

Parish Council notes for January 2026.

SCC Cllr Catherine Brown

Following several enquiries regarding gritting and grit bin refills I thought that the following would be useful. Please be aware that unadopted roads are not included.

<https://map.staffordshire.gov.uk/publicmap/en-GB/PublicMap/Gritting>

Highways Update: Weekly Stats for w/c 19/01/2026

Highways enquiries:

Closed (within the last 7 days): 1032

New (within the last 7 days): 1520

Open (inspectors – rolling): 3082

Open (other- rolling): 1353

Gullies visited: 2583 gullies visited, 84.6% observed running

Potholes patched: 387

Emergency jobs completed: 38

Pothole jobs completed by category of pothole:

Cat 3 - 128

Cat 2 - 90

Cat 1 - 188

Emergencies - 38

Speed Indicator Signs SID

SCC are reviewing all equipment, so all licences are on hold for the foreseeable future.

Meetings:

Health & Care Overview & Scrutiny meeting; ESBC Health & Wellbeing Committee; Dunstall PC meeting; Divisional Highways; SCC The Big Tourism Conference Uttoxeter; SCC Family Hubs; Lichfield Road AB with SCC highways project team.

Barton under Needwood:

Meeting proposed for all the road action groups.
Walton by-pass. On-going. Completion Sep 2026.
Bellways bus stop. Awaiting further instruction from BPC.
Footpath clearance and maintenance Station Road from Barton to Tucklesholme Nature Reserve. Ongoing.
Holland Sports Club- youth club funding support.
Efflinch Lane- flooding. Resolved.
Barr Green Providence housing development.
Grit bin enquires.
War memorial bollard- to be fixed. Reported.

Dunstall:

Highways England meeting regarding keeping the yellow lines on Lichfield Road, Dunstall. Meeting to be booked.
Gate and post for rubbish bin Lichfield Road, Barton. SCC team to sort - ongoing.
Dunstall Lane potholes reported x2.
Dunstall crossroads fallen flashing sign- reported.

Tatenhill & Rangemore:

S106 traffic calming- response imminent.
Branston Road following recent bad crash. Highways reviewed.
Horse-sign. Ongoing. Will depend on best use of my DHF.
Manor Croft/Main Street- new extra culvert is required. No timescale at present.
Byrkley Junction. D/W highways team and Byrkley park. The highly accurate Speed Compliance Tool SCT says that there is no data for further action.
Rangemore School speeding cars. Speed & volume requested.
Rangemore Mews complaint about the speed of vehicles- no data as above.
Sewage leak Whitmore Lane stables. ESBC Environmental Health, Byrkley Park manager and I met. The mapping of main sewers is being completed.

Newborough:

Thorney Lane (west). Potholes, leak with blocked drain and road camber at Holtcroft cottage still issues. 2026 surface dressing with 2027 resurfacing planned so other than Cat 1, highways do not want to fill and then remove infills. I need to review status. Just heard from Duchy of Lancaster- keepers barn, blocked pipe on highway. Reported.
Moat Lane complaint about new railing put too near road restricting access. Meeting with highways requested.

Pothole at AB end chicane reported.

Hoar Cross

The Hoar Cross Hall/Church footpath still to be done.

Thorney Lane east Speed and Volume survey not possible in the requested position due to lack of lane signpost for equipment. The Speed Compliant Tool (highly accurate and no cost) say that average speed is 31mph, and over 85% percentile, compliant. So no action, unless the residents insist on a S&V survey (£300)

Pot holes- on my list to report esp down the hollow, but please also report. (Currently reported 10 issues signage, flooding and potholes across division and wider area this week.)

Yoxall:

SID cameras Kings Bromley end of the village on hold. See above.

Hadley End gateways. Comms still taking place, but should be completed. Concerns about speed and volume outside the school are still important issues. Slow signs purchased.

Gladman's housing development- Cllr Key's and I discussed at length 5/1/26.

Abbots Bromley:

B5013 Steering group ongoing.

Lichfield Road 'Slow' tarmac painting will follow the purchase of an Amenity Sign. S7V equipment in place now.

High View footpath. Specification meeting last week with SCC survey/engineers.

Village Hall Community Shop support. Ongoing. Correspondence with Lead for SCC Communities and Culture.

Rural crime incident just coming in. Please report all incidents.

Branston:

Acorn pub/Rough Hay traffic light installation. Ongoing.

Grit Bins/gritting Aviation Lane and Henhurst Hill. FU and above link advised.

Kings Road adoption of road to allow grit bins and gritting ongoing and a lengthy process.

Community Fund allocation for purchase of 3 trees. Near completion.

Barton under Needwood Parish Council - Receipts and Payments Monthly Summary

2025-26

Receipts	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total	Budget	Budget Balance
Rents	1,220.00	140.00	110.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,470.00		
Interest	20.48	23.87	499.81	23.38	21.23	477.13	22.43	27.00	473.07	369.38	0.00	0.00	1,957.78		
ESBC	41,146.13	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	41,146.12	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	82,292.25		
LA Other	932.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	932.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,865.00		
Burial Ground	2,235.00	185.00	3,060.00	1,950.00	480.00	1,545.00	885.00	3,080.00	1,440.00	715.00	0.00	0.00	15,575.00	16,000	-425
Fishpond	409.00	260.00	130.00	228.00	316.00	0.00	400.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	1,943.00	2,500	-557
VAT	0.00	0.00	11,143.16	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,143.16		
Car Park	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Other	116.80	0.00	92.18	0.00	0.00	67.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	187.98	0.00	0.00	464.26		
Grants/donations	50.00	8,322.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	8,372.08		
Total Income	46,129.91	8,930.95	15,035.15	2,201.38	817.23	44,168.05	1,307.43	3,107.00	1,913.07	1,472.36	0.00	0.00	125,082.53		

