

Barford St John & St Michael Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday 28th February 2024 at 7.30pm in Barford Village Hall

Present: Cllrs Turner, Hobbs, Lovell, Deane, Cox & Tucker, and Mr Best, (Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer). No members of the public attended the meeting.

Apologies for absence: Cllr Charman, District Cllr Williams & County Cllr Fatemian

24/014	Declarations of Interest: None
24/015	Co-Option of new councillor – Mrs Dawn Tucker was co-opted as a councillor and participated the rest of the meeting a councillor.
24/016	Minutes of the last meeting: It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 rd January 2024 were a true and accurate record (unanimous).
24/017	Matters arising from the minutes: None.
24/018	Public Participation: None
24/019 24/019/1	Clerk's Report: Footpath 121/12 Barford St Michael Church to Netherworton Rd – The clerk has reported to OCC Footpaths that the section between Netherworton Road and footpath 121/13 (Netherworton Rd to Iron Down Hill) is impassable as the stile has been removed and the gap in the hedge blocked with a fence.
24/019/2	20mph Speed Limit Introduction – Following the survey of residents carried out at the Barford Christmas Market, the Clerk requested OCC reduce the speed limit on South Newington Road (Conker Alley), round the bend at the top of the hill in Barford St John and between Barford St Michael and Barford St John. OCC has agreed to reduce the limit between Barford St Michael and Barford St John but not the other two locations. It was agreed that the PC will appeal to OCC against the decision on South Newington Road as this is a single tack road without passing places and is used by walkers.
24/019/3	OCC work on trees around the villages – OCC Highways has pruned copper beach tree at the bottom of Murreys Lane at the request of the Parish Council as cables and telephone lines run through it.
24/019/4	Hedge in West Close along Murreys Lane – Mr Pete Eden and the clerk have planted additional hedging to make the border with the road more secure.
24/019/5	New Dog Bin in the centre of Barford St John – This was reported as overflowing. The clerk reported it to Cherwell District Council who emptied it.
24/019/6	Allotment Water – Although the clerk submits meter readings every month Castle Water has been estimating the bills and overcharging. Castle Water has agreed to base bills on the submitted readings on condition that the Parish Council pays by direct debit.
24/019/7	Report on road safety at 10 air bases including Barford St John – Following the death of Harry Dunn at Croughton Airfield, a report was commissioned by the Department for Transport. The clerk wrote enquiring when remedial work would be carried out. The DFT replied that there were no recommendations requiring immediate engineering works, there is minimal risk to those using the roads and OCC Highways is reviewing the report.
24/019/8	Update on repairs to the bridge – Following the last meeting, the clerk wrote to OCC Highways asking for an update on repairs to the bridge. OCC replied that they are hoping to commence repairs in July 2024, but this is dependant on CDC granting listed building permission and an investigation of possible bat roosts. OCC is currently considering management of pedestrian access across the bridge and may provide a footbridge to the east of the bridge.
24/019/9	VAT Refund – The clerk has submitted a VAT refund request to HMRC of £2,151. The majority of this was VAT paid on the defibrillator.
24/019/10	Overgrown hedge by the bridge – The clerk reported this to OCC Highways after the January meeting as it is forcing cars driving to the bridge from Barford St Michael into the path of oncoming cars.
24/020 24/020/1	Correspondence: Use of Glyphosate Weedkiller – Two residents had written requesting that the Parish Council does not use glyphosate. It was agreed that the clerk would check with Thomas Fox Landscaping what weedkiller they use to clear footpaths before a decision is taken.

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24/021	County Councillor's Report from Arash Fatemian: None
24/022	District Councillor's Report from Bryn Williams: None
24/023 24/023/1 24/023/2 24/023/3 24/023/4 24/023/5	<p>Parish Matters:</p> <p>Village Spring Clean – It was agreed that the village spring clean will be carried out on Saturday 13th April. Volunteers will be requested via the Barford News.</p> <p>Waste Bins being used for dog poo bags – Residents have complained about the smell from dog poo bags being put into general waste bins. It was agreed that the clerk will investigate waste bins with lids.</p> <p>Verges being worn away by vehicles – This is particularly an issue in Lower Street near the junction with the High Street. It was agreed that wooden posts would be investigated to stop people driving over and parking on the verge.</p> <p>Annual Meeting of the Parish Council – It was agreed that the date for the annual meeting, when the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer are elected will be held on Wednesday 1st May.</p> <p>Annual Parish Meeting – It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting, held in conjunction with the Village Hall Management Committee, will be held on Wednesday 17th April.</p>
24/024 24/024/1 24/024/2 24/024/3	<p>Planning:</p> <p>23/02470/F – Land to rear of The Green – Erection of a bungalow – CDC refused 5/01/2024.</p> <p>23/03370/F – Buckingham's Cottage – Extension – CDC permitted 26/01/2024.</p> <p>24/00347/LB – Barford Bridge – Repairs and strengthening – PC supports.</p>
24/025 24/025/1	<p>Reports from Meetings:</p> <p>Rural Housing Meeting – Cllr Anita Deane attended a meeting run by Communities for Oxford on promoting affordable housing. This requires landowners to supply land at below commercial rates. It is hoped that landowners will make land available as housing has become unaffordable for many young residents.</p>
24/026 24/026/1	<p>Finance:</p> <p>Payments – The clerk gained approval for payments totalling £1,940.59 including a grant of £1,300 to the church. Income and expenditure are on budget.</p>
24/027 24/027/1 24/027/2 24/027/3	<p>Any Other Business:</p> <p>Patch of brambles along footpath from Lower Street to West Close – It was agreed that the clerk would trim these back.</p> <p>Flooding at the bridge – This has been quite frequent this year. The main cause is the sluice gate not being opened at Deddington Mill which causes the water to back up. Although a local farmer has been given permission by the owners to open it when they are not in residence, it requires three people to open it and it then takes time for the water to flow through. Only the Environment Agency is allowed to dredge rivers.</p> <p>Renting of Stone Pit Field – It has been reported that a new tenant has rented Stonepit Field and the larger field next to it from the Oxford Diocese although Stone Pit Field is owned by the Parish Council. It was agreed that the clerk would investigate this.</p>

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 1st May 2024 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed by Chairman.....

Date.....