

AT A MEETING of the BARKSTON AND SYSTON PARISH COUNCIL held in the Village Hall, Barkston, on Monday 10th January 2022 at 7.45 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Miss M.E. Nussey in the Chair

Councillors A.C. Card, P.C. Connor, Miss M. Costall, S.T. Elnor, A. Hine, S.J. Kelly, C.I. Pell and A. Rowell.

PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public made comments in regard to a planning application which she had submitted for an access to her property on the A607, adjacent to Barkston Garage, referring in particular to the objection made by the Parish Council, and asked who had actually made these comments. The Chair outlined the Parish Council's agreed protocol for dealing with applications, making the particular points that nearly all applications submitted for consideration were dealt with by the Chair, Vice-Chairman and nearest Councillor to the site, and not by the Parish Council at a meeting. All members, however, were given the opportunity to make observations. For the information of the meeting, the Clerk read the comments made by the County Council in regard to the application. The Chair confirmed that the application would be discussed under the appropriate agenda item during the meeting of the Council following the public forum.

A member of the public asked if the Parish Council would support the organisation of a street party and other activities in connection with the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June. The street party was proposed for Church Street, but it was pointed out that this would conflict with the bus route. Following a discussion during which the Clerk confirmed that he would act as Treasurer if the event was to be seed funded by the Parish Council, it was agreed that the Clerk would pass on information to the interested members of the public, and arrange for a report to the next meeting of the Council.

2566. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from District Councillors Ian Stokes and Rosemary Kaberry-Brown.

2567. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2021, a copy of which had been circulated to all Members, were taken as read and approved as a correct record, subject to, in minute 2555, all the words after 'installed' being deleted (these had been included in error).

2568. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Elnor declared an interest in relation to any discussion on planning application S21/2502 – erection of holiday let units at Barkston Heath Farm, Heath Lane, Barkston, as a friend of the applicant and owner of similar units in the area.

2569. ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

(a) Update on matters previously raised

Members considered the update circulated by the Clerk on 31st December, with reference to issues raised at the last meeting:

1. Blocked drains, Minnetts Hill/Church Street and The Stag corner – the Local Highways Manager

had advised that the works at The Stag corner had been completed about two months ago. There had been no further reports of flooding, but as there had not been a significant downpour since completion, it was intended to monitor the area.

In regard to Minnetts Hill/Church Street, this scheme was likely to be delayed, not because of funds, but because the contractor had a substantial shortage of staff. The contractor was now recruiting but the loss of staff meant that some schemes, including this one, were being carried over. However, the Flood Risk team also had the site on their list, and they could also fund any works, so funding for the scheme would not be a problem. As soon as a date was available, the Parish Council would be advised.

- 2. Parking provision, western end of West Street, Barkston – Councillor Wootten reminded the Council that despite his ‘Councillor calls for action’ initiative having been agreed for passing on to the Highways Committee, that Committee had not agreed to the provision of any parking facilities. Some signage work had been carried out, and white ‘H’ markings had been installed, with the aim of dissuading parking at key points. He said that the area would continue to be monitored. Councillor Elnor said that it was difficult to establish whether the lines had helped in any way, although parking was a little better than previously.*
- 3. A607 – overgrown trees/bushes – it appeared as though some work had been done, but members were concerned that there were still some substantial trees close to the road which did not appear to have been attended to. The Area Highways Manager had reported that the works were imminent, but that he would chase them up. Clerk to remind the Area Highways Manager.*
- 4. Blocked path/road from Main Street to A607, Syston – the Area Highways Manager had been asked to take action in regard to the uncleared path. Since the request though, work had been carried out and the path was mostly clear, although the Area Highways Manager had said that further action was planned.*
- 5. Hedge – Council bungalows, West Street, Barkston – the hedge had been inspected and was on a list for cutting by the end of January.*
- 6. Grit Bin, Minnetts Hill, Barkston – area now cleared and the bin replaced and filled with grit/salt.*
- 7. Road edges, Hough Road (near railway bridge), Barkston – the Area Highways Manager had advised that fresh stoning of the road edges would be added to a list of works, although it could be some time before the work was done. After discussion, the Clerk was asked to suggest that it would be better if more permanent repairs were carried out, such as tarmacing.*
- 8. Street Lights – Hough Road, Barkston – now repaired.*
- 9. Thorold Gardens, Barkston – flooding – this had been reported and the Area Highways Manager had agreed to arrange for jetting to be carried out.*
- 10. Bus stop clearways, Church Street, Barkston – delays had occurred as a result of the contractor requesting further information in regard to overhead power lines. There was unfortunately a backlog of work so a date for completion could not be given.*
- 11. Footpath, Main Road, Barkston, opposite Village Hall – the Council received a letter from a local resident asking the Council to organise action to clear the lower area at the end of the path, which facilitated an easy crossing to the Syston road. This area had accumulated a quantity of grit and mud and was also covered in weeds, making it unusable. It was also noted that despite a request some time ago for the path to be sided back, nothing had been done. Clerk to remind the Area Highways Manager.*
- 12. Street light, West Street, Barkston – the Council received a request for the provision of a street light at the western end of West Street, and it was agreed that the Clerk would forward this to SKDC.*

