

Barton Parish Council

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 27th November 2003.

1. Constitution.

1.1 Present: Chairman Cllr Peter Wood, Cllrs Campbell Dawson, Michael Holmes and Alen McFadzean with the Clerk, Alan Spivey, Mr Philip Glithro and Mr John Tomlinson. Apologies for absence were received and sustained from Cllrs Michael Charlton and Alasdair Thorogood.

1.2 Mr Philip Glithro was asked to leave the meeting. He had previously shown interest in serving on the Parish Council, had been approached by the Chairman and now, it was proposed by Cllr Dawson and unanimously agreed "Mr Philip Glithro be co-opted to serve on Barton Parish Council."

1.3 The Chairman reported that no progress has been made in finding another person to assume the role of Parish Clerk. Cllr Dawson put forward the name of a gentleman living in Albrough St John. It was felt that a resident of Barton Parish would be preferred: the Clerk indicated his willingness to continue to serve until March 2004, and, accordingly, it was agreed that the vacancy should continue for the time being whilst further efforts are made to recruit a suitable candidate.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 30th October 2003.

Minute 1.2 had omitted the full name of Mrs Astrid Saxby. With this corrected, on the proposal of Cllr Holmes the minutes were adopted as being a correct record of the meeting.

3. Clerk's report and matters arising.

3.1 The correspondence with Head of NYCC Legal Services has been passed to the Chairman. See later at 5.2.

3.2 Mr Peter Penny of NYCC Environmental Services has sent e-mail promising action re public footpath signs. Cllr McFadzean to report when this has been done.

3.3 Letter sent to each resident adjoining footpath requesting clearance of overhanging vegetation.

3.4 Letter sent to RDC Housing Planners advising of the PC's preference that future housing developments should meet the needs of first-time buyers and enable those from this community to find affordable housing.

3.5 Reply awaited to letter sent requesting RDC Environment Unit for provision of bench seating in bus shelters.

3.6 Cllr Dawson asked that the licence transfer noted in 5.4 of the minutes be corrected. The notification has been withdrawn and will be re-submitted. It is not an hotel/bar licence.

4. The Chairman.

4.1. He reported his attendance at a conference "*Action for Market Towns.*" The report is appended to these minutes.

4.2. Discussions with the landowner of the allotment site continue. Mr Hall appears to be agreeable to those tenants who have hitherto kept pigeons or hens continuing to do so but he will refuse future applications so to do. The draft lease agreement submitted by Cllr McFadzean has now been passed to Mr Hall's solicitor for comment. At this time there is no further development.

5. Correspondence.

5.1 Telephone conversation with Miss Pat Waller re her mother, Mrs Mould, and request for pruning of branches that interfere with passage of the social services transport. Some discussion as to which tree require pruning. Noted that the RDC would charge approx £280.00 to do the work. Chairman and Cllr Dawson agreed to attend to the problem.

5.2 Response from Catherine Whitehead, head of NYCC Legal Service, was read. This and earlier correspondence from solicitors and Mouchel to be read by Chairman, and the supposed inadequate responses addressed.

5.3 From Ian Beighton, NYCC Highways, a letter noting previous enhancements of speed restriction signing, outlines works to be accomplished in second phase and promising further consultation. His letter also offers suggestions for use of a speed notification warning sign and the Clerk asked to write to Richmondshire Community Safety Partnership for details of their possible help.

5.4 In the file for circulation, papers from the Fire Service, SLCC, NYCC Best Value, a Unitary North Yorkshire, Councils Direct, NYCC County Issues, the Highways Agency re Blyth to Gateshead A1 improvements, Waste Review and Winter Road Service schedules were passed to Chairman for circulation.

6. Planning Applications.

6.1 Notice that the application by Mr Russell for alterations at 12 Wells Green has been granted. (1/93/187-/FULL)

6.2 1/93/189-/FULL, application of Mrs LCollins of North Inch, Cedar Grove to convert a garage to bedroom was considered. Papers passed to Cllr Holmes for study prior to forwarding observations.

