

BACTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Committee Meeting held on 9 December 2024 held in
Bacton Village Hall, Bacton.

Councillors Present: Vanessa Kingsley (VK) (Chairman), Gail Wiglesworth (GW) (Vice Chairman), John Kingsley (JK), Graham MacAusland (GM), Paul Merry (PM), James Steed (JS) and Paul Wigglesworth (PW).

Jill Dowsett (JD) joined the meeting as a Parish Councillor after being co-opted early in the meeting.

In Attendance : Tina Newell (Clerk) (TN), Andrew Stringer (AS) County Councilor, Andrew Mellen (AM) District Councilor and ten members of the public.

091224/01 **Apologies for absence:** All Councillors were present.

091224/02 **Co-option:** Further to the resignation of two Councillors and noting there was no by-election called one application for the position of Parish Councillor had been received. After a brief discussion and noting the applicants experience in this sector all Councillors resolved to co-opt Jill Dowsett (JD) to the Parish Council.

091224/03 JD completed a Declaration of Acceptance to Office, joined the meeting as a Parish Councillor and was made aware of the legal obligation to complete a 'Register of Interest' within 28 days of taking office (TN handed a physical copy for completion and returning to MSDC).

091224/04 TN confirmed an official email account will be set up and instructions sent within 48 hours stating this is the communication method all Councillors agree to use for Parish Council related matters.

091224/05 VK confirmed there is still a vacancy for a Parish Councillor and invited applications for the January meeting.

- 091224/06 **Declarations of Interest and Dispensation considerations:** GW and PW declared an interest in agenda item 6c 'North Close' as residents of North Close.
- 091224/07 There were no requests for dispensations to consider.
- 091224/08 **Minutes of previous meeting:** With the agreement of all present to amend in pen the location of the meeting on 11 November to Bacton Village Hall all Councillors resolved to accept the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 November 2024 as a true reflection of the decisions made and authorised VK as Chairman to sign them (111124/01 to 111124/75).
- Public Forum:**
- 091124/09 Members of the public spoke in support of the enclosed dog area; a resident asked if an extension to this area will be considered whilst another resident said this is a good social facility. Of the eight residents in attendance all were in support for keeping this as an enclosed dog area.
- 091224/10 All Councillors confirmed receipt of AS's report prior to the meeting; whilst a few S19 reports have been issued it was pleasing to note Bacton did not suffer any flooding on Pound Hill during the recent storms; AS confirmed the new drain in Turkey Hall Lane is not fit for purpose and will pursue a resolution. AS's full report is appended to these minutes
- 091224/11 JS expressed concern regarding water sitting under the railway bridge and as a consequence the poor road surface; AS confirmed a new drain under the railway bridge has been fitted in anticipation of the works required in accordance with the S106 agreement on the development off Broad Road; it was agreed these works need completing before first occupation of the development.
- 091224/12 PW reported to AS of the missing sign at Turkey Hall Lane stating a Low Bridge ahead; AS will look into this.
- 091224/13 Noting concerns around the potential increase and speed of traffic when the railway bridge is closed AS will request temporary 20mph sign limits along the entire lane at Turkey Hall.

- 091224/14 AS confirmed remedial work to the foot bridge from Prettyman Avenue to the Church will be carried out soonest.
- 091224/15 AM's report was received prior to the meeting; AM said the main topic of conversation recently has been the reporting of the abolishment of District Councils – whilst it is known some changes will happen until the Governments white paper has been received this is only speculation; most fees and charges from the District Council will increase by 1.7% (inflation rate as at September 2024) from April 2025. The full report is appended to these minutes.
- 091224/16 PW asked for clarity over the period of exemption to business rates for new businesses at Gateway 14 and VK asked for confirmation if the Governments guidance for four waste bins for residences fits in with the plans for additional waste collections from the District Authority.
- 091224/17 There was no update if the Parish Council would receive the interest that will be accrued on the £227,251.80 paid the District Council for the maintenance of the open space at Beacon Green when transferred to the Parish Council.

