

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE PARISH OF WASPERTON
HELD AT WASPERTON VILLAGE HALL
ON MONDAY 25 APR 16 AT 7:30PM**

Present: M J Metcalfe (Chairman)
Cllr J V Murphy (Chairman of the Joint Parish Council)
Cllr P Phillips (WDC)
Twenty-five Wasperton Electors

Minutes.

- 1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 Apr 15 were approved as a true record. There were no matters arising

Report by Chairman of the Joint Parish Council.

- 2 Cllr John Murphy reported:

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

2015-2016 has as always been a busy year – 9 routine JPC meetings, numerous Planning meetings, three Annual Parish Meetings two Special Meetings, numerous Working Party meetings and several public “events”. The year has also to some degree been dominated by the King George’s Field improvement scheme which has permeated into all aspects of parish life to a greater or lesser degree.

Difficult financial times have continued but the correction we made a couple of years ago has again allowed us to produce a balanced budget this year once again avoiding any increase on your parish element of the Council Tax charges.

All three village halls have this year been supported by JPC grants with £1166 towards general maintenance each and the JPC also gave grant support of £441 towards maintenance of each of the three churchyards. Following last year’s initiative, the JPC also awarded £441 to support Barford Scout Hut funds in recognition of its important role providing essential community facilities, in addition to its more conventional role with the uniformed groups.

The King George’s Field scheme has been very busy and last year we suggested that it MIGHT get completed in 2015 but weather and other factors have conspired to delay that, however the end is near and the official opening is scheduled for May this year, so we are ahead of our revised target of “before the end of 2016” and well ahead of our original target of during 2017. Additionally, we are also delivering far more within the same broad budget and are lining up more features as more funding comes on stream and things begin to settle.

The WDC **New Local Plan** was found to be unsound at its examination in public and after some debate was “suspended until May 2016” whilst housing numbers were reviewed with particular reference to Coventry overspill and windfall sites accounting. This has necessitated a further review of available sites and in the latest proposals Barford is expected to take a further 75 houses – split over two sites (off Wasperton Lane and inside the Barford Bypass) in addition to those previously proposed or granted permissions through the planning system.

Barford Neighbourhood Development Plan has now been examined by the independent examiner and was well received and approved subject to some fairly minor and mostly positive detail changes. The turmoil with the over-arching New Local Plan has cast some doubt on the timings of the way forward and we must now await taking the Neighbourhood Plan to Referendum in the parish before it becomes part of planning law.

County Minerals Plan returned in September in **Preferred Options** format, effectively spring-boarding off the consultations carried out a few years ago and arriving at an apparently fixed list of nine sites, all of which are claimed to be required. We held two public meetings in November at Wasperton and Barford and these were well attended. It was disappointing that the officers presenting the plan had limited knowledge of both the locality and the subject and many of our questions remained unanswered. Wasperton Hill Farm and Glebe Farm sites are very close to our settlements and will have major impacts on our residents. Unfortunately for us, the Wasperton Hill site also seems to be the site on which there is most detail of actual mineral reserve and over which developers can be most certain of commercial extraction.

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 continue ensure that they remain preferentially available to those with local connections in perpetuity.

Land around Barford House has remained high profile and having been refused permission to develop the whole site a scheme was submitted for eight houses on the southern portion and despite local opposition this was approved. Since approval there have been some minimal works on the site and the site now appears to be for sale and available for a developer to complete. There has been no visible progress on repairs to the walls fronting Wellesbourne road.

The **Sherbourne Nurseries** site is currently being built by Taylor Wimpey and a significant number of homes are already occupied and the site is expected to be completed in 2017.

As expected at this time last year, land between **Wilkins Close** and the river came back into the planning system and an outline application for 26 houses was duly approved. This site has now been sold on and Spiffire builders have submitted a detailed or reserved matters application for 25 houses of various sizes and tenures.

In September a “**Swingers Festival**” at **Sherbourne Park** caused much concern to village residents and as various other temporary events had caused concerns, especially with noise issues, the JPC took the opportunity to study the legislation surrounding licensing for temporary events. It seems that there is minimal effective control and even less consultation. As a result, working with the local and national association of local councils we have promoted a motion which suggests that the system should be amended, to, at the very least, include consultation with local residents and hopefully fortify the ways in which such events are actually monitored.

In Barford we have had a new “period style” fingerpost installed at the main village junction and this is both decorative and informative and will hopefully assist many of our visitors who frequently have to stop and ask for directions. This was kindly funded and installed by Barford Village Shop.

Wasperton Footpath W101, from Wasperton Lane to Lower Heathcote farm was temporarily closed due to a bridge collapse. This was re-opened in the autumn after the installation of a new bridge. Sadly, there are few markers and working with the landowners it is intended to install new markers to ensure that the correct route is clear.

Councillors have served their electors extremely well, working as a strong team with James Johnson our excellent Clerk/RFO. Over the year we have again seen some changes in Barford Councillors and have been pleased to welcome both Katy Thompson and Simon Morton to replace some of our recent losses. Vacancies do still exist for Barford councillors and we will be looking to co-opt others as time moves on. Meanwhile, once again, 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.

