

# Bacton Parish Council

## MINUTES

of the meeting held at Bacton Village Hall, on

**Monday 24th April 2023 at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors: David Chambers (Chairman), Robert Black, Bernard Coxhead, Philip Jeffries, Vanessa Kingsley, Graham Macausland, Gail Wigglesworth and Paul Wigglesworth  
Maximilian Clay - Clerk to the Council; Suzy Lupin - Clerk Designate  
District Councillor Mellen, County Cllr Stringer and 23 members of the public.

**Apr 23-1. Apologies for Absence**

All Members were present and so there were no apologies.

**Apr 23-2. Declarations of Interest and Dispensation considerations**

Cllr Black declared a pecuniary interest in item 6.a.iv of the agenda.

**Apr 23-3. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- a. The Council resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on the 13th February 2023 were a true record and that the chairman be authorised to sign them as such.
- b. The Council resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on the 13th March 2023 were a true record and that the chairman be authorised to sign them as such.

**Apr 23-4. District & County Councillor Reports**

- a. District Cllr Mellen had submitted a written report which was received by the council. D Cllr Mellen added that the District Council is now in the pre-election period when significant political decisions are placed on hold. Polling cards and postal voting packs should have been received.
- b. County Cllr Stringer had submitted a written report which was received by the council. In addition he informed the meeting that when developers are required to make a contribution to educational facilities, monies are not always received and when monies are all received there is often a shortfall because of inflation. C Cllr Stringer reported that he should soon be notified of the date for completion of drop curbs in St Mary's Close.

Cllr Coxhead pointed out that the speed-reducing raised tables in Haughley make it necessary to slow down excessively and C Cllr Stringer responded that he thought the humps had not been built to the right specification and would check this.

**Apr 23-5. Public Forum**

A member of the public raised their concerns concerning Item 6.a.ii and made the following points:

- On one of the several large scale developments that are currently in the course of construction in Bacton, only a small proportion have been sold.
- The proposed site is outside the current settlement boundary and outside the boundary in the latest draft of the future plan.
- Concern regarding construction traffic and the safety of pedestrians, as the road is narrow with only one passing space.
- The Infrastructure Statement is not accurate: the doctors' surgery is already only available for a small amount of time each week and bus services have been exaggerated as they are neither frequent nor daily.
- The ecology survey states that the field is unsuitable for hedgehogs and nesting birds but video evidence shows there are hedgehogs active as well as pheasants nesting.

- The flood risk assessment in the application shows the four proposed houses situated further away from Corner Cottage than they actually, where there is less flooding.  
Four other members of the public stood to support the first speaker and raised the additional points:
  - The ecology report states that the ditch on the side of the road to the proposed site is a dry ditch but the report was written in a drought year (July 2022) and, in fact, the ditch is an active water course that feeds ponds.
  - Evidence can be provided to show that owls and other wildlife can be found in the field.
  - Concern that if this application was approved it would set a precedent for the rest of the field.
  - Concern for loss of hedgerows and habitat.
- District Cllr Mellen stated that although developments outside the current settlement boundary have been approved, but the difference now is that the District Council has a ten year land supply. There are access problems with this proposal and Government policy is moving towards there being pedestrian and cycle access directly to and from new houses, rather than creating a reliance on cars.

**Apr 23-6.**

**a. Consideration of Planning Application Consultations**

**i. DC/23/00793 - Broadway House Broad Road, Bacton**

*Construction of timber framed three bay cart lodge*

After discussion, the Council resolved to offer no objection.

**ii. DC/23/01189 - Land on the West of Turkeyhall Lane, Bacton**

*Outline Planning Permission (Access points to be considered, Appearance, Layouts, Landscaping and Scale to be reserved) Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) - Erection of 4 No self-build dwellings.*

In discussion Councillors were supportive of most of the statements made by residents and members of the public were encouraged to raise their views on the planning portal.

Concerns were expressed about the amount of traffic in Turkeyhall Lane and Clay Lane. In addition it was pointed out that the access point to proposed house 4 is situated on the one passing place on this single track lane and the road is not wide enough for pedestrians.

Additional points included that the location and site maps were inaccurate and showed the wrong location, the access as designed was unsuitable and that the development would have a detrimental effect of the open countryside. The Council resolved to object to the application for all the reasons listed above.

**iii. DC/23/01218 Land Adjacent to I Cow Green, Bacton**

*Approval of Reserved Matters following grant of Outline Permission (DC/21/06686) Submission of details for Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale.*

In discussion, it was noted that the height and mass of the proposal was out of proportion with neighbouring properties that although the proposal could be an attractive building in itself, its style was also out of character with the adjacent cottages. It was also agreed that the proposed house was too large for the plot and represented overdevelopment. The Council therefore resolved to object to the proposal.

*Councillor Black left the meeting*

**iv. DC/23/01506 - Red House Farm, Rectory Road, Bacton**

*Change of use of land from agricultural to use for the storage of containers portable cabins and similar items, and equipment used for the maintenance and conversion of such items, construction of an earth bund and landscaping.*

In discussion, points about traffic flows and noise on site, as well as times of operation were raised. The council resolved to offer no objection to the application but to request that any grant of permission should include a condition as to hours of operation in line so that these would be confined to the hours already set for other areas of the site.