Reports from working groups:

- 091224/18 **Village Greens and Byways:** Councillors noted the Diocese is happy to extend permission for the enclosed dog area to remain on St Mary's playing field for a further four years at a nominal cost of £100 plus VAT (to cover the land agents time in seeking permission). After discussion and noting the residents support for the dog area GM proposed to accept the extension of time and the cost of £100.00 plus VAT; with the proposal seconded by JS and VK, JK, GW, JD, PM in favour and PW abstaining the proposal was carried.
- 091224/19 All Councillors noted an email from the land agents working on behalf of the owners of St Mary's field (the Diocese) stating 'at the current time the owners are not looking to sell the area the Parish Council lease however the Parish Councils interest has been registered on their file and should the Diocese wish to sell the area in the future the Parish Council will be contacted'.
- 091224/20 The Parish Council insurers have confirmed 'The Public Liability insurance cover of Bacton Parish Council will extend to pay for all injury or damage that

the Council is legally liable to pay arising from their responsibility for the playing field / enclosed dog area. It does not extend to cover the individual liability of owners and their dogs, meaning owners should be responsible for any incident resulting from behaviours of themselves and/or their dog'. After discussion all Councillors other than GM agreed for a sign to be displayed at the entrance to the area advising all users of the area do so at their own risk and the Parish Council take no responsibility for any accidents, injuries or liability claims.

- 091124/21 **Neighbourhood Plan (NP):** Members of the Neighbourhood Plan group met with AECOM (the Housing Research Team) on 25 November 2024 and walked the vilage noting the various house designs to assist in preparing a design code for the NP. A first meeting to understand the local context and objectives for the Housing Needs Assessment has been arranged for Monday 16 December 2024 and a meeting with the working group will take place on 9 January 2025. It is hoped a more comprehensive update will then be available for the January meeting of the Parish Council.
- 091124/22 It was resolved to JD to join the NP working party.
- 091124/23 **North Close:** Representatives from the Parish, County and District Council met with residents and representatives from Flagship on the Patio Area at North Close to consider the re-purposing of this area. After much discussion VK proposed and GM seconded the proposal for the Parish Council to apply to the County Council, as owners of the area, to grant a license allowing the Parish Council to re-purpose the area if the County Council agree to maintain and allow access to the houses via a formal pavement (all noted this entire area is currently in a very poor state of repair and will require intervention, and cost, by SCC if no agreement is reached). TN will cost up the landscape design Flagship will produce to include an area of grass, some soft landscaping with seating, planting of a Magnolia tree and 2-3 other trees (varieties to be decided) and collapsible lockable bollards on the entry to this area - a key for which to be accessible to all residents in the area and the

Parish Council only. It was noted there is a grant from the District Council 'Pride in Your Place' that could be applied for to fund the project up to £5k.

091124/24 Councillors noted there is an area like this on Prettyman Avenue that will require a similar project – AM will confirm the ownership of this land before plans can be proposed.

091124/25 **Road Calming Project:** All Councillors noted SCC have now received the funds to carry out a Road Traffic Assessment; an independent assessor will be instructed by SCC to carry out the work and the result of this will be reviewed by SCC and any adjustments to the original scheme will be presented to the Parish Council for approval prior to the project starting. It is anticipated the assessment will take place in the next 6 weeks.

Community engagement:

091124/26 **Christmas Tree:** It was noted there is no Christmas Tree on Shop Green despite it previously being agreed as it was not possible to light the tree safely within the time frame required. After consideration it was resolved to light up all four Willow Trees on Shop Green and more trees on Tailors Green in future years (GM is happy to provide additional power for Tailors Green and VK will ask the owners of Shop Green if they too would be happy to provide additional electricity).

091224/27 PW confirmed replacement sockets would be required for Shop Green.

091224/28 TN will look into the cost of a large metal Christmas Tree for Shop Green.

091224/29 On behalf of the Parish Council and residents VK thanked PW, PM and a local resident for their work in lighting up the trees.

