



# BADGER FARM PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the monthly meeting of the Parish Council held on 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2022 at 7.30 p.m. in Badger Farm Community Centre – room to be advised**

Members Present: Cllr John Godbold – Chairman,  
Cllr. Barlass, Cllr. Cochrane, Cllr. Dolby, Cllr. Jarvis, Cllr. Skinner

In attendance: Christine Howe – Clerk/R.F.O.

Invited: Cllrs. Warwick, Laming, Williams

***Public question time - the public are invited to speak for 3 mins each on a topic relevant to this parish or an item on the agenda – total time allowed for the public session is 15 mins.***

2 members of the public were present and outlined their complaint. The Chairman thanked them for attending and asked Cllrs. William and Laming to deal with it.

**143/22 To open the meeting**

The Chairman welcomed everyone and opened the meeting.

**144/22 To accept apologies for absence from the Parish Councillors**

Cllr. McColl – Unwell.

**145/22 To receive Declarations of Interests in respect of matters contained in this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011**

None received.

**146/22 Minutes – To approve and adopt the minutes of the meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2022**

**Resolved:** The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2022 were adopted and signed by the Chairman as a true record of the meeting.

**147/22 To receive the Chairman's report**

The Chairman received a letter from an Elder Close resident about a neighbour who owns and parks their horsebox in the close along with their 3 other vehicles which effectively takes up 5/6 car parking spaces leaving no space for her husband to park their car when he returns home from work. Whilst the Chairman acknowledges the difficulty, if the vehicles are taxed and insured, they are legally allowed to park on a highway with no restrictions and there is nothing the parish council can do to prevent it but the Chairman will visit Elder Close to see if there is anything else which might lead to a resolution.

Chairman asked the Clerk for news on the memorial bench for Queen Elizabeth II . Clerk asked Councillors for their decision on the wording, they decided to mark it with Her Majesty's date of birth to date of death. Clerk to inform the craftsman and arrange for a proposed delivery date. The Chairman gave Council an update on the progress of May Tree Garages, most of the May Tree Close residents who owned their garages had paid their contribution towards the remedial works.

The Clerk requested Cllr. Laming not to volunteer her for any involvement with a project which could place her or the Council in a compromising position and that it would have been correct and courteous of Cllr. Laming to speak to the Clerk beforehand. The Chairman confirmed he informed the residents at the May Tree Garages mtg. that the P.C. would not do any administration.

**148/22 To receive the report from H.C.C. Member Cllr. Jan Warwick**

The report was circulated prior to the meeting. (Available on website)  
Cllr. Warwick was not in attendance.

**149/22 To receive the report from W.C.C. Members Cllrs. Warwick, Williams and Laming**

The report was circulated prior to the meeting. (Available on website) Cllr. Williams explained in more detail the contents of her monthly report.

**150/22 Finance**

**1. To approve the payments for running the Parish Council during July, August, September and October.**

**Resolved:** Council approved the payments for July, August, September and October.

**2. To agree the October bank statement and bank reconciliation**

The Chairman verified the October bank statement and the bank reconciliation agreed at £129,117.37

**3. To approve the budget for 2023/24**

**Decision deferred** awaiting information on maintaining bus shelters from Cllr. Brian Laming.

**4. To set the Precept for 2023/24**

**Decision deferred** awaiting information on maintaining bus shelters from Cllr. Brian Laming.

**5. To discuss whether B.F.P.C. to opt out of the Government appointed External Audit Scheme**

Council discussed the merit of opting out of the scheme. The projected cost of the Government appointed auditor is set at £45.00 less than last year. Council decided there was no benefit to be gained by opting out of the scheme.

**Resolved:** B.F.P.C. resolved to remain with the Government's recommended scheme.

**6. To discuss awarding a grant to Citizens' Advice Bureau**

C.A.B. have requested a grant of £350.00 for the coming year. 65 residents received advice last year and, with the distinct possibility of an extremely difficult economic situation for the coming year, Council voted unanimously in favour of awarding the full amount requested.

**Resolved:** To award a grant of £350.00 to the CAB. Clerk to action.

**7. Clerk's salary**

We have now received (Published 2 November 2022) advice that the pay increase for this year has been agreed.

