

**Minutes of the Barlaston Parish Council Meeting
Held on Tuesday 5th February 2013.**

Present: – Gareth Jones
Chairman

Paul Fisher	John Russell
Sara Fearn	Patrick Linehan
Steve Hall	Tony Dodd
Viv O'Dunne	Sarah Broome
Ian Macmillan	Elaine Philpott

Apologies: Lynne Bakker Collier, Ian Parry

In attendance: P.C.S.O. Rebecca Powell & Tim Earley.

Open Forum

395. P.C.S.O. Powell was welcomed to the meeting and she reported on two incidents of anti-social behaviour on Barlaston Park. It was noted that that Stafford & Rural Homes were considering reducing the time the lights by their garages were lit as a way to discourage anti-social activities.

396. Mr Earley provided detail of the problem of ivy stifling mature trees in the Parish. He estimated there were more than 200 trees affected along all the roads into the village; Hartwell Lane was a particular example. He provided an estimate from a local contractor of treating each tree of £10 per tree to cut the ivy back around the base of the tree that led to the rest of the ivy in the tree dying back.

397. The Council shared Mr.Earley's concern over the problem, but as the majority of the trees were in hedgerows on private farmland it was felt there would be obstacles and implications in tackling the problem. It was agreed that further investigation on the matter was needed as there could be a significant on-going expense to the Council. The Clerk pointed out there were insurance implications which he would pursue.

398. As a way forward perhaps to tackle the problem working from the centre of the village outwards would improve the environment which the Council would consider later in the meeting. Mr Earley agreed to submit an article on the issue for the next edition of the Heron hoping it would precipitate some preventative action from landowners.

There were no declarations of interest made before the meeting began.

399. It was resolved that it was in order for all Parish Councillors to participate in any discussions relating to the setting of the Parish Precept in 2013.

Minutes of the meeting held on January 8th. 2013

400: RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on January 8th. be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising

401. Re. Minute 351- the Clerk had not been contacted on this matter of a new substation.

402. Re. Minute 354- The Chairman reported that he had spoken to Councillor Parry regarding the flooding in Meaford and that no conclusions on the causes had been reached. It was noted that other parts of Meaford Road near to the site of the former power station were holding water. It was felt that the signage by the Police and Highways Department closing the roads during flooding was not helpful and more signs were needed to be sited in the village preventing the traffic using the narrow routes into Stone.

403. Re. Minute 357- there had been some progress on the reduction of flooding on land to the north of Brookhouse Drive, but there was still a view that it was a blocked drain off Meadow Road that was causing the water in the field.

404. Re. Minute 366- the Council had sent a response regarding the relocation of the Post Office.

405. Re. Minute 372- Councillors Jones and Linehan had attended the A.G.M. of the Barlaston Allotments Association. A new committee had been elected with a new Chairman and Secretary. It was noted that there was a stated waiting list of ten with two applicants from Barlaston. The turnover of plots in 2012 was four. It was felt that the views of the Council had been noted and that the Association would support village events.

Report by Chairman & Borough Councillor

406. The Chairman combined local issues with wider matters for the Borough in his report.

407. The Planning and Design statement relating to Wedgwood Memorial College should be completed by March 11th.

408. A planning application for seven three bedroomed bungalows and one four bedroomed bungalow was to be submitted on the site of Old Road Nurseries.

409. A public meeting to consider the proposals for the redevelopment of Westbridge Park was to be held in the Methodist Hall on 27th February.

410. There was to be counter proposals to this from the TVT group who wish to develop a site adjacent to the Trent at Filleybrooks.

411. The Stafford B.C. Council Tax was to remain unchanged.

412. Councillors Jones and Russell had attended a recent meeting organised by Severn Trent regarding residents from Old Road complaining about the problems of HGV's. The

meeting was well attended mostly by residents from Trentham who wanted an alternative route for HGVs from the layby on the A34 onto the sewage works. A consultation on this idea was being undertaken but the cost of such a route through a floodplain would be in excess of £1 million.

413. The Chairman attended a meeting in Swynnerton called by M.P. Bill Cash regarding the proposed HS2 route which would impact on land to the west of the M6 in North Staffordshire. There was a great deal of local opposition and if the route came to fruition it would cause planning blight along its route and possibly make Barlaston more attractive for housing development and residence.

414. A consultation exercise on the closure of the Stafford site for Staffordshire University was underway. If the Stafford site was closed it could mean the loss of the X1 Bus Service through Barlaston.

415. It was noted that the publication of the Francis Report on Stafford Hospital would mean its negative findings might have an impact on local services provided at the hospital.

416. The Chairman believed the meeting held with WWRD and Ted Manders in January had been informative and helpful.

417. A letter from the Chairman had been sent regarding a planning appeal for development at Hartwell Farm supporting the conditions proposed prior to the planning enquiry.

418. The Chairman was liaising with Councillors from Eccleshall who were in the process of preparing their Neighbourhood Plan.

419. He reported that there had been some monitoring of speeding by the Police Neighbourhood traffic Officer on local roads. He agreed to establish the current activity of the local speedwatch group.

