

# East and West Barkwith Parish Council

Report on the E-meeting held with the notional date of 24th September, 2020

Contributing: Mr. A. Platt, Mr. J. Stamp, Mr. C. Wilson, Mr. D. Ward, Mr. N. Battell,  
Mrs. T. Brady, Mr. C. Fincham and Mr. N. Gibson.

It had been agreed at the July meeting that, due to the current Coronavirus situation, the council's business will continue to be conducted by e-mails, with a notional date for the confirmation of the details.

1061 Cllr. Breckons is currently on approved leave of absence but being kept informed.

1062 The Report of the meeting of 23rd July, 2020 was accepted for formal approval at the next physical meeting.

1063 There were no matters arising for immediate attention.

## 1064. **Correspondence.**

Newsletters and other general communications have been forwarded on arrival. There have been no comments on these.

Also:-

Lincolnshire Association of Local Councils has sent a paper copy of their Annual Report. This was followed by an e-mailed PDF which was forwarded to all councillors.

East Lindsey has sent an up-date to the Electoral Register showing 4 new creations.

## 1065. **Planning.**

a) Applications:-

There were no new applications on this occasion.

b) Decisions:-

Ref. - S/202/00865/20 - Glebe Farm, Louth Road, West Barkwith, LN8 5LN

For - Erection of building for 4 stables and a tack room and construction of a menage.

This has been granted.

Ref. - S/044/00813/20 - The Walled Garden, Benniworth Road, Panton, LN8 5LQ

For - Change of use, conversion and alterations of existing outbuildings to form a holiday let and siting of a shepherd's hut.

This has been granted.

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## 1066. Reports

a) Village Hall - Having studied all the recommendations, the necessary preparations had been put in place for the hall to re-open as from the beginning of October, and the regular users have been consulting their members regarding their own arrangements.

However, the Government announcement of 8th September has banned social gatherings of more than 6 people as from 14th September, for the immediate future. Samantha Smith had been in touch to say that Community Lincs was awaiting further information as to the implications for village halls and will pass this on as soon as possible. A later communication gave confirmation that village halls could still allow gatherings of up to 30 but that those attending must for and remain in groups of no more than 6 and not socialise with anyone outside that group, even if they should see someone else they knew. The Gardeners have not yet notified a decision but all other regular users have decided to wait for restrictions to ease again before resuming their meetings.

The glazing panel from the broken window was delivered to Bridgewater Glass for replacement and the new one has arrived for installation shortly.

b) Neighbourhood Watch - Residents are advised to check the security of their outbuildings as there has recently been a spate of local thefts from sheds, including from Benniworth, Panton and West Barkwith.

c) Play Area - The Play Area has now re-opened, subject to the additional conditions necessary at present and a notice will be placed on the web-site. The arrangements made are working well so far. The seats on the main swings have been replaced and the annual RoSPA inspection has been carried out with only a few small matters requiring attention at this stage. The slide steps can be repainted for now, but the whole slide will need replacing soon and funding is being sought for this and other improvements, some of which have been suggested by the children using it.

Cllr. Ward received a number of offers of help for the area and passed these to Cllr. Wilson so that a new inspection rota, to include any additional requirements, could be prepared and distributed. There has been an electronic meeting to up-date committee members on all the needs and a report on this was presented. Expenditure on the smaller items is likely to be within £150 and this was approved so that orders can be placed and paid on receipt of invoice.

d) Countryside Committee - The Parish Field is looking good and is being well-used by walkers from near and far. Cllr. Wilson has drawn up a list of tasks which will need to be completed during the winter months and a copy was circulated. Costs are likely to be within £150 and these were approved so that orders can be placed and paid on receipt of invoice.

More Owl and Bat boxes will be made as soon as the materials can be obtained, using the remaining grant funds which amount to £328. These will be placed around the field and other sites in the Parish.

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Cllr. Stamp has offered the services of his company to remove the diseased oak tree from the village green. This was agreed and the task is likely to be completed in late October. It is hoped that the main part of the trunk can be used to manufacture a Village Bench for the Church Path and a Picnic Bench for the Play Area, while a couple of branches could make a Walking Pole for the Play Area, as requested by some of the younger children who use it.

