

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE PARISH OF BARFORD
HELD AT BARFORD MEMORIAL HALL
ON TUESDAY 15TH APRIL 2008 AT 7.30PM**

Present J V Murphy (Chairman)
Cllr L Caborn (WCC)
Twenty-one Barford electors

Minutes

- 1 The minutes of the annual meeting, held on 2nd April 2007, were confirmed as a true record subject to minor amendments to the text. There were no matters arising.
- 2 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)

- 3 The report is at Annex A to these minutes.

Report by Cllr L Caborn (Warwickshire County Council)

- 4 Cllr Caborn summarized the report at Annex B, emphasizing those parts of particular relevance to Barford.
- 5 He raised the following additional points:
 - 5.1 He was making efforts to ensure that the footpath from Barford to Bishops Tachbrook could be reopened in a realistic timeframe.
 - 5.2 Following the speed review of the Warwickshire's A and B roads he had achieved a 50mph limit on the A429 from the Longbridge roundabout to the first turn to Barford.
 - 5.3 He reported that his efforts to ensure the provision of a central refuge for pedestrians and cyclists where the proposed cycleway crossed the A429 at Sherbourne had been frustrated by local objections but that he would attempt to have the decision to remove the refuge from the plan reversed.
 - 5.4 He spoke of the Warwickshire County Council's locality agenda with Warwick District Council.
 - 5.5 He announced that first place in the Civic Awards had gone to the Barford Village Shop Group.

Report by Cllr A B Rhead (Warwick District Council)

- 6 Cllr Rhead reminded the meeting that Warwick District Council had contributed some £70k to the Barford Village Shop project.
- 7 He praised the decision of WDC to purchase Oakley Woods as a public amenity.
- 8 He spoke of the importance of the post office to the village and of measures to prevent its closure.
- 9 On the matter of the new waste collection system; he acknowledged the teething problems and apologized for them, but rather than take the time of the meeting to hear verbal comments he distributed a questionnaire and urged that people should let him know of continuing problems.
- 10 He was critical of the police presence in the village. In his view the story was "Increasing cost with decreasing visibility".

- 11 The footpath from Barford Church to Hareway Lane which was prone to flooding had received his attention. Attempts to alleviate the problem were hampered by the presence of ridge and furrow in adjoining land. Nevertheless there was to be an inspection by WDC's Footpaths Officer on 16th April when a solution would be agreed.
- 12 Finally he spoke of the "bottom up" model of local government in which parish councils would assume a growing importance and urged his audience to be aware of their importance.

Police Matters

- 13 No police representative was available to attend the meeting but the written report at Annex C had been received.

Reports on Village Activities

- 14 Barford Parish Plan (John Murphy)
- The Chairman gave an update on progress with the plan
- 17 Barford Shop and Post Office (Kirsty Healey)
- Total of £203k raised
 - Still require £40k
 - Volunteers required for fitting out.
 - Donations of equipment for fitting out sought
 - Planned to open in September 2008
- 18 Barford Relief in Need Charity (Terry Offiler)
- Assets are in land and investments.
 - Trustees in discussion with the Charity Commission to expand the eligibility criteria (now solely individuals) to include groups and organizations.
- 19 Neighbourhood Watch (Ian Findlay)
- Twenty-two coordinators in place in Barford but more are required to cover the Barford Burrows area
 - Recommended the virtues of "Smart Water" as a deterrent to thieves
- 20 Village Design Statement (Paul Harris)
- Progress was maintained.
 - Once completed the Village Design Statement would be a component of the Local Development Framework.
- 21 Footpath Group (John Murphy)
- He spoke of the prospects of opening the footpath between Barford and Bishops Tachbrook
- 22 Barford Preschool (Stephanie McVeigh)
- Preschool had been through a turbulent financial period but was now operating under a tighter regime.
 - The demographics were improving.
 - WDC had made a sustainability grant.
 - Publicity through a leaflet drop, notices and a web site.
 - Hope to be full by 2009.
 - Staff changes had contributed to turbulence.
- 23 Barford School (Ann Fawcett)
- The school operates a strict admissions policy.
 - A senior management team has been formed.
 - After-school clubs had been created.
 - "Healthy School" status had been achieved.
 - Music prospers at the school.
 - A refurbishment planned for the kitchens in the summer holidays.
 - A new adventure trail was planned

- 24 Barford Pride (John Murphy)
- Last year had been dismal
 - It was hoped to encourage more volunteers for this year.

