARATIONS

Cllr Gooch declared a pecuniary interest in agenda item 7.5 (Handyman)

6. MINUTES of the Meeting held on 12th April 2023 & Annual Meeting Minutes held on 26th April 2023

The minutes were **Agreed** as an accurate record with all members in favour.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 26th APRIL 2023

Cllr Gooch informed members that as Rev Wil North was unable to attend the annual meeting, his award will be presented to him on Saturday 13th May at the church cream tea event.

Cllr Gooch commended Graham Gosden on his really informative presentation which she will do a feature on in the next Barming News.

7. RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT MATTERS

7.1 BYFC Proposed Increase of Fees

Constructive discussions took place between Members and representatives of BYFC present as to the set increase for this year. It was agreed that future increases would be based against the consumer price index rate of inflation as there was slight confusion as to which rate of inflation increases were based against; proposed by Cllr Gooch, seconded by Cllr Manser with all members in favour. Consequently, both parties agreed to meet in the middle and £1095.00 was set as the annual hiring fee for this year; the invoice will be issued by the Clerk September/October time.

BYFC confirmed that play will be suspended at South Street when Remembrance takes place and play at the school in Belmont Close will pause for the two minutes silence. A whistle may be heard to mark the end of the silence as sound does travel and timings may not be in sync.

BYFC then confirmed play times as follows:

Saturdays from 9am until 12pm from 1st September to mid-July.

Sundays from 9am until 12pm from 1st September to 30th May.

The agreement was duly accepted by both BPC and BYFC and a tap top was requested by the club to assist in cleaning of their equipment. Cllr Gooch reiterated that it must not be left on the tap under any circumstances and it was agreed that it would be left in the container and the managers would be responsible for it at all times. Cllr Gooch will arrange the tap top for the club.

ACTION: Cllr Gooch

The representatives from BYFC then left the meeting at 7.15pm.

7.2 MBC Design and Sustainability Development Plan Consultation

BPC do not have any comments to make at this time. The Clerk informed members of the upcoming online workshops that are available to book.

7.3 Allotments: a) Northern Boundary Site Visit

Prior to the meeting, Cllr Gooch had circulated a job specification sheet, a list of possible contractors to approach for quotations and an update from the recent site visit. Members were all in favour for Cllr Gooch to proceed with the process of requesting quotations for the work. Cllr Passmore added that he would not recommend any gaps are left in the fencing, but to fence around any trees that impede the boundary line. It was also noted that a number of the allotment holders have encroached the area of the boundary and will need to move their equipment away from the area.

ACTION: Cllr Gooch

b) BPC Annual Allotment Visit and Matters to Discuss

Cllr Passmore will arrange the annual visit with Barry Plummer which will give him the opportunity to ask plot holders to move their belongings and to inform them of any risk of damage to anything being cultivated during the fencing work. Cllr Gooch informed members that a new lock had been purchased for the allotments and an expense claim would be submitted when the receipt is received.

ACTION: Cllr Passmore

7.4 Insurance: Renewal of BPC Insurance Contract

The Clerk had approached three companies for long term insurance quotations and the amounts were as follows:

A – 3-year long term agreement £1067.17

B – 1- year agreement as they would not quote for a long term agreement £1,753.45

C – 3-year long term agreement £1304.82

As all the insurance companies work off the current insurance schedule and the asset register all of the policies were from the same specification. Cllr Vizzard proposed to accept the long-term agreement from A (Zurich Insurance), this was seconded by Cllr Doe with all members in favour. The Clerk will contact all of the companies to inform them of the outcome.

ACTION: Clerk

Cllr Gooch left the room for the next agenda item.

