Barlaston Parish Council – February 2026:

The Parish Council met on 20 January and 10 February 2026. Residents are always welcome to attend the public forum to raise issues and stay involved in decisions affecting the village. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 10 March at 7:15pm in the Methodist Church Hall. Agendas for all meetings are published on the Parish Council website and displayed on notice boards at Orchard Place, Barlaston Park, The Country Cabin, and the Village Hall.

Community Safety and Local Updates

County and Borough Councillors provided updates on local issues including speed vans, gully cleaning, mud on the roads, and potholes. It was suggested that a pavement accessibility audit could help improve safety for residents. The Council would like to thank County Councillor Bagguley for his swift action in getting the pavement on Old Road cleared following recent hedge works, making it safe and accessible for everyone.

Play Parks and Community Spaces

The Play Park Working Group continued to develop plans for the Meadow Road Play Area, with a public consultation event being planned. Preliminary designs were viewed, with more to come soon, and the arrangements for the consultation, including feedback stations for children, catering, entertainment, and stakeholder engagement, were agreed. A date for this will be announced in due course.

Village Facilities and Assets

Repairs to the benches at the railway station are underway; the benches will be absent for approximately two weeks while the work is completed. A new two-sided notice board for Orchard Place has been approved; thanks are extended to residents for their patience while the previous board was out of action. The decision to go with a two-sided board was made because the sun has damaged the Perspex windows on the current board, and its position means any double-sided replacement would face the same issue. Installation will proceed once permission from Homes Plus has been obtained. A new sign will also be installed at the MUGA site, as required by RoSPA.

Regalia

Members were pleased to note the return of the Chairman's Chain following its recent renewal. This important parish asset had not been updated for over 20 years and has now been carefully refurbished to ensure it continues to reflect the history and service of the Council. The names of four former Chairmen have been added, bringing the chain up to date and preserving an important part of Barlaston's civic heritage for future generations.

Civic Amenity Visits 2026

The Council has approved the dates for the 2026 Civic Amenity (skip) visits, which will take place on 24 January, 18 April, 25 July, and 24 October. The lorry will be in place at Ivy House Drive between 10:00 and 12:00.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Council has confirmed that the Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Tuesday 5 May 2026, with the venue to be confirmed shortly. This meeting is open to all residents and provides an opportunity to hear about the work of the Parish Council over the past year and to raise any matters of local interest.

Finance and Administration
The Council reviewed and approved the 2026/27 budget, with a precept of £116,792, representing a 1.3% increase on the previous year. The Section 137 budget for 2026/27 was set at £17,500 to provide funding for community initiatives, including things like the Village Hall and a share of cemetery maintenance. The list of grants made over the past 12 months is as follows:

Barlaston Guides	£599 Tents
Barlaston Bowls & Tennis Club	£212 Repairs
Barlaston Community Group	£150 VE Day Celebrations
Barlaston Cricket Club	£1,000 Fireworks Event
Barlaston Community Group	£150 Womblers
Royal British Legion	£25 Wreath
Proscenium Players	£558 Pantomime
Volunteer Transport Group	£136 Running Costs
Barlaston Community Group	£250 Golden Agers Party
Barlaston Community Group	£150 Silver Surfers
Barlaston Community Group	£150 Strollers and Striders
Barlaston Village Hall	£1,500 Maintenance
Barlaston Church	£1,500 Cemetery Maintenance
Stone Lions	£500 PSA Testing Event
Royal British Legion	£300 Remembrance Grant

Leases and Contracts
The Cricket Club lease was signed by the Chair and Vice-Chair and will be forwarded for completion once agreed insurance arrangements are in place. The Grounds Maintenance Contract Working Group reviewed the current contract and recommended revision and retendering. A short-term interim extension of two months was approved to ensure continuity of service while the new contract is prepared.

Grants and Community Support
A grant of £500 was approved for Stone Lions to support their annual PSA testing event, which provides an important health service and is well used by men in the village.

Community Initiatives
Nominations for Villager of the Year 2025 were invited, and details of the award ceremony will be announced in due course.

Planning
Updates on planning matters included progress on the Barlaston Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Fisher and the Clerk have met with Urban Vision, and an in-person meeting with the Planning Policy Manager at Stafford Borough Council is planned before further progress.

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