

**Minutes of the Barlaston Parish Council Meeting
Held on Tuesday 4th. October 2011.**

Present: – Gareth Jones
Chairman

Tony Dodd	Sara Fearn
Paul Fisher	Viv O'Dunne
Steve Hall	Sheila Perkin
Elaine Philpott	Peter Stevenson

Apologies: John Russell, Lynne Bakker-Collier

In attendance: None

Open Forum

156. As there were no parishioners present it was agreed to discuss Item 14 as a matter of urgency. The Clerk outlined the difficulties the Police had in providing adequate support for the Remembrance Sunday Parade in the village, following the normal request to them.

157. The Police had informed him that their manning levels for that day were low and they would be unable to provide cover to make the normal cover. The Police had been asked to attend the Open Forum to explain the problem across the area as other parades and services would be affected. The Police did not arrive so the discussions centred on ensuring the parade could proceed.

158. The Council were unanimous in their huge disappointment if this annual parade may be affected in some way and discussed alternative suggestions to put to the Police.

159. A number of ways forward were suggested using any available Police, the two First Responders vehicles and volunteers with high visibility jackets to patrol the Parade. The Clerk would speak to the Police after the meeting and arrange to visit Stone police station with the Chairman to voice these suggestions.

160. The Clerk would request that there was no noise or activity from Wedgwood College.

161. Councillor Philpott would check the arrangements for the delivery of the wreaths and the Council would make the normal contribution to these.

Minutes of the meeting held on September 6th. 2011

162: RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on September 6th be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising

- 163a.) Re Minute 96 the Chairman reported that he had made contact on the matter with the Highways Department but no response had been received to date.
- b.) Re Minute 101-an Enforcement Order had now been raised on the property.
- c.) Re. Minute 105- the Chairman had requested a meeting with Mr. Peter Kent Bagguley from the College management team.
- d.) Re Minute 117- the cloth bags had been distributed and proved popular; thanks were expressed to Councillor Philpott for her work in this initiative. The feedbacks from residents were that the recent edition of the Heron had proved popular and had been well received.
- e.) Re Minute 147- it was noted that the Wedgwood Sports Pavilion had re-opened after safety work and repairs had been completed.

Report by Chairman & Report by Borough Councillor

164. The Chairman outlined the main issues of the local Development Framework and that any response from the Parish had to be submitted by October 21st. Although there was little perceived impact upon the Barlaston area the issue of the protection of the greenbelt around the village was very important.

165. The general discussion centred around the possible pressure of proposals to develop in the greenbelt in the future as there were known parcels of land adjacent to the village that could be put forward as areas for development of housing or for other uses. A balance needed to be struck in the light of the need to preserve the village and greenbelt but also to ensure that the business and economic activities and facilities could be sustained in the future.

166. It was agreed that the Council needed to protect what was in existence but might have to face proposals in the future for pockets of affordable housing or development; it was noted that there were sites at Meaford and adjacent to the railway line in Barlaston that had outline planning permission but none had to date been developed by the owners or had plans to do so in the foreseeable future.

167. It was agreed that the Chairman would submit a comment based upon the discussions for the formal consultation process.

168. It was confirmed that representatives from Wedgwood would attend the December meeting for a general discussion on their management of the estate.

169. An invitation to visit the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust site on the Wedgwood Estate would be arranged for those Councillors wishing to see the work being undertaken.

170. The Chairman confirmed that he had written to the Mr. Bob Winter Chairman of the Barlaston Allotments Association to arrange a meeting to consider the issue of allotments not being freely available for residents of the Parish.

171. The Council had received a formal request from Stafford Borough Council to donate to the funds for the improvement of the towpath on the Trent and Mersey Canal from The

Plume of feathers to the Meaford Locks and the Chairman opened a discussion indicating that the proposals would go to the Stafford Borough Council Cabinet in November.

172. The Borough Council were looking for a small amount of additional financial support from the three local councils involved (Barlaston, Stone Rural and Stone Town) even though the necessary funding was believed to be in place from several organisations; a donation could not be made that would adversely affect the current budget but a donation of say £200 might be considered in April 2012.