091124/30 **Victory in Europe (VE) Day 80th anniversary celebration:** After much discussion it was agreed to set up a working party of PW, GW, PM and TN from the Parish Council and to invite representatives from The Royal British Legion and the Parish to consider how to celebrate this anniversary.

091124/30 **Village Voice:** With VK, GW, JK, JS, JD, PW and PM in agreement to holding a 'Village Voice' and GM seeing no need it was resolved to proceed with holding the first 'Village Voice' on Thursday 6 March from 9-12 in the Village Hall; it

was noted this event will be held on different days and times to assess its success/need.

Planning:

091224/31 Councillors noted there had been no planning applications made to MSDC relating to Bacton since the last meeting.

091224/32 Councillors noted the following decisions made by MSDC, the local planning authority, since the last meeting:

DC/24/04391 AND DC/24/04392 Old Manor Cottage, Bacton

MSDC: GRANTED BPC: Supported

Finance:

091224/33 **Bank reconciliations:** All Councillors confirmed receipt of the bank reconciliations for the period ended 29 November 2024 prior to the meeting. GM as a non-bank signatory confirmed the bank reconciliations as presented agree to the bank statements showing total cash available of £310,397.67; £81,010.18 in the Community account and £229,387.49 in the Premium account.

091224/34 **Budget to Actual:** All Councillors noted this report and its reconciliation to the bank accounts; with no questions the report was agreed as accurately reflecting the payments and receipts made up to 29 November 2024.

091224/35 **Reserves:** All Councillors noted the reserves account and agreed to consider virements at the next meeting.

Receipts: All Councillors noted the following receipts since the last meeting:

091224/36	Tenant	Bacton Green grazing rent	£250.00
091224/37	Tenant	Bacton Green allotment rent	£10.00
091224/38	Groundwork UK	Neighbourhood Plan grant	£8,312.00

All Councillors approved the following payments noting GM has seen and verified copies of all invoices:

091224/39	Tina Newell	Salary	£1,271.21
091224/40	Andy Mays	Salary	£583.50
091224/41	HMRC	Tax & NIC	£1,344.06

091224/42	NEST	Pension	£36.13
091224/43	Bacton PCC	Room Hire (Neighbourhood Plan)	£22.50
091224/44	Frank Davey	New Cemetery footpath	£1,548.00
091224/45	Frank Davey	Cemetery vehicle parking	£4,164.00
091224/46	Frank Davey	Garden of Reflection footpath	£3,156.00
091224/47	J Lawes	Some PPE for the Parish Warden	£57.80
091224/48	Community Action Suffolk	Website hosting	£60.00
091224/49	Poppy Appeal	Wreath for Remembrance Day	£25.00

091224/50 All Councillors offered thanks to Frank Davey for his generosity in discounting his invoices by £500.00 and noted he wishes for this money to go towards the purchase of a bench/es in the Garden of Reflection.

091224/51 Councillors noted no transfers between bank accounts had been made to date and therefore resolved for GW to transfer £78,123.59 to the Unity Trust Account and to use this as the daily transactional account leaving £232,274.08 in the Barclays Premium account as the account to hold the CIL money. TN expressed concern that the PRA and FCA (who set the financial compensation limits and compensation rules.) guarantee upto £85k per eligible person, per bank or building society and therefore it was agreed to consider opening two more accounts one each with two other banks/building societies. It was also resolved to add JS and JD as signatories on the Barclays and Unity Trust Bank accounts.

091224/52 Councillors noted TN had made an insurance claim regarding the MacBook which was settled on the same day and a replacement purchased. It was noted whilst a claim for the software had been made TN had been able to transfer the licence to the new laptop therefore saving the Council £99.99. With the insurance excess charged at £75.00 and the additional £99.99 received all Councillor agreed for TN to purchase a waterproof case upto a cost of £24.99 resulting in a net financial effect on the Parish Council.