7.5 Handyman Annual Review of Contract

On the 9th May 2023 Mr Peter Gooch submitted a letter to the Clerk outlining the increase in charges for his handyman contract for the coming year. He proposed an increase to his hourly charge by £2.00 making his hourly rate £17.00. He has also included an extra monthly charge to cover consumables that he is regularly using from his own stock e.g., screws, fixings, paint, oil etc. Cllr Manser asked whether it was appropriate for BPC pay more for a handyman than they pay the proper officer to the council. The Clerk informed members that as this was not an agenda item, it could not be discussed

and that it would have to be brought to another meeting as a formal agenda item. Cllr Passmore proposed to accept the increase as due to fuel and insurance increases, it was not seen as an unreasonable figure. This was seconded by Cllr Doe with all members in favour. Cllr Vizzard confirmed that BPC would review the contract in 12 months' time. The Clerk will formally write to Mr Gooch to inform him of the outcome. **ACTION: Clerk**

7.6 Play Equipment Annual Inspection report

The annual inspection was received and circulated by the Clerk on the 28th April 2023. Members noted the receipt of the report and that all areas were deemed low risk or very low risk. Cllr Gooch will get the handyman to look at the spring on the gate to see if it can be fixed and to ensure that there is not any risk of finger entrapment. **ACTION: Cllr Gooch**

7.7 Dusters Increase in Charges

The Clerk has received notification from the cleaning company that they will be increasing their hourly rate from £15.00 to £17.00 due to the unpredictable and harsh economic situation. Cllr Manser proposed to accept the increase in the charges; they always carry out a good job on both halls and are accommodating to any date and time changes that are needed. Cllr Gooch seconded the proposal and asked the Clerk to thank them for their continued service. **ACTION: Clerk**

7.8 Internal Audit Report

The Clerk informed members that the annual internal audit carried out by David Buckett had been completed and members noted the Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23 section (page 3) of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2022/23. The Clerk was thanked for her hard work and will now submit the Annual Return to the external auditor. **ACTION: Clerk**

8 FINANCES

8.1 Budget Monitoring

The Clerk will circulate the budget monitoring and bank reconciliation sheets to all members once the Natwest bank statements have been received. **ACTION: Clerk**

8.2 Income received

The following payments received since the last meeting were noted:

Pavilion Income – 951.50
Parish Hall Income – 953.70
Barming News Advertising – 140.00
Natwest Interest – 25.53
Allotment Rent – 513.00
MBC Precept Payment – 36,929.00
Hiring Deposits - £150.00
Mr P Gooch over payment - £8.50
HMRC VAT Refund - £450.38

Outstanding Invoices – 4 Allotment holders have been contacted by the Clerk for outstanding payments. All hiring invoices are up to date.

Confirmation of payments made

The following payments were agreed
DD – BT WIFI 29.99
DD – Waste Collection 19.50
DD – Castle Water Hall 16.89
DD – EDF pavilion 163.87
DD – Castle Water Allotments 148.27
DD – MBC NNDR Business Rates Pavilion 274.93

8.3 Cheques for signature & Online Payments

Online payments:
Employer costs - £1900.46
Air Ambulance Donation £100.00
Dusters Cleaning £180.00
Hire Deposit Refund £50.00
KALC Subscription £733.30
Fire Extinguisher Inspection £60.00
Wicksteed Play Inspection £144.00
N Attwood Expenses £60.66
F Gooch Expenses £34.82
A Doe Tree Work £400.00

9 Annual Audit Report

9.1 Annual Report and Audit 2022/23

9.1.A The Annual Governance Statements were approved and signed by Cllr Gooch with all members in favour.

9.1.B The accounting statements 2022/23 were approved and signed by Cllr Gooch with all members in favour.

9.1.C The Exercise of Public Rights was noted and the Clerk confirmed the dates as follows: Period Commencing 5th June 2023 and ending on 14th July 2023.

10 PLANNING

10.1 Any planning matters received prior to the meeting

23/502047/FULL Broadlands, North Pole Road ME16 9HG – Part garage conversion into habitable space, erection of first floor rear extension including insertion of a Juliet balcony and changes to fenestration – No objections subject to rain water capture and installation of electric car charging ports to help encourage biodiversity.

23/502065/FULL 22 Belmont Close ME16 9DY– Erection of a part single storey part two storey rear and side extension - No objections subject to rain water capture and installation of electric car charging ports to help encourage biodiversity.

11 MATTERS OF REPORT

11.1 County Councillor's Report

Cllr Webb was not present.

11.2 Borough Councillor

Cllr Gooch reported on the recent elections which had a 29% turnout. The Green party gained seats and the Conservatives suffered some losses, but will still have 25 out of the 55 seats. All will be confirmed at the annual meeting when Councillors confirm which party they will support. Cllr Gordon Newton will be the new Mayor of Maidstone and Cllr Martin Cox will become Deputy Mayor.

