

## **Barton Parish Council**

Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2003.

### **1. Constitution.**

- 1.1 Present: Chairman Cllr. Peter Wood opened the meeting attended by Cllr. Alasdair Thorogood, Michael Charlton, Campbell Dawson and David Lambert. Also present were the Clerk, Alan Spivey and 2 members of the public, Mrs Jean Kay and Mr Jim Corps.
- 1.2 Apologies were received and sustained from Cllrs. Michael Holmes and Alen McFadzean.
- 1.3 Clerk requested the inclusion of finances as item 12 on the agenda, this having been omitted from the published agenda.

### **2. Minutes.**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2003, previously circulated to councillors, on the proposal of Cllr C. Dawson were agreed as a correct record.

### **3. Clerk's report and matters arising.**

- 3.1 PC letter to Catherine Whitehead, Head of Legal Services, NYCC, had simply been passed by her to the officer concerned. Because the letter implied a criticism of that officer's handling of the Haulage Depot easement issue, this was felt to be an unsatisfactory way of dealing with the matter. The Chairman instructed that a further letter be sent requesting a copy of NYCC Legal Services complaints procedure. Cllr Dawson asked whether, with regard to future action in the matter, Barton PC should appoint a local firm of solicitors?
- 3.2 Contacts with Patrick Earle and Beverley Booth (RDC Planning) indicated that RDC also is ignorant at present concerning the buyers of the haulage depot: assurance that details will be passed to BPC when known. Mouchel consultancy is pursuing the issue.
- 3.3 Chairman and Cllr Dawson shared hearsay information of developments regarding feelers for the purchase of gardens, which separate haulage site and the Porch development. Possible interest in developing both sites as one unit, but all that is known is based upon unsubstantiated rumour.
- 3.4 PC Grainger reported as having contacted one person regarding allegedly abandoned vehicle. His report awaited.
- 3.5 Barton Services Station. A reply from Environment Agency concerning proposed Water Treatment on the plans for this development was noted. Cllr Dawson will follow this through the RDC planning process to keep BPC informed. Rumour suggests that new buyers are interested in the development.
- 3.6 Cllr D. Lambert reported upon the Conference dealing with new legislation concerning regional and local government. It appears that one tier of local government is likely to be cut and that the role of the parish councils will be enhanced. This is the commencement of discussion stages - information papers from the respective departments and the Boundary Commission are available from the Clerk.
- 3.7 Street light presently on private ground in Cedar Grove: Cllr Dawson has reported that Barton PC is willing for this to be re-sited in Jubilee Terrace but that completion awaits resolution of differences between the NYCC and the RDC regarding costs of removal and re-erection.

### **4. Correspondence.**

- 4.1 The following items were noted and placed in a file to be circulated to all councillors. YLCA White Rose papers; NYCC warnings re an Internet scam and possibly rogue door to door salespersons (a notice to be placed in the forthcoming letter to residents); Glasdon street furniture catalogue; A1 Parishes Forum minutes; Community Transport notice; Citizens Advice Bureau papers; Boundary Commission letter; SLCC and Councils Direct magazines; RDC Local Strategic Partnership papers.
- 4.2 NYCC Highways - Back Lane. Mr Woodford's letter indicates that grass cutting will be completed but that he welcomes an estimate from BPC grass cutting contractor. (This

has been requested.)

- 4.3 Cultural Activities papers. Notice to be placed in Parish Council newsletter and papers forwarded to VHMC. It was agreed that in future all correspondence relating to cultural matters are to be forwarded to VHMC and, similarly, papers on sports related matters to be forwarded to Barton Sports Field Ltd. (See 4.6.)
- 4.4 RDC Anti Social Behaviour letter dealt with early in August.
- 4.5 2 letters from Defra re Rural Services posted to 4.1 folder.
- 4.6 Sports Council papers noted and these to be forwarded to Barton Playing Fields Ltd.
- 4.7 County Cllr Heseltine's discretionary fund. Letter noted. Within BPC accounts is £600.00 granted Jan 2003 and awaiting use in village hall redecoration. A further application toward those costs is suggested; also that funds be sought for providing a speed warning sign. Cllr Thorogood to research costing and possible joint use with other parishes. Agenda item from October meeting.
- 4.8 Mrs Barry's letter enabling payment to landowner of allotment site noted (see agenda item 8).
- 4.9 Register of Electors papers already posted. 5. County Cllr Heseltine. (Subsequent to the meeting a letter received apologising for his enforced absence at another meeting.)

