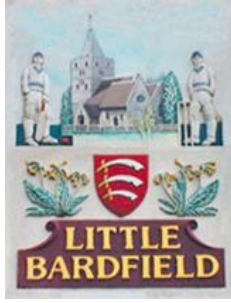


Little Bardfield Parish Council



www.littlebardfieldparish.org.uk

**Meeting of the Parish Council
Wednesday 2 November 2022 at 7pm**

MINUTES OF MEETING

It was noted that on 9 September 2022 Buckingham Palace had announced the demise of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II the previous day. The parish council was therefore unable to hold its meeting on 14 September as it fell within the period of National Mourning and proper notice could not be given. The succession of King Charles III was proclaimed on 10 September 2022.

Present: Cllr Andrew Davies (Chair), Cllr Terry Cutmore, Cllr Jan Warren and Cllr Juliet Loftus. Clerk: Kate Rixson

District Councillor George Smith and four other members of the public attended.

1. Chair's Welcome and Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence from Cllr Simpson were accepted. County Councillor Martin Foley was unable to attend due to family illness.

The Chair welcomed all present including UDC Cllr Smith, Will Slemmings and Matt Graham representing Little Bardfield Cricket Club, and two members of the public.

2. Declarations of Interest in matters on the agenda

None.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 June 2022

The minutes were signed as a true record by the Chairman Cllr Davies.

4. Public Forum

The chair proposed and it was agreed to discuss item 10 on the agenda (breach of consents next to the River Pant) at this point

Work next to River Pant

Alan Wipperman described waste-processing and dumping activities on a site owned by Pauls Farm beside the River Pant, which have continued for the past three and half years despite continued complaints to ECC, UDC and the EA. It had been acknowledged by the authorities that breaches of planning and other consents and statutes were occurring, but no enforcement action had been taken. Cllr Smith agreed to pursue the matter with Uttlesford District Council planning enforcement and asked Mr Wipperman to provide details in a letter to him.

5. Cricket Club plans

From Little Bardfield Cricket Club, the chairman Will Slemmings and captain Matt Graham set out the club's development plan (which is on the club's website <https://little-bardfield-village-cricket-club>). The club is taking an outward-looking approach and plans to offer more events and facilities to the local community as well as to develop the team. The council welcomed the plans and any increase in sports and activities in Little Bardfield, especially for young people. The council noted the need for funds and discussed assisting through the Community Fund. The club's capital projects include renovating the all-weather wicket. District Councillor Smith suggested also approaching

Uttlesford District Council for grant funding and he would be willing to assist with this. **Cllr Davies will discuss further with the club.**

6. Finance Report

- a) Cllr Cutmore reported that the Treasurer's bank account addresses were still incorrect despite the request to change these, but the clerk now had access and was on the mandate. The Community Fund account was now showing the correct address but access and the mandate had not been changed.

Cllr Cutmore will pursue with Lloyds.

From the most recent bank statements the balances were:

Treasurer's account £13,145.45 (31 October 2022); - Community Fund £8,455.89 (28 August 2022).

- b) Copies of the cashbooks for both accounts had been distributed to councillors. Transactions from 10 June 2022 (last meeting) to 31 October 2022 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

7. County Councillor and District Councillor Reports

7.1 Councillor Smith reported on district council matters as follows:

- a) **Styles road resurfacing plans:** . The district council owns the road and has started a consultation process with residents over resurfacing and the option to install lowered kerbs. Some residents will have some financial liability for the costs but the district council can offer payment plans.
- b) **Planning application UTT/22/2543 for The Bungalow,** to demolish and replace with one dwelling: this application, if the planning officer recommended refusal, would be decided by the planning committee as Cllr Smith has called it in. He would advise the clerk of the date of the meeting, as it would be helpful if a parish council member attended. As the ward councillor who had called in the application, he would be attending to support it.
- c) **Local Plan:** Cllr Smith reported that the process of consulting residents on the draft Local Plan had been postponed to June/July 2023, to allow more detailed analysis of sites for development, especially to the south and east of Saffron Walden. The lack of an approved Local Plan was making it difficult to, for example, make sure there was adequate infrastructure such as schools, for new housing developments.
- d) **District Council housing issues.** The district council has identified issues over its reporting of fire safety and asbestos in its housing stock. Having reported itself to the regulator and offered an action plan to put things right, Uttlesford is now waiting to hear if this is acceptable.

