

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE PARISH OF WASPERTON
HELD AT WASPERTON VILLAGE HALL
ON MONDAY 18 APRIL 2011 AT 7:30PM**

Present M J Metcalfe (Chairman)
 Cllr J V Murphy (Chairman of the Joint Parish Council)
 Cllr L Caborn (WCC)
 Twenty-seven Wasperton Electors

Minutes

- 1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 April 2010 were approved as a true record.
- 2 Matters Arising:
- 2.1 Minute 11. The Chairman confirmed that WCC had responded quickly to reports of potholes made through its website.
- 2.2 Minute 14. The compilation of a voluntary email distribution list for Wasperton had not been pursued, in favour of the more inclusive alternative of delivering agendas and minutes to households by hand.

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

- 3 Cllr Murphy's report is at Annex A.

Neighbourhood Watch

- 4 Mr Jim Gilligan delivered his report.
- 4.1 He prefaced his remarks with the observation that he had now been in post for 21 years. When he started there had been 21 houses and two farms; now there were 50 houses and no farms. Ten percent of the houses had security gates, there was no through traffic in the village and the arrest record of miscreants in the village was good. Little wonder then that Wasperton was a serene, quiet and crime free place.
- 4.2 PCSO Ellie Jones had joined the police team and she patrolled the village in daylight although seldom seeing people.
- 4.3 The usual warning about telephone and internet scams was repeated as was the caution about callers without identification.
- 4.4 He concluded by saying that rapid and widespread communication about security and crime depended upon computers. He described himself as an "IT-phobe" having no computer nor the wish to own one. Consequently he wondered if it were not time for him to hand over his Neighbourhood Watch duties to a suitable successor. There being no immediate volunteers, the Chairman suggested that this be discussed after the meeting.

Parochial Church Council

- 5 Mr David Hunt reminded the meeting that Wasperton church had been designed by the celebrated Sir George Gilbert Scott and had windows by Pugin. It behoved the village to treasure this architectural gem and maintain it at the highest standard. In pursuit of that aim it had not only been replastered but also redecorated.
- 6 It was also intended (funds permitting) to:
 - Plaster behind the altar and remove the curtains
 - Move heaters from the back of the church into the south aisle

- Tackle the condensation problem
- Install new lighting

7 He thanked the many voluntary helpers for their efforts in fundraising and other activities.

8 He thanked the JPC for its generous grants to maintain the churchyard.

Village Hall

9 Mr Neil Thurley explained that the Village Hall was in the domain of the parish church and that it was run by two sub-committees of the PCC.

10 The first organized events and raised funds. Mrs Phil Derbyshire explained that a questionnaire had been circulated to all houses in the village asking what type of event would be most welcomed. By a wide margin village fêtes were the most popular , followed by jumble sales and fish and chip evenings. More events were planned.

11 The second dealt with the maintenance and structure of the hall and Mr Thurley said that the current top priority was the refurbishment of the kitchen to bring it to the required health and safety standard.

12 Recent achievements were:

- Roof repair
- Purchase extra small tables
- New shelving in porch
- Classroom divider removed (revealing the attractive roof trusses)

13 During the removal of the classroom divider a board was found with the penciled inscription "This partition was erected on 24th August 1914 by Green, Partridge and Caldecot". It is being kept as a memento.

14 He thanked the JPC for its generous grants to maintain the village hall

Other Bodies

15 Without calling for a report on them, the Chairman mentioned the activities of the Art and Allotment groups.

16 Mr John Wright offered special thanks to the community for its support for the rededication of the Wasperton War Memorial and thanked the Chairman of Barford, Sherbourne and Wasperton Joint Parish Council for his presence.

17 Mr Wright went on to catalogue what he termed "small successes":

- The bus stop
- Lamp standards maintained in good working order
- Prompt attention to pothole repair by WCC
- The promise of a traffic survey to prove Wasperton's need for a speed limit within the village

Report by Cllr L Caborn (Warwickshire County Council)

18 Cllr Caborn said that in his view WCC with its present leadership had been a good council for two years.

18.1 It was being restructured from top down:

- Three directors to go
- The council organized into three business groups (from seven)
- The number of heads of services had been reduced to 17 from 27
- Reduced overheads by £60m
- One complete layer of management removed

- 18.2 Concurrently there was an analysis of the property portfolio with the intention of rationalizing the use of buildings in WCC's possession, guided by the notion that Warwick, being the County Town, should remain the focus of WCC activity.

He listed some of his personal achievements in office:

- Chairman Adult Health Scrutiny
- The additional grant from central government of £2.6m for pot-hole repair.
- The procurement of funds to ensure the safety of junctions on the Barford Bypass (with £20k for Wasperton)

- 18.3 Community Forums were to replace Area Committees

- 18.4 With regards to the extraction of gravel in the area, Cllr Caborn said that he had heard nothing and was unaware of any movement on the issue.

Planning and Environmental Matters

- 19 The Chairman sought clarification on the fate of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) under the aegis of which WDC had been obliged to identify locations for the construction of 10,800 houses in the next 15 years.
- 20 Cllr Caborn (noting that no WDC councillor was present and offering his knowledge of that role) said that under the new government the RSS had been abolished, together with the housebuilding quota. However, WDC would still need to produce a Local Plan, and an early development stage of this was out for consultation now.
- 21 The current consultation document invited comments on three growth scenarios, each having different implications for community development over the next 25 years. WDC was at pains to discover the "young" opinion since it was people of that generation who would, for better or worse, be living in the environment the Local Plan would fashion.
- 22 Although quotas would not be handed down in the manner of RSS, there remained a need for additional housing. WDC needs for example 1,000 social houses of which 300 had already been approved. The paradox to be resolved was that people need houses and supporting infrastructure, but the associated development is not necessarily welcomed by the existing community.
- 23 Cllr Murphy confirmed that the JPC would discuss and respond to the Consultation document in due course.