173. There was a majority of the Council in favour of the improvement scheme but there were views from several Councillors of the negative impact of the improvement notably the inconsiderate cyclists who regularly caused problems for pedestrians and fishermen.

174. A joint letter to support the scheme was being written by Stone Rural Council for consideration by Barlaston Parish before submission to the Borough Council. It was felt that no donation should be made at this stage.

Finance Report

175. The following items were considered and approved:

Item 7: Finance Report.			
	NET	VAT	Total Cost
a.) Neil Hemmings Accommodation and postage (Heron).	£48.64		£48.64
b.) Greenfingers-grass cutting-September	£400.00	£80.00	£480.00
c.) Panda Press printing of questionnaires	£250.00	£50.00	£300.00
d.) PJS- groundwork at the Cemetery	£285.00	£57.00	£342.00
e.) Playsafety-Inspection charge Flaxman Close Play Area	£63.00	£12.60	£75.60
f.) S.P.C.A.- new Councillor Training	£40.00		£40.00
g.) Biffa Waste Services-waste collection- Village Hall & cricket Club	£92.32	£18.46	£110.78
h.) JJ Tree Services- work at Cemetery	£100.00		£100.00
i.) Panda Press printing of Heron	£208.00		£208.00
j.) St John's P.C.C.- half of the Chapel Insurance	£396.18		£396.18
k.) PJS- grass cutting and	£338.00	£67.60	£405.60

tree planting at the Cemetery			
l.)Town & country Services- grass cutting; Flaxman Close	£90.00	£18.00	£108.00
m.)Greenfingers-grass cutting-September	£400.00	£80.00	£480.00
n.) Barlaston Cricket Club-donation for firework display	£100.00		£100.00
o.) James Penny- repairs to Village noticeboard	£317.64		£317.64

p.)The September salaries for the Clerk, Transport Co-ordinator and litter pickers have been met.

q.) A request from Barlaston Cricket Club to support their village firework display on November the 5th had been received and a donation of £100 was agreed.

r.) The Orchard Place noticeboard had now been repaired but the work had been carried out on a windy day and many of the notices had blown away!

Planning Update

176. The Clerk outlined the agreed procedure following the receipt of a planning application and Councillor Fisher as Chairman of the Planning Committee this was correct and would be adhered to with the agreement to call a meeting if he deemed it necessary following the comments received from members of the Committee.

177. The recent decision to remove the agricultural tie on the Nursery House on Old Road and the refusal for the proposed development at Heyfields Residential Home were noted.

178. There were currently no planning applications pending.

179. A booklet from the Council for the Protection of Rural England had been received with planning guidance on rural development and was passed to Councillor Fisher.

Voluntary Transport Scheme.

180. Councillor Dodd circulated a paper outlining the need for the scheme, its main objectives and a suggested pricing structure or an appropriate donation for lifts.

181. The Council agreed that in view of the needs of the current clientele that used the volunteers that it should include those needing a lift for purposes other than purely for a medical appointment if there was a good reason such as visiting a relative that was not on a regular bus route.

182. Twelve lifts were the regular number for the scheme and a new volunteer had been enlisted following a home visit and checking of required documentation.

183. The Council thanked Councillor Dodd and his wife Gill, the scheme co-ordinator, for the suggestions which had been accepted.

Village Plan

184. The Clerk gave a detailed report on the response from the Parish with the return of 287 questionnaires an overall return of 24%. He identified that the return from certain wards was lower than hoped for but the number of volunteers of over 40 was pleasing.

185. The Clerk had acted as the third party in opening the questionnaires and had read all of the comments and gave a qualitative analysis on the main issues that had been raised by those responding.

186. The main issues under the identified headings he suggested were:

- Speeding traffic throughout the Parish.
- Delays at the level crossings.
- Dog mess and litter in some areas.
- Delays at the Health Centre in obtaining an appointment.
- Lack of play facilities for the young in some parts of the village.

187. There were many other comments and suggestions that had been made and these would have to be analysed objectively to form the basis of a Village Action plan that would have many cost and resource implications.

