

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GREAT BARTON PARISH COUNCIL ON  
MONDAY 10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2016 COMMENCING AT 7.15 PM**

<b>Item.</b>	<b>Members Present :</b> Councillor Philip Reeve chaired the meeting together with Councillor Nicola Crouch, Maggie Dunn, Peter Fisk, Eddie Gibson and Kate Trevitt. 1 member of the public was present.
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Public Session</b>
<b>1.1</b>	No items were raised.
<b>2.0</b>	<b>To receive County Councillor's report from Rebecca Hopfensperger</b>
<b>2.1</b>	Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger had sent her apologies.
<b>3.0</b>	<b>To receive Borough Councillor's Report from Sarah Broughton</b>
<b>3.1</b>	Councillor Sarah Broughton reported on a meeting regarding the West Suffolk Operational Hub (WSOH). A planning application is due to be received early next year. This will go before the Secretary of State as the application is not included in St Edmundsbury Borough Council's Local Plan. The Community Liaison Group will prepare a presentation for the Secretary of State, so he is aware of the WSOH and the views of the surrounding residents, before he receives the application. Traffic surveys will be carried out in the next few months but not in half term. The dimensions of the new building will be increased to minimise the potential for internal combustion and comply with new government legislation. Brown bin waste may be accommodated in the future. The main opening has been changed to a Southerly aspect which should reduce noise and will not be facing the prevailing wind. The parameters and scope for the operation have been requested. The design details for the site are not location specific and could be used for an alternative site. Proposals suggest there will be 2 entrances to the hub from Fornham Road, a domestic entrance and a combined commercial entrance for the hub and the farm, along with 2 ghost lanes. There was a discussion on the speed of traffic on Fornham Road. Suffolk County Council advised that they do not think a 30mph limit is needed at this time. A roundabout has been requested, which will help to slow traffic down. It is believed that 150 staff will be working on the site, resulting in 300 traffic movements per day. Councillor Nicola Crouch arrived at 7.30.
<b>3.2</b>	An Air Quality Management area is going to be reinstated on The Street, Gt Barton. The issue is next to the Post Office and is caused by cars waiting at the pedestrian crossing, where the road is enclosed by high trees and a flint wall. Councillor Sarah Broughton is pushing for a solution to this problem.
<b>3.3</b>	Devolution was discussed. Suffolk and Norfolk will make their decisions on whether to go ahead this month.
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Chairman's welcome, reminder about the filming of meetings and to receive apologies for absence</b>
	Councillor Philip Reeve welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were accepted from Councillors Michele Faiers and Matthew Parker.
<b>5.0</b>	<b>(i) To receive members Declarations of Interest – Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached &amp;, when appropriate, to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item. (ii) Council to consider any new written requests for dispensation and/or requests which have been received prior to the meeting</b>
	There were no declarations of interest and no requests for dispensation.
<b>6.0</b>	<b>To sign the minutes of the council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2016 to stand as an accurate record.</b>
<b>6.1</b>	The minutes of the Council meeting on 19 <sup>th</sup> September 2016 were signed to stand as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed Councillor Eddie Gibson, seconded Councillor Kate Trevitt, unanimous decision.
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Items arising from September's Council meeting:</b>
<b>7.1</b>	(i) Item 19 – The Council resolved to allow Councillor Michele Faiers to take a 6 month leave of absence from September 2016 to February 2016. Proposed Councillor Nicola Crouch, seconded Councillor Peter Fisk, unanimous decision.