Cllr Smith's full report is on the Little Bardfield website.

7.2 Councillor Foley's report on county council matters was to follow and would be circulated and on the website.

8. Reports on:

- a) **Styles roadway** – see 7.1 a) above
- b) **Parish Councils/District Council planning liaison meeting 20 Sept 22**
The clerk had attended and provided a written report by email. Better communication, particularly about decisions on enforcing conditions attached to consents, had been promised. The planning department is short-staffed and currently recruiting.
- c) **Defibrillator at Rose Cottage**
Cllr Davies reported that the electrician reported it was not working and needed servicing. **Clerk to request.**
- d) **Tree plaque for Queen's jubilee**
This had been received. Planting a tree next to the village sign had previously been discussed, so that the plaque could be attached. A decision was needed on what species to plant.

9. Planning applications and update on planning matters

It was noted that there were no current applications which the council needed to consider. The clerk had circulated a list of undecided and approved applications.

10 See item 4 above

11 Almshouses roof repairs

Damage from a hailstorm last year meant that repairs costing more than £30,000 were needed. The trustees had reported that an insurance claim would make a very limited contribution to the cost. They wished to make an application to the Community Fund.

A donation of £6,000 to the Sarah Bernhard Trust 1774 towards the roof repairs was agreed unanimously.

Cllr Davies will inform the trustees.

12. Decisions to be taken:

a) Donations from Community Fund

It was noted that Little Bardfield parish residents used medical services at Finchingfield and Thaxted and that both GP practices raise funds for medical equipment and other items to benefit patients. It was agreed unanimously to make donations of £300 each to the Freshford GP Practice CREAMER Fund and to the Thaxted GP practice from the Community Fund. **Cllr Cutmore to arrange bank transfers**

It was agreed that the cricket club would be offered a grant of 50% of the cost of renovating the all-weather wicket, subject to providing quotes. **Cllr Davies would discuss this with the club.**

b) To approve draft budget and set precept

The draft budget was considered in detail and approved. The precept to be increased by £150 to £3,150 to ensure the cost of the elections in 2023 would be covered. It was noted that the increase was below inflation and would equate to approximately £1.50 per household for the year. The draft budget would be redrawn to include the precept increase and to separately show a £3000 contingency reserve.

c) To appoint the new clerk/responsible financial officer

It was resolved to appoint Kate Rixson as clerk and responsible financial officer.

d) Re-appoint trustees to The Sarah Bernard Trust 1774

It was resolved to re-appoint Mrs Judith Simpson and Mrs Mary Gardiner as trustees to The Sarah Bernard Trust 1774 registered charity.

e) To suspend Financial Regulation 6.20

It was agreed to suspend Regulation 6.20 from the council's approved Financial Regulations, for the time being (to be reviewed), to enable the clerk to use her own debit card for online purchases on the council's behalf.

f) To consider amendment to asset list

It was agreed that the clerk's Epson printer should be deleted from the asset list and its value written off. The printer had been noted to be not fit for purpose last year and was due for replacement. **Clerk to update the Asset Register**

g) New auditor

It was agreed that the clerk should approach and engage the new auditor she recommended, at a fee to be agreed but approximately £80. **Clerk to approach the new auditor**

h) Uttlesford District Council intention to adopt Part II of the Local Government (Misc Provs) Act 1976

The district council's letter dated 20 October 2022 giving notice of making a confirmatory resolution under s45 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 was tabled and its contents noted.

i) Approval of payments due

Payments were approved to:

C W Low & Son for verge/grass-cutting under current contract £345.60 per cut

Kate Rixson to reimburse payment for Microsoft 365 licence in Sept 22 £79.99

Cllr Cutmore for expenses for postage £27.87

j) Attendance at Parish and town council liaison meeting 7 November 2022

It was agreed that the clerk would attend on behalf of the council.

13. The dates of the next meetings

These were set for 2023 as: 8 February, 10 May (the annual council meeting and annual parish meeting), 13 September and 1 November. There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.30pm.