

BARTON PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 30th MAY 2024 6.30pm

MINUTES - DRAFT UNTIL SIGNED

HELD AT BARTON INSTITUTE

Present; Chair Walsh, Vice Chair Jones, Cllr Dobinson, Cllr Burns, Cllr Wool.

Parishioners; Gill Smalley, Deborah Hutchinson & Val Ramshaw, Simon Lee

Clerk to the Parish Council; Charlotte Liversedge-Gell

1 Apologies	None
2 Declaration of Interest	None
3 Election of a Chair	Cllr Walsh nominated by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Wool
4 Election of a Vice Chair	Cllr Jones nominated by Cllr Burns and seconded by Cllr Wool
5 Chairman's Annual Report 2023/24	Chairman report for 2023/24 – read by Chair Walsh Barton PC 2024 Annual Meeting Good evening and welcome to the 2024 annual meeting of Barton Parish Council. I would like to start by clarifying that members of this body are unpaid volunteers who endeavour to serve the community to the best of their abilities. As a collective of individuals we endeavour to manage the shared interests of the parish residents. We undertake relatively small but necessary civic endeavours designed to preserve and protect the contented life of our community. Our funding comes entirely from the precept we are permitted to levy on the community and do our level best to balance income and expenditure, we do not seek to accumulate funds beyond a small contingency to emergency or unplanned events. It is important that residents understand we are not a planning decision making authority, we do however maintain a liaison with the planning authorities to ensure the views of the community we serve are communicated to the relevant officers. We also maintain close relationships with our County Councillor Angus Thompson who supports our endeavours and has more direct access to County Council officers. We are not a grant making body and do not seek to be so as it would mean increasing our precept to raise funding beyond our essential needs. We do however when asked use our combined experience and knowledge to offer advice or guidance to those seeking financial help for worthy projects. Our responsibilities include stewardship of the Village Hall, maintenance of the village green and road verges within the village, maintaining the tree scape which is covered by Tree Preservation orders, provision of allotments, and maintenance of street furniture and bus shelters.

	In respect of the village hall I would like to express sincere thanks to the hall committee under the leadership of Mrs Val Ramshaw who do such sterling work in managing the many events held in this wonderful facility and of course the development and maintenance of the hall. Another of our duties is the selection and employment of specialist contractors to ensure public safety, key in this are our engineer who carries out a detailed examination of playpark equipment and our arborists who inspect and maintain our tree scape. I should mention the application of tree protection orders requires planning permission to be obtained for all works on trees. On behalf of the community I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to my council colleagues past and present but also to the many people who go quietly about the business of litter picking, organising clubs which provide social opportunities such as our Tuesday Mardi club, to Trevor Frankland who maintains the Village Sports Field which offers and supports community events throughout the year, to Pat Jones thank you for maintaining lines of communication, to Daren and Laura for our wonderful and essential shop and post office, all of the foregoing add up to this lovely place and community we call Barton. If I have missed anybody in this thank you I apologise In closing it would be remiss of me if I did not thank our parish clerk Charlotte without her efficiency, guidance and knowledge we simply could not function. Qualified parish clerks are a rare breed and we are very glad and lucky to have Charlotte as ours. Cllr Jones expressed thanks on behalf of the Parish Council for all of Chair Walsh's hard work after a turbulent 18 months.
6 Village Institute Report 2023/24	Village Institute Report 2023/24 – read by Val Ramshaw The last year has been another successful year for Barton Village Institute. The hall continues to be well used by a variety of regular clubs and organisations which include The Scouting Group, Pilates, French Club, Kurling, Yoga, Ballroom Dancing, Jolly Fit and the Mardi Club. A new Baby Sensory Class and Mother and Toddler group have also started in recent weeks. We have seen a considerable increase in private hire for family related functions as well as a wide range of events such as Fashion Shows, Lunches, Quizzes and workshops. The unpredictability of the cost of living crisis and energy costs continue to be a cause for concern. However, we have been monitoring the situation closely and are happy to report we have once again secured competitive tariffs for electricity on a 3 year contract and gas on a one year contract. Due to these factors and careful financial management our income currently exceeds our expenditure leaving the Institute in a strong financial position. We are therefore happy to report that following a Fee Review we will not be increasing the fees for hall hire this year. An annual review of our policies was undertaken. The Reserve Policy

	has been adjusted. A Conflict of Interest policy has been adopted. The Health and Safety; Internet Use; Privacy and Wi-fi policies remain the same. The Management Committee are continually working to ensure that the Institute is fit for purpose for many years to come, as well as being a safe and welcoming space. It is a priority that we meet all necessary regulations and guidelines and with this in mind we have a programme of work to maintain and improve standards at the Institute. The external fire escape is scheduled to be repaired and repainted in the coming weeks. We are also in the process of making improvements to the outside area comply with Health and Safety regulations. These will be funded, in part, by local government grants received during covid. Thanks were also extended to Secretary Deborah Hutchinson. Val expressed that the Management Committee couldn't survive without her and the Treasurer. Cllr Wool spoke about how the fire door was very stiff to close and is concerned it may not be getting closed properly. Cllr Dobinson agreed it had been difficult to close during the children's clubs. Ms Ramshaw is aware of the doors sticking and the VHC are looking into the getting the fire doors and bars maintained – they may need replacing. Ms Hutchinson also added that the hall and doors are always checked following a hire.
7 Allotment Committee Report 2023/24	Allotment Committee Report 2023/24 read by Gill Smalley The Allotment Committee had their AGM in March. The new Bank Account is up and running – which is helping to save money as the previous account had introduced monthly fees. There was a Work Party in March to cut the hedge that had been partly cut back by Oliver's during their annual tree works. There are still some large branches and parts of the hedge overhanging onto people's allotment plots. There could be safety issues in high winds – Ms Smalley requested could Oliver's look at the hedge again when they are next in the Village. Other hedge lines and grass cutting of the Allotment Paths have been carried out by volunteers from the Allotments. All of the plots are currently full but there is no waiting list so if anyone would like a plot and start the waiting list, please contact Gill Smalley on gillsmalley@hotmail.com The fees for an allotment are as follows: Full Plot: Rent £32.00 plus Association fee £5.00 plus National Allotment Society (NAS) fee £3.00 = Total annual cost of £40.00 Half plot: Rent £16.00 plus Association fee £5.00 plus NAS fee £3.00 = Total annual cost of £24.00

	Some money is also made from the annual seed sales. Sadly there have been some instances of dogs fouling within the Allotments. Signs have been put up to remind people to please pickup after their dogs. It is lovely for everyone to be able to enjoy a walk through the allotments – but please be considerate and pick up after your dog and take it with you.
8 Summary of Income & Expenditure 2023/24	Clerk to provide Income and Expenditure Summary for 2023/24 Parish Council: Precept: £12025 Staff Costs: £3011.84 All Other Payments: £10510.69 Balance carried forward: £6000.33