<b>7.2</b>	(ii) The Clerk provided an update on the One Suffolk website service. The hosting is being transferred to Community Action Suffolk and the Clerk gave details of other arrangements for the

	Council to consider. The Council resolved to transfer their web hosting to Suffolk Cloud as they will be using the latest version of the program, will provide 24/7 service, with updated facilities etc. This will cost £100 per annum. Proposed Councillor Kate Trevitt, seconded Councillor Philip Reeve, unanimous decision.  The Council asked the clerk to enquire if they could pay 3 years in advance at £100 per annum. The clerk will contact other organisations in the village who use the One Suffolk website host to let them know about Suffolk Cloud.	LH
8.0	<b>Chairman's Report</b>  Councillor Philip Reeve gave an update on the Neighbourhood Plan. The 5 group leaders will provide their reports to the NP working party at the meeting on 19/10/16. The council agreed in principle to provide the 5 group leaders and the NP working group leader with a large black ink cartridge and a ream of paper. To be ratified at November's meeting.  A response has been sent to Network Rail regarding their crossing consultation.  Item 11 was covered next to allow Councillor Sarah Broughton and a member of the public to join in the discussion. The meeting was closed.	LH
11.0	<b><u>Council to consider the costs of the safety assessment for the pedestrian crossing point on Mill Road, the original design for the crossing point and a conventional crossing</u></b>  Councillor Philip Reeve provided a map of the proposed crossing point and signage. A site visit had taken place with representatives from The Freedom Church and the area engineer for Suffolk County Council, Hen Abbott. Concerns were raised regarding the safety of the crossing on the busy road and the visibility of the crossing from a driver's perspective. If a safety assessment were to be carried out by Suffolk County Council the cost is approximately £1,000. Councillors did not feel that a safety audit would provide any new information, compared to the status quo. Historically the road has been a safe one. The crossing point was just that and not a full pedestrian crossing and it was felt that pedestrian's would recognise this and use it accordingly. Most pedestrians would be local and have a knowledge of the area. It was felt that the scheme should be future proofed and Suffolk County Council suggested making the crossing wide enough to allow it to be changed to a full pedestrian crossing at a later date if required. The Council agreed in principle to additional funding of £1,000 for the project, if needed. This will be ratified at November's meeting. Councillor Philip Reeve proposed that a safety audit/survey be undertaken before the Mill Road crossing scheme is implemented. This was seconded by Councillor Maggie Dunn. The Council voted not to proceed with the safety audit by a vote of 4 Councillors to 2.	LH
9.0	<b><u>Council to consider their budget and precept for 2017/18 along with any requests for grants, following recommendations from the finance committee</u></b>	
9.1	Councillors were given the minutes and recommendations for the precept from the finance committee. No applications for grants had been received. This will be discussed again at the November meeting.	LH
10.0	<b><u>Council to consider the 2017/18 Local Government Finance Settlement Technical Consultation Paper following recommendations from the finance committee</u></b>  The Council agreed to submit the following response to the questions relating to Parish Council precepts:	
10.1	<b>Question 4: Do you agree that referendum principles should be extended to larger, higher-spending town and parish councils in 2017/18 as set out in paragraphs 3.3.3 to 3.3.4?</b>  <i>Although Great Barton Parish Council will not be affected by this proposal, we are opposed in principle to any further extension of the referendum principles to "parishes". It is our belief that the increases in Parish Council precept quoted in Table 1 are in direct response to a number of specific government policies, in particular arising from the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework. For example, a large number of local councils are involved in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans, as proposed and encouraged by central government – these are costly and time-consuming exercises which can only be partly-funded by the grants available and so councils are making appropriate budget provision for this in their setting of precept.</i>  <i>In addition, the reductions in government funding over the period have transferred some of the local tax-raising burden from district and borough councils down to "parishes". As a Parish, we are spending no more in total per annum than we were three years ago but, because of the reduction in grants provided to us by our borough council, it has appeared that our precept has increased significantly over this period. We are certain that this pattern will be repeated across the country, making the figures quoted in Table 1 an inaccurate representation of the generally prudent</i>	