## **6. Planning applications.**

- 6.1 Barton Services - Variation of Condition (1/93/146H/VAR) withdrawn, (see also 3.5 above.)
- 6.2 Tree Preservation, trees on Vicarage grounds - no objection reported, work approved.
- 6.3 1/93/187-FULL application for extension to 12 Wells Green. No comments or observations to be made.

## **7. Village Hall, Survey of Condition.**

Cllr Charlton reported a full survey, the following points made and noted: -

- Some work to roof necessary.
- Windows and doors - woodwork will require considerable attention. Discussion re advisability of uPVC.
- Work could be phased over next 2 or 3 years. Discussion re centenary in 2008 as target.
- Chairman reported that he has responses from some grant making trusts applied to for financial assistance -some unable to assist; others sending application forms and offering helpful advice.
- Chairman indicated that he would speak with Mr Alan Kay. It is appreciated that Mr Kay provided a first tender for window repairs but that this survey effectively closes the door to that early treatment of the problems.
- Proposed by Chairman "Cllr Michael Charlton be appointed to convene and chair a sub-committee made up of some councillors and some representatives of the VHMC to provide a programme, costing and advice for the refurbishment of the village hall."

At this point the Chairman closed the meeting to invite comments regarding the next agenda item. None was forthcoming.

## **8. Allotments.**

- 8.1 Cllr Thorogood reported on a meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> September with Mr Hall, landowner of the allotment site, at which he has agreed in principle to renew the lease to the PC. He seeks an annual rental of £500.00 for the whole site, is willing to consider allowing the keeping of racing pigeons but not other livestock and asks agreement of standards of upkeep.
- 8.2 Barton PC anticipates that the management of the site will be by Barton Allotment & Leisure Gardeners Association (BALGA), responsible to the PC. At this point Mr Corps raised an objection that rent for each site will be more than doubled to £30.00 p.a. Some discussion during which Mrs Kay stated that this is less than £1.00 per week and Cllr Thorogood pointed out that rentals remain undetermined.
- 8.3 Certain details are yet to be agreed. It was noted (See above 4.8.) that payment to Mr

Hall in respect of his Public Inquiry costs, could now be made. It is understood that Mr Hall will thereupon present to his solicitor for consideration/comment a draft agreement of lease. Cllr Thorogood proposed, and it was agreed, 1.) "Payment of £1150.00 be made to Mr Hall as soon as possible." and 2.) "Barton PC meet as soon as possible with BALGA to consider details of the lease before final approval by the PC."

9. Parish Clerk appointment.

The Chairman reported receipt of Alan Spivey's resignation. He spoke most appreciatively of the work Alan has done since June 2000 and particularly of the advice and help he has given to this Council. It was agreed that a notice of vacancy be posted locally to find a suitable candidate.

10. Community Investment Programme.

The Chairman reported on a meeting of the CIP for the A1 Corridor parishes held on 1st September. He presented a draft reply and invited comments upon the submission being made. It is noted that a final reply will be made after consideration of points that have been raised.

11. Village Green Easements.

An article written for the Darlington & Stockton Times during September 2003 raises questions concerning easements (formerly known as wayleave payments). This highlights recent government legislation and could affect residents nearby the village green lands. Papers are awaited from both Defra and YLCA, which should clarify the matter. Matter deferred to October meeting.

12. Finances.

- 12.1 Accounts to date were previously circulated and show a credit balance of £7,542.29 which accords with the bank statement.
- 12.2 Outstanding legal fees in respect of the Public Inquiry Dec 2002 of £7,018.04 are requested by RDC.
- 12.3 The Clerk asked that the quarterly payment of salary be deferred until the VAT refund and payment for grass-cutting services from NYCC have been paid into the account. This was reluctantly agreed.
- 12.4 It was proposed by the Chairman "*The outstanding account to the RDC (£7,018.04) be paid forthwith and the Clerk claim VAT refunds to date.*" Agreed.
- 12.5 It was agreed that means of covering any possible shortfall in cash flow needs to be investigated - RDC advance on precept, Bank provision of, say, £1,000.00 overdraft facility pending receipt of Precept in 2004.

13. Business for October meeting.

- 13.1 Cllr David Lambert moves from the area early in October and therefore tendered his resignation, it being the case that electoral rules forbid his continuing service. Greeted with dismay, the Chairman spoke for all present of the appreciation of his services to Barton PC and the community. The Clerk directed to obtain the necessary forms to advertise the vacancy.
- 13.2 The Chairman intends to produce an autumn newsletter to residents and asked that the PC submits any items to him by 1/10/03 and accepts that a charge will be made for distribution during October. This was agreed. Also agreed that £15.00 be deducted from funds to pay news-persons for delivery of the newsletter around the village.

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10 p.m. and Council adjourned to meet next on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> October 2003.