Minutes of the Meeting of Barlaston Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 11th March 2025 at the Methodist Church Hall at 19:15

Present:

Cllr S Tudor (Chair)
Cllr C Hurst
Cllr G Lloyd
Cllr G Jones
Cllr E Philpott
Cllr J Dando
Cllr L Pickering

Also in attendance: Parish Clerk: Ms Vivien O'Dunne.

Open Forum: Borough Cllr A Sandiford was in attendance. There were no members of the public present.

300. **Apologies:** Apologies were received from Cllr Borasinski & Cllr Fisher: it was resolved to accept these. Cllr Oakden was not present, and no apologies were received.

301. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr Jones declared an interest in item 324.

302. **Written applications for dispensations under the Localism Act 2011:** There were no written applications for dispensation.

303. **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 11 February 2025:** These were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

304. **Clerk's Report**: See Appendix A

305. **Update from County Councillor:** Cllr Parry sent his apologies. He had updated the Clerk on various matters prior to the meeting.

306. **Working groups:**

Community & Health: Cllr Dando provided an update on the working group's intention to conduct a community engagement exercise. It was resolved that the Clerk would post a link to an online survey on the Parish Council's social media.

Youth engagement: Cllr Lloyd provided an update on his progress in forming a Youth Council. He proposed that, should there be sufficient interest, a budget for the group, covering expenses such as hall hire, be considered in the 2026/2027 budget.

307. **Training courses:** nothing to report

308. **Financial matters:**

I. The bank reconciliation reports were accepted and signed.
II. The schedule of payments report for February 2025 was accepted.
III. Banking arrangements: The Clerk reported that there had been no progress regarding the investment account. A letter was received informing that the Lloyds Bank accounts would transition to Community Accounts with associated charges being introduced. It was resolved that the Clerk would explore other banking options to identify accounts offering free banking services.
IV. Gate Licenses: There are four outstanding payments. The Clerk will provide an update to the Parish Council at the next meeting.

February Expenditure - Standard	**GROSS**	**VAT**	**NET**	**Payment**
Tesco: mobile phone – Bill ref – 134234232935	15.10	0.00	15.10	DD
BT: Phone & Broadband – Invoice M065 C6	39.30	6.55	32.75	DD
Pozitive Energy – Village Hall Gas – 6181820257335458	558.02	93.00	465.02	DD
Pozitive Energy – Village Hall Electric – 26181620257335456	141.23	6.73	134.50	DD
Vivien O'Dunne Expenses (Parking SBC/Bus & Taxi trip to Solicitors)	18.57	0.00	18.57	BACS
Vivien O'Dunne Mileage (SBC visit and Noticeboards)	13.10	0.00	13.10	BACS
Vivien O'Dunne Salary	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	BACS
Buxus Green – Feb Grounds Maintenance	1081.50	0.00	1081.50	SO
Barlaston Methodist Church – Coffee Mornings 6 @ £20 (002868)	120.00	0.00	120.00	Cheque
Barlaston Methodist Church – Office Rental 6 months (002869)	750.00	0.00	750.00	Cheque
Income – Standard	**GROSS**	**VAT**	**NET**	**Payment**

Interest – Business Bank	126.75	0.00	126.75	
Barlaston Village Hall Utilities	1498.36	0.00	1498.36	

309. **VE Day Commemorations:** The Clerk has been unable to order the bench as Fiskars has not yet responded regarding permission to replace the existing one. The Clerk will follow up again. Councillors Philpott and Tudor are planning an event for 5th May and will meet with interested parties at the Methodist Church on 24th March at 12:00

310. **Buxus Green:** Buxus Green reported that the MUGA has been sprayed and will be swept by the end of the week. It was resolved that the Clerk will remind the contractors of their obligation to submit to the meeting, a monthly detailed report of work completed.

311. **Meadow Road lease:** Amendments have been submitted to the Borough. We are now awaiting confirmation from the Solicitors for Stafford Borough Council on whether they can agree to the revised lease terms as requested.