Appointment of Chairman for 2010-11

- 24 Mr M Metcalfe was appointed Chairman for the ensuing year.

Closure of the Meeting

- 25 There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:32pm, thanking those who had attended.

ANNEX A

Annual Report of Chairman of Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton Joint Parish Council

2010-2011 has again been a busy year – 9 routine JPC meetings, numerous Planning meetings, 3 Special JPC Meetings, numerous Working Party or subcommittee meetings and the three Annual Parish Meetings.

A46 Sherbourne Bypass is now complete and seems to be working well. Predicted increases of rat-running through Sherbourne have materialized to some degree and this combined with our ongoing concerns over all of our villages' junctions onto the A429 has led us to continue our pressure to get these matters reviewed. Early in 2011 we heard that we had been successful in getting some considerable funding to start resolving Sherbourne village traffic issues, Barford bypass access junction issues and problems at the Wasperton junction. This is most welcome and whilst probably not sufficient to produce dream solutions it should certainly quantify the issues and start to fund some of the solutions.

Barford Village Design Statement was adopted in year 2009-2010 and during the last year has been quoted and acted upon to some good degree when Planning Applications have been considered at WDC. It is obvious however that its use earlier in the planning stage is not happening and it should be promoted at every opportunity to help guide emerging plans and designs.

JPC and WDC funding have assisted the **Glebe Hotel** to undertake remedial works to the ailing Cedar of Lebanon tree. These have been carried out fully and confirmed the situation to be even worse than feared with the top layer of soil totally impacted and bonded. This has now been remedied using air-spades and there has been proper mulching and watering with parking now made more remote by the new surrounding bed wall. We will have to wait and see if and how well it recovers.

Barford Heritage Group unveiled their magnificent oak tree notice board on Barford Village Green in June and it has been much admired by locals and visitors alike.

Dogs – Dog fouling remains an ongoing problem and although much less than in years past is still causing concern. There are strict rules and severe fines for offenders and the Dog wardens promise zero-tolerance when folk are caught and dog owners can now encouraged to put their pets' waste in the standard waste or litter bins. The problem of fouling and control is so significant that WDC are looking to impose quite draconian measures but it is difficult to see how these might be implemented in our rural locations – watch this space...

Inconsiderate, and often illegal, parking around the Bremridge Close and Wasperton Lane junctions continues to be an important issue and consultation is underway moving towards implementing formal restrictions in the problem locations.

All three village halls have this year been supported by JPC grants with £940 to each and the JPC also gave grant support towards maintenance of each of the three churchyards.

Most of the major **planning consultations** that were worrying us last year – Minerals and Core strategy - have gone quiet in the wake of the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies by the new coalition government - but they haven't gone away and will re-emerge as new Local Plans, but they will take time and we have every opportunity to fully engage in shaping our District Council area in ways that we think will be appropriate.

Affordable Housing – We have continued to work to identify the most appropriate site and consensus currently comes down to land to the south side of Wasperton Lane and outline plans and negotiations are currently underway with the Rural Housing Enabler.

The threat of development on **land around Barford House** has remained topical again this year following the Barford Parish Meeting's rejection of Sharba's conclusions from their own surveys. Barford Residents Association was resurrected and a very able team oversaw the production of a truly independent assessment of village opinion. The result was clear although not everyone is happy or convinced so we must wait and see what follows for that site.

The opportunity has appeared to acquire a plot of **riverside land** left over from the Barford Bypass construction and plans are moving to develop an orchard , wild flower meadow and canoe launching point there with public access. The site is currently quite overgrown but the views are magnificent and will give our villages important new access to our river. Although it will require considerable self-help labour we are also fortunate to have secured LEADER funding for some of the more costly and specialist elements.

The three villages were given the opportunity recently to take part in the “Exercise Watermark” a nationwide flood defence exercise. Barford staged an evening “table top” meeting where we went through various scenarios, where, whilst finding ourselves relatively well-prepared, we identified measures which could be improved to assist us in dealing with any significant emergency or disaster which might just happen without warning.

Our parish councillors have played a significant part in developing Locality Community Forums into a much more useful body than they have been to date but there is still a long way to go before they achieve the potential which was been promised, even before the Localism Bill began to emerge.

All councillors have attended many meetings and generally have served their electors extremely well, working as a strong team with James Johnson our excellent Clerk/RFO. Many thanks to all for their input. Some have done much more than the expected minimum and these are particularly deserving of our community’s gratitude. Sadly several have indicated that they will not be standing for election for a further term and we will miss their contributions but will welcome new members to join the team in the coming year.

JVM

15/03/2011

Councillor attendance records:

2010-2011 year

Name	Meetings	Present	%
Cllr Mrs P W Barlow	11	11	100%
Cllr M P Byerley	11	3	27%
Cllr R Clay	11	9	82%
Cllr Mrs D S Cobb	11	5	45%
Cllr Mrs M A Hayward	11	9	82%
Cllr D C Morrow	11	10	91%
Cllr R G Mulgrue	11	10	91%
Cllr J V Murphy	11	11	100%
Cllr A B Rhead	11	8	73%
Cllr W Worrall	11	9	82%
Cllr Mrs A Gordon	11	11	100%
Cllr Mrs P L Johnston	10	3	30%
Cllr Mrs P W Wilkinson	11	8	73%
Cllr Dr M J Metcalfe	11	8	73%
Cllr N F J Thurley	11	9	82%
Cllr J T Wright	11	9	82%