

THE PARISH OF BARWELL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

6th April 2023 @ 7.00pm

Held at Jubilee Hall, Bryon Close, Barwell

In attendance:-

Chairman of the Parish Council Cllr Michael Gould

Borough Councillors Mr Russ Roberts & Mr Huw Williams

County Councillor Mr Ross Hills

Parish Deputy Clerk – Mrs S Williams

4 parishioners

1. The chairman welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting
2. The Chairman gave a verbal report to the meeting as follows:

As another year comes to a close may I reflect on the work of our Council.

Firstly, it has been a year with Covid still around and the year our late Queen's 70th Jubilee celebrations and the sad loss of Queen Elizabeth. The Council opened a condolence book as part of "Operation London Bridge" for residents to express their condolences.

On a happier note, we were able to host the "Barwell By The Sea" event, a well-attended event as I remember a hot and sunny day. Other events include Halloween Disco, Remembrance Sunday, Christmas Lights event, Christmas Food parcels and recently a Warm Room and Cost of living advice event. Up and coming

events are the Easter Eggstravaganza on 10th April, King Charles III Big Lunch – 7th May, Barwell By The Sea – 16th July, Band in the Park – 3rd September, Halloween Disco – 28th October, Remembrance Day Parade – 12th November and Christmas Lights Switch on – 25th November.

Improvements to play equipment include a new climbing wall in Radford park made possible by S106 monies. A PCIF grant supported the replacement of new equipment on Barwell Park. Also, our staff have completed a number of repairs to play areas highlighted by our ROSPA inspections.

Projects carried out this year are the complete refurbishment of the public toilets which were very tired and subject to a constant leak. The Parish Office window is in the progress of being replaced with some opening windows to aid ventilation and this was made possible with the help of the HBBC Shop Front Grant. This year the Council has for the 5th year running obtained free trees for planting in Barwell park reaching a total of about 1,400 saplings to date. Other projects include the provision of a Bench to dedicate to the Coronation of Kings Charles III, an aeration pump at the pumping station on Barwell park to mitigate the soluble methane issue, addressing invasive plant on Barwell Park, consulting on a request for a bus shelter on Queensway, carrying out drainage work at Dovecote Park and the new play equipment was officially opened on Dovecote Park. We also received a new trailer for the Ground staff thanks to a grant from HBBC.

The Council have supported various local groups with our grant scheme. We have worked with groups such as Befrienders, The Earl Shilton & Barwell Lions and the local British Legion Group who help at some of our events such as Christmas Parcel delivery, Remembrance Sunday and Tree Planting. Many thanks to them for their help in making these events successful.

Maintenance activities include, apart from the day to day grass cutting etc, replacing vandalised dog bins on Barwell Park and removing dead trees on mentioned park. Clearing and tidying top end of the cemetery.

Other work the Council have carried out include attending and supporting residents in opposing developers appeals to build on our valuable Green Wedge, one successful, one has been allowed. The Council has been represented at Parish Forums, a meeting with our MP, the Rural Conference and attended Police Surgery's, also welcomed a new Member of our Ground Care Team.

As this Council term of office draws to a close may I offer my gratitude to our dedicated Staff for keeping the work of the Council going during the worst Pandemic for over hundred years.

I wish the new Council well and hope they continue to challenge developers and other organisations to deliver the best outcomes for our village.

3. County Councillor Mr Ross Hills gave a verbal report as follows

As your current representative on the County Council, I also cover Newbold Verdon and Barlestone

Firstly, thank you to all the hard work of the Councillors and Parish staff.

The Library was one project that was looked at and it very nearly went ahead but hopefully this can be resurrected again in the future.

Lots of parking issues in Barwell, especially outside the local Co-op and the infants school. County have put in place more patrols in the area and meetings are being set up with the school to actively look at how the parking problem can be solved.

Top Rane Motors in an ongoing issue

Speed Camera and Bike racks have been approved for the centre of the village just need to decide where best for them to be sited.

A grant has just been awarded to the value of £1,600 to remove Japanese Knotweed in Barwell Park

Once again, we are seeing antisocial behaviour at the Tip and there is no an increase in security at night which will help alleviate this problem.

4. Borough Councillor Mr Huw Williams gave a verbal report as follows:

After representing Barwell for the last 8 years it is now time for personal reasons to take a step back

The SUE is still bubbling away in the background, but I hope doubt that the original plans will come to fruition

Over the years Barwell has had massive problems with antisocial behaviour and drugs – a lot of work has gone into this problem which has definitely been reduced but has not gone completely.

Thank you to the HBBC Shop Front Project and to Barwell Bloomers the village is certainly a much brighter and smarter place now.

The biggest disappointment to me is that Top Range Motors is still an eyesore and an ongoing project. We have all tried our best to resolve this problem but for some reason very little is being done and nothing seems to be moving forward.

I would also like to personally thank the Clerks, the groundmen and other staff and fellow Councillors, it's been a tough time especially throughout COVID – I may be stepping down, but I will still be an active resident. I hope that the new Council will carry on with the good work and continue to improve the village making it a welcoming and safe place to live.

5. Borough Councillor Mr Russ Roberts gave a verbal report as follows:

I would like to thank Michael, the Clerks, staff and must mention Steve Astill who due to COVID could not work at Jubilee Hall but turned his hand to helping the Groundsmen.

I've been a Councillor for the last 12 years and a Borough Councillor for the last 8 years. I have however been disappointed in the change of admin at Borough and feel that Barwell is always treated as the poor relation.

Like Cllr Huw Williams Top Range Motors is my biggest regret and disappointment. There is so much potential there for a computer suite, a library, market stall area, offices, storage and of course parking for the village.

Some of the Planning decisions have also been very disappointing because there is no active plan, we need control in local government not let the developed have control.

6. Questions raise by Parishioners: -

None