

BARKSTON AND SYSTON PARISH COUNCIL

AT A MEETING of the BARKSTON AND SYSTON PARISH COUNCIL held in the Village Hall, Barkston, on Monday 13 November 2023 at 7.45 pm

PRESENT

Councillor Miss M.E. Nussey in the Chair

Councillors A.C. Card, P.C. Connor, A. Hine, S.A. Micklewright, R. Parke, C.I. Pell and A. Rowell.

Also present – District Councillor I. Stokes.

PUBLIC FORUM

One local resident said that she was concerned about the flooding on the A607, near The Stag, and considered it dangerous, as at its worst, it was halfway across the road. The Clerk gave brief details of action taken by himself and a number of local residents in reporting the flood. It was agreed that when the issue was considered during the following Parish Council meeting, as well referring it to LCC, the new County Councillor would be advised.

Another resident referred to flooding on Hough Road, north of The Leas, and enquired if it was permitted to dig 'grips' in the grass verge to drain water. Agreed that the Clerk would enquire from LCC.

Mike Ainsworth of the RAF Benevolent Fund attended the meeting, and spoke briefly about proposals for an Airborne Trail, relating the history of local involvement in the lead up to D Day in 1944. He was working with SKDC and was interested to hear if the Parish Council would be interested in being involved. There was the specific involvement of Syston Old Hall as well as other buildings and people in the area. An Information Board was being considered, and ideas were being sought for its location. It was agreed that the Clerk would liaise with the SKDC contact and report to the next meeting.

The Chair thanked the residents for attending, and for their comments. The points made in regard to the highway issues would be considered later in the meeting. The Public Forum was closed at 7.55 pm.

2718. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence, accepted for the purposes of an attendance, were received from Councillor Elnor.

2719. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023, a copy of which had been circulated to all members, were taken as read and approved as a correct record, subject to, in the fourth line of minute 2707 (h), the words 'had been assessed' being added after the words 'picnic site'.

2720. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none declared.

2721. ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

Members considered the update circulated by the Clerk on 7 November, with reference to issues raised at and since the last meeting in relation to the following:

(a). Blocked drains, Minnetts Hill/Church Street – the Clerk said that he had not received a reply following the request made at the last meeting for an indication as to when the promised works and drain clearance would take place. Reminder to be sent.

(b) Footpath opposite Village Hall, Barkston – a reminder had been recently sent but a response had not been received. Further reminder to be sent.

The Clerk advised the Council that he had met two Highways Officers on the 11th October, and they had agreed that works would be scheduled to cut more grips through the path further up the road towards Grantham, to aid drainage, and that the dyke could be used as a soakaway to collect water. It was also agreed that the ownership of the dyke and surrounding land would be clarified, and that action would be taken to clear the three drains leading towards the junction, one of which was solidly blocked.

(c) Speed limit reduction, Hough Road, Barkston – reported after the last meeting. Reply now received advising that the road did not meet the density of development and accident criteria as set out in the LCC policy, and therefore the request would not proceed further. Clerk to ask for details of the policy in regard to these issues, not just in relation to speed.

(d) Footpath to Picnic Area from village, along Station Road - no reply received yet in regard to the ownership of the land to the north of Station Road, Clerk to remind the County Council.

In regard to the alternative suggestion of a path on the south side of the road, this had been referred to the Area Surveyor, but no reply had been received. Clerk to send a reminder. The alternative suggestion of a footpath on the south side of the road had already been put to the County Council, but again, no reply had been received. It was further pointed out that the idea of this path would be to provide a safe area, possibly with lights, to ensure greater safety. Clerk to refer to the Area Surveyor.

(e) Station Road speed limit – noting that the County Council had advised that any further extension of the proposed new speed limit westwards would not meet policy requirements, Clerk to again asked for details of the policy and how the Council's request did not meet it.

(f) A607 crossings – still no reply received from LCC in regard to the request for a pedestrian or pelican crossing instead of the existing refuge, Clerk was asked to send a reminder.

(g) Footpath from The Drift to Main Street, Syston – path now cleared.

(h) Footpath outside 12 West Street, Barkston – reported to LCC via FixmyStreet as being dangerous owing to broken and misplaced brick pavers. Work planned to repair the path.

(i) Flooding, A607, Barkston – flooding had occurred in the usual place at the A607/Church Street junction, near The Stag. This had been reported by the Clerk and several local residents. Action was proposed (see para. (b) above) to clear drains. A 'Flood' sign had been provided.

(j) Speed restriction sign, A607, Barkston – this had been reported to FixmyStreet as being inoperable.

(k) Hough Road, Barkston – it was suggested that a survey of Hough Road was needed, as the grass verges were encroaching onto the paved surface, meaning that the road was narrowed. The issue of flooding reported during the Public Forum was noted, and the Clerk was asked to refer these issues to the Area Surveyor.

