

BARFORD SHERBOURNE & WASPERTON JOINT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Parish Council held in Barford Memorial Hall on Mon 9 June 2025

Present:	Chairman: Cllr J V Murphy Cllr: J T Barrott, J D Billingham, R Clay, H Gadsden, Mrs S Jarratt, T Merrygold, B Ranner, M J Sheard, Mrs K E Thomson
Apologies:	Cllr: J M Hawkesford, Mrs R Newsome, P B Phillips
In attendance:	Cllr J Matecki

Opening

21 The meeting opened at 7:30 pm.

Declarations of Disclosable Interests

22 None

Public Question Time

23 2 members of the public attended the meeting.

Minutes of the JPC Meetings for approval

24 JPC Annual Meeting 12th May 25
JPC Planning Meeting 20th May 25

The JPC adopted the minutes as a true record

Financial Reports

25 Cash Book Balances as at 31st March 2025
HSBC £89,386.35
Santander £76,959.26

The JPC took note

25.1 Receipts and Payments

Date	Payee	Category	Amount
01 Apr 25	Bank Interest	Bank Interest	65.69
01 Apr 25	Stripe	BSC	39.70
02 Apr 25	Plot 21B	Allotments	55.47
02 Apr 25	Plot 2	Allotments	41.60
02 Apr 25	Plot 22A	Allotments	54.00
07 Apr 25	Chq pyts for Plots	Allotments	324.20
08 Apr 25	Plot 20.4	Allotments	35.50
08 Apr 25	Plot 1	Allotments	41.60
11 Apr 25	Octopus	KGF	-30.40
12 Apr 25	Allotment Refund O'pyt	Allotments	-7.40
16 Apr 25	Frank Mann Farmers	KGF	-354.00
16 Apr 25	WALC	WALC Subs	-760.80
21 Apr 25	Bank Chgs	Bank Chgs	-8.00
23 Apr 25	Employee 3	Employment Exp Salary	-138.60
25 Apr 25	JPC Office	JPC Office	-75.00
25 Apr 25	Heating costs (JVM)	Venue Hire	-40.00
25 Apr 25	Chairmans Allowance	Chairmans Allowance	-620.00
28 Apr 25	Employee 1	Employment Exp Salary	-1,029.81
30 Apr 25	Precept (50%)	Precept (50%)	35,750.00
30 Apr 25	Nest	Pension	-97.38

The JPC endorsed these transactions

25.2 Management Accounts to April 25

APRIL MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS 2025/26					
	Bdgt 24-25	Bdgt 25-26	Comment	YTD	FOO
RECEIPTS					
Allotments Rents	1,663	1,812	Reflects a 6.7% increase in rents	545	1,812
Bank Interest	700	700		66	700
BSC	2,000	1,320		40	1,320
Precept	66,963	71,500		35750	71,500
VAT (prior year)	14,000	9,500			9,500
WCC Grant Defibrillator/BCC Donation					
Wayleave	5	5			5
TOTAL RECEIPTS	85,331	84837		36400	84837
PAYMENTS					
Allotments Hire of Land	680	694	5-year review. Increase to £680 from Sep 24		694
Allotments Maintenance	100	110			110
Allotments Water Supply	250	255			255
Allotments Pest Control	250	240			240
Audit Fees	925	1,000	External Auditor +5%. Internal Auditor +£200		1,000
Bank Charges	105	120		8	120
BSC	120	120	Website charges		120
SF (KGF)	0	0	Designated Fund to be held at £40k		0
Bus Shelters Maintenance	620	650			650
Bus Shelter Refurbishment	0	0			0
Chairman's Allowance	620	650	Indexed (2024 & 2025)	620	1,251
Election costs	2,500	2,500	Incremental rise to £10k Designated Fund by 2027		2,500
Employment Expenses	22,905	20,000	2% increase assumed	1266	20,000
Footpath					
Grants: Churchyard Maintenance	1,761	1,791	Indexed		1,791
Grants: Community Centres	4,481	4,558	Indexed		4,558
Grants: BYCC	0	0			0
Insurance Premium	4,000	4,200	Estimate		4,200
KGF/	5,000	7,500		384	7,500
KGF Mowing Charges	6,919	5,000	Rolling contract reviewed 5% increase		5,000
Newsletter	2,881	3,250	Agreement to track CPI		3,250
Noticeboards Repair/Replace		3,000			3,000
Office Accommodation	960	900	Indexed	75	900
Open Spaces Maintenance/		5,250			5,250
Mowing Charges	5,000	2,500			2,500
Payroll Administration		600			600
Pest Control (OSM)	300	350			350
Postage	80	100	Predominantly for sending allotment contracts		100
Printing and Stationery/office	20	200			200
Public Access Defibrillator					
Public Clock		275			0
Rectory Paddock	500	734	Fixed annual charge		734
Section 137	25	30	Remembrance wreath		30
Subsidiary Powers LGA72 s111 Total	0	1,000	Fire Proof Cabinet for Clerk		1,000
Subs: SLCC	188	228			228
Subs: WALC	710	790		761	790
Tech Gov		3,000			3,000
Training and Seminar Expenses	200	500			500
Travel Expenses	80	100			100
Venue hire	0	50		40	50
War Memorial Wasperton	124	130			130
Youth Advisory Board		1,000			1,000
TOTAL PAYMENTS	62,304	73375		3154	73701
Difference:	23,028	11462		33246	11136