188. The core group of four Councillors that had written the questionnaire would meet on the 11th. of October at 6p.m. to take the matter of analysis further and address the issue of confidentiality.

189. At this stage the Clerk would retain the confidentiality of any comments until an agreed procedure had been established to undertake the analysis but he was given permission to collate a list of the volunteers for the community groups such as Speedwatch in the interim.

190. It was agreed to accept any further questionnaire replies and that a brief statement be placed upon the website to encourage further response and volunteers. It was hoped some initial findings could be circulated via the Church Parish News in December.

The Heron

191. It was agreed after discussion that the next edition of the Heron would be in February 2012 followed by editions in July and October.

192. It was hoped that there would be enough material to develop into another successful edition.

Cemetery Grounds Maintenance Report.

193. Councillor Fearn outlined the details of the improvement work that had been carried out in September and it was agreed that the Cemetery was looking much tidier and the users of the Cemetery had commented favourably. Councillor Fearn was thanked for her actions in ensuring the improvements. The Vicar had been supportive in the aim to tidy the area and a number of notices requesting all visitors deposit waste in the bins were to be displayed. It was noted that a number of very old untended family graves were in need of attention.

194. It was agreed that the mound of earth in the Cemetery should be removed and levelled and the area seeded as soon as possible by a local contractor. The Council agreed to contribute half the cost and the Church would be requested to pay for the other half estimated to be £92.50 each, which was additional to the £700 already allocated at the last meeting.

Matters arising from the Open Forum.

195. The Clerk and Chairman would seek a meeting with the Police to discuss the parade arrangements for Remembrance Sunday.

Correspondence and Clerk's Report

196. The Clerk's actions were noted and agreed.

197. It was agreed that some remedial repairs and better signing on the Multiple Use Games Area (MUGA) on Flaxman Close were required in the next few months following the Playsafety Inspection and subsequent report. Councillor Dodd agreed to visit the site and report back upon any problems with glass or litter as well as the issues raised in the report before any expenditure was agreed.

198. The Clerk was asked to write to Mr. John West the licensee of the Plume of Feather to congratulate him and his staff for organising the recent Music Festival which raised over £500 for the Donna Louise Trust.

199. Councillor Fisher had agreed to stand as a Local Authority Governor for Barlaston CE (VC) First School.

200. It was noted that Stafford Borough Council were supporting the Keep Britain tidy Campaign "Love Where You Live" an involvement for the Parish would be sought by the Clerk.

Any other business – Agenda items for meeting to be held November 8th. 2011

201. There were no items raised for the next agenda.

Note by Clerk

202. The Parish Council meeting closed and members re-convened as the Village Hall Trustees.

Village Hall Committee Report

203. The Council had received the most recent minutes of the Village Hall Committee.

204. The Village Hall Committee had spoken to local residents concerning the noise from the Zumba classes. The noise was bearable if the doors to the Hall were closed but this was not always the case additionally the high humidity in the Hall during the class did impact upon the next user of the Hall and the existing fan did not deal effectively with the problem particularly in warm weather.

205. A letter had been sent to all hirers requesting that the doors are kept shut and that courtesy and consideration to the neighbours was important.

206. The Trustees listened to a range of reasons and options to upgrade the current audio equipment that had been damaged during recent use. Councillor Dodd explained that there were systems where the level of noise could be preset by the Village Hall and could not be overwritten by users such as Zumba.

207. The Trustees authorised that the Village Hall Committee could spend upto £1000 to purchase from their funds a suitable audio system and to investigate the costs of a dehumidifier for the Hall.

208. The Trustees would receive in due course their recommendations and any proposals of the Village Hall Committee on their priorities for the Hall once they had been established.

209. A meeting with the organiser of the Zumba classes had been arranged to consider limiting the numbers participating at any one time.

210. The date of the next social event was the 15th October.

211. There had been some damage to the tarmac at the front of the Hall by the mobile library and there were ongoing discussions on this matter.

212. The dates for the 2012 Proscenium Players productions had been agreed and would be posted.

213. It was noted that there a new clock at the front of the building is needed as the other clock was unreliable.

Chairman

