Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Barlaston Parish Council

Held on Tuesday 12 May 2026 at Barlaston Methodist Church Hall at 7:00pm

Present:

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

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

Public Open Forum: There were no members of the public present.

606. Welcome and Introductions: The retiring Chairman welcomed those present.

607. Election of Chairman for 2026/27: Cllr Borasinski was duly elected Chairman for the forthcoming year. The Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

608. Election of Vice-Chairman for 2026/27: Cllr Arnold was elected Vice-Chairman.

609. Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received from Cllr Fisher. It was resolved to accept these. *Clerk's Note: Apologies from Cllr Tudor were received prior to the meeting but were omitted in error from the meeting proceedings.*

610. Declarations of Interest: Cllr Philpott declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 631.2 as a member of the Plume of Feathers Bowing Club.

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

612. Committees and Working Groups: Membership of the following committees and working groups for 2026/27 was resolved:

Joint Playing Fields Committee (4)	Cllrs Fisher*, Hurst, Borasinski, Pickering
Planning Committee (8)	Cllrs Fisher*, Tudor, Pickering, Philpott, Arnold, Jones, Dando, Borasinski
Health & Safety Working Group (3)	Cllrs Dando*, Borasinski, Jones
Finance Committee (8)	Cllrs Fisher*, Jones, Philpott, Arnold, Tudor, Dando, Borasinski, vacancy
Employment Working Group (4)	Cllrs Pickering*, Sear, Dando, Philpott
Playpark Working Group (5)	Cllrs Philpott*, Tudor, Dando, Sear, Hurst
Biodiversity/Environment WG (4)	Cllrs Fisher*, Jones, Hurst, Pickering

It was resolved to disband the GP Surgery Working Group and appoint Cllr Dando as the Council's GP Surgery Liaison. It was further resolved to discontinue the Rights of Way, Graveyard Extension, and Policies Working Groups, and to establish a Biodiversity and Environment Working Group. (*Chairman)

613. Appointment of representative on the Village Hall Management Committee: It was resolved that Cllr Arnold be appointed as the Council's representative from April to September, and Cllr Philpott from October to March.

614. Review of Banking Arrangements and Signatories 2026/27: The banking arrangements were reviewed. It was resolved that these remain unchanged, with the Council continuing to hold accounts with Lloyds Bank, Unity Trust Bank, and the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.

615. Asset Register: The Asset Register, dated 31 March 2026, was reviewed and formally approved by the Council. It will be published on the Council's website.

616. Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2026:

616.1. The Internal Audit Report was received and accepted. A minor qualification was noted in relation to Box 9 of the Annual Governance Statement regarding historic processing of Village Hall utility invoices prior to July 2025. The Council noted the Internal Auditor's commendation in respect of compliance with Assertion 10 of the AGAR and that the current level of general reserves (0.46 years) is considered adequate.

616.2. Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement 2025/26) was considered by Councillors and it was resolved to approve it. The Chairman and Clerk signed the document.

616.3. Section 2 (Accounting Statements 2025/26) was considered by Councillors and it was resolved to approve them. The Chairman signed the document.

616.4. It was resolved to approve the period for the exercise of public rights from 3 June to 14 July 2026 for the 2025/26 accounts.

617. Budget and Earmarked Reserves 2026/27: The Council confirmed the budget position and earmarked reserves as previously approved in January 2026: EMR: Election £10,000; Asset Replacement £6,000; Play Park £140,000.

618. Internal auditor for 2026/27: It was resolved to appoint Kim Squires as Internal Auditor for the 2026/27 financial year.

619. Governing Documents:

619.1. **Standing Orders:** The Standing Orders were reviewed, and it was resolved that they remain unchanged.

619.2. **Financial Regulations:** The Financial Regulations were reviewed and it was resolved that the amended Financial Regulations be approved, amended at section 6.1 to reflect the Council's banking arrangements with Unity Trust Bank and the CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund.

619.3. **Risk Register**: Councillors reviewed and approved the Risk Register dated 31 March 2026. It was noted that this will be published on the Parish Council website.

