Minutes of the Meeting of Barlaston Parish Council
Held on Tuesday 9 December 2025 at the Methodist Church Hall at 19:15

Present:

Cllr D Borasinski (Chairman)
Cllr L Arnold
Cllr E Philpott
Cllr O Sear
Cllr G Jones
Cllr L Pickering
Cllr C Hurst
Cllr J Dando
Cllr S Tudor

Also in attendance:
Parish Clerk: Ms Viv O'Dunne

Public Open Forum:

Two local PCSOs attended the Open Forum. Parking matters were raised. The PCSOs advised that parking enforcement is undertaken by Civil Enforcement Officers. The offer of a joint public surgery in the New Year was noted. These items will be included on a future agenda.

516. Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Fisher and Thomas; It was resolved to accept these. Apologies were also received from County Cllr Bagguley.

517. Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest.

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

519. Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting 11 November 2025: The minutes of the meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

520. Clerk's Report: See Appendix B

521. County Councillor: not present

522. Borough Councillor: Cllr Jones provided an update on Local Government Reorganisation, including the proposal put forward by the Borough Council.

523. Training: Cllr Sear to attend the New Councillor training via Zoom on 15 December.

524. Playpark Working Group: A verbal update was received on the work of the Play Park Working Group. Members have reviewed example designs from other play parks to inform potential options and further ideas will be sought from additional suppliers. The group will plan community consultation events and will bring proposals back to full Council for formal approval.

525. Finance and Administration:

525.1. The November bank reconciliation and bank statements were noted and signed.
525.2. The budget position as at 30 November 2025 was reviewed and noted.
525.3. It was resolved to approve the schedule of payments for November 2025 (Appendix A)
525.4. Electronic devices for Councillors: This item was deferred to the next meeting.
525.5. MUGA refurbishment: It was resolved to approve the 20% deposit payment to Play Surfaces of £1,046.90 + VAT (£1,256.16). Work is scheduled to commence in Spring 2026.
525.6. Unity Trust corporate multi-pay card: It was resolved that a Unity Trust corporate Multi-Pay Card be obtained for use by the Clerk, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

525.7. Orchard Place Notice Board: This item was deferred to the next meeting.

526. Assets and Leases:

526.1. Grounds Contractor's report: This is covered under item 530.1.

526.2. Cricket Club Lease: It was resolved that the Chairman and Vice-Chairman sign the Cricket Club lease. The Council noted that Cllr Fisher's work on the lease would be formally acknowledged by the Chairman. A set of photos of the ground and pavilion will be retained with the lease. The completion statement shows fees of £1,380 due; it was resolved to pay these fees. Completion of the lease is subject to suitable insurance being in place.

526.3. Meadow Road Lease: Completion of the Meadow Road lease was confirmed. Inspection sheets have been prepared, and RoSPA Play Safety will include the area in the annual inspection programme. The Landlord's interest is noted on the insurance policy. A risk assessment has been completed. The Clerk was tasked with obtaining cost for a sign indicating Parish Council responsibility for the grassed area.

526.4. Gate Licenses: This item was deferred to the next meeting.

527. Health & Safety / Risk Management:

527.1. Emergency Tree Works: The use of the Clerk's emergency powers to authorise tree works (Tree T25) following storm damage, at a cost of £396 plus VAT, was noted.

527.2. Bench Repair: Railway Crossing: The Clerk is in contact with Network Rail and is awaiting permission to proceed with the repair.

527.3. Meadow Road Play Area: Cllr Philpott was appointed as the designated inspector for the Meadow Road Play Area.

527.4. Weekly play inspection reports: The Council received reports from the appointed Councillor.

528. Grant applications:

528.1. It was resolved to award a grant of £1,500 towards 50% of the annual maintenance costs of the village cemetery, maintained by St John's Church. The expenditure was agreed under s137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

529. Exclusion of the Press and Public: It was resolved, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, to exclude the press and public for the confidential business to be discussed at item 530.

530. Confidential business:

530.1. Meeting with grounds contractor: The Chairman and a Councillor had met with the contractor to review completed works. The contractor had submitted a list of scheduled works for the remainder of the financial year.

530.2. Clerk's hours: It was resolved to increase the Clerk's hours from 15 to 20 per week. It was noted that the Clerk may work additional hours as required but does not wish to increase permanent hours further.

531. Planning:

531.1. Neighbourhood Plan Revision: Cllr Fisher and the Clerk met with the planning consultant on 19 November. Follow-up requests for feedback on draft policies have been sent to the Borough Council and to the owners of current housing allocation sites. A further meeting with the consultant is scheduled for mid-January 2026, with consultation expected in Spring.