Payments	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	Total	Budget	Budget Balance
Bank Charges	8.50	34.25	0.00	18.88	18.75	10.20	31.41	0.00	15.35	19.55	0.00	0.00	156.89		
Salaries	3,682.12	3,806.67	3,464.72	3,806.67	3,807.38	3,521.80	3,869.51	3,521.60	3,802.25	3,863.75	0.00	0.00	37,146.47		
Lengthsmen	195.40	259.38	195.40	244.46	195.40	195.40	244.46	195.40	275.40	244.46	0.00	0.00	2,245.16		
HMRC	0.00	967.25	1,556.57	1,294.44	2,345.34	1,510.89	1,330.55	1,482.89	1,304.76	1,477.55	0.00	0.00	13,270.24		
Nest Pensions	183.28	0.00	183.28	183.28	183.28	407.70	0.00	189.16	388.82	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,718.80		
Admin	1,660.47	1,976.74	1,464.68	854.10	107.99	808.77	1,322.94	159.45	1,902.25	446.29	0.00	0.00	10,703.68		
Donations	0.00	157.50	25.00	40.00	130.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	80.00	50.00	0.00	0.00	482.50		
Parks	13,370.37	405.97	2,398.45	1,479.79	1,207.85	1,346.65	1,507.85	1,207.85	30.00	30.00	0.00	0.00	22,984.78	24,213.00	1,228.22
Burial Ground	20.00	0.00	0.00	366.66	149.65	789.03	0.00	183.33	0.00	408.95	0.00	0.00	1,917.62	5,000.00	3,082.38
Allotments	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	95.77	0.00	0.00	1,461.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,557.44	2,152.00	594.56
Fishpond	425.24	0.00	297.28	394.34	127.00	1,220.75	98.00	214.70	523.99	98.00	0.00	0.00	3,399.30	3,350.00	-49.30
Capital Exp	0.00	4,958.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4,958.00		
Maintenance	0.00	32.21	69.21	60.84	82.42	0.00	91.36	97.86	1,265.00	1,791.59	0.00	0.00	3,490.49		
Car Park	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,161.65	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,161.65		
General payments	360.00	2,690.08	0.00	19.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.00	0.00	65.00	0.00	0.00	3,154.38		
Projects	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
PEC	179.99	100.00	0.00	567.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.47	253.33	235.70	0.00	0.00	1,356.87	3,500.00	2,143.13
VAT	2,860.26	1,011.07	548.75	436.07	252.99	683.16	319.59	335.61	337.24	524.30	0.00	0.00	7,309.04		
Total Spend	22,945.63	16,399.12	10,203.34	9,766.21	8,703.82	11,656.00	8,815.67	9,089.99	10,178.39	9,255.14	0.00	0.00	117,013.31		

Barton under Needwood Parish Council**Bank Reconciliation as per statements at:**

02-Feb-26

Lloyds Business Account	£	2,000.00
Lloyds Commercial Instant Access Saver	£	24,997.89
Unity Trust Bank Instant Access Saver	£	82,546.40
National Savings	£	35,540.95

Total Bank Balances**£ 145,085.24**Add Credits not on Statement£0.00 **£ 145,085.24**Less unrepresented payments:-

FP	100.00
FP	100.00
FP	50.00

£250.00 **£ 144,835.24****Opening Balances :-****Bank Statements as at 31st March 2025**

Lloyds Current A/C	£	2,000.00
Lloyds Deposit A/C	£	18,771.11
National Savings	£	81,156.32
Petty Cash	£	35,189.06

Parish Council -

Total £ 137,116.49

<i>Add Receipts to date</i>	£	125,082.53
<i>Less Expenditure to date</i>	£	117,363.78

Total Cash and Investments as at -

£ 144,835.24**Difference** -£ 0.00RFO. S. Rumsby

**Barton under Needwood Parish Council -
Schedule of Payments presented to Full Council
(invoices and quotations emailed with meeting pack)**

05/02/2026

		£	£	£	Allocation
Payee	Description	Value Gross	VAT	NET	
Salaries total		4,085.90		4,085.90	HR
Nest Pension Scheme		199.66		199.66	HR
HMRC		1,477.55		1,477.55	HR
Lloyds	Bank Charges	9.35		9.35	Admin
Sky mobile	mobile phone and CCTV data	44.00		44.00	Admin & CA&E
Forvis Mazars	External Audit fee	504.00	84.00	420.00	Admin
Source for Business	Water bill - Burial Ground	144.72		144.72	CA&E
Source for Business	Water bill - Allotments	76.57		76.57	CA&E
G A Cannell Memorials	Plaques x 2	490.74	81.79	408.95	CA&E
Amazon	Paper	14.87	2.58	12.29	Admin
Burton Skip Hire	Skip Burial Ground	220.00	36.67	183.33	CA&E
Screwfix	Padlock - Burial Ground shed	8.29	1.38	6.91	CA&E
Barton Village Hall	Hall hire	835.89		835.89	Admin
			Total	7,905.11	

Notification of increase to Sky mobile charges:

Unity Trust Bank interest change:

Here's a summary of the changes:

Effective from your first bill on or after 14 February 2026, the price of your data plan(s) will be changing. If you've changed or Mixed your data plan on any of these phone number(s) since 6 November 2025, these increases won't apply to them. This also won't affect any offers you have with us.

The following data plan(s) will change by +£2.00 per month:
07359359299

The following data plan(s) will change by +£3.00 per month:
07368932308

We hope you'll continue to enjoy our services, but if you're unhappy with these changes, you can adjust your data plan anytime using Mix in the MySky app. Alternatively, you can visit sky.com/mobfaq or call us on 0333 759 4813 to discuss or cancel your subscription. If you're within your minimum contract period, call us within 30 days of getting this email to avoid early termination charges. Unless you tell us otherwise, your Sky Mobile subscription will continue as normal.

Your new interest rate

Account type	Existing rate Gross rate*/AER**	New rate from 23.03.26 Gross rate*/AER**
Instant Access		
All balances	2.10% / 2.12%	1.95% / 1.96%

This new rate will take effect on 23 March 2026.

If you are happy with the change, you do not need to take any action and we'd like to thank you for continuing to save with us.

If you don't wish to accept these changes and would prefer to close your account(s) before the rate changes you can do this by completing the [account closure form](#) on our website or calling us on the number below.

If you would like any further information about these changes, please visit unity.co.uk or call us on 0345 140 1000^.

Together, we have a bank to be proud of.

Yours sincerely,

Unity Trust Bank plc
For Businesses. For Communities. **For Good.**

Signed:

Barton under Needwood Parish Council

Notes of the Planning Committee Meeting 19th January 2026

Present: Cllrs Lord, Sharkey and Wallace and Roger Bell as a co-opted member

Apologies: Cllr Hassall

Declarations of Interest: None

P/2026/00033 30 Holland Park Erection of single storey front and rear extensions with alterations to the roof including installation of roof lights and blocking up window on side elevation

Resolved: No objections, and we feel that the proposal brings some symmetry to the front and rear elevations.

P/2024/01084 Rhosyn Farm, Scotch Hills, Barton Gate Retention of use as an animal encounter experience including the retention of a toilet/shower building, enclosed paddock area and reception building, including associated parking areas and retention of a passing place along the access road

Following ESBC's Planning Committee consideration of this proposal, the applicants have now amended their opening times. The Experience will be closed during January, February and March. It will be open during April to December, but with minimal use in October and November, mainly associated with October half term and Christmas/Festive activities from the end of November. Experiences will operate four times a day but with the 4:00pm to 5:00pm session mainly operating at peak times only and at Christmas.

The Parish Council's objection to this application was based on our assessment of Local Plan policies which indicated that farm diversification projections were acceptable provided that accompanying information demonstrated how the proposal would support the long-term viability of the agricultural enterprise. In addition, Policy SP 15 supports tourism projects where they support the local economy. As far as we could tell, very little information was provided to support these aspects of the Local Plan policies. Indeed, this was confirmed in para 8.5 of ESBC's Committee Report which stated, "*Whilst the amount of information submitted justifying the need for diversification is limited, the proposed use is considered suitable and of an acceptable scale at this location*". There was no further explanation, with regard to Local Plan policies, as to why or how ESBC had arrived at this conclusion.

