

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**  
**HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE**  
**ON TUESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024, 6.00 PM**

**Present:** Councillor Dempsey in the Chair  
Councillors Allen, Atkin, Brereton, Ellis, Evans, Reeves, Scott, Sheridan and Simcock

Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald  
RFO / Deputy Clerk – Mrs. C. Caddock  
Administrative Assistant – Mrs. H. Thomas

PCSO Palfrey – Birchwood Police

3 Members of the Public

**Apologies:** Councillor Ball, and Councillor Bowden (LGA Conference)

**Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interests**

The Chair reminded Members of their responsibility to declare any personal interest or prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when the item is reached.

321/23-24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PCSO Palfrey supplied the following report for the period 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 to 27<sup>th</sup> February 2024:

*“Tru Cam has been deployed to areas around the East and Birchwood, we have caught a number of drivers and the highest being 38 MPH on Admirals Road*

**Anti-Social Behavior**

*2x Whitworth Close- Objects being thrown at callers Window.*

*1x Pipit Lane- Harassment from family member*

*1x Ashdown Lane- Scrambler Bike*

*1x Rendlesham Close- Glass bottle has been thrown at caller’s window; gang of youths were seen on CCTV just before.*

*1x Admirals road- excessively loud illegal exhaust*

*1x Birchwood Business Park- Male training a dog, caller was concerned about the manner in which the dog was being treated.*

*1x Birchwood Park- male intoxicated on bus being aggressive.*

*1x Birchwood Rail Station- a group of youths causing issues on the platform- British Transport Police informed.*

*1x Halliday Close- Teens setting fires at the back of the park adjacent to the close and drinking alcohol.*

*1x Rutherford House- unauthorised encampment*

*1x Talbot Close- Male on scrambler bike riding on pavement.*

### **Burglary Dwelling**

*1x Redshank Lane – Lock been snapped off door.*

*1x Linnet Grove – Dog has been let off lead in back garden.*

*1x Heather Close – Alcohol has been reportedly taken from carers home.*

### **Burglary Others**

*N/A*

### **Vehicle Crime / Offences -Reports**

*1x Birchwood Park – Theft of motor vehicle.*

### **Criminal Damage**

*1x Campion Close – Fence has been snapped.*

*1x Centurian Close – Back gate has been forced outwards.*

*1x Goldfinch Close – Caller has had her tyre slashed.*

*1x Talbot Close – Lights have been damaged around the boundary of caller’s address.”*

PCSO Palfrey stated that there has been an increase in speed monitoring in the area. These have taken place along Glover Road, Ordnance Avenue, Admirals Road and Warrington Road.

He added that because of the layout of the road, many residents seem to think that Ordnance Avenue is a 40mph zone, when it is 30mph. Because of this, there were six activations within 20 minutes.

PCSO Palfrey noted that some residents may continue to speed in these areas, but a Police presence should help deter occasional speeders.

PSCO Palfrey said there appears to have been a rise in anti-social behaviour, which is reflected in the monthly report.

The Clerk asked if PCSO Palfrey could investigate a complaint at Armstrong Close which was raised by a resident earlier that day. PCSO Palfrey said he would go to look at the area following his part in tonight’s meeting.

PCSO Palfrey stated that at the March Council Meeting, he will bring ‘Residents Voice’ surveys so that Members can have their say on the things they would like Cheshire Police Force to focus on in the area.

The Chair thanked PCSO Palfrey for attending the meeting, and PCSO Palfrey left.

**(b) Public Participation**

Councillor Dempsey welcomed the three residents to the meeting and explained that there is an allocated time of up to 30 minutes for this section of the meeting.

One resident stated that she has been reporting the vast amounts of dog faeces to BTC Officers since the last meeting. She asked if WBC had put more signage up in Gorse Covert, as mentioned in correspondence with her.

The Clerk said that the Senior Maintenance Operative had been to check on the progress of this, but WBC's Enforcement Team have not completed it yet.

A second resident spoke about someone planting shrubs on a service strip along her street. She stated that the shrubs are unkempt and overhang both the road, and the footpath nearby, and often scratches cars.

Councillor Atkin explained to the resident that this can be reported online to WBC. WBC should come and assess the area as service strips are supposed to be left clear.

A resident mentioned that the trees behind her house, which are in the boundary of Risley Moss Nature Reserve, are around 40 feet tall. She believes they leave her home vulnerable especially during periods of high wind. The resident stated that she has reported this to WBC multiple times previously and has been told there is nothing that can be done about this.