Other Matters

- 25 Warwick Castle Park. In response to a question from the floor, Bill Worrall briefed the meeting on the negotiations to open up part of the park to public access.
- 26 Minerals. No further applications for sand and gravel extraction had been made.
- 27 Higher Avon Navigation. No further progress to report.
- 28 Church-Hareway Lane Footpath. Bill Worrall reminded the meetings of the factors affecting the improvement of this muddy right of way.
- 29 Barford Allotments Footpath. The maintenance was the responsibility of the land owner but this was impracticable to enforce. The Chairman arranged its repair with a contribution of planings from WCC.
- 30 Sherbourne Parish Council. The Chairman gave a resumé of Sherbourne's efforts to withdraw from the joint parish council and set up an independent parish council.
- 31 Cedar Tree Glebe Hotel. Concern was expressed about the distressed state of this fine specimen.

Appointment of Chairman for 2008-9

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

Closure

- 33 There being no other business the meeting was closed at 9:35pm.

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

2007-2008 has again been a busy year – 9 routine JPC meetings, numerous Planning meetings, 2 Special Meetings, numerous Working Party or subcommittee meetings and the three Parish Meetings.

The year began with parish council elections, adding two new and extra councillors for Barford – Cllr Mrs Dulcie Cobb and Cllr Alan Rhead, who was also elected as a District Councillor. Cllrs Mrs Petra Johnstone (nee Smith-Ryland) and Mrs Peta Wilkinson were elected without a poll for Sherbourne and all are already playing a very active role in JPC activities.

Barford Shop and PO – The shop and Post Office projects have moved forward at a pace during the year, focusing initially on feasibility, location and design and moving on to fundraising and legal matters. During the year there have been extensive negotiations with Robin Smith-Ryland in order to secure relaxation of the restrictive covenants on the Barford village green and all this has now moved on to the point where construction is actually under way and the shop is hoped to open in the autumn. Doubts are currently resting over the future of the Post Office elements of the project due to the closure review which will remove many outlets from the system.

Barford Bypass has settled into use and has brought important relief to the village. There are still outstanding matters which we are struggling to get resolved but we will continue to pursue these. The northern entrance to the village seems to provide most problem and continues to catch out the unaware who fail to slow and signal early enough and are then often harassed by following traffic, and this is an aspect that we will be drawing yet again to the county's attention.

A small number of properties are apparently severely adversely impacted by noise from the new road and levels are apparently significantly in excess of those predicted. This is a civil matter and must be pursued by individuals as parish and district councils have no powers to act formally in these matters. Extra planting has also been provided to shield one property which is adversely suffering from lights from vehicles on the road.

A46 Sherbourne Bypass – The proposals to improve the Longbridge J15 area with an A46 bypass were approved after the Public Inquiry despite strong objections being made by the JPC. The scheme is progressing at this very time. Many aspects of the scheme have been designed to minimize disruption during the build period but there will be disruptions and delays including closure of the B4463 for six months from the end of 2008 and a weekend closure of the A46 Warwick Bypass for demolition of the Budbrooke Bridge. However, despite all the ensuing inconvenience we may look forward to improved traffic flows and hopefully the gridlock we often endure will become less frequent in the future.

