

**Minutes of the Barlaston Parish Council Meeting
Held on Tuesday 1st October 2013.**

Present: – Gareth Jones
Chairman

Patrick Linehan	Elaine Philpott
Sara Fearn	John Russell
Paul Fisher	Ian Macmillan
Sarah Broome	Tony Dodd

Apologies: Viv O'Dunne

In attendance: Michala Black, Lynne Bakker Collier, Ian Parry, Tim Cockin, Kerry Ashdown (Stafford Newsletter), P.C. Dave Perry, P.C.S.O. Lyndsey Brough & Phil Gammon Stafford B.C.

Open Forum

213. Tim Cockin outlined the proposals for the 2013 Wassail walk. He said there would be a gathering near the Plume of Feathers at 5.30 p.m. for children and their parents to outline the history behind the Wassail and then the walk for adults would begin at 9.30 pm from Orchard Place.

214. Michala Black spoke to the Council indicating her on-going concerns over litter in the village. She referred to daily problems of litter around the Green and the Downs Banks car park. She praised the work of the assigned litter picker in the village but felt a more co-ordinated approach should be considered and she was prepared to assist in forming a dedicated force to target hot spots. The Clerk explained the routes the appointed litter picker took to the boundaries of the village and her excellent work as well as the support of Streetscene over fly tipping and litter collection. It was agreed to take up her offer of support.

215. P.C. Perry said that there had been no major issues in the area and he was pursuing reports of drug taking in public areas. There had been an eviction of a troublesome resident from Barlaston Park and an issue of harassment of a local resident was noted. He confirmed that he would be managing the police at the Remembrance Day Service on the Green. PCSO Lyndsey Brough was welcomed to the meeting and would be helping to cover the area during a maternity leave.

216. Mr Phil Gammon from Stafford B.C. outlined the work of Streetscene and the team dedicated to the rural areas. Councillors were complimentary over the services provided and the Clerk outlined some difficulties with litter bin emptying. It was agreed that the dog waste bins on the Green should be moved and the Clerk would liase with Streetscene on this and other matters raised.

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

Minutes of the meeting held on September 3rd. 2013

218: RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on September 3rd. be approved and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising

219. There were no matters arising from the minutes.

Report by County Councillor

220. Councillor Parry reported on the proposed gas powered power station on the Meaford site. He indicated that consultations with residents had begun and three public meetings were to be held in October, one of which was in Barlaston. He had no concerns over the proposals at this stage believing that the stack from the building would be unobtrusive. There would be construction traffic for three years from 2016 and the Council stressed the need for this to be managed by the developers to avoid HGVs passing through Barlaston especially along Meaford Road. The improvements to the road infrastructure from the A34 to the site were in the proposals.

221. It was noted that there would be construction traffic from the housing development on the WWRD site and again this needed to be managed to avoid congestion and HGVs on Old Road.

222. Councillor Parry had no new information regarding the possible sale and redevelopment of the Wedgwood College site.

223. Councillor Parry listened to comments concerning the changes to local bus services and reported that the County Council were working to ensure that local demands could be met but the service providers could not be expected to run the services at a loss. It was hoped a co-ordinated approach for the X1 & X5 could be developed as there were problems such as no provision with the X5 from Barlaston Park around 9.00 am and the needs of local residents. Councillor Jones reported the possible link of the X1 with the 101 service to enable a link to Stafford.

224. Councillor Parry announced the County Council was beginning a strategic property partnership to improve the utilisation of all Council properties.

225. There was a general discussion over the cleaning of roadside drains and gutters; Streetscene swept and cleared the gutters of loose debris but weeds persisted in some such as those on Station Road and Old Road- it was agreed that the more stubborn weeds needed to be removed by the Highways teams.

226. The on-going poor utilisation of the Barlaston Children's Centre was noted.

Report by Chairman

227. The Chairman reported on the Civic Awards ceremony for the Golden Jubilee Award and Certificates of Commendation. Councillor Philpott would present a Certificate of Commendation to Christine Donohue in the Methodist Church.

228. The Clerk would write to all local organisations seeking nominations for 2014. A list of organisations was agreed.

229. It was noted that the planning application by Mr Warren for the Stud at Hartwell had been called in.

230. The Borough Councillors had been involved in the Environmental Health Day escorting Saul Hocking from the Borough Council around the area focusing on trees and raising the issues of dangerous and dead trees as well overgrown ones that cause problems to footpaths. It was hoped some coordinated actions would result to improve the village.

231. The Chairman had posted on the Parish Council Facebook page accurate information regarding the WWRD millennium arboretum following criticisms of the Parish Council by several postings.

232. The lecture regarding the Pewter flagons in the Church was noted.

233. Work Parties for the Churchyard extension were being arranged.

234. The official opening of the Canal Towpath was to take place on October 3rd.

235. There had been a meeting of the Good Neighbours scheme with a good attendance, however the use of the bus on Ivyhouse Drive was minimal.

