

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE PARISH OF BARFORD
HELD AT BARFORD MEMORIAL HALL
ON MONDAY 10TH APRIL 2006 AT 7.30PM**

Present J V Murphy (Chairman)
 Eighty-three Barford electors
 Cllr Mrs C Sawdon (WDC)
 Cllr L Caborn (WCC)
 PC Emma Matthews

Minutes

- 1 The minutes of the annual meeting, held on 26th April 2005, were confirmed as a true record. There were no matters arising.
- 2 The minutes of the special meeting, held on 21st July 2005, were confirmed as a true record. There were no matters arising.
- 3 The meeting agreed to allow the minutes of the current meeting to be made public in draft form as soon as approved by the Chairman.

Report by Cllr J V Murphy (Chairman Joint Parish Council)

- 4 The year 2005-2006 has been busy yet again – nine routine JPC meetings, twenty Planning meetings, two Special Meetings, numerous Working Party and Officer Meetings and the three Annual Parish Meetings.
- 5 During the year Sue Dean and Graham Morris resigned and have been ably replaced by Cllr Geoff Smith for Wasperton and Cllr Ted Scrannage for Sherbourne who are both already playing a very active role in JPC activities.
- 6 Barford Shop and Post Office In the summer we were pleased to learn that a suitable tenant had been found and eagerly awaited the opening. There was significant support from locals; however promised developments failed to materialize and customers became more despondent and had to continue shopping outside our parish areas. Eventually the shop closed summarily and there are ongoing efforts to find a suitable replacement tenant or purchaser. The shop and house are currently on the market and subject to a planning application to add some office units at the rear of the property. Meanwhile there are also moves afoot to launch a community venture to reopen or replace the facility elsewhere in the village, although prospects for regaining a Post Office are very limited. The old butcher's shop which was empty for more than two years has been granted planning permission for change of use to residential and the conversion is currently underway.
- 7 Barford Bypass The project is finally truly underway and the massive earthworks give a clear indication of its scale, although progress does seem to be swift. The liaison group, consisting of members of the JPC from the three villages, Barford Residents' Association and the elected representatives, along with WCC officers and the contractors, continues to meet to help ensure any problems during the build period are resolved as easily as possible.
- 8 A46 Sherbourne Bypass Proposals to improve the Longbridge J15 area with an A46 bypass were poorly received at the 2005 Sherbourne Parish Meeting and this was then replaced summarily by a completely different scheme bringing the A46 Bypass route nearer to Sherbourne but removing all traffic from the old A46 immediately adjacent to the village. The proposal was implemented to avoid disturbance of bats found on the original route and to keep the scheme within the allocated budget. The JPC sits on a Liaison Group for the scheme and has strongly represented local views and achieved a few small concessions to date, including a proposed public meeting to be held on Thursday 27th May in Sherbourne Village Hall.