Action has been taken by Committee members and some volunteers to remove a patch of Himalayan Balsam weed from a garden (with the permission of the owner) to prevent it spreading as it is registered in the top ten of the Department of Agriculture's list of noxious weeds. The location will be monitored to ensure that it remains free of the weed.

e) Dog Watch - There is not a great deal to report, apart from a complaint about people not picking up after their dogs along Willingham Road. This has been referred to East Lindsey with a request for more notices. The situation will be monitored.

f) History Group - Members of the group are continuing to work hard, researching their projects and relaying information to the group electronically. Meetings of the group will resume when conditions permit.

Cllr. Wilson wished to express his thanks to everyone who helped with the VJ Day event. It had to be put together quickly as there was no National Timetable, so thanks are due to all who joined in and helped to make it a day to remember, in particular to Nick Gibson, who helped to present the memorial in a fitting manner to reflect the efforts made by Harry Bradley, from the village, who was lost fighting the Japanese, and by all the many others who did their bit for us.

Thanks are also due to Mr. Copeland, for playing the Last Post, followed by the two minute's silence. It gave so many people who were passing the opportunity to stop and pay tribute to their fallen in their own way. The roadside sign had been put out, inviting drivers to pip their horns; sometimes it got very loud.

The signs on the main notice board are being reviewed as some of the information on them now needs up-dating.

## 1067. Amenities.

a) War Memorial - Mr. Andrews is to be contacted to give an up-to-date valuation of the War Memorial in order to satisfy the concerns of the insurance company prior to the next renewal.

The winter pansies are growing on well and should be ready for planting out in good time. There have been many comments on how well the area has been kept over the year.

This year's Remembrance Sunday Service will be subject to whatever restrictions remain in place due to the Covid 19 situation. The Scouts have already reported that their participation will have to be limited in accordance with their own guidelines. One suggestion has been to close off a larger section of the road to allow more room for maintaining social distancing, to be supervised by marshalls. A notice will be placed, nearer the time, to inform residents as to what is happening.

In the meantime, the proposal is to obtain the two wreaths as usual and this was agreed.

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b) Web-site - The Web-site Accessibility Regulations have been studied and, thanks to the sterling work of Mr T. Bollan, supported by Cllr. Battell, the Council pages are now fully compliant and the required Accessibility Statement has been posted on the site.

This also gives the clerk's contact details should any resident need further help.

The other pages, such as the History Group, are not subject to the requirements, at least for the time being. However, the GoDaddy platform itself does support those aims so most of the text is already accessible to screen-reading and similar technology. It might be wise to review the way new content, particularly pictorial material, is presented to improve accessibility and at some later date, it may be possible to review the older content. Any requests for help will be dealt with and the site will continue to be monitored in case of further issues with accessibility.

GoDaddy has sent a reminder that the subscription to the 'Unlimited Business E-mail' is due for renewal in early November. This is an integral part of the web-site 'contact us' facility as well as providing e-mail addresses for managing it. The cost is approximately £130 plus VAT for 1 year and the payment was approved.

c) Quantum Fibre - Following the last meeting, although there was some support for publicising the opportunity, there were still reservations as to how this could be done in the present climate. As a result of the suggestions made, the following measures seem most appropriate:-

A notice on the web-site showing the company's proposal and Neil's summary, with the council's e-mail address and clerk's telephone number for residents to request further information and to register an interest.

Similar information in poster form, possibly with additional information on the main council notice board, for the benefit of those with limited or no internet access.

A basic notice on other boards, directing readers to the main board or the web-site.

A 'flyer' to be inserted in the next available issue of 'Community Spirit'.

Cllr. Breckons has also said she might be able to put this on the village 'Facebook' page. If there is sufficient public interest forthcoming, Quantum can be notified to take up the project. If not, the whole matter can be allowed to drop. It was agreed that all possible measures should be taken to enable residents to register an interest, and the results reported to the Quantum Fibre representative for a decision on whether there was enough support for the project.

d) Crossroads - Although there were members in favour of registering the Crossroads as a community asset, the sale board has now been displayed. Bateman's brewery, the current owners, have confirmed that it is offered for sale as a public house. An enquiry at East Lindsey showed that, although it is still possible to register the property, doing so would result in the immediate need to think about putting in a bid to purchase it and mounting a campaign to raise the necessary funds both for the purchase and for any preparations needed for its re-opening.