Finance Report

420. The following items were considered and approved

	NET	VAT	Total Cost
a.) Neil Hemmings- Allowance & Postage	£48.00 £6.00		£48.00 £6.00
b.) Biffa Waste Services- Cricket Club	£46.68	£9.34	£56.02
c.) British Gas- Village	£531.78	£26.58	£558.36

Hall			
d.) G. Jones-flowers for Gill Dodd	£7.50		£7.50
e.) Stafford B.C.- Civic Amenity Visits	£250.00	£50.00	£300.00
f.) Biffa Waste Services- Cricket Club	£26.07	£5.21	£31.28
g.) Samaritans-donation	£250.00		£250.00

- h.) The January salaries for the Clerk, Transport Co-ordinator and litter pickers have been met.
- i.) It was agreed to donate £250 to the Stafford Branch of the Samaritans.
- j.) Councillor Hall reported on the recent Finance Committee meeting and outlined their recommendations.
- k.) It was noted that proposed income of £34000 would be exceeded by approximately £7000 in expenditure thus reducing the expected balance/ contingency on 31/3/14 to around £10000.
- l.) There were three main reasons for this increased expenditure:
- Allocation of £2000 for the Best Kept Village Competition
 - Allocation of £4000 for improving ventilation in the Village Hall
 - Allocation of £3000 for implementing the Village Plan, including the Design Brief
- m.) He concluded that the Finance Committee's recommendations be accepted and proposed that the Precept be set at £29000 for 20103/14.
- n.) Councillor Russell proposed as an amendment that the Precept be increased to £30000 for the year to allow some expenditure on the problem of ivy engulfing trees. His proposal was seconded by Councillor Fisher.
- o.) After discussion on this amendment a vote was taken and the amendment was defeated eight votes to three. Several Councillors stated that they did not believe in raising the Precept and further investigation into the matter of ivy on trees should be made before any expenditure on this matter.
- p.) It was then proposed to set the Precept at £29000 for 2013/14 and to take the full Concurrent Allowance of £2053. This proposal was accepted by ten votes to one.

421. It was resolved that the Precept be set at £29000 for 2013/14 and that the full Concurrent Allowance be requested.

Planning Update

422. There had been a Planning Committee meeting earlier in the evening that had considered two applications. It was agreed to hold a private meeting of the Council to identify their ideas on how they would want Barlaston to develop over the future; it was agreed this take place on Tuesday February 19th at 7.00 pm in the Village Hall. The outcomes could then be discussed publicly in the March Council meeting.

Voluntary Transport Scheme

423. There had been 13 lifts only during January as a result of the wintry weather.

The Heron

424. Councillor O'Dunne outlined the content of the next edition which would be printed and distributed later in the month.

Village Plan

425. Councillor Dodd reported that the Environment Group through Councillor O'Dunne were arranging for Saul Hocking from Stafford B.C. to speak to children at the school on environmental issues and that a poster competition for the schoolchildren was being arranged.

426. Councillors Macmillan and Jones would meet to discuss the traffic issues that needed to be moved forward.

Best Kept Village Competition

427. Councillor Linehan reported on progress to date and it was agreed to form a separate working group to take plans forward.

428. He was looking into the provision of some hanging baskets and floral tubs in the village probably in the vicinity of Orchard Place.

429. The Clerk would produce a map of the village identifying all the required amenities.

430. It was suggested Mr Joe Poultney could assist with plants for any displays.

431. Councillor Broome felt ownership of the activities should be focussed on volunteers and not be driven by the Parish Council.

432. Councillor Fearn reported on recent damage to a seat by the War Memorial and to the grass verge at the junction of Longton Road and Station Road. These matters required attention.

433. Councillor Fisher felt that the War Memorial needed further attention to reduce weeds and moss.

434. There was a discussion on how much of the village be defined and it was agreed that the whole of the Parish be included; if the judges of the competition found areas that needed improvement then this would help in identifying work that could be actioned.

Matters arising from the Open Forum

435. The proposal by Mr Earley relating to the treatment of ivy on trees needed further discussion before any expenditure. The Clerk would look into the implications for maintaining trees on private land.

Correspondence and Clerk's Report

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

437. The Clerk sought requests relating to the Community Paths Initiative. It was suggested that the footpath from Longton Road close to Adderley Place towards Barlaston Park needed attention. He would look at this and consider submitting a bid to the County Council.

Any other business – Agenda items for meeting to be held on March 5th.2013.

438. The following Agenda items were agreed- Barlaston Health Centre; Discussion on the future development of Barlaston.

439. It was noted that there were several parcels of agricultural land for sale on the edge of the village in Tittensor Road and Hartwell Lane.

Note by Clerk

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

Village Hall Committee Report

441. Councillor Jones indicated that the Village Hall Committee had not met recently but would do so later in February and the on-going issues of kitchen refurbishment and improved ventilation would be discussed.

442. Councillor Fearn suggested a film evening in the Hall would appeal to a wider cross section of the local population.

443. It was agreed that the early advertising of events many weeks away should be discouraged outside the Hall.

Chairman

