

MINUTES of the BARTON-ON-THE-HEATH PARISH COUNCIL

ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

Held on 21st April 2026 in the Village Hall

Councillors Present:

Chairman: Mr. James Coker Mr. Johnny Rickett Mrs Juley Piney Mr. Alistair Aitken Clerk to the PC: Mrs. Julia Hicks

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. Mandy MacPherson

Public Present:

Cathryn Aitken, James Hayman-Joyce, Vanessa Bolton, Marc Pennick, Simon Lofthouse, Penny Mead, Helen Seymour-Smith, Suzie Coker, Adam Jones, Councillor Sarah Whalley-Hoggins

- 1. Apologies:**
- 2. Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interest:** None were highlighted by those present.
- 3. Public Forum:** James Coker addressed the issue of speeding through the village and will send a list on to Councillor Jo Barker. Also he will address the damaged verges caused by the tanks of Severn Trent the during the many months last winter. Mandy McPherson mentioned the drain blocked outside Stanbrook House, weekly telephone calls have been fruitless, this is a County Matter and one that Councillor Jo Barker should address.
- 4. Minutes of the OGM of 11th October 2025** were agreed and signed by Chairman James Coker with matters arising to be discussed in meeting
- 5. Updates from the OGM of 11th October 2025:**

Maintenance/spraying of village verges

Alistair Aitken commented that there had been no further communications but that the County Council had accepted that it was the responsibility of SDC to maintain and a plan with the designated areas will be made available. Councillor Whalley-Hoggins advised that this service is scheduled for 4-5 times per year, however the weedkiller contractor is responsible for his own schedule and therefore it is not known when he will be spraying – causing an issue with moving parked vehicles to accommodate.

6. Village Hall Accounts to 31st October 2025

James Hayman-Joyce went through the accounts and noted that the £1000 raised by the Fete had not yet been received. James also made reference to the electricity bill and is monitoring as the hall is rarely used.

James Coker high-lighted that the gate between the Village Hall and cottage is in need of repair and whether this was the responsibility of the Village Hall; Simon Lofthouse kindly offered to arrange for the repair and payment.

7. St. Lawrance Church – Annual Accounts to date

Penny gave an update of affairs - The Parochial Church Council independent examiner approved the 2025 accounts and these were signed at a meeting on 14 April 2026 by myself and Walter Sawyer (Church Warden).

A summary of the year showed a small improvement in giving, which is welcomed. There was a much larger need for expenditure due to the Quinquennial survey which indicated urgent electricity upgrades in the fuse box and other electrical areas. There was also a need to repair an area of the roof. These works have now been completed. A recommendation by the Surveyor to remove the detritus that has accumulated in the bell tower and a remedy to prevent birds from coming through the window spaces was also made. It is hoped to have this removed in 2026 when an accredited company/individual is found. Volunteers have pruned and cut back the church gardens and shrubbery. Expenditure was financed through an increase in Collections, the use of the bequest given for maintaining the building, the generous donation given by The Fete Committee in 2025 and a donation from The Link.

There will be a relaunch of the Harvest Festival service this year followed by a light lunch on 20th September in the Village Hall.

The Annual PC General Meeting will be held in the Church at 3.30 on Wednesday 13th May 2026. All are welcome.

8. Parish Council Accounts

Mandy McPherson reported that the 2026/27 PRECEPT has been increased to £2000, from the £1000 it has been for many years; there has been more expenditure, particularly with the essential tree work on the village green and also the installation of the defibrillator

AOB: Re-positioning of the village defibrillator

Helen Seymour-Smith asked for the defibrillator and BT box to be removed from the wall of Home Farm Cottage as the wall in which is fixed to is in need of repair. However, the defibrillator is waterproof and will need to be positioned somewhere central in the village, the bus shelter was suggested along with the Village Hall. It needs to be ascertained as to whether the defib. Is battery charged or hard-wired to the electrics. Helen to investigate and report back.

Update:

Following the meeting, Shipston First Responders have confirmed that the defibrillator needs to be connected to power (only a trickle, like a phone charger). The phone box would have to be disconnected in order to be moved, which is necessary so that Helen can repair the damage to her wall behind it. Since the bus shelter has no power, the logical place to relocate the defibrillator to is the Village Hall, on the outside, between the door and the notice board. Helen will pay the £500 National Grid disconnection fee and organise for the phone box itself to be removed, once the defibrillator has been relocated, which Shipston First Responders are happy to do, hopefully in the next few weeks.

Update from District Councillor:

Sarah W-H had kindly attended our meeting and gave us an informative update on the workings of Stratford District Council and all things Local Plan orientated. She took questions from the floor and the chairman thanked her for her input.

Jo Barker our County Councillor had been invited but was unable to attend due to an important meeting in Shipston to do with Planning.

Date for next meeting. The next meeting will be the AGM to be held in May (date and time to be confirmed and circulated to the village).