	<p><i>approach to financial management seen at Town and Parish level.</i></p> <p><b>Question 5: Do you agree with the proposed approach to take account of the transfer of responsibilities to town and parish councils as outlined in paragraph 3.3.5?</b></p> <p><i>Further to Question 4, this is another reason why Great Barton Parish Council does not believe that it is appropriate to extend the referendum principles to “parishes” at this time. Many local councils, including our own, are in varying stages of dialogue with “higher tier” councils about the devolution of services and appropriate budgets down to a parish level in service areas such as Highways, Street Scene and Grounds Maintenance. Against this back-drop of service devolution, Parish Councillors should be able to focus on making the best service and financial decision for their local residents in any single given financial year, without worrying about a possible precept referendum arising from this decision. The proposal makes reference to a specific exemption allowable for 2017-18 but no indication that such an exemption would be available in future years. This could create a false impression that 2017-18 is the “last chance” to put in place these local service devolution arrangements, resulting in hasty rather than well-considered decision-making for any proposed changes in funding and service delivery at a local level.</i></p>	
<b><u>10.3</u></b>	<p><b>Question 6: Do you agree with the suggestion that referendum principles may be extended to all local precepting authorities as set out in paragraph 3.3.6? If so what level of principle should be set?</b></p> <p><i>Great Barton Parish Council is fundamentally opposed to the proposal to extend the referendum principles to all local precepting authorities and therefore the second element regarding the level of principle is not relevant.</i></p>	
<b><u>10.4</u></b>	<p><b>Question 7: Do you have views on the practical implications of a possible extension of referendum principles to all local precepting authorities as set out in paragraph 3.3.7?</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>It will discourage potential Councillors</i> <i>Parish Councillors, unlike their higher-tier counterparts, are unpaid volunteers who are required to live or work in the area covered by their council in order to stand for election. The vast majority are independent and not driven by party politics. They endeavour to make informed decisions in the best interests of their own community including in financial matters. There is an ongoing and increasing problem trying to convince local residents to volunteer as Parish Councillors – in our Borough Council area alone, there are 52 Parish Councillor vacancies, including 3 in our own parish. We believe that one practical implication of subjecting Parish Councils to a potential annual referendum on the level of their precept will be to discourage local residents from serving as Parish Councillors in the future.</i></li> <li>2) <i>It is an unnecessary and inappropriate form of scrutiny</i> <i>Parish Councils are already subject to regular scrutiny without the need for the expense of a referendum to gauge local opinion, for example they are required by law to hold an Annual Parish Meeting. Outside of that, most Parish Councils meet formally on a regular basis and also informally with residents, community groups and local bodies to discuss priority issues. The availability of funding and finances forms a key part of this engagement on an ongoing basis and precepting decisions are always taken by Parish Councils in the best interests of their community within the context of this widespread and regular local dialogue.</i></li> <li>3) <i>The cost of a referendum outweighs any potential benefit</i> <i>The cost of a referendum can vary somewhat, for example depending on whether it coincides with an existing election, but research by the BBC concludes that local by-elections since 2010 have cost the electorate £8.75 per vote (<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-magazine-monitor-29540785">http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/blogs-magazine-monitor-29540785</a>) and that they “tend to be more expensive to administer because they are unexpected, so the returning officer has less time to plan”. Great Barton Parish Council believes that a Council Tax Referendum would be similarly unexpected and therefore similarly expensive, meaning that more tax-payers money could be spent on a referendum than the maximum amount of tax revenue that could possibly be raised by the increase being voted upon.</i></li> <li>4) <i>It could undermine community cohesion and delay potential community investment</i> <i>Unlike regular elections, referenda require a local electorate to make a binary choice between 2 polar opposites. Subjecting local democratic decisions to further scrutiny because of their financial impact could create unwelcome community divisions. Parish Councillors are elected to weigh up such extremes and make a decision in the best interests of the whole community. They could then find that these decisions result in the need for a referendum which serve to set different factions of the community against one another who hold these polar opposite views. Great Barton Parish Council’s opinion is that this is an unhelpful and unwelcome addition to the local democratic</i></li> </ol>	