620. Site Risk Assessments: Councillors considered and approved the adoption of site risk assessments for Council-managed open spaces and recreational areas (MUGA, Meadow Road Play Area, Village Green and Wild Play Area). Councillors requested that residents be reminded that these sites are inspected weekly, and that any concerns or issues requiring attention can be reported to the Council at any time.

621. Parish Council Meetings 2026/27: It was resolved that meetings will continue to be held on the second Tuesday of each month, with the exception of August. The following dates were agreed: 12 May, 9 June, 14 July, 8 September, 13 October, 10 November, 8 December, 12 January, 9 February, 9 March, 13 April.

622. Subscriptions and memberships for 2026/27: It was resolved to renew the following subscriptions and memberships: Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association (includes membership of National Association of Local Councils), Society of Local Council Clerks, RIALTAS Accounting Software Licence, Support Staffordshire, Campaign to Protect Rural England, McAfee Virus Protection, Dropbox, Information Commissioners Office, Microsoft 365, and website hosting. It was resolved not to renew the Rural Services Partnership subscription.

623. Insurance Renewal: It was resolved to renew the Council's insurance with Clear Councils Insurance at a cost of £1,421.51. It was further resolved to authorise the Clerk to review and update the Statement of Fact and asset information with the insurer as necessary, including the addition of play surface cover, and to make any resulting adjustments without requiring a further Council meeting.

624. Minutes: The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 14 April 2026 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

625. Clerk's Report: See Appendix B

626. County Councillor: The County Councillor was not present.

627. Borough Councillor: Cllr Jones gave a brief report.

628. Finance and Administration:

628.1. The April bank reconciliation and statements were noted and signed.

628.2. It was resolved to approve the schedule of payments for April 2026 (Appendix A)

629. Playpark Working Group:

629.1. An update was received from the Working Group. Two design options were presented, one for Meadow Road Play Area and one for the Village Green. A meeting had taken place with a play provider on 16 April, and it was agreed that a third quote and design would be sought.

630. Leases and Contracts:

Grounds Maintenance Contract Tender 2026 - 2028: The Council considered the recommendations of the Tender Evaluation Panel. The Council noted that a single tender had been received following the tender process and, having considered the submission against the specification, was satisfied that it represented good value for money, was within the approved budget, and demonstrated appropriate experience, resources, and capability to deliver the contract.

Resolved: that the Grounds Maintenance Contract be awarded to Croppers Grounds Maintenance Limited for a period of two years from 1 June 2026, with an option to extend for a further one year, at a contract sum of £9,990 + VAT per annum, and that the Clerk be authorised to finalise the contract award and complete the necessary contractual documentation.

631. To consider grant applications and determine awards:

631.1. 1st Barlaston Guides: It was resolved to approve a Section 137 grant of £350 for the purchase an additional tent.

631.2. Barlaston Plume of Feathers Bowling Club: It was resolved to approve a Section 137 grant of £500.00 for the servicing of two mowers. Cllr Philpott declared an interest as a member of the Bowling Club and left the room during discussion and voting.

632. Health & Safety / Risk Management:

632.1. Asset Inspection: It was noted that asset inspections are ongoing, with Councillors reporting back as inspections are completed.

632.2. Weekly Play Reports: These were received from appointed councillors.

633. Community Initiatives and Proposals

633.1. It was resolved that the Clerk send formal letters of thanks to Barlaston Church for hosting the Villager of the Year event and to Fiskars for donating the commemorative bowl

633.2. Canal & River Trust: It was resolved to approve the request to use the Meadow Road Play Area as parking for an event on 4 July, subject to completion of the Temporary Use of Land Agreement, to be signed prior to the event.

633.3. Dog fouling awareness scheme: It was resolved to support a refreshed dog fouling awareness campaign and to allocate a budget of £250. The Clerk will design new posters with refreshed messaging. Cllr Borasinski volunteered to support the campaign

634. Planning:

634.1. **Planning Committee decisions:** No planning applications were received. It was noted that application 26/41654/ANX has been refused by the Local Planning Authority.