312. **Cricket Club lease:** An amended version of the lease has been returned by the Cricket Club's legal team and will need to be discussed again with the Parish Council's solicitors. The Clerk and Cllr Fisher have a meeting with the Parish Council's Solicitor on the 19th March.

313. **Neighbourhood Plan Review:** A draft of the updated policies has been shared with Stafford Borough Council (SBC) for informal feedback to ensure alignment and prevent issues during the Regulation-14 consultation later this year. Special attention is being given to ensuring the Plan aligns with SBC's growth strategy, particularly in light of changes in the 2024 NPPF.

314. **Casual Vacancy:** The vacancy has been advertised on the noticeboards and our social media accounts, but there have been no expressions of interest.

315. **Public Rights of Way:** the clerk had reported footpath *Barlaston 3* to the Rights of Way officer at Staffordshire County Council. A response has been received stating that problems will be addressed as and when resources allow and that the repair had been categorised as a category 3 on a category B route with no specific target for repair.

It was resolved that the Clerk would write to the landowner to report the broken wire that may be a hazard to visitors.

316. **Allotment site off Meadow Road:** It was resolved to defer this item to the next meeting.

317. **Staffordshire Societal Resilience Summit:** Cllr Tudor provided feedback from a recent meeting, where the need for an emergency plan was highlighted. It was agreed that the Clerk would consult with other clerks in the area to gain insight on drafting a suitable plan for Barlaston.

318. **Villager of the Year award and Certificates of Commendation.** It was resolved that the Clerk would request nominations through the usual channels and contact Fiskars regarding the bowl to be gifted to the recipient as a keepsake.

319. **Annual football match on The Green:** Concerns regarding parking issues during the annual Boxing Day football match on the Village Green were discussed. It was resolved that the Clerk would write to the Cricket Club later in the year to request that participants refrain from parking on the Green in future.

320. **Overgrown vegetation:** It was noted that responsibility for this lies with the County Council. It was resolved to remove this item from the agenda.

321. **Signage at the Downs Car Park:** Cllr Hurst reported that the 'Park at your own Risk' sign at the Downs Car Park needed replacement. The Clerk will bring a price back to the next meeting.

322. **To receive Risk Assessment updates and determine actions:**

- Downs Car Park pathway: The Clerk has received one quote for this work. More quotes were awaited.
- Leaning tree on the Village Green: A leaning tree has been reported by a member of the public. The Clerk will arrange for this to be inspected and to establish if any remedial works need to take place.
- Defib location awareness: It was resolved to ask a local artist if he would like to produce a map of all the Public Access Defibrillators in the village for use online and publications.

323. **Weekly play reports:** Cllr Hurst submitted the weekly play reports for the Wild Play area and the MUGA.

324. **Grant applications:** Grant applications were received from Barlaston Guides and Barlaston Bowling and Tennis Club. As the grants budget for the current financial year has been fully allocated, it was resolved to defer consideration of these applications until the next meeting.

325. **Correspondence:** Letter from a resident regarding parking in Broughton Crescent.

326. **Planning decisions:** No planning applications were received.

327. **Items for inclusion on the next agenda:**

328. **Date of next meeting(s) – 8th April 2025**

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Clerk's Report February 2025

161 Wedgwood Memorial College – no updates received

245 Letter of appreciation: A letter of appreciation has been prepared to be sent to the former Clerk

255 Signage Downs Car Park: The sign has been delivered and will be installed by the end of the month.

262 Village Green Drainage: The work will be completed when the ground has dried out.

278 Annual Parish Meeting: The Methodist Hall has been booked.

285 Migration of the Parish Council website: The gov.uk domain has been purchased and work has started on the website rebuild.

286 Update of Parish map: The Clerk has informed the artist to proceed with the work as proposed.

290 Flashing Lights for the School Crossing: There's been no contact with Cllr Parry regarding this. It will be added back to the agenda when an update is received.

291 Culvert adjacent to the village green: Cllr Hurst will obtain a quote for a new sediment trap in the spring