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY APR 25		
Opening balance 2024-25	133,099	
Excess of Income over Expenditure 2024-25	11,136	
Closing balance 2024-25	144,235	
Designated Funds		
Barford Leisure Improvement Scheme:		
Barford Sports Club	10,090	Self funding
King George's Field	8,597	Includes residue of third-party start-up funding
Sinking Fund	40,000	Funded from Precept; for long-term capital needs
Barford Telephone Kiosk	200	Barford Heritage Group bond for future costs
Barford War Memorial	470	Raised by public subscription
Contested Election Costs	7,500	JPC policy to maintain this reserve (2.5K increase 24/25)
Key Man Insurance	17,300	75% of employment costs and office accommodation
Neighbourhood Watch	100	Current Balance
Total Designated Funds	84,257	
SUMMARY 2024-25		
Closing balance	144,235	
Designated Funds	(84,257)	
Discretionary Reserve	59,978	

The JPC approved the Management Accounts to April 25

Annual Internal Audit Report

26 Internal Audit year ended 31st March 2025

Louise Best – Internal Auditor – Comments from Internal Audit

As requested I have completed an examination of the financial statements and cashbook. In doing so I have verified the bank reconciliation and agreed the cashbook entries to the bank statements. I have also agreed expenditure to supporting documentation and to approval by the Councillors in the Minutes. I have reviewed VAT on the invoices to cash book entries.

The financial statements and cashbook are in very good order. The Clerk retains accurate records and files supporting documentation in a methodical order.

The financial statements are accurate and are supported by underlying financial records and documentation.

I have seen all of the minutes up to and including 10th March 2025, for these I can verify that Councillors regularly are updated on balances and variances of actual vs budgeted expenditure. The Clerk also lists all the receipts and payments within the minutes for approval.

I have agreed the receipts & payments to the Annual return.

Observations

- The financial totals as at 31 March 2024 have been brought forward accurately.
- The cashbook is maintained and up to date.
- VAT has been evidenced and recorded correctly. The claim for VAT for 24/25 for £9,286.33 needs to be submitted for repayment.
- Payments have been checked and were supported by invoices, authorised and minuted. (Up to PV117 to the unsigned March 10th 2025 minutes). There was one instance where a receipt wasn't included for the purchase of stamps but the expense was approved by the Council (PV37).
- Bank statement entries have been agreed to the cash book and to the Bank reconciliations.
- Income recorded in the bank account was checked to those entries shown in the cashbook.
- S137 expenditure has been recorded separately.
- Expenditure against budget and Bank reconciliations are carried out on a regular basis, presented to Councillors and minuted. There are no unexplained variances in the Bank reconciliation.
- The figures in the AGAR 24/25 are accurate and are supported by underlying financial records and documentation.
- The Council's Insurance Cover is provided with Hiscox Insurance (Gallagher). The cover is to 31/05/2025
- The Risk Assessment was reviewed and updated in meeting of 10 February 2025
- The bank balances are reported regularly in the minutes.