Councillor Atkin explained that when Birchwood was built, many trees were planted and have grown and seeded significantly since then.

If residents are unhappy with responses from WBC, they can put in a formal complaint via the WBC website.

A resident asked about progress on trolley signage and recovery since the last meeting.

The Clerk stated that she has been liaising with WBC's enforcement team regarding this matter. She said that an email has been sent to the stores at Birchwood Shopping Centre to facilitate a response indicating proactive steps the stores will take to prevent trolleys being taken and retrieve ones that are abandoned in the area. They have been asked to respond by 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

Councillor Allen spoke about a local Council who had recently charged for collection and storage of trolleys to encourage the supermarkets to be more proactive, and wondered whether this is something that WBC could adopt in order to deter trolley theft.

Councillor Scott researched the powers that Councils have regarding trolleys, and found that Councils cannot recover costs of collection and storage of trolleys if they are already part of a collection scheme.

As all of the stores within the Birchwood Centre are signed up with either Trolleywise or Collex, it would not help the situation in Birchwood.

Councillor Sheridan stated that the people who are removing the trolleys from the Birchwood Centre need to take some responsibility. She suggested large visible posters around the shopping centre and possibly a leaflet drop to local residences.

## 322/23-24 JANUARY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Councillor Ellis **proposed**, Councillor Simcock **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

### PROGRESS

## 323/23-24 WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)

### **Communication**

#### (a) **Enforcement issues on Risley Road**

The Clerk stated that since the last meeting, when residents voiced their concerns regarding alleged unlawful planning practices on Risley Road, she has been in contact with planning enforcement as when the list of enforcements was sent via email, it did not contain any mention of the Trident development, even though Risley residents have informed us that they had made a formal complaint.

Councillor Ellis stated that he has looked into this, and some of the issues raised were not applicable or specific to the Trident development. He is unaware of any further issues.

The Clerk also said that the loudspeaker that was reported as going off at unsociable hours is being investigated by environmental health.

Councillor Ellis stated that he is aware that the company have been advised to turn down the volume of the speaker and to only use it when absolutely necessary.

The Clerk stated that the inconsiderate parking near to the Spar shop is a WBC highways matter.

#### (b) **Rotten Bench in Havisham Close**

The Clerk stated that a partial repair had been undertaken by WBC, which included new wood to the seat of the bench. However, the back of the bench had not been included as part of WBC's refurbishment, so BTC operatives have been to the bench today and replaced the back with new wood.

BTC will paint the bench when the weather permits, and also cut back vegetation and scrape the moss surrounding it.

#### (c) **Lords Lane Flooding**

The Clerk said that there was a notification on the WBC report that a partial blockage has been found and is currently being investigated. The Clerk has asked for further information, and no timeframe has yet been given.

324/23-24 **LICENSING OF NEW PRIEST FOR BIRCHWOOD**

The Clerk confirmed that Councillor Sheridan, acting in her role as Vice-Chair, and Councillor Brereton attended the licensing of the new Team Vicar for Birchwood and Woolston on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

Both Councillors reported that it was an honour to attend the event and it was a lovely service.

The Chair thanked the Councillors for attending the service and representing BTC.

**NEW ITEMS RAISED UNDER THE CLERK'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL**

325/23-24 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)**

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/online reports/telephone calls following queries/contact from residents regarding flytipping, tree/shrubbery/hedge issues (including ownership), flooding, bin collections etc.
- (b) Received – Email from Chief Executive of WBC containing information about candidate and agent briefings in preparation for the forthcoming elections on Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024. This information was shared to Members and posted on BTC's Facebook page.
- (c) Received – Email from the Public Rights of Way Officer giving notice for a meeting on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> March at the Town Hall between 2pm and 5pm.
- (d) Received – Email from Environmental Crime copying in Birchwood Shopping Centre retail representatives regarding shopping trolleys being taken and dumped around Birchwood, asking for a response to indicate proactive steps to prevent it happening.

This matter was discussed further earlier in the meeting.

- (e) Sent – Email to BTC's WBC contact copying in the Operations and Commercial Services Manager with a complaint regarding the Firmstep reporting system as a case had been marked 'closed' the same day with no further information. WBC have said that they will look into it but cannot promise anything will change.
- (f) Notes from a 'Teams' meeting to discuss current and future partnership working arrangements between BTC and WBC and other ongoing matters, including some 'progress' and 'finance' items.