- 9 Barford Byelaws After a long development period byelaws were adopted by the JPC in July 2005 and were finally enacted on 4th October. Signs have been placed at either end of the allotment and Playing Fields areas and on Barford Village Green. So far they have not needed to be invoked.
- 10 Barford Parish Plan This year the project was finally completed and the Barford Parish Plan document was published and circulated to all homes in the parish. The JPC has established a Working Party consisting of all Barford councillors and is working towards implementing or promoting as much of the plan as possible, as soon as is reasonably possible. The BPP committee will keep a watching brief on developments but have meanwhile moved on to considering a Village Design Statement to assist in future planning in the area.
- 11 Play Areas These are under constant review and checked at least weekly by a Parish Councillor. The surface under all the equipment has been thoroughly overhauled and the access gates on the children's area at Barford Playing Fields have been replaced and are now an "outward-opening, self-closing, dog-resistant design" as approved by ROSPA.
- 12 Skateboard Area This continues to generate comment over noise and youth activity, and we continue to try to find ways to limit this impact on residents, albeit with only limited success so far.
- 13 The Boundary Commission Changes to WCC electoral wards put all three of our villages together with other more rural parishes (Bishops Tachbrook, Hampton Magna, Hampton on the Hill and Norton Lindsey) and we now have a single councillor, Les Caborn to represent our interests at county level.
- 14 Police Matters Our police cover has been patchy over the last year and there have been many instances where the service provision has been considerably less than might be desired. After a period without a CBO we were pleased to hear that PC Emma Matthews was appointed to our area in September and we look forward to working with her.
- 15 On Planning specifically:
- 15.1 The Oldham's' site was the subject of a mixed use planning application with part commercial B1 office use, part affordable housing and part market homes. This was approved by the WDC planners but called in by the Secretary of State as the decision was outside both local and national policies. The JPC supported the proposal, largely to get the affordable homes, but also to keep/gain employment uses and has undertaken significant lobbying to ensure that if the application is approved there will be clear priority for affordable homes for individuals with Barford connections and secondarily those with Sherbourne or Wasperton connections, ahead of all other applicants. The JPC position was ably presented at the Public Inquiry by Cllr Rob Mulgrue and we currently await the final decision.
- 15.2 An application to extend the facilities of the Glebe Hotel and incorporate one of the Church Lane residences was objected to by the JPC on the grounds of over development, traffic issues and unneighbourliness, but was eventually approved by the planners at WDC.
- 15.3 Land surrounding Barford House remained a major interest, and the agent staged a public exhibition with a scale model in July. There was much interest and a full spectrum of opinion. Since then the agent has assembled a focus group to consider possibilities for the site and we await further progress, if any, given that there is currently a moratorium on new development in WDC area.
- 16 Traffic Calming in Barford The lighting upgrade on the High Street chicane and narrowing has recently been implemented, along with replacement of damaged bollards.
- 17 Village Halls The three village halls have again been supported by JPC grants - £400 Barford, £1000 Sherbourne and £1000 Wasperton – although members have again suggested that they would wish to see more active management and fund raising taking place in Wasperton to make their hall more viable.
- 18 Allotments The JPC allotments have now been cleared and ploughed and it is hoped to get them let and into production for the current season.

- 19 All councillors have attended many meetings and served their electors well.
- 20 The Clerk/RFO has as always borne the majority of the work and pressure. Many thanks to our excellent Clerk/RFO, Mr James Johnson.

Constabulary Matters

- 21 PC Emma Matthews was introduced to the meeting. Having described her role and working patterns she answered questions on the following:
- 21.1 Theft from parked and locked cars was the prevalent offence in the village. She urges motorists not to leave valuable in their unattended cars.
- 21.2 The burglary at Barford School had yielded no forensic evidence and the investigation was at a dead end.
- 21.3 It was difficult to report overall crime detection rates to the JPC because some of the cases were not dealt with by her.
- 21.4 The recent deployment of the police helicopter near Barford had been to search for a missing child.
- 21.5 She could assist in deterring speeding in Barford by using a speed camera and issuing tickets.
- 21.6 Parking on the pavement was an offence but, in the interests of maintaining traffic flows through the village, she was prepared to condone it on Bridge Street always provided that sufficient space was left for the safe passage of a wheelchair or a children's double buggy.
- 21.7 Telephone contact with the police should be as follows:
- Emergencies – 999
 - Crime and nuisance – 01926 415000 (and obtain an incident number)
 - Administrative and non-urgent – the CBO's mobile telephone 07931 328540

Report by Cllr L Caborn (Warwickshire County Council)

- 22 Cllr Caborn described the reorganization of the WCC under a new chief executive. One of the priorities was on communication with parish councils. The reorganization entailed certain amalgamation and relocations of departments.
- 23 He spoke of the Barford Bypass under construction and of the proposed improvement to Junction 15 of the M40 by diverting the A46 around it, and the impact this would have on surrounding villages.
- 24 He stressed the need for improved neighbourhood policing and announced extra resources of four constables and a sergeant for the CBO function. He reminded the meeting of the amalgamation of police forces taking effect on 1 Apr 07.
- 25 Reminding the meeting of the proposals to amalgamate ambulance service he said that the need was not evident because the present arrangements delivers a proper level of service.

Report by Cllr Mrs C Sawdon (Warwick District Council)

- 26 Cllr Mrs Sawdon began her presentation by listing the functions of the WDC; these included:
- Planning
 - Rubbish collection
 - Recycling
 - Street lighting
 - Housing
 - Assisted travel
- 27 On planning; she assured the meeting that she was constantly alert to the threat to the tranquility of the village which excessive development of the Glebe Hotel threatened.