	<p>process.</p> <p>In addition, substantial precept-raising decisions at this local level are likely to be to fund investment in community improvement projects or to acquire and maintain assets – village halls, play equipment, traffic speed management, new footpaths or road crossings, for example. These investment decisions are made in response to identified local need which, if subjected to a referendum process could result in unnecessary delays to this much-needed community investment. In our experience, this is a much greater source of local unrest and dissatisfaction with Parish Councils than the issue of raising a precept by either £5.01 or 2% per annum!</p> <p>Copies will be sent to SALC and St Edmundsbury Borough Council's Finance Department.</p>	
<u>12.0</u>	<p><b><u>Update on the draft Heads of Terms for the sale of the carpark on School Road following Councillors Philip Reeve and Kate Trevitt liaising with the Holy Innocents Church</u></b></p>	UH
<u>12.1</u>	<p>Councillors were advised the Holy Innocents Church were keen to keep the car park and will confirm this in writing.</p>	UH
<u>12.2</u>	<p>There was a discussion on the simultaneous transfer of the lease from Havebury to the Parish Council and the Parish Council to the Holy Innocents Church. The financial implications will be discussed at the November meeting.</p>	UH
<u>13.0</u>	<p><b><u>Council to consider the costs involved in maintaining/cutting the roadside verges in the village including an update from the working party on which roads will need cutting.</u></b></p>	
<u>13.1</u>	<p>Councillor Philip Reeve had prepared a map of the village showing the roads with verges which will need cutting along with the distance. The total for the village is approximately 31,000 metres. Councillor Eddie Gibson will provide a copy of Suffolk County Council's verge cutting specifications for discussion at November's meeting.</p>	EG
	<p>The clerk will contact Councillor Rebecca Hopfensperger to see if Suffolk County Council has made a decision to divulge any budgets to Parish Council level, for this service.</p>	UH
<u>14.0</u>	<p><b><u>Concerns raised by Montana Care Home – speeding on East Barton Road and the request for a church sign</u></b></p>	
<u>14.1</u>	<p>Councillors discussed the increase in large lorries using East Barton Road, raised by the Montana Care Home. Possible causes were construction traffic for the Eastern Relief Road, Taylor Wimpey's new development on Moreton Hall and the temporary closure of Sow Lane.</p> <p>The Clerk will find out when Sow Lane is due to open and if there is a weight limit on the East Barton Road bridge.</p>	UH
<u>15.0</u>	<p><b><u>Updates on village projects/matters:</u></b></p>	
<u>15.1</u>	<p>I. <b><u>Update on the proposed transfer of land between the Gt Barton Village Hall and the Scout Group</u></b> - The Scouts have been asked to discuss the scope of their lease and report back to the Village Hall Management Committee.</p>	
<u>15.2</u>	<p>II. <b><u>Nicky Crouch - Update on the submission of the planning application for the pump track in Icepits Wood</u></b> - The documentation has been started for the planning application which will then go to the Icepits Wood committee for approval.</p>	
<u>15.3</u>	<p>III. <b><u>Matthew Parker - update on the life of the batteries for the VAS</u></b> – Councillor Matthew Parker had sent his apologies.</p>	
<u>15.4</u>	<p>IV. <b><u>Progressing the School Lane/Downing Drive link footpath</u></b> – Nothing to report.</p>	
<u>15.5</u>	<p>V. <b><u>Update on the Neighbourhood Plan</u></b> – Already covered under item 8.</p>	
<u>15.6</u>	<p>VI. <b><u>Grass cutting at Conyers Green – Councillor Kate Trevitt</u></b> – the council agreed in principle to donate £25 towards the cost of petrol for cutting the grass at Conyers Green to a resident . To be ratified at November's meeting along with future arrangements.</p>	
<u>15.7</u>	<p>VII. <b><u>Following recommendations from the Planning Committee, Council to consider keeping the traditional telephone box on Livermere Road</u></b> – the Council resolved to keep the telephone box on Livermere Road. Proposed Councillor Philip Reeve, seconded Councillor Maggie Dunn, unanimous decision. Thurston Road telephone box will be removed. Both boxes have not been used in 12 months.</p>	UH
<u>16.0</u>	<p><b><u>Councillors Reports</u></b></p>	
<u>16.1</u>	<p>No reports were received.</p>	
<u>17.0</u>	<p><b><u>Clerk's Report</u></b></p>	
<u>17.1</u>	<p>The Clerk had nothing further to report.</p>	

<b><u>18.0</u></b> <b><u>18.1</u></b>	<b>Finance</b>			
	<b>a) Payment of Accounts</b>			
	<b>Details</b>	<b>Chq no</b>	<b>TOTAL INVOICE</b>	<b>VAT</b>
	LJ Harley - Clerk's salary & expenses	1887	£ 955.68	£ 2.98
	S Deare - NP Clerk	1888	£ 146.53	
	Gt Barton Thanksgiving Fund-Hall hire	1889	£ 10.00	
	Kallkwik - newsletter printing	1890	£ 418.28	
	Vertas Group Ltd-grass cutting	1891	£ 1,433.62	£ 238.94
	Total		£ 2,964.11	£ 241.92
	<b>b) To receive a financial report from the Responsible Financial Officer including details of reserve budgets and spending against them</b>			
<b><u>18.2</u></b>	The clerk reported the bank balances at 1st September 2016 as:			
	Current A/C		£57,555.22	
	Bus Reserve		£40,373.61	
	<b>TOTAL</b>		£97,928.83	
	Invoices had been sent out for advertising in the autumn edition of the newsletter.			