As a codicil Cllr Murphy then elaborated on some of the features of the **King George's Field** scheme

stressing the community involvement, local fundraising, extent of the facilities, the delivery within both budget and funding and the hope that residents from all three parishes would use and enjoy what would shortly be available.

Councillor attendance records:

	Meetings	Present	%
Cllr M J Metcalfe	9	8	89%
Cllr N F J Thurley	9	7	78%
Cllr J T Wright	9	9	100%

Report by County Councillor

3 Cllr Les Caborn had submitted a written report:

BUDGET

In the autumn statement the government announced that it had changed the way councils were to be allocated their funding, without consultation. The net effect is that WCC has £10 million less in 2016-17 and 2017-18 per year. As the announcement was too late for this year's budget setting, we took money out of reserves. The roll on effect will mean an extra £25 million will have to be found in 2017-18.

In addition, the public health budget was reduced by £1.4 million in year plus 3.9% in real terms each year until 2020

We increased council tax by 1.9% plus 2% for adult social care.

SAND AND GRAVEL

The work is nearly complete in processing all responses to the first consultation and putting them on line. An additional member of staff is being recruited to assist. A number of new sites have been submitted so these will be consulted on shortly. Following which there will be a second consultation on proposed final list of sites based on all sites (new and old) in the Autumn. It is then planned to submit to inspectors in 2017.

SOLAR ENERGY

Three sites in council ownership are being investigated and costed with a partner to deliver income and balance energy usage with generation. One of these is Glebe Farm Wasperton. Possibly 6 acres around Glebe Farm itself, facing south towards Wellesbourne.

SMALLHOLDING. ESTATE

Council has agreed to maintain our small holding estate at 5000 acres. Where land is sold for development out of this estate, council has agreed that 5% of sale price will be reinvested in land to maintain the total acreage.

MENTAL HEALTH

Our mental health contracts (CAMHS) has been redesigned to concentrate on early help and intervention and is being relet this year. In addition, we have won £17 million additional funding which will be used to eliminate waiting time.

MASH

The multi-agency safeguarding hub will open for children on May 3rd and adults on Sep 1st. This brings together on one site in WCC; social workers, police, health, education, priority families, youth justice and child sexual exploitation teams to safeguard all our vulnerable people.

SMART START

This is our 0-5 years' redesign to ensure every child is school ready. It involves health, education, children's centres, nurseries, and nurses to deliver the best start for every child and parents across the whole county. It is about changing ours and our partners' services and engaging local communities to assist and help.

FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

Policy now completed and will be coming your way

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

The additional 2% council tax has enabled WCC to ensure all care workers alongside all WCC staff receive the living wage. We continue with our programme of delivering independent living for the elderly and disabled.

We are redesigning all our social care contracts to deliver improved service with a reduced number of suppliers with new performance targets.

FIRE AND RESCUE

We continue our work with Worcester and Hereford fire and rescue but are waiting the Home Secretary to give details of the announced collaboration with police.

OLD SHIRE HALL

After competitive tender, council has accepted an in-house bid to manage this venture. It is proposed to do this via an arm's length company,

Thanks to all chairmen, councillors and Clerks for their support throughout the year
Cllr Les Caborn

Report by District Councillor

4 Cllr Alan Rhead had submitted a written report:

The message is all about sustainability of our Rural Areas, not least Barford. This is in great part achieved by:

- More than 100 new houses coming to our village with 40% being affordable for our younger people.
- The development of the King George Playing Fields which will provide significant facilities for all ages of our community. This has only happened due to the enormous work put in by the JPC's Working Group. The District Council has made a significant financial contribution to this mainly as a result of the new homes.
- The additional classroom at the school again as a result of the increased housing.

All of this is good for the long term for our shop, our pubs, our church and our community halls.

The emerging Local Plan is far from perfect but we urgently need to have one that passes the test of soundness of the Inspector. My greatest concern and my main focus is the infrastructure. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP for short) is very much a work in progress and currently its funding has not been sufficiently identified. Some of the thinking behind the IDP is, in my opinion, naïve, believing we will all change our reliance on the car (yet planning rules insist on delivering parking spaces according to the number of bedrooms in a property). My main concentration will be to scrutinise highways, public transport, cycle ways and education.

One other area of concern is the provision, or lack of, for Gypsy & Travellers sites. The Council has gone about this with a lack of a coherent strategy and currently has now disregarded its last proposals. This is a further area that will have our close scrutiny.

The Council Tax is for the first time in 4 years being increased to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget over the next 4 years. There are challenges ahead but your Council is one of the few that has ensured no cuts in services while maintaining a balanced budget.

Finally, local government organisation has to change, the status quo is not an option. Personally I am an advocate of a Unitary Authority both for economy of scale and public awareness. I will be promoting this idea in Council.

