

**Minutes of the Barlaston Parish Council Meeting
Held on Tuesday 2nd. April 2013.**

Present: – Gareth Jones
Chairman

Steve Hall	John Russell
Ian Macmillan	Patrick Linehan
Sarah Broome	Tony Dodd
Sara Fearn	

Apologies: Paul Fisher, Viv O'Dunne, Elaine Philpott

In attendance: Lynne Bakker Collier, David Connell, Sylvia Farrier, P.C.S.O. Emma Kempson, Peter Headley, Michelle Curs (The Sentinel), Kerry Ashdown (Stafford Newsletter) & D. Buxton.

Open Forum

502. David Connell requested an update regarding the use of weed killer in the village. The Clerk explained that Staffordshire County Council use weed killer on their verges and roadside gutters that did comply with legislation and that Greenfingers used no weed killer on Parish land but did use a herbicide for Stafford & Rural Homes on Barlaston Park.

503. Mr Connell provided detailed information regarding recent research suggesting the residues of weed killers could get into the water system endangering wild life. He itemised the risks he thought existed and stated that the operatives for the County Council and Greenfingers did not always wear protective equipment.

504. The Clerk explained what control could be exercised by the Parish but there was none over land owned by the County Council.

505. Mr. Connell then issued information regarding a website called "**turn to us**" to assist impoverished people. He urged the Council to be more proactive in supporting needy residents.

506. Councillor Dodd outlined the support of the voluntary transport scheme. It was agreed to discuss the matter further later in the meeting.

507. Sylvia Farrier the new Chairman of Barlaston Allotments Association asked for clarification over the terms of the lease for the allotments regarding structures on the site. The Clerk clarified the exact terms of the lease and the Council would discuss the matter further later in the meeting.

508. P.C.S.O. Emma Kempson reported upon recent complaints regarding anti-social behaviour on Barlaston Park; she suggested again that incidents be reported at the time

of the incident not after the event. Councillor Dodd reported on perceived problems in the flats in Flaxman Close.

509. She reported on a report of suspicious vehicles on the Orchard Place Car Park. This would be Emma's last meeting as she was to become a regular police officer.

510. Peter Hedley congratulated the Parish Council on entering the Best Kept Village Competition, which he was keen to support.

511. He was provided with an update regarding the trading of goods from a property in Tittensor Road.

512. Mr Hedley reported on a stash of discarded tobacco and filter papers he had found at the rear of the Church.

513. The Chairman welcomed Robert Gatensbury from Stafford Borough Council who presented the initial ideas relating to a design and development brief for the Wedgwood Memorial College site.

514. He outlined the main features of each site and the priority for development which would be to preserve as many of the natural features of the site such as the retention of the arboretum. This was summarised as a key principle of sensitive development.

515. The main recommendations would be finalised on the completion of the brief but he was able to identify the likely proposals as follows

1. The retention of the two main buildings
2. To retain trees and hedges to lessen development impact.
3. Any new houses to have their back gardens backing onto existing properties.
4. Any new vehicular access into the Limes site likely to be from Coton Rise.
5. Possible residential development on both sites with larger houses on the Estoril site with affordable housing on the Limes site.
6. The retention of Esperanto House.
7. The provision of open space and some recreational space.

516. The design briefs were circulated and Councillors offered suggestions and had their questions answered.

517. The general view was one that felt the draft proposals were acceptable and suggested a few amendments. It seemed to provide many positives for Barlaston.

518. Relevant departments at Stafford B.C. would also consider the suggestions before a final brief would be produced hopefully during May.

519. The brief documents were retained by Mr Gatensbury who was thanked for his presentation.

520. The document once finalised would help to form part of the Neighbourhood Plan and hopefully would be given support by the planning authority if an application for development was proposed.

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

Minutes of the meeting held on March 5th. 2013

522: RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on March 5th. be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising

523. Re. Minute 447: Councillor Fearn reported on the problem of rooting ivy in the Cemetery. The ivy was prevalent in the trees but also the hedges and ought to be cut back.

524. Re. Minute 484: Councillor Philpott would identify planting areas.

525: Re Minute 496: Councillor Broome would lead this initiative.