Report by Borough Councillor

236. Councillor Bakker Collier reported upon the revised proposals for the management of Stafford Hospital.

Finance Report

237. The following items were considered and approved.

	NET	VAT	Total Cost
a.) Neil Hemmings- Allowance- September	£48.00		£48.00
b.) Back pay	£42.15		£42.15

c.) PJS Landscapes- monthly Cemetery Maintenance- September	£235.00	£47.00	£282.00
d.) Greenfingers- grass cutting September	£424.00	84.80	£508.80
e.) Town & Country Services- grass cutting Flaxman Close- September	£90.00	£18.00	£108.00
f.) Barlaston Cricket Club- contribution to fireworks	£200-00		£200-00
g.) Barlaston P.C.C.- contribution to magazine costs	£250.00		£250.00

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

Village Green Improvements

238. The Clerk reported on the detailed proposals produced by Liz Hill relating to four areas on the Village Green. He detailed the likely costs if all the areas were treated reaching a total of £6000. It was agreed that Areas A & B were the priorities and that Area C could be managed by volunteers; Area D could be left in abeyance for the time being.

239. This proposal was accepted and further quotes were awaited to compare with the one that had already been received from a local contractor and if no further quotes were received by the Clerk by October 7th he was instructed to instruct to action the quotation that had been received to improve areas A & B at a cost of £3290.

240. The Clerk would organise a site meeting to clarify the work based on the specifications.

Best Kept Village Competition

241. Councillor Linehan reported on the outcome of the 2013 Competition as the judges comments had been made available. He read the report and comments were taken. The Clerk pointed out several inaccuracies that had been written down by the judges.

242. The report made many very favourable comments about the village and indicated the areas where higher marks could be gained. The areas for improvement related to BKV publicity, the children's poster competition and the map.

243. The report had no major criticisms and concluded- "Barlaston had made a really good effort and there was much to be praised".

244. The Clerk would circulate the comments to the Council and interested parties and it was agreed to enter in 2014. Councillor Broome suggested a larger and wider reaching committee be set up for 2014 to broaden the scope to assist Councillor Linehan.

Planning Update

245. There had been a Planning Committee meeting earlier in the evening that had considered two applications and there were no objections but comments had been submitted.

246. The application for houses on the Old Road Nurseries site was on hold it was noted following the recent appeal.

Neighbourhood Plan

247. Councillor Russell had attended the recent Parish Forum and another presentation on Neighbourhood Planning. Councillor Macmillan was interested that the focus suggested Councils could seek financial support from planning applications and to be proactive in obtaining up to 25% funding for a community involvement levy to support the development of Neighbourhood Plans.

248. Councillors Jones, Macmillan and Philpott agreed to form a subcommittee to take the ideas forward and to develop public consultation.

Voluntary Transport Scheme

249. There had been 17 lifts in September; there was a shortage of volunteer drivers there had been no new offers of help.

Remembrance Day arrangements

250. Mr Malcolm Dixon was to attend the service and lay one of the wreaths at the service on the Village Green.

Railway Line issues

251. The Clerk had spoken to Bill Cash's office requesting an update on the proposed actions by Network Rail on the Wedgwood Crossing but no reply had been received; it was noted that it appeared there was on-going work by Network Rail by the platforms.

Roadside trees

252. It was noted that there were trees in the village that might be in a dangerous condition or indeed dead and need inspection or treatment. It was suggested a list could be drawn up.

Matters arising from the Open Forum

253. The proposals for the Wassail 2013 were acceptable.

Correspondence and Clerk's Report

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

255. The Clerk reported on the recent Speedwatch activities. There had been twice weekly sessions at approved sites during July and August and offending motorists had been sent warning letters by the Police. There were some concerns of the Speedwatch members operating on a private road owned by WWRD.

256. A resulting discussion on traffic issues in the village focussed on the need to gather clear and reliable information regarding traffic; Councillor Macmillan referred to the executive summary form the village questionnaire 2011 and offered to gather views and to produce some statistics on the perceived problems. He wanted to obtain relevant statistics such as how many accidents had there been, how many cars had been caught speeding etc. He suggested a way forward was to focus on a local survey based upon a neighbourhood questionnaire in a perceived hot spot in the village. It was agreed he should liaise with the Speedwatch team and gather information based upon their recent activity. He also agreed to develop a questionnaire to ask residents about traffic issues and would trial this on Old Road.

257. The Clerk reported on walkers having difficulties following several local footpaths in particular the path from Station Road across farmland down to the Canal; he agreed to pursue better way marking for this and that a dialogue begins with local landowners and farmers began to avoid conflict between users and landowners.

258. It was noted that the County Council sought volunteers to sit on their School Admissions & Appeals Committee.

259. The minutes of the recent Playing Fields Committee were accepted.

260. It was noted that the attendance by Parish Councillors needed improvement and should be reviewed at the AGM in 2014.

261. It was agreed that damage to the hedge on the boundary at the Cricket Club by the kissing gate needed attention. The neighbour, Mrs Walker, had offered to replace the hedge by a picket fence as she felt the area needed urgent attention. Views on this replacement by a fence or a repair to the hedge were divided and it was agreed that Councillors Jones, Philpott and Fisher should visit the site and liaise with other members of the Playing Fields Committee and a decision reached on a suitable course of action.

262. The Clerk would advise Mrs Walker and the Cricket Club that the work would be undertaken in due course and the costs picked up by the Council.

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

263. It was agreed to consider the signing of local footpaths.

Note by Clerk

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

Village Hall Committee Report

265. The Clerk had received a request from the Village Hall Committee to erect signs regarding parking at the Village Hall to deter non users of the Hall, a suitable wording was agreed and permission to erect the sign by the school entrance gate at the back of the Hall car park would be sought.

266. Councillor Jones reported on likely personnel changes in the structure of the Hall Committee which were a result of resignations.

Chairman