If any member of the public has any questions, then please email me on:

Alan.rhead@warwickdc.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Watch

- 5 The Chairman reported:
- The post of Coordinator remained unfilled and until a volunteer was found, he would continue the role although the duties were minimal.
 - The present arrangements appeared to be sufficient; crime was at a very low ebb.
 - 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

- 6 Mr Carl Smith reported:
- The church roof had been cleared of moss and broken tiles replaced but the roof's condition would pose major problems in future.
 - The new lighting scheme would now take a lower priority than the roof.
 - A new ventilation scheme is being investigated and costed.

Report of Wasperton Village Hall Amenities Committee

- 7 Mrs Janet Newberry reported:
- Following the completion of the kitchen, fund raising began in 2015 for Phase 2 of improvements to the Village Hall. Whilst currently at the discussion stage, it is hoped that this will include further improvements to the interior of the Hall and landscaping to the outside area.
 - Our new venture, The Village Hall 100 Club Lottery has proved to be a great success. Over £300 was won by nine people during the year. Membership is open to all residents of Wasperton, Barford and Sherbourne parishes and costs £12 per year. We would welcome any new members.
 - A successful pantry sale was held in March with home cooked food on sale. Our local M.P. Chris White attended and made the first Lottery draw.
 - In June a cream tea proved to be a popular occasion. A village picture quiz was enjoyed during the afternoon.
 - The annual Wasperton Sale, in September, brought many visitors to the village. Helpers worked hard selling nearly new clothes, household items, together with toys and books. This event was, once again, a good fund raiser.
 - Our first Christmas Fair was held in December. Christmas food, cards, decorations, plants and presents were on sale. A Christmas raffle, which included a beautiful Christmas cake was well supported and helped to make the event a great success.
 - These events during 2015 have raised £2,443.60 towards the planned improvements to the Village Hall.

New Local Plan

- 8 Cllr John Murphy had reported: The WDC New Local Plan was found to be unsound at its examination in public and after some debate was "suspended until May 2016" whilst housing numbers were reviewed with particular reference to Coventry overspill and windfall sites accounting. This has necessitated a further review of available sites and in the latest proposals Barford is expected to take a further 75 houses – split over two sites (off Wasperton Lane and

inside the Barford Bypass) in addition to those previously proposed or granted permissions through the planning system.

- 9 Whilst Cllr Alan Rhead had warned in his report: The emerging Local Plan is far from perfect but we urgently need to have one that passes the test of soundness of the Inspector. My greatest concern and my main focus is the infrastructure. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP for short) is very much a work in progress and currently its funding has not been sufficiently identified. Some of the thinking behind the IDP is, in my opinion, naïve, believing we will all change our reliance on the car (yet planning rules insist on delivering parking spaces according to the number of bedrooms in a property). My main concentration will be to scrutinise highways, public transport, cycle ways and education

Gypsy & Traveller Sites

- 10 Cllr Peter Phillips was frank; in the matter of gypsy and traveller sites, Warwick District Council was back at square one with the Brakes football ground the sole item remaining on the original list, all the others having been discarded.
- 11 It was thought that the best solution might be to plan to have the sites as an integral part of some future, large development.

Sand and Gravel Extraction

- 12 Cllr Les Caborn's written report was: The work of processing all responses to the first consultation and putting them on line is nearly complete. An additional member of staff is being recruited to assist. A number of new sites have been submitted so these will be consulted on shortly. Following which there will be a second consultation on proposed final list of sites based on all sites (new and old) in the Autumn. It is then planned to submit to inspectors in 2017.
- 13 Notwithstanding the sensitivity of subject and the passion it aroused, there were few new facts which could be added to the discussion, except to insist that any new sites which were identified should undergo the public consultation process.

Other Matters Raised

- 14 Telecommunications and WiFi
- 14.1 Notwithstanding BT's claims to the contrary, Wasperton is very ill-served for telecommunications. It suffered loss of landline telephones over the Christmas period and broadband service is slow (2Mb/s) and intermittent (dropping out two to four times a day).
- 14.2 Cllr Phillips had discovered that one resident of Wasperton (yet to be identified) is alleged to enjoy super-fast broadband and so, by a curious leap in logic, BT claims all residents can have it.
- 14.3 No easy solutions were available, but the advice was to press on and complain vigorously and often as high up the BT chain as possible.
- 15 West Midlands Combined Authority. Cllr Phillips said that Warwick District Council had declined to join a West Midlands Combined Authority. This was not to be confused with the concept of forming a Unitary Authority for Warwickshire, which he supported.
- 16 Cycleways and Footpaths.
- 16.1 Several complaints were made that these were not extensive enough, in poor condition, badly maintained or hazardous and that "something should be done".
- 16.2 Cllr Murphy bluntly advised that individuals complaining would receive stock answers containing

such words as “no budget” and “limited cost benefit” justifying inaction. If Wasperton wanted new cycleways and footpaths then electors had to cooperate to define the need, obtain permission and find the necessary funding.

Appointment of Nominated Trustee of Hampton Lucy Grammar School Foundation

17 Mr Neil Thurley was appointed.

Appointment of Chairman for 2016-17

18 Mr Mike Metcalfe was appointed Chairman for the ensuing year.

Closure of the Meeting

19 There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:45pm, thanking those who had attended.