Resolved: No objections. In view of the ESBC's Planning Committee report (16th December 2025) endorsement, we accept the proposal as an appropriate farm diversification project. We would like to express our disappointment, however, that the ESBC Committee report provides no explanation as to how and why it accepted this proposal with such limited justifying information, seemingly contrary to its own Local Plan policies. Whilst we are aware that you determine each application on their merits, our fear is that this decision will set a precedent for future such diversification projects, if the bar is set at this low level.

P/2026/00013 Wrens Nest 14 Main Street Listed Building application for internal and external alterations to include repair and treatment to structural timber frames, repointing of brickwork and render, resin repairs, partial replacements of window frames and sashes to double glazed units, replacement of rainwater goods, repair and replacement roof tiles to match existing include repair and replacement to timber rafters/battens, replace lead flashings and valleys, roof insulation, breathable underlay, repair and reinstate internal plasterwork with lime plaster, historic infill, replace cementitious infill, replacement of screed and concrete slabs to ground floor, repairs to existing lime

ash floor to first floor, installation and re-routing of services, replacement of dilapidated ceilings and alterations to fixtures and fittings

The Planning Statement, Design and Access Statement and the Architectural Schedule of Works seemingly provide a comprehensive set of works for the maintenance and repair of this important and iconic listed building within the heart of the village and the conservation area. All the works appear to respect the integrity and heritage of this listed building. The nature of the works is such, that it may not be possible to prescribe in sufficient detail what may be necessary until work actually starts on site. Within that context, we felt that more information was required regarding the works to the foundations and how a damp proof membrane might actually work in practice.

Resolved: No objections

P/2026/00003 68 Efflinch Lane Demolition of existing detached garage to facilitate the erection of a two-storey rear and side extension, with rear first floor balcony and roof alterations including raising of roof height to facilitate first floor extension

This proposal is for a substantial expansion of one of the series of bungalows on this stretch of Efflinch Lane. These bungalows were obviously constructed at a similar time and consequently provide the area with a certain style and character. They are generally on large plots and set well back from the road. This proposal takes the existing bungalow and turns it into a two-storey substantial property, losing all traces of the bungalow's origin in the process. The Block Plan clearly demonstrates that the extension itself is probably larger than the size of the host property. Whilst we accept that many of these bungalows have been altered, in some cases substantially over the years, they have generally retained the characteristic design style. We have seen nothing on this scale before.

Resolved: The Parish Council objects to the proposal as being contrary to Policy DP 1 by not responding positively to the context of the surrounding area. In addition, we feel that the massing and height of the development are out of context to the surrounding development. There may also be a problem of overlooking, and a loss of privacy, possible loss of light, and amenity, by virtue of the proximity of the first floor rear balcony to the neighbour's property. We also object to the proposal as being contrary to Policy DP 3 in terms of having an overbearing impact on the street scene. By extension, the proposal is also contrary to Policy SP 24 as it does not contribute positively to the area in which it is located. It does not create a sense of place as it fails to reflect the local patterns of development. The proposal is also not redeemed by providing any sense of innovative or contemporary architecture. We, therefore, object to the proposal as being contrary to Policies DP 1, DP 3 and SP 24.

P/2026/00002 21 Mill Lane Erection of a replacement front porch

Resolved: No objections

Land off The Green P/2025/00513

Resolved: That Cllr Lord will contact ESBC to find out what progress is being made on this outline planning application.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 2nd February 2026

Barton under Needwood Parish Council

Notes of the Planning Committee Meeting 2nd February 2026

Present: Cllrs Lord, Sharkey and Roger Bell as co-opted member

Apologies: Cllrs Hassall, Wallace

Declarations of Interest: None

P/2026/00086 37 Westmead Road: Demolition of existing conservatory to facilitate the erection of a single storey side/rear extension, enlargement of rear dormer, installation of roof lights to front elevation, alterations to existing fenestration and removal of chimney

This is a fairly large rear and side extension, but nothing out of the ordinary as many other properties have undertaken similar alterations. The rear extension intrudes into the rear garden but there is a good sized irregular shaped plot to accommodate this.

Resolved: No Objections

P/2026/00071 402 Lichfield Road: Erection of replacement self-build dwelling
This site was subject to a similar planning application P/2025/00875. That application was withdrawn. The Parish Council, in commenting on that application in September 2025, resolved to make no objections in principle but to question the amount of fenestration on the front elevation. Since that application was withdrawn, looking on Google Earth, it appears that a considerable amount of demolition has taken place. The design of this application appears to be very similar to what was originally proposed and, therefore, our comments should still stand. This time, however, the applicant appears to want to promote this application as a self-build replacement proposal.

Resolved: In view of what appears to be very little design changes from the original planning application (P/2026/00875), we will repeat our previous comments. No objections in principle, especially as the dormers seem to fit in neatly. We are just uncertain as to what appears to be two large patio doors, and consequently the amount of fenestration, on the front elevation suits the character and context of the property in accordance with Policy DP 1

P/2026/00068 20 Park Road: Single storey infill to porch on front elevation

Resolved: No Objections

P/2025/01263 Barton Marina: Application under Section 73 to vary condition 2 of planning permission for the erection of detached building to form 9 craft shops and office accommodation to amend the design to remove the cantilevered/over hung portion of the first floor and alterations to the internal layout

Planning permission was originally granted for craft units and office space in 2017 under planning application ref: P/2016/01644. According to the accompanying Statement, attached to this present application, various pre- commencement conditions were discharged under application ref: P/2019/00524 and consent was subsequently implemented in 2019, and this was apparently confirmed by ESBC. No development has taken place on site, however, because we are told that the project was paused due to COVID. A further complication is that these units sit on the exact same site also given permission for a motel under

P/2024/00818. No explanation is provided in the accompanying Statement as to which land use is likely to be fully implemented.

The original approved design for these units involved a cantilevered/overhung portion of the first floor. It also included a public walkway/cut through in the middle of the front elevation. According to the accompanying Statement this design required significant costly structural steel and groundworks. As a result, this application, submitted last year revised the design by removing the cantilevered element and the public walk through in favour of a rather bland façade identifying the individual craft/retail units on the ground floor and a series of windows on the first floor for the offices. On the rear elevation small windows at first floor height, we assumed, identified the individual office spaces. Whilst welcoming the economic benefit to the area of these units the Parish Council regretted the loss of the cantilevered aspect.

The latest iteration in this saga is that the design has been amended again. The design of the ground floor for the retail units remains the same but the first-floor level has had some tweaks and fine tuning so that it now looks a lot less sterile. For some reason, as the revised design is not accompanied by any explanation, there are fewer small windows on the first-floor rear elevation. There are also some minor cosmetic changes to the rear facing roof pitches.