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These points were relayed to the councillors resulting in the general view that there would be insufficient financial support from the village for any campaign to be successful and, therefore little point in completing the registration. Cllr. Wilson reported that, in any case, a covenant had been placed on the deeds of the Crossroads when it was sold by the original estate owner, that it should always remain a public house. It was pointed out that this covenant might apply only to the oldest section of the building, the part nearest the corner, which means that this part could be left in isolation while the rest of the site is redeveloped.

The fact remains that the future of the premises as a pub lie in the possibility of a purchaser with the funds and the enthusiasm to refurbish and attempt to run it as such in spite of its recent financial history. Otherwise the pub is unlikely to re-open and the site may be sold for redevelopment. Sad as it is, this must be accepted. It was agreed that no further action could be taken at this stage.

## 1068. Highways.

Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership have inspected the lamp-posts for the speed sign and confirmed their suitability. Contact with Unipart Dorman revealed a price increase, over the original estimate, of some £350 for the main unit, bringing it to £2,345, plus the expected £57 for each of the two extra brackets. VAT will be added but can be reclaimed in the usual way.

These details were forwarded to the councillors who agreed to proceed with the purchase in spite of the increase, as the traffic is as busy as ever and is presenting the same speeding issues as before. Cllr. Ward confirmed that many residents have told him of their concerns regarding the speed of the traffic through the village.

The proforma invoice has just been received and the payment is being processed.

The section of road outside the village hall has been repaired and the lump of concrete on the road at the junction with Torrington Lane has also been removed.

There has been a further complaint about the persistent flooding on the footpath of Panton Road whenever the rain is heavy. There may be an issue in the adjacent field but, in the past, neither Highways, nor Anglian Water have found a cause which they could rectify. Cllr. Wilson offered to make further enquiries.

## 1069. Finance.

a) Receipts - Mr. & Mrs. Gaunt -	Donation for Play Area	£80.00
Lincs County Council -	for Grass-cutting	£929.99

b) Bills - The following items had been approved for payment on receipt of invoice:-

Payee - For	Cheque no.	Net	VAT	Total
Cllr C. Wilson - Village Hall Door Signs	000864	£40.98	£8.20	£49.18
Hags-Smp - Swing Seats	000865	£109.58	£21.91	£131.49
Viking Direct - Stationery	000866	£22.45	£4.49	£26.94
Viking Direct - Inks	000867	£90.48	£18.10	£108.58
Play Safety - RoSPA Inspection	000868	£72.00	£14.40	£86.40
Mark Woodcock - Grass-cutting	000869	£154.00	-	£154.00

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Signed by the Chairman .....

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Approved by the meeting:-

	Cheque no.	Net	VAT	Total
Unipart Dorman - Speed Camera	000870	£2,459.00	£491.80	£2950.80
HMRC - PAYE for clerk	000871	£231.45	-	£231.45
Mrs. B. Theairs - Clerk's salary	000872	£860.55	-	£860.55
Mrs. B. Theairs - Clerk's Expenses	000873	£101.50	-	£101.50
Royal British Legion - Wreaths	000874	£50.00	-	£50.00
GoDaddy - Web-site e-mails	CARD	£119.88	£23.98	£143.86

Further payments - identified or expected:-

On-going grass-cutting costs

Owl and Bat box materials - from grant - up to £328

Play Area maintenance tasks - up to £150

Parish Field maintenance tasks - up to £150

The specific payments were approved and it was agreed that these and the further on-going payments should continue to be made at the due date or on receipt of invoice, in all cases using the CARD if there was no alternative.

c) Annual Return - This year's official period for public inspection of the accounts expired on 8th August, with no requests to view the books, so the formalities for 2019/20 are now complete.

d) Mid-year Audit - This month's entries will complete the transactions for the first half of the year and it was agreed that the accounts will then be prepared for the Mid-Year audit by Sophy Warren.

## 1070. Any Other Business.

Cllr. Brady would like to remind the council to look again at the increasingly pressing need for a replacement for the tractor-mower as, unless it is very carefully handled, it repeatedly throws off and 'chews' the belt.

One suggestion has been to approach local dealers, such as Green Stripe and Paul Dales, who might be able to offer a good second-hand machine when customers start trading in to buy newer machines. In the meantime, Cllr. Wilson is looking into the funding situation.

There was no further business.

Signed by the Chairman .....