The JPC has repeatedly asked for a review of the speed limit on the A429 as it passes through all three parishes and have suggested a 50mph limit would be appropriate – The A and B roads Speed Review was conducted this year and we were disappointed that once again we were being overlooked, despite the fact that there appears to be a move towards more general speed control, often by signage alone. We have made a forceful comment upon this and the matter is now being reconsidered and we are hopeful that we may still get a speed reduction which will benefit all three parishes.

Barford Parish Plan – The original BPP Committee continues to monitor and report on the implementation progress, but progress is slow. At last we are seeing some signs that the higher authorities are beginning to look more favourably on our proposals but there is still, despite all the rhetoric, a reluctance to accept bottom-up government and grass-roots input. Old paradigms are being discarded and obstructions are being displaced – a slow process but we will continue to press for response.

Play areas are under constant review – checked at least weekly by a Parish Councillor. The skateboard area continues to generate comment. The new spray produced minimal improvement and one of the ramps has now been boxed in. Despite expert predictions this has made little difference to sound readings but complaints have reduced, at present but no doubt better weather will tell us the real result.

New play equipment will be provided on Barford Village Green as part of the shop project and the older equipment removed will be relocated at the Playing Fields to provide a wider range of activities

there.

Graffiti at the Playing Fields was becoming excessive and unpleasant and a major campaign was initiated to remove it using specialist equipment and materials provided via the Probation Service. The results whilst not perfect were most welcome and to date the problem has not recurred to any great degree.

Dog Fouling – This remains a constant 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. Dog mess bins are available at the Playing Fields and near the Scout Hut so there is little excuse. Persistent offenders are clearly not listening so it may be that names need to be passed on to improve matters.

Police Matters –The safer neighbourhood Initiative has now been with us for more than a year. Despite assurances of ongoing stability we have suffered continual changes of personnel and latterly a significant reduction in man-power; currently reduced to a sergeant, two PCs and four PCSOs when fully staffed. Rota patterns have been changed to give greater coverage of the day Although actual presence in our villages remains small given greater priorities in other parts of their “patch”. The mobile Police station now calls regularly in our villages and times of attendance are posted well in advance on the notice boards.

Sherbourne and Wasperton village halls have again been supported by JPC grants - £1250 Sherbourne and £1370 Wasperton – members have again recognized more active management and fund raising taking place in the smaller villages, to make their halls more viable, and Barford waived its claim to JPC funding in the light of good occupancy and reserves

The JPC also gave grant support towards maintenance of each of the three churchyards.

Allotments –Most are in good productive use and the water supply to all parts of the allotments has been fully implemented.

Bus shelters – shelters throughout our parishes have been reviewed and the older brick-built ones have been found in need of significant renovation. Detailed specifications have been drawn up and contractors will be implementing repairs in the near future.

On Planning specifically:

Oldhams’ site is now well progressed with nearly all the market homes sold, all the original rental Affordable Homes taken and some of the shared-equity Affordable Homes being converted to rental status. We had a stressful time when WDC failed to deal with the Affordable Homes allocations according to the s.106 agreement which we had negotiated and various worthy people were initially denied access to the properties. After much debate a temporary “work-around” was agreed and largely addressed the shortfall. However, it is still not working as it was intended and we will be pressing firmly for the WDC Allocation Policy to be changed and for s.106 agreements to have greater precedents in such schemes.

Proposals at 20 Wellesbourne Road Yet another application, two backfill bungalows, has been made and refused at WDC. The site remains vacant and neglected and we await further developments – hopefully a return to single household occupation.

Land surrounding Barford House still remains a matter of interest although there has been little public activity this year. The JPC refrained from comment on previous informal proposals for fear of prejudicing its position in the event of an actual application on the site, but we believe that a new approach may be made, by a new interested party, in the near future.

All councillors have attended many meetings and served their electors well, working as a strong team with James Johnson our Clerk/RFO. Many thanks to all for their input.

JVM
25/03/2008

REPORT FROM WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Our Vision:

Working in Partnership to put Customers first; Improve Services and Lead Communities.