(b) Speeding, A607, Barkston – Community Speedwatch Scheme

Clerk to establish the current situation with regard to availability of volunteers and carrying out of checks.

2570. PLANNING MATTERS

Following consultation, comments had been made on planning applications as follows:

Formation of two SRF/recovered plastics bale storage areas, New Earth Solutions (West) Ltd., Copper Hill Industrial Estate, Ermine Street, Ancaster (consulted as a neighbouring authority – no objection)

Renovations/alteration of curtilage listed building, Old Hall, Church Street, Syston – no objection

Proposed drop kerb to form new vehicular access at front of dwelling (re-submission), Tagmoor, Main Road, Barkston – objection

Section 73 application to vary a condition to allow for the erection of a detached garage on Plot 1, 2 Crosby Court, Barkston – no objection

Section 73 application to vary condition 1 to allow for the erection of a detached garage to serve plot Unit B, 1 Crosby Court, Barkston – no objection

Application received, but comments not yet submitted:

Erection of four log cabin holiday let units, Barkston Heath Farm, Heath Lane, Barkston

The appeal following the application for a lodge type mobile home on land off Drift Lane, Barkston, had been confirmed as withdrawn. A request for an update in regard to enforcement action in connection with the static van on the site had not been answered, and the Clerk was asked to request an update from SKDC.

The Council gave further consideration to the application for a drop kerb at Tagmoor, Main Road, Barkston, following the presentation/discussion during the public forum. Councillor Connor referred to a series of photographs which he had circulated to all members, and which showed the views obtained from a vehicle exiting the access from Tagmoor onto the Main Road, A607. He was of the opinion that the objection had been correctly made initially, but that the series of photographs showed that safe egress was possible. In his view, objection 2, in relation to a car being far out into the road and causing a possible collision, did not apply, and there was a clear view in both directions, as far as it was possible to see. A collision would only happen if the driver already on the road was at fault. The applicant had, in his opinion, done everything possible to minimise any danger, and had provided a mirror on the exit gate to assist in viewing from the south and reduced the height of the fence. The road safety and road danger aspects had been dealt with, and the central refuge was far enough away so as not to be an issue.

The Clerk read the LCC Highways latest observations, and the full objection as sent in following the usual consultation system of the Chair, Vice-Chairman and nearest Councillor (Councillor Rowell). After a lengthy discussion, during which the Chair expressed concern that the agreed planning policy was not being adhered to, and having received advice from the Clerk that the Parish Council was at liberty to consider further (relevant) information on any application, it was proposed and seconded that:

“Following the receipt of additional evidence, the Parish Council’s objection in regard to the

application for a drop kerb at Tagmoor, Main Road, Barkston, be withdrawn.”

On being put to the vote, the proposition was agreed.

2571. BURIAL GROUND

Nothing to report.

2572. PLAYING FIELD

Nothing to report.

2573. PICNIC AREA

The Council was advised that the work was complete. Arrangements had been made for the area surrounding the parking area to be tidied, and this would be carried out shortly. Warning signs had been purchased and would be installed in the near future. The wooden sign was in the process of being refurbished.

2574. CORRESPONDENCE

(a) LIVES – request for a donation, no further action.

(b) SKDC – Flood Prevention – offer to provide a stock of sand and sandbags to use in the event of flooding in the area. The Clerk reminded members that this offer had been accepted some years ago and in fact the sand and bags were stored in the bier shelter.

(c) LCC Budget proposals – agreed to re-circulate these to Members. Comments to be sent to the Clerk by 24th January for onwards transmission to LCC.

(d) PCC Budget – Councillor Wootten asked the Council to consider commenting on the budget for 2022/23, noting that these were required by Thursday. After discussion it was agreed that the Police were largely underfunded, and that the Council’s view was that considerably more finance was required to provide more officers on the ground.