Resolved: Whilst we continue to acknowledge the economic benefits to the area of the proposed units, and this updated design is certainly an improvement on last year's attempt, we still feel that it does not compensate for the loss of the cantilevered design on the front elevation. As we stated previously, this is regrettable as it provided an attractive arcade feel to the units and, consequently, made a clear distinction between the retail offer and the office spaces. It also provided some respite and amenity distance from the proposal for the occupiers of the houseboats at the western end of the waterfront nearest to the public house. We would support the retention of the original design and would ask ESBC, once again, to investigate appropriate design options with the applicants which went some way to achieving this. We also note that the public walkway through in the middle of this front elevation has also disappeared from this latest design without any explanation. We feel that ease of access to these retail units from the nearby car parks should be a consideration which would be facilitated by such a walkway. Accordingly, we have concerns that the proposal is contrary to Policy SP 24 by not making a positive contribution to the area in which it is located.

The Parish Council feels that this application demonstrates an issue which we have been requesting for some time. This is the need for some form of strategic direction or overall development brief for the Marina as a whole. Without this it is very difficult to understand the context for outstanding proposals for such things as tourist lodges, signing and even car parking. Without that context, this development just illustrates the rather piecemeal and uncoordinated approach to the site. Allied to this issue is the problem of having planning permission for two different land uses on the same site at the Marina. It would be very beneficial for the applicants to let the community know which land use they intend to implement.

P/2026/00041 11 Fullbrook Avenue: Erection of a single storey front extension and side/rear extension

This proposal is for a significant front, side and rear extension to this bungalow. In principle, in and of itself, the proposed work is in keeping with similar work to properties in the area.

The problem with this proposal, however, is that the compound effect of these extensions means that the proposal is a full width boundary to boundary development. Whilst we note that there is a garden store on the front in what might be part of the former garage, there appears to be no means of gaining access to the rear garden. The retention of the small boundary wall on the frontage may also impede the capacity of providing off-street parking and may inevitably lead to on road parking in the hammerhead.

Resolved: In view of the dominance of the boundary to boundary effect of these extensions, the Parish Council objects to the proposal as being contrary to Policy DP 3 on the grounds of an overbearing impact on adjacent dwellings. In addition, there is an impracticality issue as regards the lack of access to the rear garden. We also fear that retaining the small front boundary wall will impede the capacity for off-street parking and may result in occupiers or visitors parking in the hammerhead, therefore, making access for service vehicles such as refuse collection to the detriment of neighbouring properties.

P/2026/00042 Indurent Park, Gateway Road: Display of 2 non-illuminated free standing entrance signs, 1 non-illuminated wall mounted sign, 2 non-illuminated directional totem signs, 5 non-illuminated unit totem signs, 3 non-illuminated hoarding signs, non-illuminated directional lamp post signs, 1 non-illuminated post mounted v-board sign & 5 non-illuminated building vinyl's

Resolved: No objections but we just question that as many of these adverts relate to the status of the buildings being "To Let" then what happens when they are occupied? Should any permission, therefore, be temporary?

P/2025/00513 Land off The Green

Cllr Lord reported on his various attempts to contact ESBC to investigate the progress on this application. He had sent an e-mail to the development control section and hoped to speak to someone in the next few days. The Parish Council also has an outstanding request to see the comments of the Planning Policy team on this application.

In relation to the issues associated with this proposal, Roger Bell reported on a recent planning appeal in West Northamptonshire District Council for the development of 700 houses. Despite the Planning Inspector admitting that the site would be contrary to Local Plan policies, the Inspector approved the appeal on the grounds of the Council having only 4.56 years of housing supply i.e. below the five-year Government requirement.

Addendum: Cllr Lord received an e-mail response from the Principal Development Control Officer on 3rd February. The Case Officer appointed to deal with this application had left the authority in January and the application has still to be re-allocated. Cllr Lord was told that no additional drainage information had been received to date, but it was understood that the applicants wished to resolve these technical issues prior to a decision being made. The Planning Officer also stated that the application was unlikely to be presented to either the February or the March Planning Committees.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 16th February 2026



Attendees: Councillors Sally Bedford (Chair of Committee) (SB), Ed Sharkey (ES), Margaret Hassall (MH), Jo Sellers (JS), Susie Miller (SM) and Siobhan Rumsby

1. Welcome and apologies

Councillor Bedford welcomed everyone. There were apologies from Cllr Derek Lord.

2. Minutes from the meeting held on 12th November 2025

The minutes were approved.

3. Outstanding actions

Actions from PFCC meeting

The PFCC to be asked for an update following the meeting last March. ES updated the Committee that following the restructure of local government the Mayor of the proposed new Unitary Authority would pick up these functions and that there would presumably be a handover process by which the current PFCC's outstanding actions would be picked up for action.

First Responder Training

SM to identify a one day First Response training course and speak to the Village Hall Committee Chair.

4. Christmas Lights Switch on – feedback

Tree Raising

Thank you to all volunteers as the tree had been erected successfully. In future Vernon Wright would not be asked to use his scaffold tower as it's erection was a potential hazard that could be eliminated, ES had used his 4 metre Tripod Tower to take the decorations down, which was more stable and worked very successfully and so could be used to put decorations up.

Switch on

We had had a good number of Marshalls, as well as vehicles used as road blocks which had worked well.

The additional DMRB 'Chapter 8' compliant road signs hired following TK's review of the closures and advice at the last meeting had worked well and ES proposed similar signs were purchased as with at least 4 village events annually requiring diversion signs it would be more cost effective for BPC to own a set of signs. The committee agreed to this. ES to refresh quotations. These could be stored in the large shed in the Village Hall back yard, Steve Murray the VH Caretaker having confirmed there was space. Additional signage needed for the Dunstall Road junction by the cricket club particularly for night time closures as drivers continue to drive into the village. SM suggested 'Road closed tonight'. ES noted that there would be specific Highways compliant signs ES stated it took 2.5 hours to put the signs up and 2 hours to take them down.

PCSO had asked if a spare VHF radio might be made available for use at the event to keep her in the loop. SB to check with LJ that the BPC walkie talkies were compatible with the Teddy Bear Festival ones.

Thank you letters and payments to be issued to Rev Andy for the Hire of the PA system (£50), to the Church and the pub for the use of the electricity and to Neil for erecting the star.

Santa had already been paid.

JS to investigate purchasing a new star(1.2m tall x 1.0m wide).

The tree star would need to be repaired as the wire had been accidentally cut when the tree was being taken down.

Next time it would be better to site the choir next to Rev Andy's MC position against the pub wall.

Stephen Taylor (BMM) and James Avery (TRJS) were both agreeable to this.

The elves had been a great success and were thanked. Next time we will ask adults and children to dress up too. It was suggested we do Elfie Selfies and the children make reindeer glitter whilst queuing. The DJ in the pub was too loud for Santa – liaison needed with Neil Munro and DJ on the night.