Our Priorities:

Raising levels of Educational Attainment Caring for Older People
Pursuing a Sustainable Environment

Children, Young People and Families:

- Primary schools: Very impressive Key Stage 2 results. 84% of pupils gained level 4 or above in English; in Maths 79% reached level 4 or above compared to the national average of 77%; and in Science 90% of pupils achieved level 4 or above compared to 87% nationally. Snitterfield Primary School, and Bishopston Primary School in Stratford-upon-Avon achieved particularly good results, along with a number of others in different areas of the County.
- Ofsted: Warwickshire has been rated as a 'good' children's services authority by Ofsted. The report said that attainment was continuing to improve in all key stages, and praised the Council for its partnership working and commitment to the Every Child Matters outcomes: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic well-being.
- The County Music Service has received a prestigious diploma from the National Music Council for their extensive work across the County.
- Funding: Still one of the worst Councils for education funding, but despite this we have achieved excellent results.
- Schools Funding Formula: We are fighting to obtain fair and equitable schools funding. After the production of a formula that we weren't completely happy with, we have decided to go back to the drawing board to ensure a fair deal for Warwickshire schools.

Adult, Health and Community Services:

- CSCI Adult social care services inspection: WCC was awarded a 2* rating. This is quite a leap and shows strong improvement.
- Supporting People: AHCS has recently undergone a Supporting People inspection and early indications suggest feedback will be very positive.
- Home care and independent living: We are working to increase the number of older people who can live independently in the community, via schemes such as warden controlled housing.
- Libraries: We have delivered 5 new mobile library vans, and have increased provision of IT within libraries and on mobile libraries. This has increased access and is strongly linked to the customer access agenda.

Customer Access:

- One stops shops were unveiled across the County, and Kenilworth one stop shop celebrated its first very successful year. The brand behind the shops, Warwickshire Direct was awarded the top accolade in the 'e-Government excellence: Shared Services' category of the prestigious e-Government National Awards.
- Three kiosks have been delivered in Rugby, providing customers with information on, and a range of options for, accessing Council facilities.

Achievements 2007

- One stop shops were opened in Whitnash and Atherstone, with a further shop planned for Southam.

Modernisation Programme:

- Providing value for money: Strategic Directors have led a robust budget process based on the principles of delivering on our priorities whilst ensuring we offer efficient services and good value for money for our communities. As a result of this, the Conservative group recently announced a budget resolution delivering £6.197 million of savings, a low 3.9% council tax increase, and investment in services that matter to the people of Warwickshire as are included in our priorities, such as reducing the risk of flooding, ensuring the provision of services for older people, and improving prospects for our young people (this is subject to approval of Council in February).
- Resources: A recent inspection awarded WCC a 4* rating for use of resources, the highest

mark possible. This indicates that we are one of the best Councils for use of resources in the country.

- Partnerships: Developing strong partnership arrangements, such as through the LAA where we are currently negotiating the new LAA. Through CSW sub-regional forum, the sub-region has gained a strong voice in the creation of the Regional Spatial Strategy, and this work is ongoing. We are also working to develop more partnership working at a local, sub-regional and regional level, particularly in economic matters. We have also continued to develop our partnership arrangements with the Police and Health Service, and I am keen to build on this next year. With localities being developed, our working with various partners is set to be strengthened further, both through the area committees and new arrangements being put in place.
- Discussions are continuing to be held between Conservative Members and MPs with the Directors of Coventry Airport, ensuring that the County's voice is heard on issues such as planning, and so that we can work together in boosting economic development opportunities. Similar action has been taken on other issues, including the development of Stoneleigh Park and options for the Peugeot site.