The pay offer was for a flat rate payment of £1,925 on each scale point with effect from 1/4/22. In addition, the National Joint Council (NJC) has agreed that **from 1 April 2023**, all employees covered by this National Agreement, regardless of their current leave entitlement or length of service, will receive a permanent increase of one day (pro rata for part-timers) to their annual leave entitlement. This may require, in some organisations, that a local agreement has to be reached in order for the extra day to be applied. The NJC's full expectation is that the additional day's leave will be applied for all NJC staff, regardless of existing local arrangements.

The National Agreement Green book will, with effect from 1 April 2023, be amended to read as follows:

**7.2 Annual Leave**

With effect from 1 April 2023, the minimum paid annual leave entitlement is twenty-three days with a further three days after five years of service.

Council unanimously agreed to award the increase and the extra day's leave.

**Resolved:** Clerk to be awarded the nationally agreed pay increase and an extra day's leave to be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2022. Clerk's contract to be amended accordingly.

### **151/22 To receive the Clerk's report**

1. I had intended to transfer £80,000 from the Parish Council's Unity Trust Bank account into Chase Bank. This is a savings account which would have accrued 2.1 % interest. On £80,000 we would have earned approximately £1,600 p.a.  
However, this is not a 'community' account so instead, I have started the process of opening a Unity Trust savings account which only gives 0.95 % int.
2. I attended the annual S.L.C.C. conference which took place from Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November, 2022 to Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2022. The 4 main topics threaded throughout the conference were:
  - i. The new Prime Minister and possible repercussions for the 1<sup>st</sup> Tier of Government.  
It was thought that district and county councils would have their budgets cut and thus require them to cut the services they provide to parishes and town councils. We were advised to increase the precept sufficiently so we could provide the services which could be cut from County and District level, e.g. grass cutting.
  - ii. The environment was also high on the list of priorities, but the general consensus of opinion was not something which smaller Parish Councils like Badger Farm could influence to a large degree. However, we were encouraged to persuade parishioners how each person doing just one thing could have a huge positive impact on climate change.
  - iii. The civility and respect project is moving slowly towards a resolution. The aim is to get legislation in place to be able to penalise Councillors whose behaviour is disrespectful, intimidatory or bullying towards another member of the Council or towards staff.
  - iv. The chief officer of N.A.L.C. attended the S.L.C.C. conference. He was a Councillor and his wife is a parish Clerk so he is uniquely positioned to bring a greater level of understanding. He is very keen to encourage both sides to work closer together.
3. BDO LLP (Southampton), have been awarded the external audit contract from 2022/23 – 2026/7. Their offices are in Ocean Village, Southampton.

### **152/22 To receive reports from BFPC Members**

N.T.R.

### **153/22 To discuss planning applications received from WCC**

None received.

Cllr. Jarvis requested the Clerk automatically request extensions for planning applications which require P.C. comments before the next full council.

### **154/22 Estate Management**

Whilst there nothing in particular to report, the whole Council expressed their displeasure at the poor standard of grass cutting on the estate. B.F.P.C. have requested numerous times that the grass be cut in accordance with the W.C.C. schedule, every reply from W.C.C. affirmed it would be cut properly but the contractors are still not adhering to the terms of the contract between them and W.C.C. The lack of tree care is also of great concern to B.F. Councillors as W.C.C. ignore any requests to look after them properly. This lack of tree maintenance could lead to somebody being seriously injured or possibly killed should one fall in the high winds we are now experiencing which could lead to W.C.C. being prosecuted.

### **155/22 Highways**

Nothing to report.

### **156/22 Playgrounds**

AVA have not yet re-set the railings. Clerk to ascertain whether AVA intend to re-set them in the near future.

### **157/22 To discuss holding a garden competition starting next year**

Cllr. Barlass is researching the feasibility of holding a best garden competition. Councillors thought a 'Summer' garden in July was the best time to determine the winner.

**158/22 To discuss I.T. Management**

Clerk attended the S.L.C.C. conference and obtained the contact information for two companies which other parishes/towns use and will pass on the details to Council members.

**159/22 To discuss amended terms for the photographic competition for 2023**

Deferred until the December meeting as dates are to be confirmed.

**160/22 Items for inclusion on the December Agenda**

1. To approve the Budget for 2023/24
2. To set the precept for 2023/24
3. To discuss the terms and conditions for the Best Summer Garden competition.
4. To discuss I.T. management.
5. To discuss the terms and conditions for the photographic competition.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked all present and closed the meeting at 9.10 p.m.

*Date of next meeting: 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2022 to be held in Badger Farm Community Centre at 7.30 p.m.*

***As the Community Centre requires the door to remain locked at all times, please ring the bell for access.***