091224/53 Councillors received a request from residents at North Close for a road sign confirming the road as no through road; SCC Highways suggested a sign

denoting 'T' would be most suitable at a cost of £250.00 for which AS agreed to fund. All Councillors resolved to accept the proposal and the offer of funding from AS.

- 091224/54 Further to the Parish Councils agreement to fully fund WiFi in the village hall for two years at a cost of £958.80 in exchange for the Parish Councils free use of the hall it was noted the village hall committee value the hire income more than the financial contribution towards the Wi-Fi and Councillors agreed no further action is required.
- 091224/55 Councillors noted the Parochial Church Council (PCC) had not requested any financial help towards the printing of the parish magazine and it was agreed there was no item to consider or decision to be made.
- 091224/56 Councillors JS, PW and JK reviewed a draft budget for 2025/26 prior to the meeting and suggested an increase in line with the District Council (2%) could be achieved; it was proposed to defer setting the budget and precept to the January meeting when a final tax base figure (issued from the District Council) would be known to which all Councillors were in favour.
- 091224/57 Councillors noted TN was making good progress uploading draft policies onto the website and that these would be ready to review and adopt before the March meeting (noting these should be reviewed annually).
- 091224/58 **Internal Auditor:** All Councilors accepted TN's proposal to appoint Trevor Brown as the Internal Auditor for the year ending 31 March 25 at a cost of £407.00 plus travel expenses; whilst all Councillors noted this is the same fee as SALC the major difference in the two services is Trevor Brown would complete the audit in one day whilst SALC would complete it all on line which could take several days/weeks; Trevor Brown would guarantee to have the Internal Audit completed before 30 June (the deadline).
- 091224/59 All Councillors approved the proposed audit plan.
- 091224/60 All Councillors resolved for a letter of appointment be sent to Trevor Brown setting out the terms of his engagement.

- 091224/61 No Councillor wished to represent the Parish Council on the Village Hall Committee.
- Correspondence:** Councillors noted and discussed the following correspondence received:
- 091224/62 Memorial tree on Tailors Green: it was agreed to offer the newly planted Christmas Tree as a memorial to a long standing resident and for a small memorial plaque to be erected at cost to the family.
- 091224/63 Trees on St Marys Playing field: It was agreed the trees were planted before the development and therefore there is no issue for the Parish Council to address.
- 091224/64 Pedestrian safety under the railway bridge; It was noted the completion of a footpath is part of the S106 planning condition on land off Broad Road and would resolve the issue of pedestrian safety under the railway bridge; this work is required prior to the first occupation and AS is confident this will be undertaken soon.
- 091224/65 Bench at Cemetery: Councillors regretfully agreed they cannot allow individuals to place any benches or chairs in the cemetery noting there are and will be many places to sit and reflect close to graves.
- 091224/65 Councillors agreed to make individual representations on the Government consultation for changes to include removing the requirement for Councillors' home addresses to be published and introducing sanctions; allowing councils to use virtual attendance at council meetings noting the closing date as 19 December 2024.
- 091224/66 **Items for inclusion in future meetings:** litter bins, Cemetery fees, notice boards, road safety working party, financial regulations (should be reviewed after the appointment of a new Clerk FR 18.1), the use of grit bins, grass cutting responsibility, bank accounts, June fete, extension to the enclosed dog area, streetlighting and the Bacton fayre.
- 091224/67 All Councillors noted the date of the next meeting as Monday 13 January 2025; GM offered apologies for this meeting.

- 091224/68 All Councillors agreed to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 due to the commercially sensitive nature of the issues to be discussed.
- 091224/69 After discussion all Councillors resolved to appoint E J Barker and Sons, Westhorpe to manage the land at Bacton Green for three years from 1 January 2024 using the Sustainable Farming Incentive options noting the current Stewardship scheme expires on 31 December 2024; working within the rules the land will be split to 75% Legume fallow and 25% remains in a Flower-rich block.
- 091224/70 All Councillors agreed to defer consideration of land at the Ivy Hill development to the next meeting.
- 091224/71 Noting there were no members of the press and public to re-admit VK closed the meeting at 8.55pm.