Environment:

- Highways: An extra £400,000 is proposed to be spent on highways next year, and we also propose to deliver more money locally to reduce the risk of flooding by clearing gutters and gullies.
- Waste and recycling: There is more to be done in this area, and it will be an important feature of the County Council's work for years to come. Recently, Cabinet agreed for a statutory joint committee for waste to be set up. This will allow all waste authorities in the County to meet the challenges they face.
- Speeding: The Village Speed Limit Review saw changes to speed limits in villages including Lighthorne Heath, Fillongley, Stoneleigh, Kineton, Stretton on Dunsmore, and Harborough Magna. Others are planned for next year.
- Connect2: The Connect2 project, strongly supported by the administration, has received over £1 million in funding from the Big Lottery Fund: The People's £50 million contest. WCC held a large scale communications campaign encouraging people to vote for the scheme, which will see the disused Kenilworth - Berkswell railway line converted into a leisure route, a positive reward for the success of the campaign.
- Biomass boiler: In December, Council agreed for a Biomass boiler to be installed at Kingsbury Water Park. The boiler will utilise wood chippings, a renewable source of energy which will reduce the Council's carbon footprint.
- The controlling group are supporting all friendly initiatives at whatever level.

Economy:

- The Nuneaton & Bedworth Masterplan continues to develop, with Cabinet agreeing to the co-location of two colleges in the centre of the town earlier this year.
- Stratford: There has been a strong commitment from WCC to the World Class Stratford project, and following a joint bid from SDC and WCC almost £5 million has been secured from AWM towards a set of five projects. Also contributed to the production of an Urban Design Framework that provides a blueprint for the future development of the town.
- Business Improvement District status has been obtained for Rugby Town Centre, delivering £5 million over the BID period. Plans are also being pursued for Timothy Road Bridge Stratford, and in Warwick and Coleshill.
- The Market Towns initiative is progressing, resulting in improvements for many market towns in the County.

Community Protection:

- Fire and Rescue: The recommendations of the Morpew Review have been put on hold pending outcomes of investigations into the fire at Atherstone-on-Stour in November, which are being undertaken by both the police and the Fire and Rescue service. In the wake of the fire, the Council launched the Firefighters' Families Fund, which has so far raised almost £400,000. A new campaign, "one hour four lives" was launched on 13th December, asking people to give an hour's salary for the long-term support of the firefighters' families.
- The Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team have won the Highfliers Care Services Improvement Practice Award for Information Sharing - Joining Health and Social Care (a national award). The award recognises the efforts of the team to inform people of the risks of alcohol misuse.

Performance:

- PWC: In the Price Waterhouse Coopers Benchmarking Club, Warwickshire County Council has been judged as third best County Council in the country. This is a very good result for the County and bodes well for the CPA next year.
- The Peer Review that was recently carried out indicates that WCC is a good county with the potential to become excellent.

Audit Commission Report, 2007:

Warwickshire County Council is improving well :

The Council has delivered improving outcomes in its three priority areas together with good improvement across services. Investment in modernising Adult Services is still at a relatively early stage but is delivering better support services and more choice for older people. The prospects for improvement are now 'promising', reflecting a clear vision, strong leadership and increased capacity. Education attainment is above the national average with good progress with reducing inequalities in attainment and improving outcomes for vulnerable children. The Council is making progress in pursuing a sustainable environment but it is not yet clear what impact this is having in delivering its carbon emissions target. Overall performance and improvement are above average with comparatively low levels of spend. The Council has developed stronger plans for the future. It is better placed to modernise Adult Social Care and has a clear pathway for delivering its waste strategy. The new ways of working programme is supporting an increased pace in improving access to services and better corporate working. Strengthened financial processes and strong leadership has improved the Council's capacity for change.