SB to contact Anita McKinly, Nat and Knitter (Skinny Kitten on Mondays) to make more poppies for the railings for Remembrance Day and stars for the railings for the Christmas celebrations.

Checks with the Christmas lights to be done sooner.in advance of the 2026 event.

For 2026 it was suggested we might have more stalls for food and drinks and BBC to get involved with Christmas trees on Main St etc. The Committee will look at how Main Street Businesses can be supported to install the mini trees above their shop fronts.

SB thanked everyone for all their hard work and said what a successful event it was.

Tree take down

This went well with the use of ES's 4m tripod ladder.

The tree star wire was unfortunately cut through by accident and will be mended for next year.

Vernon Wright had refused a present to thank him for his continued support over many years in putting up and taking down the tree. SB to write to thank him for his continued help and support.

5. Future Events

The Committee reflected on the busy year with the VE Day celebrations as well as Remembrance Day and the light switch on. HSC are holding a Village Fete in June which the Parish Council should support. Apart from Remembrance Day and the Christmas Tree/Lights it was agreed to hold no additional 'BPC-only' events in 2026. BBC are meeting again on 1st March

It was agreed Parish Councillors should take it in turns to support the Police drop in sessions at the library and the Tuesday coffee mornings at the Village Hall to help improve public awareness of the PC and its members in the village.

The Committee were informed that in 7 years (2033) St James Church would be celebrating its 500 year anniversary.

6. Social media

It was agreed the High School should be asked to do short videos with each Councillor. MH to liaise with JTTHS which would be put on the web-site.

Also to ask the Junior school to write a story about the Barton Bunny.

7. Liaison with Schools

MS will meet both the Infant and Junior schools on 6th March. No date arranged yet for MS to meet with JTTHS, but she would follow this up.

ES explained that when the Junior School was built, the only access was owned by the Parish Council via Gilmour Lane. An easement for access was agreed between the Parish Council and the Staffordshire County Council Education Department with SCC taking responsibility of maintenance of Gilmour Lane. If the school is to become part of the JTS MAT, then both schools need to be reminded of this and SCC Education Department and JTS MAT to confirm who is picking up continued liability for maintenance of Gilmour Lane. MH to speak to the Junior School Head about this in the first instance.

8. Policies –

A Reserves Policy is going to the next Finance Committee for approval.

IT Policy required to comply with proper practices. SR has sourced a template policy from NALC which SB will ask former Councillor Chris Allcok to have a look at revised policies which he had volunteered to do.

SB and SR will review the master spreadsheet for policies and any work required to update them for the next meeting.

9. Any other business

A Parish Council statement about the proposed new Holland Park Sports Club to be drafted following the Parish Council closed meeting on 8th January.

Councillor Frend had asked the Committee to share the Fix my Street website with parishioners to raise issues. The Committee agreed to do this.

The Chime article will include Fix my street, a thank you to Cllr Lindy Young, details of her replacement and a statement about our position regarding Holland Park Sports Club.

JS had been asked by the Barber Shop to help them navigate the planning system for their new sign.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 4th March 2026 at 9.30am.

CORRESPONDENCE & COMMUNICATIONS

GENERAL

1. Resident report of potholes on Wales Lane, Church Lane and light on dayburn (Church Lane) – *Clerk reported*
2. Organiser hoping to set up Junior Park Run at Holland Sports Club, request for permission and funding – *Clerk responded with B&DK Trust details.*
3. Request for information regarding Lime trees outside St James Church
4. Resident enquiries regarding burial interments criteria – *Clerk responded*
5. Burial Ground interment request – *passed to CA&E for review*

COUNTY/DISTRICT

POLICE

6. Stakeholder update on PCSO reorganisation.
7. Formal request for CCTV footage of an incident in Collinson Park.

SPCA/NALC

8. Newsletters and training opportunities- forwarded to all Cllrs;



A CHECKLIST OF KEY INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED WITH ANY PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL BORROWING APPLICATION

Councils wishing to borrow will have to get in touch with the County Association, whether a member or not, to submit the Application Form. Where a borrowing approval is required the purpose must be detailed on the application and in a report to Council. Approvals should only be sought for capital expenditure. Please complete the borrowing application form and provide the following supporting information;

1. Copy of full minute of the Full Council Meeting with the resolution to seek the Secretary of State's approval for the proposed borrowing drafted in accordance with the example criteria;
2. Copy of the Council's budget or cash flow forecast for the current year, and next year (if available), showing the provision made to meet the loan costs, as well as a copy of the latest Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR);
3. Full report to the Council or business case. This should include a breakdown of the proposed works, estimated costs, financial planning to fund the loan repayments and the steps/options the Council/has in place to mitigate the risk for not being able to afford the loan repayments;
4. Please provide information on how the Council will afford the loan repayments, breakdown of funding resources, amounts to be used from reserves, and any increase of precept to fund the borrowing;
5. If the Council precept is to be increased to cover the loan repayment, please confirm the amount and percentage of the planned increase related to the loan only (if possible how much increase for house holders at Band D);
6. If applicable, please provide evidence of public support to increase the precept to cover the loan repayment (e.g. the result of any consultation).
7. You still need to provide details how local residents were consulted on the project and associated borrowing even if you are not increasing precept to fund the loan (e.g. newsletter/website/in the agenda of public meeting).

Full provision of this information with the application demonstrating that it meets the guidance criteria will expedite the approval process. For further information,

- Please read full guide to parish borrowing in Page 5 and the supporting documents;
- For any queries, please contact your local association at first instance or;
- For clarification on any aspect of this guidance, please contact MHCLG by email: parish.borrowing@communities.gov.uk

APPLICATION FOR BORROWING APPROVAL FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

- If you have any queries about completing this form please contact your local county association.
- When completing this form please use CAPITALS.
- Once completed and signed please send this form to your local county association.

1. Name of Council	BARTON UNDER NEEDWOOD PARISH COUNCIL
2. Name of Clerk	SIOBHAN RUMSBY
Working Address (inc. Postcode)	VILLAGE HALL, CROWBERRY LANE, BARTON UNDER NEEDWOOD, BURTON UPON TRENT, DE13 8AF
Email address	clerk@bartonunderneedwood-pc.gov.uk
Telephone	01283 716059
3. Name of Chair	ED SHARKEY
4. Home Address (inc. Postcode)	49 MEADOW RISE, BARTON UNDER NEEDWOOD, BURTON UPON TRENT, DE13 8DT
Telephone	01283 713124
Email address	edsharkey@bartonunderneedwood-pc.gov.uk
5. District/Unitary Council area	EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL
6. Purpose of Borrowing Please give a brief description of the purpose for which funds are required. Example of Capital projects : Purchase of land/building or, construction/building works or, provision of other assets or; provision of grants to another body for a Capital expenditure	To fund the construction of building works - changing rooms /sports pavilion
7. Total Contract/Project Value	£100,000 plus VAT
Funding from Council's own resources	£0
Funding from other sources	£0
Amount to be borrowed	£100,000

