

BARWICK in ELMET and SCHOLES PARISH

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held in the John Rylie Centre, Barwick in Elmet on Monday 15th May 2023 at 7pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Claire Hassell (*Chair*) and twenty other electors (including Parish Councillors and the Clerk).

1 TO AGREE SOMEONE TO TAKE THE MINUTES.

It was agreed that the Clerk of the Parish Council (PC) take the minutes.

2. NOTICE CONVENING THE MEETING

It was confirmed that, in accordance with statute, the notice convening the meeting has been duly published on the Parish Council's notice board and on the website.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Paul Birdsall.

4 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting, held on Monday 9th May 2022 be signed as a correct record.

5 CHAIR'S REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Chair gave her annual report as follows;

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO BARWICK IN ELMET AND SCHOLES PARISH COUNCIL 15th MAY 2023

The year 2022-2023 has been filled with a number of Royal Events. Firstly the JUBILEE celebrating 70years on the THRONE by QUEEN ELEZABETH II. The Parish Council voted to support the event by purchasing decorative bunting and a water bottle for all infant/junior school age children in the Parish.

This coincided with a Maypole Raising Year in Barwick. In line with tradition the Maypole was brought down, rested in the entrance track to Hall Tower and fully restored. It was then raised on Jubilee Day and a local man James Brown climbed to the top to 'Spin the Fox'. Barwick School had decided not to undertake teaching Maypole Dancing so it was taken under the wing of the Maypole Committee and some dedicated volunteers. The dancing was impressive round the Maypoles erected on Hall Tower, the school children had had the opportunity to vote for the May Queen Felicity Burn-Chandler and she was duly crowned.

Hundreds of people had lined the route from Barwick Village Hall to Hall Tower and all crowded into the field, many sitting on the Motte. The sun shone, refreshments were available and everyone had a great day. A free bus was provided to transport residents of Scholes to and from Barwick. The day ended with the lighting of a beacon on top of the Motte to join in with beacons all over the Country.

Scholes was duly decorated with bunting, a fun day arranged for Scholes Lodge Farm Field which was well attended and had lots of activities for the young. The Scouts put on a bar-b-que and the Jubilee was well and truly celebrated.

The death of Queen Elizabeth was noted with sadness and people looked towards the Coronation of King Charles III. The Parish Council decided it did not want to provide any celebration or memorabilia so it was left to villages and residents to organize their own activities. Scholes put up bunting. In Barwick many houses put up their own decorations and the parade of shops produced superb dressed windows celebrating the event. All Saints joined churches throughout the country with bell ringing as requested by the King. At St Philips, The Deputy Lieutenant Stan Hardy attended to read The Proclamation and also a message from King Charles. The church was full, all the scouting groups, the Happy Together Choir, representatives from the Methodists – all joining in an excellent service. This was followed by the planting of the Coronation Tree and a party atmosphere in the grounds of St Philips with lots of stalls. And the sun shone.

On a more serious note, The Muga Pitch is now well used and several attempts have been made to improve the cricket field in Scholes. Discussions have been held regarding a further playground in Scholes.

The ELOR is now completed and open, it is well used and speeds access to the M1. At last improvements have been made to the Verity Strip in Barwick providing access to Barwick Cricket Club and the Allotments.

Barwick Methodist Church is raising funds for essential work to the fabric of the building. Whilst at long last a pedestrian crossing is to be installed near Scholes School.

Thanks need to go to our In Bloom Groups for the work they do keeping the villages floriferous. Also to all the organisations, Village Halls, Community Groups providing activities, Scouting for all ages, Sports Clubs. Including our churches saving our souls, we need you all.

Finally, of concern is the composition of the Parish Council. Scholes has its full complement of 6 Councillors. Regrettably there are only 2 Councillors representing Barwick. Some years ago an issue of becoming separate Parishes was raised by a Scholes resident. After a wide consultation this did not proceed but perhaps the issue should be revisited. There appears to be considerable difference between the aims and objectives of our villages and this has been noted by Leeds and our Ward Councillors have concerns. I intend asking the Parish Council to survey again all residents on this issue. If you would like to be involved in the process please advise Keith Langley, the Parish Clerk who will call a meeting of Barwick residents in due course.

6 STATEMENT OF PARISH COUNCIL ACCOUNTS

The Clerk of the PC circulated a summary of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 with a comparison with expenditure and income for the year ended 31 March 2022. This showed an overall income of £116,172.67 and expenditure of £92,963.50. He went through the report and, where there were noticeable differences between the 2022/23 and the 2021/22 figures, explained why. The biggest items of expenditure was the drainage on Scholes football pitch.