Warwick Rural West Safer Neighborhood Team April 2007-March 2008

Much has happened since the introduction of the Government SNT initiative back in November 2006. Warwickshire Police now has thirty-three safer Neighborhood teams based over five Boroughs in Warwickshire, as well as district policing teams that provide 24/7 response. The area given to our team, known as the Warwick Rural West Safer Neighborhood team (WRW SNT), was the area formally covered by four dedicated Community Beat Officers (Constables) that being the Wards of:

Bishops Tachbrook (PC Emma Matthews)
Hatton (PC Andy Rouse)
Lapworth (PC Ken Fowler)
Leek Wootton (PC Tom Quinlan)

Upon formation, the WRW SNT consisted of one Sergeant, the four CBO Constables and two PCSO's. However, following an internal review, which Police Head Quarters called '150 Forward', we have now been reduced to one Sergeant (he covers two SNT's), two Constables and three PCSO's.

The team is presently made up of Sgt Manjith Johal, who also manages the Warwick Rural East SNT in Kenilworth, PC Leon Carter, PC Ken Fowler and PCSO's Lucy Hague, Paul Coleman and Nathan Parry-Hall. PC Tom Quinlan left the team in March and was replaced by PC Leon Carter. PC Carter is a very experienced PC and has worked for Warwickshire Police for just over 5 years. In that time he has mainly been a re-active constable and is looking forward to working on a Safer Neighborhood Team. The two new PCSO's Paul and Nathan have been with the team for just over two months now. Paul Coleman is the PCSO for the Hatton ward, Nathan Parry-Hall for the Bishops Tachbrook ward and Lucy Hague for the Lapworth ward.

Warwickshire Police as a whole has gone through a large amount of change in the past year with the implementation of the '150 Forward' program that has seen all the reactive officers at Warwick move over to Leamington. This now means that the whole of Warwick district is covered by reactive Police Officers who work out of Leamington Police Station. A new shift pattern has also been introduced which saw a large amount of change for officers when it was introduced in January 2008. Another possible change following on from the '150 Forward' recommendations maybe a shift pattern change for the WRW team. This is currently under discussion and the local Parish Councilors will be update when the team knows the new shift pattern

The Mobile Police Station visits have been altered from morning and mid day times to evening slots. This has been a huge success, with recorded visits up by 76%. Mobile Police Station are important to local community members because it maybe the only chance they get to speak to a member of their local Police team.

The Lapworth Police Post will be totally overhauled in April 2008, being redecorated inside and outside. Hatton Park has a Police post, which was re-furbished last year, and there is now a computer which host's full access to all of Warwickshire Police systems and there is also lockers available if officers wish to leave their radios over night on charge. Due to operational commitment the team cannot say exactly when an officer will be in the Police post.

In March, the Safer Neighborhoods Team saw their names being publicized in the local newspaper. The team now has a direct dial number for the office which is 01926 684397 and a voicemail number 4397. A voicemail can be left for the team by dialing 01926 410111 then entering when prompted 4397. This voicemail is checked regularly when the team is working and we aim to respond to messages within 72 hours of them being left.

The 'Week That Was' continues to go from strength to strength, with record numbers of recipients asking to have their e-mail added to the database. If anyone knows of anyone that may benefit receiving the 'week that was', please forward their e-mail address to the teams e-mail: www.snt@warwickshire.police.uk and they will be added to the database.

The PACT priorities have not changed since Sgt Johal took over from Sgt Holtby. The PACT priorities currently are:

- Inconsiderate parking: Rising Lane, Baddesley Clinton and Barford, High Street, Church Street and on the Wellesbourne Road
- Speeding: B4439 Hatton to Hockley Heath
- Nuisance youths: Bishops Tachbrook and Hampton Magna. High visibility patrols are being conducted especially in Hampton Magna and Bishops Tachbrook concerning the nuisance youths. And since having the two new PCSO's (Nathan and Paul) high visibility patrols are being conducted more frequently in the hot spot areas.

PACT priorities are extremely important to the team because we need to know what the public wants from the Police and the PACT meetings are a perfect opportunity for community members to express what they want and change a priority.

Kindest regards,

Sgt Manjith Johal, PC Ken Fowler, PC Leon Carter, PCSO Lucy Hague, PCSO Paul Coleman & PCSO Nathan Parry-Hall.