8. Deadline for approval (if applicable) If borrowing is required by a specific date – eg an auction date, or to meet match-funding requirements - give details here.	30 April 2026			
9. Is funding from other sources confirmed?	_____ No _____ N/A			
10. Proposed Borrowing Source	PWLB			
11. Repayment option (if borrowing from PWLB)	Annuity _____ EIP _____ N/A https://www.dmo.gov.uk/data/pdfdatareport?reportCode=D9A.1			
12. Intended Borrowing Term (please specify the number of years)	10 years			
13. Details of Existing Loans - none	1 st loan £	2 nd loan £	3 rd loan £	4 th loan £
Date Taken Out				
Amount Outstanding	£	£	£	£
Unexpired Term				
14. Are you increasing Precept to fund this borrowing?	Yes			
What will be the amount and percentage of the planned increase per annum?	£12871	12.38%		
What will cost band D per annum?	£50.34			
15. If applicable, have you assessed the extent of public support to increase precept for this loan?	Yes			
If yes, what were the results of the assessment to increase precept for this loan?	90% in support			
16. Precept for previous year:	£81,444.47 for Band D: £41.15			
Precept for current year:	£82,292.25 for Band D: £41.15			
Precept for next year:	£88,875.63 for Band D: £44.79			
17. Number of Electorate	3897			

18. Value and purpose of all funds, capital/revenue reserves and balances currently held.	£152,270 of which £65,512 is earmarked for existing projects/planned expenses
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19. Have you provided the following supporting evidence?	Please tick the appropriate boxes below	
a) Full Council minutes with resolution to apply to MHCLG for borrowing	YES	NO
b) Report to the Council/ Business Case	YES	NO
c) Council Budget for current year and next year if available	YES	NO
d) Communications with local residents on the purpose of borrowing, borrowing amount and increase in precept (if applicable)	YES	NO

20.
Approval of Full Council

The above application was agreed by resolution of the full council on..... (date), the Report to Council and Budget attached have been taken to and approved by the full Council, and the draft Minutes attached have been seen and authorised for submission by the Chairman.

The Council undertakes to notify the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), as soon as reasonably practicable, in the event:-

- of not exercising the approval, or,
- it finds that the original amount requested is greater than the actual borrowing need.

SIGNED.....
 (Chair of the Council)

DATE.....

NAME.....ED SHARKEY.....

SIGNED.....
 (Responsible Financial Officer)

DATE.....

NAME... SIOBHAN RUMSBY.....

*Please send signed, completed forms and all supporting information to your county association of local councils.
 Failure to submit all required information will delay your borrowing approval.*

A GUIDE TO PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL BORROWING IN ENGLAND

Introduction

1. In this guide, all references to statutory provisions are to provisions in the Local Government Act 2003 ('the 2003 Act'). References to parish councils include those designated as town councils, village councils, community councils, neighbourhood councils and city councils in England.

2. This guide replaces all previous guidance on borrowing by parish councils in England and reflects the legal framework in force as at 1 April 2015. The law that allows a parish council to borrow money is contained in paragraph 2 of Schedule 1. Before such a council can borrow a sum of money, it must first receive an approval to borrow from the "appropriate person": in England the Secretary of State by way of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and in Wales, the Welsh Ministers. Evidence of the borrowing approval may be required at audit.

3. This guide sets out the criteria that the Secretary of State generally applies in deciding whether to give borrowing approval, and how parish councils should go about applying for approval. It applies only to England. Community and town councils in Wales should contact the Local Government Finance Division of the Welsh Government (telephone: 029 20 823227 or 029 20 825223) for details of the approval system applicable to them.

4. There is no national limit on the total annual amount of borrowing approvals that will be granted. Councils should only apply for borrowing approval when they are fully ready to take up the borrowing, for example, when planning permission has been obtained. Applications by councils for borrowing approval should be sent to the local County Association affiliated to the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). This applies whether or not the council is a member of NALC.

5. If the Association considers that the application form is complete with no obvious omissions or errors, and that the application is made in good faith, the application will be forwarded to MHCLG. Where an Association has any concerns it will raise the matter with the council. The council may, if it wishes, take up any disputed issue with MHCLG. The review by the County Association is intended to assist councils in submitting well-founded applications to MHCLG. The County Association will provide a brief factual report to MHCLG with the application.

Local Accountability and Transparency

6. The Government's localism agenda aims to place more power into people's hands. For democratic accountability to increase, local people need to be able to hold local authorities to account over how they spend public funds and the decisions that are made on their behalf. This principle applies to decisions made by all levels of local government, including parish councils. Transparency is the foundation of this

accountability and, if people are to play a bigger role in society, they need to have the tools and information to enable them to do so.

7. When considering whether to apply for borrowing approval, parish councils should be fully open and transparent with their residents and taxpayers in all their dealings. Details of the project and plans for borrowing and loan repayment must be available to residents from an early stage. This could include discussion of proposals in open meetings, and ensuring that information is available for the public before and after a decision is taken, for example on the council website or published in local newsletters. Evidence of this will be taken into account in considering whether to give approval for borrowing. When increasing precept to fund borrowing, evidence of public support for increasing the associated precept will be required to support the loan application.

What is a Borrowing Approval?

8. It is a formal approval issued by the Secretary of State to borrow money.

9. The Secretary of State's decision on the borrowing application will be sent direct to the Clerk to the council. A copy of the decision letter will also be sent to the Chair of the council and the local County Association. Where approval to borrow is given, as well as containing the legal authority for the council to borrow money, the approval will state the maximum amount of money that can be borrowed, the purpose for which the money may be used, the period within which money must be borrowed, and the maximum period within which the borrowing must be repaid.

10. Where a council wishes to use borrowed money for a purpose other than that specified in the borrowing approval letter, written consent to the change of use must be obtained from MHCLG, prior to committing to the expenditure. This applies to unused funds.

Who can apply for Borrowing Approval?

11. Any parish council in England.

When is a Borrowing Approval not required?

12. Under paragraph 2(3)(a)(i) of Schedule 1, no approval is required for borrowing by temporary loan or overdraft from a bank or otherwise of sums which the council may temporarily require to meet expenses pending the receipt of revenues receivable by it in respect of the period of account in which the expenses are chargeable.

13. A council may also borrow by temporary loan or overdraft pending the raising of the loan permitted by a borrowing approval (paragraph 2(3)(a)(ii) of Schedule 1). A council must be in possession of the borrowing approval when the temporary loan is taken out, but no second approval is required. The temporary loan must be for the purpose of meeting expenses intended to be met by the approved borrowing. A council can also raise a further loan to repay the original loan without the need for another approval, so long as the new borrowing takes place within the fixed period

(paragraph 2(3)(b) of Schedule 1). For the meaning of "fixed period" see paragraph 33 of this guide.