Report by Chairman

526. The Boundary Commission Review for the area was under way which proposed the reduction from two to one Borough Councillors for the Barlaston & Oulton ward.

527. The planned development of Westbridge Park had been put on hold.

528. The felling of four trees on the Wedgwood Estate had caused some disquiet with local residents but had been regularised by the tree officer from the Borough Council. A Turkey Oak tree by the pool might also be felled in the near future.

529. The remedial work to remedy the flooding at Meaford had taken place.

530. The Chairman had discussed the possibility of improving the footpath from the Church across the fields to the canal but had not had a positive response. The Council felt this footpath should be improved and would continue to pursue the matter.

531. The Clerk read a letter from the Post Office confirming the move of the Post Office to the Londis store in the near future.

532. The traffic problems and road markings were a concern and it was hoped some keep clear markings could be provided by the level crossing.

533. A meeting of the Cumberland House Practice to discuss the findings of the recent patient satisfaction survey was held on March 6th. The Chairman and Councillors Russell and Dodd had attended.

534. The main issues raised from the survey were the length of wait for an appointment, particularly if an individual Doctor was requested.

535. It was a concern to the Council and the Cumberland House Practice that the number of services available was limited.

536. The Chairman suggested if possible the Council should have an input into the Support Stafford Hospital campaign.

537. There had not been a planning application for the proposed development of the Old Road Nurseries.

538. The owner of the property on Tittensor Road had been advised to stop trading from his driveway.

539. The Chairman had written again to Stafford & Rural Homes regarding the flooding problem to the rear of Brookhouse Drive.

540. Councillors Jones, Linehan and Dodd had attended the recent Stafford & Rural Homes estate walkabout. The action points had been circulated.

541. Comments on the proposed use of the Children's Centre by the school had appeared on Facebook and responses had been sent. There would be more use of the Children's Centre area by the school in the mornings and from September 2013 the proposal was to use half of the area all day.

Report by Borough Councillor

542. Councillor Bakker Collier reported on the new support shop in the Guildhall centre in Stafford for Stafford Hospital.

543. She was pleased that the Council had supported the recent planning application for an extension at the Douglas Macmillan Hospice.

544. She reported on the trend of thefts of pole mounted post boxes in the Cotwalton and Fulford areas.

Report by County Councillor

545. In the absence of Councillor Parry Councillor Russell raised the matter of the delay to the solution of the flooding problem which he felt was disappointing. He had written an article for the press outlining the issues involved.

Finance Report

546. The following items were considered and approved.

	NET	VAT	Total Cost
a.) Neil Hemmings- Allowance	£48.00		£48.00
b.) Paint-bus shelter	£14.18		£14.18
c.) PJS Landscapes- monthly Cemetery Maintenance	£235.00	£47.00	£282.00
d.) Community Council of Staffordshire- Annual subscription	£22.00		£22.00
e.) Eurooffice-stationery and BKV materials	£33.90	£6.74	£40.64
f.) Town & Country Services- cleaning of road signs	£55.00	£11.00	£66.00

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

Planning Update

547. There had been a Planning Committee meeting earlier in the evening that had considered two applications.

Voluntary Transport Scheme

548. There had been 12 lifts during March. One regular user of the service had been taken ill earlier in the day and the Council felt the volunteers drivers involved could not undertake any more lifts because of the difficulty involved in assisting the gentleman.

549. It was a concern that Stafford & Rural Homes had still not responded to the agreed need for a disabled ramp for this gentleman and other elderly residents in Rock House Drive.

A footbridge for Barlaston over the railway line?

550. Councillor Russell proposed that the Council contact Network Rail to consider a footbridge over the railway line. This was seconded and voted upon, the proposal was carried.

551. It was resolved that the Parish Council contact Network Rail to consider a footbridge over the railway line in the interests of the local community.

552. There had been concern expressed over the delays for children being late for school as a result of the delays and the exposure to bad weather whilst waiting at the level crossing to open.

Village Plan

553. Councillor Dodd reported on a meeting at the school between Saul Hocking from Stafford B.C. and the Headteacher and the arrangement later in April for the pupils to receive a presentation regarding dog fouling and the environment; a poster competition for the pupils was being organised.