7 PRECEPT

The Precept for the year 2023-24 had been set at £43,388 compared to £39,444 in 2022-23. This was a 10% increase on the previous year being the consumer price index inflation rate at the time the decision was taken. A band D property would therefore see an increase of £1.93 a year to £21.67. A resident asked what the breakdown was in number of properties between the two villages.

8 REPORT on the ANCIENT PARISH OF BARWICK in ELMET TRUST

The Trust was established in 1996, an amalgamation of seven smaller trusts founded in the 16th and 17th centuries. The object of the Trust is to relieve financial hardship, which it does by making grants of money, or by providing or paying for services, items or facilities calculated to relieve the hardship. The area the Trust covers includes not only Barwick and Scholes but also parts of Cross Gates, Swarcliffe and Whinmoor, and parts of Fearnville, Oakwood and Ladywood. This was the Ancient Parish in 1856 and is known as "the area of benefit." The Trustee names can be viewed on the Charity Commission website.

During the 2022/2023 financial year ended, the Trust made eight grants totalling £5,355.

9 OPEN DISCUSSION of PARISH AFFAIRS

Residents in attendance raised queries about;

- **Library.**

A resident had successfully obtained funding from the Community Fund for a bespoke cabinet for a kerb-side library similar to the one outside the Post Office, however this one would contain books for children. She envisaged that this would go on Jack Heaps Field (near to the playground or the new bench) and thus required Parish Council approval. She passed this location twice a day. It would be accessible at weekends as well as weekdays. The bookcase outside the Post Office was originally designed for indoor use, whereas the bookcase she envisaged would be purpose built for outdoors. The one outside the Post Office would be repurposed for books suitable for adults. The bookcase would be sourced from the not-for-profit Little Leeds Libraries charity. Scholes has a permanent library, but Barwick no longer had any library services as the mobile library no longer visited. The local primary school had a library of children's books but this was not accessible side of school hours and was only available to those who attend the school. There would be a mixture of fiction and non-fiction books. She was asked how many books this bookcase could hold, and advised that it would be double decked. One of those in attendance said that this was a great idea. The bookcase would be made of wood with a Perspex door and the only maintenance cost would be an occasional coat of varnish. It was noted that Jack Heaps Field was also used by the fairground.

- **Defibrillator**

A resident advised the meeting that the defibrillator in Barwick had recently been used on an 18-year-old man who had had a heart attack. Although it had been unable to save his life, it had given him time. Following this incident, a Just Giving fund had been set up (with the support of the landlord of the New Inn public house) to raise funds for another defibrillator. She proposed that the money raised be given to the PC who would be able to buy a defibrillator and claim back the value added tax (VAT). The resident had been the guardian of the defibrillator at the Village Hall for the last four years and was willing to continue as guardian of both, having this as a PC asset would ensure continuity. Once installed, the PC would need to budget for additional maintenance costs.

- **Barwick Playground Consultation**

The same resident advised that she had been liaising with the school regarding proposals for playground equipment in Barwick. She would be going into school once year five and year six children had completed their examinations.

- **Scholes Playground proposal**

Two residents spoke about the suggested location of the playground proposal in Scholes, one of whom was head of facilities with Leeds City Council. He spoke about Sandringham Park play area, York Place, Wetherby and cited this as an example of a play area in a location not publicly visible to passersby as it was overlooked by trees and only used as a cut-through. He spoke about issues regarding antisocial behaviour such as youths taking drugs and starting fires and damage done to the slide and swings which

had resulted in funding being used on a security system. He felt the location would have an adverse effect on the Bowling Green and also had concerns that when a cricket match was being played there was a risk of the users of the playground being hit by a cricket ball. It was noted that historically, there had been a playground behind the properties on Belle Vue Avenue. There followed discussion amongst those present as to whether anonymous replies to the consultation should be included.

- **Christmas Lights**

A resident expressed concerns that the Christmas lights in the tree at Green Court were still switched on.

- **Comments regarding the Chair's Report**

A resident asked about the final part of the Chair's report, i.e. her comments about splitting the Parish. There had been a referendum on this issue in 2017. The Scholes Ward would be very different once the properties of the East Leeds Extension (ELE) proposed for the quadrant north of the A64 were built.

- **Neighbourhood plan**

The Chair of the Neighbourhood plan gave the following report.

Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan Review Group (NPRG) was set up by the Parish Council to undertake a review of the existing Barwick and Scholes Neighbourhood Plan. The membership of the group is a combination of Parish Councillors and local residents. The group has met on a number of occasions over the last 12 months. These have included evening meetings, workshop sessions and two drop in sessions held in Barwick and Scholes. The group has been assisted by officers from Leeds City Council.