14. In all other circumstances, borrowing approval is required.

How is an application for borrowing approval made?

15. In the first instance, councils should complete the application form included in this guidance. Contact should also be made with the local County Association who will process the application form once it is completed. All questions in the form need to be answered and all supporting information must be supplied (see paragraph 16 below). The making of the application requires approval by resolution of the full council (paragraph 4 of Schedule 1). The form must be signed by the Chair of the council and the responsible financial officer (in most councils the Clerk is also the responsible financial officer, but the post is sometimes a separate appointment). The completed form must be sent in hard copy to the County Association (see paragraph 4 above).

What information must be provided?

16. In addition the form must be accompanied by:-

- a copy of the council's budget for next year (or for the current year if next year's is not available) clearly illustrating the total income and expenditure and costs associated with the project in question,
- a copy of the written report or business case considered by the council in reaching its decision to apply for borrowing approval,
- the full minutes of the meeting at which the resolution to make the application was passed,
- evidence that residents have been consulted on the following:
 - i) the proposed project,
 - ii) the council's intention to borrow,
 - iii) proposals to increase the precept to meet borrowing costs, if applicable; and
 - iv) if applicable evidence of public support to increase precept because of the proposed borrowing.

17. Where the council intends to provide a grant to another body the references to "project" in this guide and in the application form apply to the assistance being provided by the council, not to the project towards which the assistance is given. For example, if a council wishes to borrow £50,000 to part finance a grant of £100,000 towards the construction by a local charity of a village hall costing £250,000, the application form should show £100,000 as the total cost of the project and £50,000 as the amount to be borrowed, and explain how the remaining £50,000 is to be financed by the council.

Parish council precepts and council tax referendum principles

18. When planning budgets and considering whether to apply for borrowing approval, parish councils should bear in mind the provisions of Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 relating to council tax referendums. Each

year, the Secretary of State will determine “excessiveness principles”. If an authority breaches those principles, it must arrange a referendum to seek the approval of its local electors to the excessive increase in council tax it has set. For 2022-23, no principles were set for parish councils: so the new referendum provisions did not apply to them for that year.

19. However, Ministers have made it clear that when setting principles in future years, the Secretary of State will consider whether this, in light of the extent to which restraint in relation to council tax in 2022-23 has been exercised in order to provide protection for local taxpayers and to extend the principle of direct democracy.

20. If the Secretary of State decides to determine council tax referendum principles in relation to parish councils for the financial year 2023-24, (and in subsequent financial years), a parish council would need to consider whether its relevant basic amount of council tax¹ was excessive by reference to those principles. Councils with precept increases resulting in a relevant basic amount of council tax which exceeded the principles would be required to hold a referendum to seek local electors’ approval to that increase. The result of the referendum would be binding and where an increase was not approved, the parish precept would be substituted with a precept that produced a relevant basic amount of council tax that was not excessive by reference to the principles. Parish councils would be responsible for meeting the costs of any referendum.

21. It should be noted that the Secretary of State will **not** exclude increases in parish council tax precepts attributable to a borrowing approval when considering whether to set council tax referendum principles for parish councils in 2023-24 and in future years.

22. The Secretary of State intends to determine excessiveness principles in parallel with the process for deciding the annual local government finance settlement for each year; so it is expected that principles will be proposed in November/December alongside the announcement of the provisional settlement.

What are the criteria for borrowing approval?

23. The Secretary of State will generally apply the following criteria in deciding whether to give borrowing approval:

- a) the borrowing should be for a purpose that would be capital expenditure as defined in section 16 of the 2003 Act. Appendix A to this guide explains what is covered by the section 16 definition;
- b) the amount to be borrowed should generally not be less than £5 multiplied by the number of local government electors for the area of the council as counted at the latest register for the electoral roll. However, the Ministry will consider

¹ For the meaning of “relevant basic amount of council tax” see section 52ZX(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

applications for a lower borrowing amount where the total project cost is above the threshold and grants or other resources intended for the project expenditure will be refused or reduced if the borrowing does not go ahead;

- c) any unallocated balances (including, where appropriate, capital receipts), beyond those required for the prudent financial management of the council, should be used in the project for which borrowing is required;
- d) the council should have a realistic budget (this must be affordable, taking account of its effect on the council's precept) for the servicing and repayment of the debt. The Secretary of State will expect to see that the affordability of the loan charges and any other revenue costs arising from the project is demonstrated in the written report to the council recommending the borrowing application. A copy of the report should be submitted with the application form. The report should provide:
 - an estimate of the annual costs, and an indication of whether they will be covered by reductions in other expenditure, or by additional income from the precept or other sources,
 - in cases where an increase in the precept is proposed, an estimate of the amount of the increase in both monetary and percentage terms, and recognition that any proposed increase in precept may be subject to council tax referendum principles in future years,
 - evidence that any risks and uncertainties affecting the financing of the project have been taken into account in assessing its affordability,
 - details of any significant financial developments that might affect the ability of the council to finance the costs in future years, so far as can reasonably be foreseen.
- e) The council should have consulted local residents on the project and associated borrowing. The format of consultation with residents is a matter for the council to decide, however councils should note the following:
 - details of the project and plans for borrowing and loan repayment must be accessible to residents from an early stage,
 - decisions on borrowing must be taken in an open and transparent way, following discussion in open meetings,
 - inclusion of the matter on an agenda for a public meeting of the council will not, in itself, be considered sufficient evidence of consultation,
 - the council should ensure that information about the progress of the project continues to be available to residents following the approval to borrow,
 - in particular, any proposal to increase the precept to meet borrowing costs **must** be backed by evidence of public support.

When should a council apply?

24. All councils are encouraged to let their County Associations know of their borrowing requirements as soon as possible. However, councils should not apply for borrowing approval until all negotiations have been completed, all other sources of funding have been secured and all other consents (e.g. planning permission) have been obtained. If an applicant council is successful, processing of the borrowing approval should generally take between 3 – 4 weeks from the date of its receipt by MHCLG. The borrowing approval will authorise the council to take out a loan within a period of twelve months starting with the date of issue of the borrowing approval.

How much can a council borrow?

25. The amount that an individual council will be authorised to borrow will normally be limited to a maximum of £500,000 in any single financial year for any single purpose.

26. Where borrowing approval is sought for an amount higher than £500,000, MHCLG may issue the borrowing approval phased over the life of the project. An approval-in-principle for the full amount will normally be issued at the outset of the project, with formal approval letters issued at stages agreed with the council. MHCLG may request project progress reports at any time during the phased approvals process.

27. A council wishing to borrow more than £500,000 is encouraged to contact MHCLG as early as possible to discuss the approvals process and should acknowledge that the processing times will be longer due to additional stages of review.

Where can councils go for funds?