	The bank statement to 30/9/2016 had not yet been received.			
	Details of reserve budgets were given. There were no questions:			
	<b>RESERVES</b>	<b>BALANCE</b>		
	Small Projects	£10,884 – (Items paid this month £355 to increase other budgets) <b>earmarked</b> : £3,000 School Lane footpath, Mill Rd crossing from PC £1,250 & from Freedom Church £1,250 = £5,386)		
	Neighbourhood Plan	£5,819 – Items paid this month : S Deare NP Clerk salary £146, Hall Hire £10 ( <b>earmarked</b> : S Deare salary £2,200 and LJ Harley extra hours £120 = £3,499)		
<b><u>18.3</u></b>	Youth Project	£1,038		
	General	£25,595		
	Allotments	£ 326		
	Asset maintenance	£ 4,425		
	Asset acquisition	£5,956		
	Village Sign	£444 balance earmarked for restoring the old sign.		
	Icepits Wood	£16,443 ( <b>earmarked</b> : £15,000 pump track)		
	Total reserves	£70,930		
	Amounts to nearest '£'			
	<b>c) Consideration of risk assessments including confirmation of which assessments have been carried out</b> – There was nothing new to report from the risk assessments. Weekly inspections of the playground are carried out along with monthly inspections of the pocket park at the playing field. Councillor Philip Reeve is reviewing the bearings on the Spinning Pole. He does not feel they need urgently replacing.			

	<b>d) Consideration of payment to Clerk for work carried out for Neighbourhood Plan</b> No extra hours were claimed. There was a discussion on how to monitor the grass cutting, whether it could be tied in with playground inspections, could Vertas' bill include a list of cutting dates etc. Councillor Philip Reeve will pursue.	PR		
<b>18.5</b>	<b>e) Choose a pension scheme</b> – The Clerk left the meeting for the Councillors to discuss her pension scheme. The Council resolved to start a new pension scheme for the Clerk using the scheme set up by the government, The National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) as the provider, from January 2017 (staging date) with the Parish Council contributing 3% of the Clerk's salary . Proposed Councillor Philip Reeve, seconded Councillor Eddie Gibson, 5 Councillors voted for and 1 against. The Clerk will put in 4%. The Pension Regulator had confirmed that the declaration of compliance cannot be completed until the Parish Council has legally past its staging date. Councillor Peter Fisk left the meeting.			
<b>18.6</b>	<b>f) Consider interest rates on notice savings accounts</b> – The Clerk had provided the councillors with a list of alternative arrangements for their savings, which is currently receiving 0.01% interest at the National Westminster Bank, Following a discussion it was agreed that the Clerk will look into the details of the Nationwide Savings Account.	LJH		
<b>18.7</b>	<b>g) Consider the cost of Councillor Philip Reeve replacing the spinning pole bearings</b> – The council resolved that Councillor Philip Reeve can purchase a spare set of bearings for the spinning pole. Proposed councillor Eddie Gibson, seconded Councillor Maggie Dunn, unanimous decision.			
