

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF  
THE PARISH OF WASPERTON  
HELD AT WASPERTON VILLAGE HALL  
ON MONDAY 27 APR 15 AT 7:30PM**

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

**Minutes.**

- 1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 Apr 14 were approved as a true record. There were no matters arising

**Report by Chairman of the Joint Parish Council.**

- 2 Cllr Murphy reported:

2014-2015 has yet again been a busy year – 9 routine JPC meetings, numerous Planning meetings, three Annual Parish Meetings one Special Meeting, numerous Working Party meetings and several public “events”.

**Difficult financial times** continue and all levels of government continue strive to achieve best value and minimize service reductions. Last year we took the brave step of a 33% increase in the parish element of the Council Tax. Of course 33% of a modest amount was a very small real increase - but it has allowed us to do much of what we would wish and importantly has allowed us to produce a balanced budget this year whilst avoiding any further increase on your parish element of the Council Tax charges.

**All three village halls** have this year been supported by JPC grants with £1140 towards general maintenance each and the JPC also gave grant support of £432 towards maintenance of each of the three churchyards. In a new initiative the JPC also determined to financially support the Barford Scout Hut with a £570 grant in recognition of the excellent role it plays in accommodating our community well beyond its initial “uniformed groups” remit.

This has been a really, really busy year for the **Playing Fields Working Party**. A full and very professional business plan has been produced and is being used to apply for funding from many major bodies with some considerable success. We held an Open Day consultation in March, further consultation at the School Fete and later in the Memorial Hall and presented final options at Barford Village Show on August Bank Holiday. This was then followed by a “Play Drop-In” over the weekend of 6/7<sup>th</sup> December when we presented our “preferred provider’s” proposed scheme. This was greeted with near universal delight and the ever-present question of “when”. The question remains, but as funding proceeds it all gets clearer. Currently the scheme is seen in three parts and we really need to see a way of funding all three parts before we can trigger any start, but the ultimate answer must be “perhaps” in 2015 but hopefully certainly all completed before the end of 2016.

The **New Local Plan** has continued to be a major theme over the year - and after a bumpy ride over housing numbers (12900) and G&T sites the Draft Local Plan was finally adopted by WDC in January and is currently awaiting Examination In Public.

After two years of hard work and consultation the **Barford Neighbourhood Development Plan** group published the Draft Plan and this was circulated to every household and other interested parties in “Consultation Summary” format with the full version available on-line or directly to those that wished it. Minor amendments did come forward and the final “Draft Plan” has now been submitted to WDC for conformity checking and further consultation prior to going to “examination” and hopefully coming back for a Referendum, to finally become “planning law”. All a very long and difficult process but thanks to the hard work of many we will end up with a useful document to control and direct any development in the parish in the future.

And, just in case that was not enough of plans - we have had to consider the tail-end stages of county wide waste proposals - and we have the return of the **County Minerals Plan** to look forward to. The former has minimal implications for us but of course the latter effectively surrounds and divides our parishes so we will be taking a very keen interest.

**Affordable Housing** – We continued to liaise with WRCC but as the developer pressure has become so great it would seem we will now get more Affordable Housing than is required for our parishes' immediate needs and that the extra units will be occupied by those in need across the WDC area. We are hopeful that WDC will ensure that they remain preferentially available to those with local connections in perpetuity.

The revised proposals for 58 homes on **land around Barford House** remained high profile and having been refused, on similar grounds to the original but additionally on failing to meet the mix indicated by our HNS, went to a four day Appeal at the end of September. It was further complicated by duplicate and simultaneous applications to demolish parts of the front wall on safety grounds, one of which demolition applications went to appeal at the same time. Both Appeals were dismissed and the landowner has been required to reinstate the wall. Safety fencing was erected around the wall in question, completely obstructing the pavement on the east side of Wellesbourne Road and has only recently been removed and a resolution to restore the wall put in place by WDC.

A revised proposal for 60 houses on the site of the now closed **Sherbourne Nurseries** was also the subject of a further Planning Application by Taylor Wimpey with access via demolition of the Police House. This site which had been agreed acceptable in negotiations on the WDC New Local Plan and within the development of the Draft BNDP - has now been granted permission and preliminary works are currently underway.

An application to build 32 homes on land between Wilkins Close and the river came and went - but is expected to return in the very near future, apparently with strong officer support for approval – watch this space.

The 40mph limit on Watery Lane, Sherbourne, remains controversial and the WCC has been asked to review the situation.

Having secured funding support from both Barford Community Charity and Warwick Rural West Community Forum we have taken advantage of the WDC lighting improvement scheme and replaced many of the ageing lights in both Barford and Sherbourne along with installing some much needed additional ones in Sherbourne.

We were able to agree to add an extra name to Barford War Memorial this year – Harry Conlon, who had spent time in Barford and had somehow been overlooked on previous occasions. The name will be engraved and painted as soon as weather is suitable.