Approach adopted

This is the first revision of an existing Neighbourhood Plan being undertaken in Leeds so there is a learning curve to be navigated. The NPRG has had a number of discussions with the officers on the best approach to adopt.

The NPRG has sought to collect evidence of key issues in the parish as well as seeking information such as census material to understand any changes which may have taken place in the parish since the original plan was adopted in November 2017. This has included drop in sessions to find views of residents, and writing to local businesses and stakeholders.

The NPRG is currently looking at the existing policies to consider whether the intention behind the policies has been achieved and what evidence exists to amend the policies, or leave them as they are.

Once all the information has collected the NPRG will consider what additional policies are required to address the key issues.

Key Issues

The NPRG has identified the following key issues,

- *The boundaries of the new Plan*
- *Impact of the East Leeds Extension on existing infrastructure*
- *Threats and opportunities from the revision of the Leeds City Council Local Plan*
- *Housing*
- *Other local issues*

These are considered in more detail below.

Plan Boundaries

The Vision in the current plan envisages the parish as a rural community. The NPRG wish to maintain this character in the new Plan. Part of the existing parish lies to the west of the new East Leeds Orbital Road, (ELOR) and will be developed as part of the East Leeds Extension. As such its character will not be in keeping with the Vision for the parish and so the NPRG has decided not to include this area of land within the new Plan. It was also excluded from the existing Plan. It will include land in the south of the Parish between the M1 motorway and Nanny Goat Lane which was previously excluded from the existing Plan.

The NPRG have also supported seeking an extension to the Plan boundary beyond the parish boundary to the south west where there is no other parish boundary to enable additional policies to be applied to help protect this area from future development. However permission is required from Leeds City Council to do this and the NPRG have been informed that such a request is likely to be opposed by Crossgates ward Councillors. The NPRG are awaiting further advice from LCC officers but are currently not inclined to pursue this idea unless there is a reasonable prospect of it being supported by LCC.

Impact of ELE

Following the completion of ELOR, developers are now pressing ahead with the development of the east Leeds extension. When completed this will add around 5000 new houses to the area with an increased population of around 15,000. This will be a new town in the area and will require new infrastructure to meet the additional demand for services. This will be particularly relevant for health , education and transport provision. The NPRG are liaising with LCC to keep abreast of proposals to ensure that any impact on existing services in the parish will be kept to a minimum.

Leeds Local Plan Revision

LCC have started to revise their Local Plan, which will look at the need for new development including new housing over the next 15 years. It is a process that will run alongside the revised Neighbourhood Plan and so it is important that the 2 plans are in conformity.

This review is likely to look at development of a mass transit system for Leeds including a route along the A64 which may terminate in the parish. LCC and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority are also looking at increasing Park and Ride sites around Leeds and a site on the A64 near Langlands Garden Centre has been considered as a possible site for this facility.

At a recent briefing meeting with LCC it was made clear that at this stage nothing has been ruled out and the possibility of a site being identified for a new settlement has not been ruled out. It is also possible that the safeguarded site at Scholes could be allocated for housing in their new plan although presumably it would have to be conditional on any developer resolving the problem of the site lines at the Rakehill Road junction with Station Road, which was the reason the planning appeal was dismissed a few years ago.

Housing

Housing provision is always a controversial subject in plans. Census evidence has revealed little change in the size and demographic of the parish population. A study published in 2015 for the original plan concluded that there was a need for 18 new dwellings in the parish over a 5 year period. A similar requirement probably exists today. The NPRG are currently looking at this issue.

Other local issues

The NPRG will be undertaking a review of the existing public rights of way network and looking at ways this may be improved. It will also review the extent of land designated as green space in the parish and consider how to encourage more tree planting and rewilding .

The existing plan had little to say about climate change and the NPRG is looking at introducing new robust policies to address issues including solar farms, windfarms, and solar panels . New ideas on the design of buildings are also being considered to address on street parking and electric charge points.

Land in the parish which is currently unused or unsightly is being identified and consideration given how to bring it back into use.

Next Steps

It is fair to say that at this stage no major issues of concern to residents since the original plan was adopted have been identified. However as will be apparent from the issues referred to above this could easily change over the next few months. The drop in sessions evidenced support for extending the Plan boundary to the south west and also for seeking improvement to the condition of Rakehill Road to provide a better link between Barwick and Scholes.

The NPRG are anxious to hear from any resident who wishes to raise any matter relevant to the new Plan and any ideas for new policies and initiatives. Next year the NPRG hope to publish a new draft Plan for consultation and then take it forward for a formal Referendum and adoption.

The meeting closed at 8:10pm

Chair, May 2024