- JPC approved the Budget 2025/26 with a precept of £71,500 in January 2025
- The level of the precept appears to be supported by budgetary review. The 25/26 Budget was adopted on 13 January 2025
- The precept amount is approved in the minutes 13th January 2025.
- An up to date Asset Register is in place with individual assets listed.

Points Arising

- I would recommend that the Clerk maintains a list of all Council Policies with the date that they were last reviewed and approved by the Council. This to be shared with the JPC and dates set for their review by the Council. Upon discussion with the Clerk it was noted that the JPC are to streamline the review process and will ensure that all policies are regularly appraised, 'Policy Review' will be an annual agenda item at the June JPC.
- It is noted that The Fixed Asset Register was reviewed earlier this month, and the Chair is to approve and report to June JPC.
- Review of Standing Orders was done in 2022 and therefore these are due to be reviewed. This will be added as an Agenda in June for any changes to be adopted by the JPC.
- The new model financial regulations were added to the minutes earlier this financial year, for review by the Chairman, Vice Chair and Clerk, to report back to the JPC for approval, however this was held over but is now a priority, with a date to be set at the May JPC meeting, reporting back to the JPC for adoption at the June meeting.
- Publication of JPC financial matters on the council website should include the following:

- AGAR
- IA report
- Bank Rec 31st March
- Explanation of Variances
- Asset Register
- Notice of Public Rights

It is noted that the JPC in the process of having a new .gov.uk website built by Parish Online. This facility will give everyone easy access to all Policies.

The JPC took note

Fixed Asset Register

- 27 The Fixed Asset Register was reviewed by the JPC. It was decided that the format was unnecessarily complicated and could be simplified to enable the data to more easily appraised. The description of each asset did not make it immediately clear as to the purpose. Additionally, whilst the figures recorded for each asset are accurate, the total box included hidden data for expired assets which contained a negative balance, therefore under reporting the overall total.
- Correct balance £95, 526 as subsequently updated and reported on the AGAR return.
- Chairman and Clerk to review the current format of the register to make it more user friendly.

AGAR Return 2024/25

- 28 Annual Internal Report - JPC took note – Document published on the JPC website
- 28.1 Annual Governance Statement – JPC Approved – Document published on the JPC website
- 28.2 Accounting Statements – JPC Approved – Document published on the JPC website

New Model Standing Orders Update

- 29 The New Model Standing Orders were presented to reflect the May 25 update.
- Adopted by the JPC

Model Financial Regulations Update

- 30 The Model Financial Regulations were presented to reflect the May 24 update.
- Adopted by the JPC

Verification of quarterly Bank Reconciliation

- 31 The JPC appointed Cllr Billingham to sign off the quarterly bank reconciliation.

Policy Review

- 32 The Clerk proposed that all JPC policies should be reviewed on an annual basis. This task will be spread across the year with the Clerk maintaining a Policy Review Register capturing the last completed review date and future review due date for each policy.
The JPC agreed

Harassment & Bullying Policy

- 33 The JPC reviewed the draft of the new Harassment and Bullying Policy. A number of issues were raised, specifically that it should be made more clear that the policy relates to both employees and councillors.
The Clerk will redraft the policy to reflect the requested changes.
Final draft to be presented at July meeting for adoption.

IT Policy

- 34 The JPC reviewed the IT Policy. It was requested that the policy should be retitled 'Information Technology Policy'.
Item 12 was amended to reflect that all security incidents should be reported to both the Clerk and Chairman.
Amendments agreed – Policy Adopted

JPC EMAIL/Website – Supply and Maintenance of .gov.uk domain - update

- 35 Parish Online have submitted the new domain name for registration and are waiting for confirmation that it has been accepted.
The Clerk requested that those Cllrs who have not yet supplied their headshot (landscape format) and chosen first names for their e-mail address, do so by 23rd June.