Councillors have served their electors extremely well, working as a strong team with James Johnson our excellent Clerk/RFO. Over the year we have seen some changes in Barford Councillors. Early in the year Scott Coop resigned due to work conflicting with meeting times and recently Ian Boak resigned due to work pressures. In the mid-year Richard Shotton-Oza left us due to family pressures. Meanwhile Harry Gadsden, who cut his teeth on the Playing Fields Working Party where he has done sterling work on our funding applications, joined us as a full JPC member in July. Meanwhile the bulk of the work has had to fall on the stalwarts able to make meetings and dedicate considerable amounts of extra time to pursue our various activities and other commitments. Many thanks to all for their input.

This is of course an election year and in May we all step down as parish councilors. Some, hopefully many, will stand again to serve our community. There is however a need for more members to get us up to full strength and there is of course the benefit of new blood. The job is relatively easy but it does require interest and commitment. It is definitely not just a case of turning up for a monthly meeting – there is plenty to do between meetings. Obviously plenty of background to assimilate and then we need to keep up to date with current and emerging

legislation – we cannot afford to be out of date or act illegally. But if you have the interest and commitment and can dedicate some time, do come and join us – it is actually very rewarding.

Councillor attendance records:

2014-15	Meetings	Present	%
Cllr Mrs W BARLOW	10	8	80%
Cllr R CLAY	10	10	100%
Cllr Mrs J L LONGFIELD	10	9	90%
Cllr P A P MORRIS	10	6	60%
Cllr J V MURPHY	10	9	90%
Cllr A RHEAD	7	3	43%
Cllr H GADSDEN	6	6	100%
Cllr Mrs A GORDON	10	10	100%
Cllr Mrs NEWSOME	10	9	90%
Cllr M J METCALFE	10	7	70%
Cllr N F J THURLEY	10	10	100%
Cllr J T WRIGHT	10	10	100%
Cllr J M HAWKESFORD	10	8	80%
Cllr T MERRYGOLD	10	8	80%

### Report by County Councillor

3 Cllr Caborn reported:

Budbrooke Division: Parishes of Barford, Bishops Tachbrook , Hampton Magna, Hampton on the Hill Norton Lindsey. Sherbourne, Wasperton

Budget ---- Following on from last year's 4 year financial plan, WCC set a budget at 1.9% increase headlines within the budget put an additional £2million into safer environments around schools to be spent over the next 2 years and I will be part of the team dealing with it. This is in addition to our dangerous school routes funding and will work together. All schools will be assessed and works done in partnership with schools.

We also put £4million to changing to LED street lighting to increase savings over the £600k we have saved by turning off lights. There does not appear to be any change in crime through this measure.

The formerly money allocated by area to Districts has been divided between Councillors for highway safety works. This gives me £32k to spend on capital funding. However this is top sliced to deal with particular safety concerns in Warwick District area including Watery Lane. The balance of £26k is for my discretionary use but I have schemes and bids from residents and parishes amounting to £97k before I allocate for rural gullies additional cleaning out to help recent road flooding.

In addition I have put £4k into the Warwick West community forum grants fund.

We have won the contract for supplying Audit services to Worcestershire County Council as part of our work to obtain outside contracts on a commercial basis.

WCC continues to increase its participation and influence in the working of the Local Enterprise Partnership to gain economic growth and funding for Warwickshire. We do not support the moves to build a large economic area based on Birmingham as our growth area based on data and facts covers from Leicester to Banbury/Oxford. We are looking at working with our Shire Neighbours as we already do with Coventry in the joint LEP.

Highways are going out to tender on a contractor for our highways work as Balfour Beatty do not wish to exercise their option to extend the existing contract

I thought I would use this opportunity to run through some of the areas I cover in my role as cabinet member for Community Safety:

- Fire and Rescue continues to spend around 60% of its time effecting rescue. This means the reorganisation going on is vital to ensure full cover to our residents and to maintain full training for our firefighters. Projects being carried out to achieve this are a new hot fire trading facility, refurbishment of HQ, Introduction of day crew plus at Alcester and Stratford .new fire delivery unit at Gaydon, all within this year.
- Trading Standards--- very successful with national recognition for fake cosmetics being imported via Coventry Airport, Wellesbourne Market goods, Holiday time share scams and prosecutions in Warwickshire for faulty garage work and unsafe used cars.
- Flooding. As WCC is now the Statuary Flood Authority( SFA) we are working with communities to help them prevent flooding by local intervention .We also are the statutory consultee with the planning authorities .We have also secured approx £6m for flood schemes from EA?
- Priority Families unit are nationally top of the results tables meaning Warwickshire has been awarded a further 4years funding to expand the service. In the past 4years we are credited with turning around 1000thousand families with major problems with crime, school attendance and unemployment. Alongside this the Youth Justice Service we provide continues to have one of the best rates of stopping reoffending nationally.
- Drugs and Alcohol teams work with people with all alcohol related problems and drug usage as well as working with Trading Standards on prosecuting retailers who break the law. 6---Road Safety operates speed cameras on WCC controlled roads working with the Police .We also carry out road safety in schools and do driver training for private companies alongside our Speed awareness work with drivers. We support villages in their own speed recording work.