*Councillor Black re-joined the meeting*

**b. Updates on Planning Applications Considered at Previous Meetings**

There were no updates.

**Apr 23-7. Footbridge and Path on Church Road**

The Clerk updated the meeting on the progress of discussions with the Rector and PCC of St Mary's regarding the footbridge and path. As had been explained in previous meetings, the Council is forbidden by law from contributing to the maintenance or repair of Church property. The Clerk informed the meeting that the reasons for this had been explained to the Rector and PCC, along with ways in which it could be made possible for the Council to take responsibility for the work by taking a licence or lease over the footbridge and path, to secure its ongoing availability to the public. Unfortunately the Rector and PCC had been unwilling to engage meaningfully in negotiations but had decided that they would carry out repairs to the footbridge themselves. This brings to an end the Council's involvement in this matter.

In discussion members pointed out that the repairs to the bridge were important for safety, especially because of the many children who use this route as their journey to the primary school, and that there is a civic responsibility for the work to be undertaken as soon as possible. It was resolved to write to the PCC to express willingness to support them in the exercise of this civic responsibility, in anyway legally possible.

**Apr 23-8. Finance**

**a. Receipts and Payments** - The schedule of receipts and payments was received and it was resolved to approve the payments.

**Apr 23-9. Grant Request**

Bacton football club sought grant funding in support of their current irrigation project to help ensure that the pitches can be maintained in the best possible condition. The Council had previously agreed to underwrite a grant application to another source to the extent of £5,000 but this had not been needed and the Council subsequently reallocated the funds. In discussion it was noted that the club was a real asset to the community and did a lot for the young people of the village and so it was resolved to grant £1,000 - this includes the £300 granted at the last meeting.

**Apr 23-10. Beacon Green Public Open Space - Acceptance of Transfer**

It was noted that the land comes with an open space maintenance contribution of £22,900 per year, for ten years. After discussion it was resolved to adopt the land as shown in Taylor Wimpey's plan, subject to legal advice, which will now be obtained.

**Apr 23-11. Working Groups Reports**

**a. Events** - Cllr Jeffries advised of the costings for the Coronation events were totalling £3,015.03, with a contribution of £250 from Taylor Wimpey. Thanks were given to Cllr Coxhead for organising the supply of coronation mugs which it was agreed to distribute at the tea party to each family that attends. It was agreed that more promotional material and online publicity would be produced. A resident has kindly agreed to be the first-aider for the day. It was agreed to acknowledge the contributions of all the organisation that were contributing to the day.

**b. Village Greens** - The main grass cutting contract was awarded to Top Garden for a further year at a maximum cost of £2,175 plus VAT. The price of the contract had not been increased for over three years and represented an 11% increase. The contract will be put out to tender for the 2024 season. The cutting of Cow Green by Country Cottages 12 times per year at a cost of £360 plus VAT was also agreed and the wild flower area will be left uncut.

The Council was informed that there was a problem with the gully being blocked at Cow Green under the road. Responsibility for having this dealt with is unclear and so the exact position of the blockage will be identified and the appropriate action (either notifying Highways or dealing with the problem) will be taken.

The fish had been put back into Shop Green Pond.

The Council gave a vote of thanks to John Kingsley for the great deal of voluntary work done by him around the village to help maintain and improve its appearance.

- c. Recreation and Play Area** - The Clerk reported that the order for the new see-saw and roundabout had been placed and it is hoped that installation will take place by the end of May. Cllr Macausland proposed replacing the existing goalposts with five-a-side goal posts which would potentially encourage more young people to use the facility and this was supported by the council. It was resolved that quotations and specifications would be provided for discussion and final decision at the next meeting.

**d. The Work of the Village Warden**

The Warden has been busy with the normal round of maintenance tasks. He has a sweet chestnut tree and the best site for planting it was discussed. It was resolved to plant the tree at St Mary's playing field which will be able to accommodate its eventual size.

**Apr 23-12. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agendas**

Cllr Jeffries reported that he had been asked by a member of the public about the potential installation of electric vehicle charging points in the village and possibilities will be researched and discussed at a future meeting.

**RESERVED BUSINESS**

**Apr 23-13. Staff Matters**

**Appointment of Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer**

It was resolved by the council:

- i. To appoint Suzanne Lupin as Clerk to Bacton Parish Council.
- ii. To authorise the Chairman to sign the contract of employment.
- iii. To approve expenditure for the new Clerk's training and development at an initial cost of approximately £250, and up to £1500 for exceptional office set-up costs (including an iPad, £119 for the purchase of the latest edition of the *Arnold-Baker, Local Council Administration* and £50 for a subscription to the Society of Local Council Clerks.
- iv. It was also resolved to add Mrs Lupin's salary to the Schedule of Payments.

**Payment of the Village Warden's Pay Arrangements**

It was resolved to put the Village Warden's monthly pay on a standing order.

**The meeting closed at 9.05 pm**

Signed as a true record by authority of the Council

Chairman

Date