554. The Transport group was still to convene.

Best Kept Village Competition

555. Councillor Linehan reported on progress to date, the entry had been submitted along with a detailed map; thanks were expressed to the Clerk for this. There was a small working group of volunteers who were co-ordinating activities.

556. Several dates for litter picks had been identified starting at the Village Hall on April 10th at 6.30 pm.

557. It was noted that Councillor Fisher would look to ensuring the war Memorial was tidied and weeds removed.

558. The Clerk reported that there were on-going works in the village which might detract from the overall appearance.

559. Councillor Linehan had ordered a number of lightweight signs to be placed on the verges at the entrance to the village on several roads.

Golden Jubilee Award 2013 and Certificates of Commendation

560. It was agreed that nominations would be sought through a notice on the noticeboards, the Church magazine and Councillor's nominations. A final decision would be made at the May meeting.

Matters arising from the Open Forum

561. The Clerk would investigate the type(s) of weed killer being used by Greenfingers and the County Council and report in due course.

562. It was agreed that the Council look at ways on informing and helping residents with financial difficulties following Mr Connell's suggestion.

563. The Clerk would write to the Allotments Association indicating that the existing shelter could remain but there were to be no new shelters or erection of structures on the site.

Correspondence and Clerk's Report

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

565. The Clerk gave a detailed report on the meeting he had attended regarding Neighbourhood Planning.

566. A working group for local Parishes had been formed and he suggested several Councillors should attend the next meeting to keep abreast of developments.

567. He circulated the comments received by Stafford B.C. during the consultation, none of which were of significant concern but would need to be noted in the writing of the plan.

568. Naomi Perry from Stafford B.C. would provide assistance with the writing of the plan but she was to be replaced in May by a new dedicated Neighbourhood Planning Officer.

569. The Clerk provided the detail of a Neighbourhood Plan that had been circulated by a neighbouring Parish. It was a detailed and a very specific plan and surprised the Council in its specificity and detail.

570. The Chairman would convene a meeting to discuss the writing of a plan and it was agreed to form a working group with Councillors Hall, Macmillan, Broome and Dodd & Jones would be involved.

571. The Clerk would retain the literature gained from the meeting; he pointed out that the views of other parishes in a similar position to Barlaston that they were anxious to prevent unwanted developments in their area but several were already under threat from planned developments.

572. There would be a cost to writing and producing a Neighbourhood Plan – these costs might include an Environmental impact statement. The idea of a simple development plan was not favoured by the parishes represented at the meeting – progress on a detailed Neighbourhood Plan was the preferred route.

573. The value and effectiveness of the Playing Fields Committee was discussed. It was agreed that Councillor Linehan speak to the Chairman of the Cricket Club and the need for a more proactive response to the points arising from meetings.

574. The resident trading from Tittensor Road was still considering his position with regard to on-going trading and a change of use planning application.

575. It was agreed to respond to the request from a television company producing the series Secret Dealers to advertise in the Heron. A charge for the advertising would be sought.

Any other business – Agenda items for meeting to be held on May 7th. 2013.

576. Councillor Russell informed the meeting that the preliminary results of a helicopter survey suggested many houses in Barlaston were losing heat through their roofs on a scale much higher than other areas in the Borough.

577. The following Agenda items were agreed- Neighbourhood Planning; helping the needy in Barlaston.

578. It was noted that the Planning Meeting was an Open Meeting beginning at 7.00 p.m.

Note by Clerk

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

Village Hall Committee Report

580. Councillor Jones outlined the main action points from the minutes of the February meeting that had been circulated.

581. There had been some redecoration of the toilets and the meeting room.

582. He commented that the existing Committee were settling into a range of revised roles as several were new to the Committee. There was a significant amount of work on a voluntary basis. Councillor Russell suggested that the Committee consider an honorarium for an administrator.

583. The A.G.M. would be held in May on a Thursday evening.

584. The unpaid wayleave for Babbacombe Cottage was discussed. The Trustees agreed a letter should be sent to Mr Farnsworth as verbal requests had failed to gain a solution. The Clerk would action this; it was agreed the possibility of taking legal action without further correspondence be included in the letter. A reply within 14 days of the letter would be requested.

585. Problems over parking in the day were on-going. Notices regarding the parking of vehicles by the school and users of the Children's Centre would be posted.

Chairman