Unfortunately road accidents have increased over the last year in line with national trends, including motor cyclists so we are relaunching our be-aware campaigns.

Following the Boundary commissions review of WCC for the 2017 elections this division will have added to it Hatton and Shrewley as it has been declared as overrepresented on numbers of residents per councillor.

Finally I have arranged a one to one meeting with the new Chief Constable and will be expressing to him my concerns on the above and particular rural issues about policing, speeding etc.

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

- 4 The Chairman reported:
- The post of Coordinator remained unfilled and until a volunteer was found, he would assume the role although the duties were minimal.
  - The present arrangements appeared to be sufficient; crime was at a very low ebb.
  - There had been one case of theft of heating oil.
  - The warning mechanism is mainly by email; additions to the list were welcome and he would manage it
  - Those on the list were in receipt of the Police Newsletter

### **Report by the Parochial Church Council**

- 5 Mr Carl Smith reported:
- The repair to the church floor in the north aisle has been completed.
  - An Archdeacon's faculty has been sought for a new lighting scheme.
  - A new ventilation scheme is being investigated and costed.

- The Open Gardens event on 1 Jun 14 raised over £3.5k.

### **Report of Village Hall Property Committee 2014**

6 Mr Neil Thurley reported:

Last year I reported to this meeting, after nearly 4 years work in fund-raising and making grant applications, that £15,000 was now available for the Phase 1 essential works necessary to make the Village Hall compliant with current legislation for Public Buildings.

These works comprised: - Complete refurbishment of the Kitchen, equipment and floor, making Porch/Hall and Hall/Kitchen steps safety compliant, upgrading of electrical installation, provision of emergency lighting, provision of fire alarm system, renewal of obsolete fluorescent lighting in Main Hall, and provision of dimmable up-lighters in Main Hall appropriate for social functions. It was anticipated that these Phase 1 works could be carried out for £13,000.

When the works commenced in July it became immediately obvious that we would be getting a smart, clean and hygienic Kitchen, but this would make the whole of the rest of the building look even more shabby in comparison.

Favourable tenders and funds available enabled these other areas to be improved. The whole of the building was 'deep-cleaned' by a specialist cleaning company, concentrating on flooring, toilet fittings, and washing down all walls, windows, doors, ceilings and roof trusses.

Where necessary internal and external repairs and decorations were carried out, new signage and equipment provided for the Toilets, and all Kitchen equipment, crockery and cutlery replaced with new matching items. (It had been the original intention to re-use most of the existing), including the new provision of a hot-cupboard. A new flexible demountable picture hanging system has been provided in the Hall, replacing over 50 sharp hazardous nails previously used, thus removing a serious Health and Safety issue.

The 2014 year-end Accounts show expenditure totalling £15,952.70 was incurred on Kitchen Expenditure and Repairs (£9,759.13 + £6,193.57 respectively), however, an allowance of approximately £1,000 to £1,500 needs to be made for maintenance and repairs not carried out in previous years, and more sensibly executed whilst the building was closed, so it is pleasing to record that the Phase 1 and considerable other further improvements were completed on time and within budget.

My thanks are due to the Property Committee for their support and help, particular thanks to Nick Chambers for considerable technical input, the Amenities Committee for their tireless fund-raising, and to all the Contractors who worked to programme, showing much respect for the building,

### **Report by the Village Hall Amenities Committee**

7 The following report on fundraising was delivered by Mrs Diana Phillips:

- Sale in September.
- Quiz Night in November.
- The 100 Club is actively seeking more participants.

### **New Local Plan**

8 Cllr Caborn confirmed that the New Local Plan would soon be examined by an Inspector who was likely to concentrate his attention on the following key requirements:

- That in drawing up the Plan, WDC had properly consulted neighbouring districts and towns and had incorporated the results of this liaison.
- That the gross housing numbers used in the Plan were correctly calculated.
- That the gross housing numbers reflected the forecast economic growth in Warwick District.

### **Gypsy & Traveller Sites**

- 9 Cllr Caborn confirmed that the sites proposed in the New Local Plan were:
- The Brakes football ground.
  - A plot of land in Greys Mallory owned by Warwickshire County Council and used by the police.
- 10 If however these were not acceptable then the search would continue (without a satisfactory resolution the New Local Plan would not be approved) and would extend to new areas not excluding green belt land.
- 11 The original proposed sites in Barford would not be reconsidered and compulsory purchase of land would not be employed.

### **Appointment of Chairman for 2015-16**

- 12 Mr Mike Metcalfe was appointed Chairman for the ensuing year.

### **Closure of the Meeting**

- 13 There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:15pm, thanking those who had attended.