- 28 She was a powerful advocate of neighbourhood policing and lamented the practice of local police being withdrawn to deal with major incidents elsewhere. She endorsed the CBO's advice to report crime and nuisance and to obtain an incident number; crime reduction was the responsibility of all.
- 29 She was actively involved in the deliberations about traffic on the A46.
- 30 She was opposed to the change in the Assisted Travel Scheme, withdrawing taxi tokens and replacing them with bus passes. This had little merit for inhabitants of villages which had poor or no bus services.
- 31 She informed the meeting of proposals to change the frequency of rubbish collection to fortnightly which she considered ill-advised.
- 32 On recycling; she was told that the Leamington waste disposal site would not accept certain types of plastic despite publicity that all types were accepted. [Cllr Caborn promised to take up this matter].
- 33 On planning; she was asked why the WDC planning committee appeared often to grant planning permission even when it had been opposed by the JPC. She responded that the committee was guided by the advice of the planning officers who were in turn interpreting planning law and policy.

Barford Parish Plan

- 34 Mr J Barrott reported that the action plan had been sent to WCC for adoption by the Area Committee.
- 35 It had not proved possible to identify any department at WDC which acknowledged an interest in it. [Cllr Mrs Sawdon promised to take up this matter].
- 36 The next phase was to produce a village design statement which, once approved, would be the source of supplementary planning guidance. To achieve this, advice and assistance from WDC was required.
- 37 Asked what hopes he had that a village design statement would influence the WDC planning department, he responded that he did not yet know.

Village Initiatives

- 38 The Barford Parish Plan had identified certain activities which might be revived or created. The Chairman circulated forms asking for volunteers to take part in:
- Creating a parish directory
 - Reactivating Neighbourhood Watch
 - Starting a recreation or sports group
 - Forming a footpaths development group
 - Establishing a village pride group
 - Establishing a youth club
 - Drawing up a village design statement
 - Investigating the reopening of the Barford shop or post office or both
- 39 The last initiative caused resentment because, had the assurances given to the parish meeting in 2005 by Mr and Mrs Bussey been fulfilled, there would have been no requirement for it. As it was, through a perceived lack of drive and determination, the village was left with neither shop nor post office and the failure to reopen them had considerably diminished the prospects of doing so in future. Feelings ran very high and it was agreed that a letter should be sent to Mr and Mrs Bussey expressing outrage that matters should have been allowed to reach this sorry state.

Barford Residents' Association (BRA)

- 40 Mr M Lyon (Treasurer BRA) said that the role of BRA was to fight major issues affecting the village but to be independent of formally elected bodies. Nevertheless it operated in collaboration

with the JPC and welcomed members of the JPC to its two-monthly management committee meeting. Membership of BRA was automatic to all Barford electors.

- 41 Current issues:
- Closure of Barford Shop and Post Office
 - The Oldham's' development
 - The Barford House development
 - The Barford Bypass

42 The next meeting is on 19 Jun 06.

Barford Relief in Need Charity (BRINC)

43 Mr J Furness (Chairman BRINC) briefed electors on the role of the charity.

44 BRINC's charitable purpose was to provide such things as transport and appliances for those in need in the village.

45 Publicity was through notice boards, mail drops and the web-site. There was a simple application procedure and the applicant received a visit where the need was assessed.

46 He urged anybody who knew of a deserving case to contact BRINC.

Barford St Peter's C of E Primary School

47 Mrs A Fawcett (Chairman of Governors) gave a resumé of the school's activities. It had been a busy and productive year.

48 The school with 120 pupils was oversubscribed and there was a waiting list. It was within the top 20% of the Key Stage 2 data

49 Questioned on the possible impact of the Oldham's development on demand for additional places, she explained the school's admission policy but stated there could be no guarantee that places would be available for all applicants from Barford. The Chairman added that if the Oldham's project came to fruition WCC would receive a sum of money from the developers which might be used to expand the school's facilities but there was no obligation for the money to be spent in this manner and, in any event, 10% of any cost would have to be found by the school.

Other Matters

50 The Chairman (in his capacity as Chairman of the JPC) was asked to explain the increase in the parish precept which he did.

51 An offer from Mr Simon McVeigh to establish a Parents'/Guardians' group to add to the "Village Initiatives" (see above) was gladly accepted.

52 It was reported that the timing of the lights at the pedestrian crossing in Barford needed adjustment. [Cllr Caborn will deal with this].

53 The chicane at the pedestrian bridge over the M40 is too narrow. [Cllr Caborn will deal with this].

Appointment of Chairman for 2006-7

54 Mr J V Murphy was proposed and seconded, and in the absence of other nominations, was elected Chairman for the ensuing year.

Closure

55 There being no other business the meeting was closed at 9:25pm.