2722. PLANNING MATTERS

Comments/decisions:

i Decisions received:

British Telecommunications PLC intention to install fixed line broadband electronic communications apparatus at various sites as follows:

O/S Barkston Grange, Hough Road, Barkston x 2

O/S Quintrel, Hough Road, Barkston

No comments made by Parish Council – SKDC raised no objection

ii Comments made following consultation:

Variation of condition 15 (operating times) of S22/2320 (Section 73 application to vary conditions 2 and 5 of planning permission S22/0471), Land north of The Leas Hough Road, Barkston – objection

Conversion of existing agricultural buildings into 5 dwellinghouses, Agricultural Buildings, Syston Park – no objection

2723. BURIAL GROUND

The water meter had now been repaired. Recently there had been an incident of the mound on a recent interment sinking so much that the grave was now some 4/5 inches below ground level. The Funeral Director concerned had been contacted and had arranged for action to be taken.

2724. PLAYING FIELD

It was noted that the large depression at the Playing Field entrance had been repaired. The outstanding risk assessment reports of the Children's Play Area had been received and were on file.

2725. PICNIC AREA

The litter bin had disappeared. Clerk to report to SKDC and request a replacement.

2726. CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk reported on a request from LIVES for a donation. After discussion, it was agreed to make a donation of £100.

2727. SKDC LIFE SAVING TRAINING

The Chair reported that the life saving training had taken place on Friday, 10th November. Seven people had attended and received a thorough grounding in life saving techniques and the operation of defibrillators. She expressed thanks to SKDC for promoting the courses. Further sessions were planned for the spring.

2728. SOUTH KESTEVEN PROSPERITY FUND

The Clerk reminded members that consideration of ideas for funding from the South Kesteven Prosperity Fund had been deferred at the last meeting to enable the Council to consider any ideas for future action.

Councillor Micklewright explained several ideas, as follows:

1. Improving parking facilities at the end of West Street, to improve access for pedestrians using the footpaths and bridleways around the River Witham stepping stones, and other walking areas.
2. Investing in the Barkston and Syston Playing Fields by:
 - (a) Expanding the existing children’s play area to offer a wider range of play furniture attractive to a wider age group;
 - (b) Improving parking facilities for when the fields are in use for cricket and football; and
 - (c) Refurbishing the pavilion – new changing rooms, ablutions and kitchen, and extra storage for furniture and structural improvements.
3. Commemorating the Parishes’ support to 1st Parachute Division in WW2, some of whose soldiers were billeted in Barkston and Syston before flying to Arnhem. 2024 is the 80th anniversary of the battle.

A discussion ensued, during which the Clerk gave information on the operation of the Fund, with reference to dates for applications. It was agreed to circulate the suggestions above on the Council’s website, and on the WhatsApp and Facebook groups, inviting comments, prior to consideration at the next meeting.

2729. VILLAGE HALL

Councillor Micklewright said that he had met the Village Hall Treasurer/Vice-Chairman, and had been advised that the issues raised by the Council would be discussed at the next VH meeting on 29th November. Unfortunately, he would not be able to attend, and it was agreed that Councillor Connor would attend as an observer, to report back to the next meeting. It was agreed that there was a need to regularise some of the issues connected to the Village Hall. The appointment of a Parish Council representative on the VH Committee was also deferred to the next meeting.

2730. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Financial update

The Council received and noted the financial updates at the present date, and the Clerk explained these for the information of members.

It was suggested that, given the balances in the Parish Council’s accounts, that consideration be given to opening a deposit account. The Clerk suggested, and it was agreed, that he would take the last 3 years’ total expenditure, average the figures and discuss the result with the Council’s Internal Auditor, before arriving at an appropriate figure to consider for deposit. Chair and Vice-Chairman to be consulted before a final decision.

(b) Accounts paid and for payment

RESOLVED:-

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

M L Hall (Half year salary)	£1240.16
BDG Mowing Contractors (Mowing – August)	£476.00
SMV Contract Services (Herbicide Treatment at PF)	£306.00
Belvoir Windows (Replacement Doors at PF)	£3415.00
Miss M E Nussey (Donation – Ray Wootten)	£20.00

BDG Mowing Contractors (Mowing – September)	£476.00
Glasdon UK Limited (Commemorative benches)	£1647.34
Mark Stafford (Repairs to War Memorial)	£696.00

(ii) Accounts for payment:

That the following accounts now submitted be approved for payment:

BDG Mowing Contractors (Mowing – October and strim picnic area)	£502.00
JW Trading (Constructing plinths & installing benches)	£977.08

2731. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION BUT NOT DECISION

It was noted that the Coronation Commemorative benches had been installed in Barkston and Syston.

The Clerk reminded members that the next meeting, on 8th January 2024, would be the budget meeting. He asked that any proposals, costed, be with him by the end of this year.

The meeting closed at 9.03 pm.

Dated..... Signed.....
Chair