635. Items for inclusion on the agenda for the next meeting:
Grants Policy; Bench Meaford Road; Christmas Tree; Culvert Maintenance

636. Date of next meeting: 9 June 2026

clerk@barlastonparishcouncil.gov.uk

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

April expenditure and items for approval	Invoice Reference	GROSS	VAT	NET	Payment
BT: Phone & Broadband	M079 XR	49.24	8.20	41.04	DD
Brown & Brown Insurance (Cricket Club)	554792247	1,027.00	0.00	1.027.00	BACS
Unity Trust – Bank Charges (CHAPS TRF)	TRF	25.00	0.00	25.00	BACS
Lloyds Bank – Monthly Bank Charges	480975299	4.25	0.00	4.25	BACS
V O'Dunne – Frames/Villager of the Year	-	11.89	0.00	11.89	BACS
V O'Dunne – McAfee Annual Subscription	-	114.99	0.00	114.99	BACS
Bradleys Accountancy Services: Payroll	2026/0955	99.12	16.52	82.60	BACS
UVE Planning Ltd – Planning Consultancy	UVEP103-26	700.80	116.80	584.00	BACS
Viking Office UK Ltd – Office Consumables	4410606379	53.92	8.99	44.93	BACS
Vivien O'Dunne – Salary April 2026	-	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
V O'Dunne – Mileage	-	5.49	0.00	5.49	BACS
Barlaston Bowling & Tennis Club – S137 Grant	-	348.03	0.00	348.03	BACS
Buxus Breen – Grounds Maintenance		1,109.62	0.00	1,109.62	SO
Staffordshire Local Government Pension Scheme	-	570.35	0.00	570.35	BACS
Soft Surfaces Limited – MUGA Refurbishment – Payment on Completion	26157	5,024.64	837.44	4,187.20	BACS
The Secret Kitchen – Buffet – Villager of the Year Event	2202	600.00	100.00	500.00	BACS
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund Units	8391488	21,149.00	0.00	21,149.00	BACS
CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund Units	8394070	32,761.00	0.00	32,761.00	CHAPS
Income		**GROSS**	**VAT**	**NET**	**Payment**
Interest – Commercial Bank (Lloyds)		36.71	0	36.71	BACS
Interest – CCLA – Public Sector Deposit Fund		77.37	0	77.37	BACS
Stafford Borough Council - Precept	SPRQ004858	49,938.66	0	49,938.66	BACS
Stafford Borough Council – Local Council Tax Support Government Grant	SPRQ004858	7,430.84	0	7,430.84	BACS
Stafford Borough Council – Concurrent Functions Allowance	SPRQ004858	2,053.00	0	2,053.00	BACS
Barlaston Cricket Club – Insurance		1,027.00	0	1,027.00	BACS
HMRC VAT Refund		3,609.46	0.00	3,609.46	BACS

Appendix B – Clerk's Report (back to the minutes)

317 Emergency Plan: The Clerk will add back onto the agenda for discussion when progress has been made on this.

510.8 The Village Gateway gates: I am struggling to find a contractor willing to quote. The County Council have confirmed that a NRSWA (New Roads and Street Works Act 1991) contractor is required who has Public Liability Insurance of a minimum £5m.

526.4 Gate licenses: I will move this back to the main agenda when progress has been made.

525.6 Unity Trust multi-pay card: This is in process; I will report when this has been completed.

542.5 Purchase of iPads and MDM: I am taking receipt of the iPads on Monday 11 May.

556.5 Library Plaque: This will be an agenda item in June.

556.8 The noticeboard for Orchard Place has been installed and The Village Stores have kindly agreed to hold the key.

563.1 Seasonal Community Decorations and Event: This item will be reinstated on the agenda in April when the Councillor responsible for this remit is present.

564.2 Green Spaces Templates: One template has been received. Councillors are reminded to identify community spaces in their ward to be earmarked as protected green spaces and submit details to the Clerk

General updates:

The MUGA works are now complete.

Stafford Borough Council have installed a repurposed bench at the play area on Flaxman Close.

Tree works at the Downs Car Park are scheduled for the 12 May.

Highways Reports Update: No change in status.

Ref	Date	Detail	Status
4491360	30/03/26	Flooding at the crossroads	Enquiry ongoing
4491384	30/03/26	Road condition on Station Road by One Stop	Enquiry ongoing
4491573	31/03/26	Verge on Old Road following hedge cutting	Enquiry ongoing
4491973	02/04/26	Overgrown hedges by the bus stop on Old Road	Enquiry ongoing