11.3 Chairman

The Chairman was extremely concerned to hear from a local resident that their small elderly dog was attacked yesterday by two large dogs, yards from the children's play area. The resident has given details to the Chairman and she will be discussing the matter with the Borough Council to see what preventative measures can be invoked.

ACTION: Cllr Gooch

A local resident has reported that hirers have been still at the pavilion beyond the permitted hours of 10.30pm. The resident will keep an eye out for future use and report dates and times for further investigation.

The giving of coronation mugs to the Barming School children went really well and the Mayor attended. We have approximately 20 mugs left which will be sold at £5.00 each. The Chairman will advertise them in the next Barming News and the Clerk will advertise them on the Facebook page.

ACTION: Cllr Gooch, Clerk

The Big Help Out Litter Pick organised by the handyman (Mr Peter Gooch) was really successful, members of Dawn Patrol and some local residents collected 35 bags of rubbish a tyre, a lump of timber, a bag of paving slabs and a length of guttering. Residents are keen to join in another litter pick at some time in the future.

Year 6 children from Barming School were the first to take part in Gallagher's new 'Roots in the Community' schools' initiative that the Chairman attended. It involved presentations on the history of ragstone and the importance of land restoration. Each child then planted their own oak tree in the habitat field along North Role Road so that in 25 years' time they can go back there and say 'I planted that tree' and the children received a certificate as well.

Cllr Gooch then report on the Highways Improvement Plan outcome. Given KCC's desperate financial situation, the projects are low priority and will not be proceeded with.

Cllr Gooch will be suggesting a keep clear or a yellow box junction on the corner of South Street and Church Lane so that the bin lorry can get round as there is a continued problem with cars parked at the junction. **ACTION: Cllr Gooch**

Cllr Gooch attended the Annual Stakeholder Meeting for the Kent Community Rail Partnership, of which the Medway valley Line is part of. It was a very informative stakeholder meeting and she managed to meet the Network Rail Manager and has his details for applying for permission for a noticeboard.

Cllr Gooch attended the Community Safety meeting with Police and MBC in partnership and reported that there will be more warranted police officers trained up from PCSOs. Each parish cluster will have its own officer on the beat. There is not yet a full complement of officers as they are currently being recruited and trained; expected to be operational by early next year.

Lastly, Cllr Gooch attended an on- line course 'KALC social media for Councils'. It is felt that a social media presence humanises the council and makes it more accessible.

11.4 Individual Councillors Report

Cllr Manser informed members of the new campaign from CPRE 'Let June Bloom' Unfortunately, as the mowing has already been scheduled to recommence at the beginning of June, this will have to be considered next year.

Cllr Manser has received a complaint regarding the grass verge outside of the parish hall by the cottages. It has not been mowed for ages and the residents are having to do it themselves. Cllr Gooch will check with KCC as it is their responsibility.
ACTION: Cllr Gooch

Cllr Doe reported that the roots of the Ash tree that he had recently cut down have been removed by a resident and requested that Cllr Passmore checks the boundary when he attends the allotment visit. **ACTION: Cllr Passmore**

Cllr Vizzard confirmed that himself and Cllr Passmore had both been unsuccessful at the recent Borough Council elections in Coxheath and Marden wards.

Cllr Passmore said that the recent litter pick had been a great success, but it would be better if it was carried out a month earlier next time as the grass was rather long so made it quite difficult at times. He thanked the Dawn Patrol, Mr Gooch and the local residents who showed great enthusiasm.

Cllr Passmore is still liaising with South Eastern regarding the platform safety issue as it really is a hazard and will keep members updated.
ACTION: Cllr Passmore

11.5 Clerk Report

The Clerk informed members that a letter of thanks had been received from the Kent Air Ambulance for the recent donation that Barming Parish Council had made.

12 CORRESPONDENCE

None

13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Full Council meeting will be held on **Wednesday 14th June 2023 at 7.30pm** in the Parish Hall, Tonbridge Road.

The meeting was closed at 9.01pm.