28. Councils may not, without the consent of HM Treasury, borrow otherwise than in sterling (section 2(3)). In practice, most councils are likely to obtain funds from the Public Works Loan Board or the clearing banks. When councils apply for funds, the Public Works Loan Board will insist that they have sight of the original borrowing approval. Loans may also be taken out from private or voluntary sector organisations, or from individuals. Irrespective of the proposed source of borrowing, councils must have borrowing approval in place before arranging a loan. Evidence of the borrowing approval may be required at audit. Councils are advised to seek appropriate advice.

29. Councils are reminded that the decision to borrow must be taken by the full council (paragraph 2(4) of Schedule 1). This is a separate decision from the decision to apply for borrowing approval. Lenders will generally offer a variety of loan structures such as fixed or variable repayment rates of interest, discount or premiums for early repayment in certain circumstances.

Timing of borrowing

30. A council may borrow by temporary loan or overdraft pending the raising of the loan permitted by a borrowing approval (paragraph 2(3)(a)(ii) of Schedule 1). This means that progress on a project need not be delayed until the longer-term borrowing is arranged. See paragraph 13 above for the requirement for borrowing approval in these circumstances.

Security for the lender

31. All borrowing by a council, together with interest on it, is charged indifferently on all the revenues of the council (section 13(3)). A council cannot mortgage or charge

any of its property as security for money borrowed or which it otherwise owes; any security given in breach of this provision is unenforceable (section 13(1) and (2)).

Period of loan

32. Councils must determine the period within which the money borrowed will be repaid, and they are required to make charges to revenue account sufficient to repay the principal within that period and meet the interest charges on the borrowing (paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 1). The period determined is known as the "fixed period", and the council's determination requires the consent of the Secretary of State. The borrowing approval letter will normally specify the maximum period for the repayment of the loan. The maximum period will begin on the date on which the money is borrowed, and will generally be either:

- *50 years*, for the acquisition of, or works on or to, land, buildings, roads or structures, or the making of grants for such purposes; or
- *10 years or life span of an asset*, in all other cases.

33. Councils are asked to consider carefully whether it would be appropriate to borrow for the permitted maximum or for a shorter period. Generally the borrowing period should be no greater than the period for which the expenditure is forecast to provide benefits to the council (or the body being assisted). Thus if a piece of equipment is only thought likely to last for five years, it would be more appropriate to borrow for five years than for the ten years that the borrowing approval might permit.

When a borrowing approval is no longer required

34. If a council finds it no longer needs the borrowing approval issued to it, it must inform MHCLG.

35. If a council finds that it does not need to borrow the full amount as specified in the approval letter, MHCLG should be informed of the actual loan amount as soon as is reasonably practical.

Best Practice

- Seek appropriate advice and guidance at early stage of the project.
- Programme prudent use of balances as well as borrowing.
- Budgets or revised budgets should be considered before applying for borrowing approval.
- The borrowing term should not exceed the life of the asset.
- Even if the council secures an interest free loan, it will still require borrowing approval.
- Consult local residents about the proposed project and the intention to borrow.
- Make sure residents have access to as much information as possible about the project and loan, both before and after the decision to borrow.
- If increasing precept, ensure residents are consulted on the increase and obtain evidence to support loan application.

APPENDIX A

DEFINITION OF CAPITAL EXPENDITURE

- 1 Section 16 of the 2003 Act defines "capital expenditure" as "expenditure of the authority which falls to be capitalised in accordance with proper practices". In turn section 21(2) defines "proper practices" as those accounting practices that local authorities are required to follow by virtue of any enactment, or of a code of practice or other document specified in regulations. Under this power the Secretary of State has specified (among other documents) the CIPFA/LASAAC *Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting in the United Kingdom* ("the Code"). The Code does not apply to parish councils. However, the first of the criteria set out in paragraph 24 of this guide relies on the Code's provisions to provide a definition of capital expenditure for parishes consistent with the definition applicable elsewhere in the public sector. This is done purely to ensure that all applications are judged against uniform criteria, and does not imply that the Code is in any way applicable to a parish council's accounting statements.
- 2 The key relevant paragraphs of the 2012-13 Code for the purposes of the capital expenditure definition are as follows:

4.1.2.11 Property, plant and equipment are tangible assets (ie assets with physical substance) that are held for use in the production or supply of goods and services, for rental to others, or for administrative purposes, and expected to be used during more than one period.

Recognition

4.1.2.16 The cost of an item of property, plant and equipment falling under this section of the Code shall be recognised (and hence capitalised) as an asset on a local authority Balance Sheet if, and only if:

- it is probable that the future economic benefits or service potential associated with the item will flow to the authority, and
- the cost of the item can be measured reliably.

4.1.2.17 Costs that meet the recognition principle in paragraph 4.1.2.16 include initial costs of acquisition and construction, and costs incurred subsequently to enhance, replace part of, or service the asset.

The Code goes on to exclude day-to-day servicing (ie repairs and maintenance) from the definition if they do not add to the future economic benefits or service potential of the asset.

- 3 In addition, section 16 allows the Secretary of State to adjust the definition of capital expenditure by regulation, and, in the case of a particular authority, by direction. Regulation 25 of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/3146), as amended, provides as follows:

Expenditure to be capital expenditure

25. —(1) For the purposes of Chapter 1 of Part 1 the following expenditure of a local authority, incurred on or after 1st April 2004, shall be treated as being capital expenditure insofar as it is not capital expenditure by virtue of section 16(1) —

(a) expenditure incurred on the acquisition or preparation of a computer program, including expenditure on the acquisition of a right to use the program, if the authority acquire or prepare the program for use for a period of at least one year for any purpose relevant to its functions;

(b) subject to paragraph (2), the giving of a loan, grant or other financial assistance to any person, whether for use by that person or by a third party, towards expenditure which would, if incurred by the authority, be capital expenditure;

(c) the repayment of any grant or other financial assistance given to the local authority for the purposes of expenditure which is capital expenditure;

(d) subject to paragraph (3) the acquisition of share capital in any body corporate;

(e) expenditure incurred on works to any land or building in which the local authority does not have an interest, which would be capital expenditure if the local authority had an interest in that land or building;

(ea) expenditure incurred on the acquisition, production or construction of assets for use by or disposal to, a person other than the local authority which would be capital expenditure if those assets were acquired produced, or constructed for use by the local authority; and

(f) the payment of any levy by a local authority under section 136 of the Leasehold Reform Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 (levy on disposals)

(2) Where the expenditure referred to in paragraph (1)(b) is a loan given by a parish council or charter trustees to any person, it shall not be treated as being capital expenditure by virtue of this regulation.

(3) Where the expenditure referred to in paragraph (1)(d) is—

(a) an investment in a money market fund; or

(b) an investment in the shares of a company to which Part 4 of the Finance Act 2006 (Real Estate Investment Trusts) applies; or

(c) the acquisition of shares in an investment scheme approved by the Treasury under section 11 (1) of the Trustee Investments Act 1961 (local authority investment schemes).

it shall not be treated as being capital expenditure by virtue of this regulation.

Parish councils should note in particular the effect of paragraph (2) of the regulation.