2575. TREES

The Clerk reminded members that at the last meeting discussion had taken place on the ‘locations’ which had been mentioned, and he had emailed details to members. He also confirmed that the County Council had agreed to remove the proposed trees for The Drift, Syston. Members noted the report.

2576. LITTER/DOG WASTE BINS

Members were reminded that clarification of the SKDC view as reported at the last meeting had been requested. The Clerk read the reply in full, from which it was noted that the SKDC position had not changed, and that they would only empty the Playing Field bin and/or dog waste bin if another from the current list was removed. After a discussion, it was agreed to take no further action, and deal with the bins as at present.

2577. DEFIBRILLATORS

The Clerk reported that the School had been asked to provide an explanation as to why the defibrillator had been removed, but no reply had been received. Agreed to await a reply and consider at the next meeting.

2578. BARKSTON EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

It was agreed to re-appoint Councillor Card as one of the Parish Council representatives on the Foundation.

2579. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Financial update and budget 2022/23

The Council received and noted the financial updates at the present date, and also the likely financial position at the end of the current financial year, together with the budget report for 2022/23.

The Clerk then explained the accounts in detail with reference to the above circulated documents, and took members through the recommendations for expenditure in the report, as noted below, following which members made decisions as follows:

- (i) *Clerk's salary – the Clerk's current hourly rate was the NALC pay scale point 21 (higher). The NALC pay scale for 2021/22 and 2022/23 had yet to be published. An estimated increase of 3% on the 2020/21 salary had therefore been applied over the two year period, which would equate to a sum of £2,848 for the year 2022/23. It was agreed to calculate the Clerk's salary on that basis. (Note: eventual salary could be different, when the NALC scales are published, and would be back dated to April 2021).*
- (ii) *War Memorial – an annual increase of £100 would mean that £1042 would be available. Agreed.*
- (iii) *Playing Field – the annual increase for 2022/23 is 2021/22 plus 3% = £4042. Agreed.*
- (iv) *Picnic Area – a section 137 precept of £2000 to provide a reserve maintenance fund for the picnic area and scope for other initiatives. Agreed. (Note: if not required at end of year, can result in a reduction in the following year).*
- (v) *Burial Ground – a precept of £3000 to cover estimated excess expenditure, plus a small float. Agreed.*
- (vi) *Christmas decorations – Village Green – provisional allocation of £100 if the event is repeated. Agreed.*
- (vii) *Mowing/Burial Ground hedge – a quotation had been received for mowing in 2022/23 in the sum of £231 per cut, giving a total if there were 11 cuts per year of £2541. Additional cuts had been requested – Playing Field, one cut to reclaim grass on western edge of field - £8; Picnic Area, two cuts to tidy grass/bushes at edges of parking area - £50 total. The entrance grass at Thorold Gardens, if included, at £18 per cut, would give a total per cut of £249, a total per year of £2739. The Burial Ground hedge cutting was estimated at £400. After discussion, during which it was noted that the grass at Thorold Gardens had been cut for a long time by local residents/property owners, it was agreed to omit this from the schedule. This would leave a total of £2541 for the 11 cuts per year, and this was agreed. It was also agreed to include the cuts for the picnic area and Playing Field, at £25 and £8 per cut respectively.*
- (viii) *General Fund – a precept of £3258, to approximate 2021/22 levels. Agreed.*

The Clerk asked members to note that adoption of all the recommendations in the report would require a precept of £12,400, compared to last year's precept of £12,500, and would be the sixth reduction in a row. There were 249.2 band D properties, meaning that the Community Charge Band for 2022/23 would be £49.76, a reduction of 1.3%. It was noted and agreed that any expenditure required for Platinum Jubilee projects could be met from balances.

It was agreed to precept for £12,400 – General Fund - £3258; Section 137 - £2000; Burial Ground - £3000; Playing Field - £4042; War Memorial - £100 for the financial year 2022/23.

(b) Accounts paid and for payment

RESOLVED:-

That payment of the following accounts be approved and confirmed (all online):

£

<i>Simon Williams (Work on picnic area)</i>	<i>2840.00 Note</i>
<i>Rob Harris Groundworks (Work on picnic area)</i>	<i>3760.00 Note</i>
<i>Anglian Water Business (Supply 12.8.21 – 12.11.21)</i>	<i>12.04</i>
<i>Signs Express (Grantham) (Sign for picnic area)</i>	<i>36.00</i>

Note – these payments were over the Clerk’s £500 limit, and were authorised in the approved manner.

Dated

Signed

Chairman