Youth Advisory Board

- 36 Cllr Ranner presented an update on the progress of the Youth Advisory Board.
Following a productive meeting with Hollie Hutchings of the WCC Youth Service, the following work list has been formulated:
- Risk assessment for any sessions which may take place based on national guidance for youth organisations.
 - Formation (and endorsement) of a Safeguarding policy by JPC
 - Promotion materials to be developed for push over summer
 - Formal contact to be made to Aylesford, Kinton and Stratford High schools
 - Contact Stratford Youth Hub, and arrange to meet with their youth forum/ team.

To enable this work to proceed, the following is requested of the JPC:

- In addition to Councillor Hawksford (who volunteered last month), an additional JPC councillor to be attached to the project who would be willing to attend meetings, be DBS checked, and to undertake a 3 hour first aid course.

- A working budget of £1,000 for:

Setup

3 x DBS checks @£21.50 each = £64.50

1 x Weekend, onsite, All age emergency first aid training (3 hours) (up to 12 delegates) = £520

Social media push = £100

Poster and leaflet printing = £100

Contingency =£75

Ongoing

BYCC Hall hire – 2.5h pcm @£8ph (£20pcm) = £140 (to end of FY)

A project budget to be considered later in the year based on proposals from young persons.

Cllr Katie Thomson volunteered to be attached to the project alongside Cllrs Ranner and Hawkesford.

The JPC agreed a budget of £1,000 to cover costs for the next 6 months.

JPC Social Media – Editorial Policy

37 Carried forward to July meeting

To Receive Report of Parish Councillors

- 38 Cllr Barrott reported that the defibrillator at the BYCC will be checked as there were reports that it had been used following a medical emergency. If so, replacement pads will be ordered.
- 38.1 Cllr Barrott commented on the mess left behind following the council mowing in Barford which had been reported to WCC. Cllr Matecki confirmed that this had been passed to the responsible department.
- 38.2 Cllr Clay reported that road markings at the mini roundabout were disappearing – Cllr Matecki informed by e-mail 9th June.
- 38.3 Cllr Clay reported that there had been 2 instances of vandalism at the public toilets and pointed out that this was not the first time this had happened. Cllr Clay suggested changing the lock on the toilets to a time basis rather than a light sensor to enable the toilets to be locked at 6pm rather than as late as 9pm in summer.
Cllr Sheard pointed out that according to CCTV the latest incident happened at 4.30pm. As the vandalism seemed to consist of using the blue towels from the dispensers to block and flood the toilets, the JPC should consider installing a hand dryer instead.
Cllr Sheard also recommended installing a combination of time lock and light sensor to accommodate the winter and summer months.
Topic to be added to July agenda.
- 38.4 Cllr Sheard advised that the SWLP 3rd call for sites had now been published. Due to the location of the additional sites outside our immediate area, no further JPC action required at this stage.
- 38.5 Cllr Billingham asked if a response had been received from the Safer Neighbourhood team following issues raised at the Wasperton Annual Parish meeting and prior to that at the March 25 JPC meeting. No response received to date.
- 38.6 Quarry Regulation 25 - Cllr Matecki confirmed that Smiths had promised to submit their response by the end of June for officers to review 16th July (response originally promised by mid April). The consultation period will be 3 weeks. Cllr Matecki has requested that this be extended but was not confident if this request would be granted.
Subject to the application being received, Cllr Ranner will publish a reminder of the consultation period on social media from 30th June.
- 38.7 Cllr Matecki reported that the consultation period for putting a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for no parking on the zig zags in Barford will commence on 23rd June. If a TRO is in place, traffic enforcement officers can visit the area at an appropriate time and legally enforce no parking on the zig zags with appropriate actions against transgressors. The prospect does provide problems for buses picking up from the school so may not be straightforward..

Closure

39 There being no further business, the meeting closed at 8.55pm

Date of Next Meeting

40 Monday 14th July 2025