<b>19.0</b>	<b>Planning</b>			
<b>19.1</b>	<b>(i) Council to sign the committee meeting minutes from 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2016 to stand as an accurate record of the meeting.</b> The council signed the minutes from the planning committee meeting of 3 <sup>rd</sup> October 2016 as an accurate record of the meeting. Proposed Councillor Nicola Crouch , seconded Councillor Philip Reeve, unanimous decision from those present at the meeting.			
	The Council supported the following applications:			
<b>19.2</b>	<b>Thurston Road</b>	<b>DC/16/2000/TE3</b>	<b>Removal of Telephone Box</b>	
<b>19.3</b>	<b>Livermere Road</b>	<b>DC/16/1992/TE3</b>	<b>Removal of Telephone Box</b>	
	Recommendations will be made to full Council to keep the traditional red telephone box on Livermere Road.			
<b>19.4</b>	The Council supported the following application and commented:			
	<b>2 Diomed Drive</b>	<b>DC/16/1914/HH</b>	<b>Detached garage (following demolition of existing garage)</b>	
	Gt Barton Parish Council have no objection to this application but commented that the proposed building should be moved back in line with the hedge to accord with assurances from the applicant given to Mr and Mrs Graves and to overcome the concerns of the adjacent neighbour.			
<b>19.5</b>	The Council objected to the following applications:			
	<b>Landair, Thurston Road</b>	<b>DC/16/1850/HH</b>	<b>Flat roof cabin</b>	
	Gt Barton Parish Council object to this planning application as it is contrary to policy DM 24 and does not respect the character and design of existing dwellings in the area and the character and appearance of the general street scene.			
<b>19.6</b>	<b>35 Conyers Way</b>	<b>DC/16/1973/TPO</b>	<b>TPO 033 (1961) - Tree Preservation Order - (i) 1no. Yew (1 on plan, within area A1 on order) all round crown reduction by 1 metre; (ii) 1no. Field Maple (4 on plan, within area A1 on order) remove lowest East limb back to main stem; (iii) 1no. Maple (5 on plan, within area A1 on order) fell; (iv) 1no. Redwood (6 on plan, within area A1 on order) prune in any extending branches in line with the natural shape of the tree, to a maximum of 3 metres; (v) 1no. Ash (7 on plan, within area A1 on</b>	

			<b>order) pollard at 5 metres; (vi) 1no. Cedar (8 on plan, within area A1 on order) all round crown reduction by 1.5 metres (reduce height and prune of Laurel and mixed species hedge do not require permission as not covered by TPO)</b>	
19.7			Gt Barton Parish Council only object to item (iii) on this application, the felling of the Maple tree (no. 5 on the plan), as it is a healthy tree.	
			<b>(ii) Council to consider the completed planning applications from St Edmundsbury Borough Council for August/September 2016.</b>	
			Councillors considered the following applications which had been approved:	
	5 Conyers Green	DC/16/1513/HH	Single storey rear extension	
	32 Barton Hamlet	DC/16/1670/HH	Single storey rear extension	
			The following application had been refused by St Edmundsbury Borough Council:	
	7 Diomed Drive	DC/16/1414/FUL	(i) 1 dwelling (following demolition of existing garage); (ii) two storey side extension to existing dwelling; (iii) 2no. two bay detached garages; (iv) associated vehicular access works	
20.0			<b>Correspondence</b>	
			No items of correspondence had been received.	
21.0			<b>Urgent Business</b>	
			The tree hanging over the footpath along the A143 will be reported to Suffolk County Council.	LJH
22.0			<b>Date of next meeting</b>	
			The next meeting will be on Monday 21 <sup>st</sup> November 2016.	
			There being no further business the meeting finished at 10.15 pm.	
			.....Sign & Date	
			.....Print name.	
		CHAIRMAN		
		Signed as confirmation that they are a true record.		

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