6.3 It is noted that Cllr Dawson, member of the RDC Planning Committee, absented himself from this discussion.

7. Financial Statement.

7.1 Clerk presented invoices from CE & CM Walker (£133.95) for the October grass cutting and from Mazars (£152.75) for audit of the 2002/2003 accounts. It was agreed that payments be made.

7.2 Clerk distributed updated copies of the accounts, which show a true balance of £25.27 and an anticipated credit of £492.00 (approx) from NYCC for grass cutting.

7.3 The Chairman distributed his 'draft' prepared figures for the 2004/2005 precept. The figures were not now discussed. Councillors were requested, at this stage, to keep the contents of the papers confidential. They were asked to study these and make observations to him so that a final precept can be agreed at the January 2004 meeting.

8. County Councillor. In the absence of County Councillor Michael Heseltine this item passed over.

9. Village Hall sub-committee report.

9.1 The Chairman reported his attendance at the Village Hall Management Committee. MacPlant are to carry out some groundwork which will include cutting back ivy from the walls and generally tidy the outside in readiness for installation of additional storage for the Village Hall. Concerns expressed that this may not include clearance of gutters.

9.2 He raised questions re trusteeship. It appears that in 1969 the VHMC obtained charitable status (or declared itself a Charity) and this required the appointment of Trustees. (Copy of Charity Commission Internet print off of Charity details provided and placed with these minutes.) Only once was VHMC required to present accounts when spending rose above £10,000.00 in the year of considerable renovation. However, the position of the PC as management or sole trustees (the subject of considerable observation and questioning during 2002 by the Principal Auditor) is not clear. Chairman will speak with Mr Alan Flowers to seek some light in the confused picture.

10. Quality Parish Council Status.

10.1 Cllr Michael Holmes reported attendance at a seminar held in Wetherby at which local parties heard from Alun Michael, Minister of State, Defra, and the government's intentions to promote QPCS, primarily by way of improving communications with local community residents. The seminar was presented by SLCC who had consulted with 1700 of 8,500 local councils to impress the benefits of QPCS

10.2 Discussion also focussed upon possible devolvement of some powers from district councils to "clusters" of parishes, the debate, however, without definite proposals.

10.3 He concluded that Barton PC should apply for QPCS but this will involve setting aside the finances for both the proper training for the Clerk and his/her membership fees of SLCC.

11. Adoption of Blind Lane. A local resident requested this item but no one from Blind presented at the meeting. In such absence it was noted that the issue is of many years inconclusive debate and its resolution would prove very costly to residents. Experience of the Chairman re Silver Garth does not bode well for the PC involvement, the issues not being related to functions of a PC. Sympathy, but no possibility of further discussion at this meeting.

12. Bus Timetables and Routes. The PC awaits research promised by Co Cllr Heseltine. Mr John Tomlinson asked if a route via Darlington Memorial Hospital was possible. Clerk asked to write and impress upon service providers the complaints that have been voiced at this and the previous meeting (agenda item 13 30/10/03), and request up to date details of timetables on all routes.

13. Notification of future business. Cllr Dawson requested:

13.1 An approach to Fish & Chips service manager for control of litter by village green.

13.2 Clerk to write to Persimmon Homes regarding repair of a manhole cover outside 16 Silver Meadows.

13.3 Further request to Yorkshire Water to make good the damage to Village Green as promised following work done during the summer.

Mysterious holes on the village green, which on occasion gush water, were discussed. Cllr McFadzean reported these to be dramatic at times of heavy rain. Yorkshire Water (providers), Northumbria Water (sewage and drainage) and RDC have each been asked for advice in recent past. All disclaim both responsibility and knowledge of the cause.

The engaging possibilities for councillors with long holling spades employing their aquatic talents provided a light close of the meeting at 8.40 p.m.

The Parish Council adjourned to meet next on Thursday 29th January 2004.

Chairman _____ Clerk _____

29th January 2004.