531.2. Green Spaces: Councillors were asked to consider potential green spaces in their wards for inclusion in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, noting that some may qualify for Local Green Space designation under the NPPF, while others could be included as valued community open space. Suggestions are to be brought to the next meeting.

531.3. Planning: No planning applications were received. Feedback from the Planning Case Officer regarding application 25/40885/OUT for 81 houses was noted.

532. Date of next meeting: 13 January 2026

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Appendix A – Schedule of Payments for approval (click here to return to the agenda)

November expenditure and items for approval	Invoice Reference	GROSS	VAT	NET	Payment
Tesco: Mobile phone (final payment)	134263408769	16.06	0.00	16.06	DD
BT: Phone & Broadband	M074 DZ	41.81	6.96	34.85	DD
St John the Baptist Church (Remembrance Orders of Service 50%)	Grant	35.00	0.00	35.00	BACS
Barlaston Village Hall Grant – Plumbing	S137 Grant	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00	BACS
Viking – Office Stationary	4410097110	40.42	6.74	33.68	BACS
Society of Local Council Clerk's (Reference Book)	V1505	149.40	0.90	148.50	BACS
Staffordshire Parish Council's Association: Councillor Training	SI-2069	300.00	50.00	250.00	BACS
Joe Poultney – Winter planting	177	240.00	0.00	240.00	Cheque: 003004
Curry's PC World – Office Laptop	71761633	453.38	75.56	377.82	BACS
Lloyds Bank – Monthly Fees	-	5.25	0.00	5.25	DD
Woolliscrofts Solicitors - Meadow Rd Lease	91607-2	1,252.00	200.00	1,052.00	BACS
Support Staffordshire – Annual Subscription	7110	25.00	0.00	25.00	BACS
V O'Dunne – Expenses	-	38.99	0.00	38.99	BACS
V O'Dunne – Mileage	-	22.82	0.00	22.82	BACS
V O'Dunne – Salary – November	-	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	BACS
Staffordshire LGPS – November	-	543.86	0.00	543.86	BACS
Staffordshire County Council – Allotment Rent 25/12 – 24/03	1000159485	300.00	0.00	300.00	BACS
Viking – Toner	4410140423	352.73	58.79	293.34	BACS
VEN-AS Contractors Ltd: Hedge Cutting	4350	168.00	28.00	140.00	BACS
Buxus Green – Grounds Maintenance	202511	1,109.62	0.00	1,109.62	SO
N & J Tree Services – Emergency Works	18651	475.20	79.20	396.00	BACS
Creative Landscapes: install of 2 signs, install of bench, RoSPA works and redirect path at Downs carpark	-	1,130.00	0.00	1,130.00	BACS
Income		**GROSS**	**VAT**	**NET**	**Payment**
Interest – Business Bank	-	139.46	0.00	139.46	-

317 Staffordshire Societal Resilience Summit: The Clerk will add back onto the agenda for discussion when progress has been made on this.

319 Annual football match on The Green: The Clerk has written to the Cricket Club to request that players and attendees refrain from parking on the grass.

468.5 Village Green: Drainage works are in hand.

492.11 Dog fouling awareness campaign will be worked on and added back on the agenda when progress has been made.

495.2 RoSPA advised works are expected to be complete by the December meeting.

510.4 **Laptop** This has been purchased.

510.7 The **bench** for the bus shelter has been ordered. To remain within the agreed budget, the colour has been kept as brown, as upgrading to green would have cost an additional £200.

510.8 I am still arranging the order of the village gates and trying to avoid delivery during the Christmas break.

533. For information:

The owners of the college proposed a meeting to update the Parish Council on their plans. This was due to take place on 2 December but was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances. It is hoped that it can be rescheduled.

I attended the SPCA conference on 24 November, which was very informative. I have also completed three SPCA Zoom training courses: Procurement, Introduction to AI, and Assertion 10 (AGAR).

A thank-you has been received from Wedgwood Cricket Club for their grant, along with an update on recent activity and future plans.

The local Scout Group has contacted the Council regarding their intention to promote Scouting and the need for investment in their Scout Hut. I invited them to speak at the public forum to outline their requirements.

Both the CCLA and Unity Trust bank accounts are now open. The FSCS limit of £85,000 has been transferred into the Unity Trust account, and I will do the same with the CCLA account in line with the Council's Investment Policy.

Allison Gardner, MP, has had to cancel her meeting with councillors scheduled for the 8th January. I will liaise with her office for new dates.