The Clerk said that they sent some items directly to the Highways Manager to discuss at the meeting but was told that the items have been responded to in the monthly WBC report to BTC.

Councillor Ellis questioned point 10 on the notes, Cross Lane South Cemetery. He said that WBC have concerns about the amount of time it would take to put together information for the boards, however, he and a local historian have already put together the relevant information and would be happy to send that over to WBC.

**Action** Councillor Ellis to send information to Officers.

Councillor Atkin enquired about point 1 on the notes, regarding 'Mowing'. He asked how BTC would deal with announcing this to residents. The RFO stated that she has already publicised this via BTC's website within the 'What does the Precept pay for?' section.

The Clerk stated that in response to point 2, 'Wildflowers / rewilding', the chosen location for the Locking Stumps wildflowers, which is in or near the grassed park area to the rear of the Turf and Feather Public House, has a 2.9m clearance and usually a clearance of 3m is needed in order to enable machinery to access the site.

**Action** Officers to go back to WBC and enquire if this amount of clearance is sufficient.

#### 326/23-24 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/reports following queries/contact from residents including issues with flytipping, shrubbery maintenance, trees blocking light from street lamps, waste removal etc.
- (b) Sent – Email to YHG to let them know that the container at Kingfisher Close needed to be emptied and a query regarding the removal and delivery of containers at unsociable hours.
- (c) Sent/received – Emails with YHG regarding 'The Birches' play area as BTC's maintenance operatives noted damage to the rubbish bin and also the state of the playground sign. YHG have since cleaned the sign and removed the rubbish bin, although we are unaware if a new one will be put in its place.
- (d) Sent – Email to YHG with queries regarding the possibility of removing or significantly reducing the height of vegetation on Chatfield Drive / Admirals Road to improve sightlines following an incident involving a child and a car at the junction. Enquiries have also been made asking if a stretch of vegetation on Trefoil Close was cut back by YHG contractors as it exposed a large volume of litter.
- (e) Sent – Numerous emails and photographs regarding significant amounts of flytipping in YHG areas.

The Clerk stated that she has been in contact with the Regional Housing Manager and asked about whether YHG contractors are asked to litter pick prior and post cutting jobs as there is a lot of litter left after jobs appear to have been completed.

Councillor Brereton stated that she recently had to litter pick for a resident with mobility issues as the back of their YHG property was scattered with dog litter bags and other waste.

#### 327/23-24 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE/ISSUES**

- (a) Received – various emails from Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA).
- (b) Received – Email from Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service thanking BTC for providing a response to the 2024 – 2028 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) with a link to the agenda of the meeting of Authority, which will discuss the CRMP and include BTC's response to the proposals.

- (c) Received – Email from Post Office Limited announcing their service known as ‘Warrington Road (714) Drop & Collect Post Office’. This was shared with Members and posted on BTC’s Facebook page.
- (d) Received – a letter regarding dog waste, addressed to Charlotte Nichols MP. This was forwarded onto her office.

Charlotte Nichols’ office thanked BTC for the information. They had also been contacted separately regarding the same matter.

We also informed Charlotte Nichols’ office that BTC has been liaising with WBC’s Enforcement Department regarding a specific issue of dog fouling in Gorse Covert.

- (e) Emails were exchanged with Councillor Dempsey regarding a housing query raised by a local resident.

#### 328/23-24 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Received – Various Neighbourhood Alerts.
- (b) Sent – an email to Sgt Gulam and PCSO Palfrey asking for their input in relation to two proposed new bench locations.

#### 329/23-24 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (CHALC), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC), SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS (SLCC)**

- (a) Received – NALC publications including the Chief Executive’s Bulletins, events information, etc.
- (b) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins with various attachments, details of training sessions, etc.
- (c) Received – SLCC – various updates, briefings, news items, etc., including notification that all local Councils can register to receive one free framed copy of the King’s Portrait; which Officer’s have done.
- (d) Received – ChALC – information regarding a consultation on the future for wildlife in Cheshire. This was forwarded to Members.

#### 330/23-24 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC e-mail correspondence/briefings.

#### 331/23-24 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

- (a) **Warrington Borough Council - Development Management Committee (DMC)**
  - (i) The DMC meeting was held on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2024. There were no items of specific relevance to Birchwood on the agenda.
  - (ii) Information re: enforcement cases specific to Birchwood have been circulated to Members.

(b) **Planning Decisions**

- (i) **Application No. 2023/01221/DISCON** Trident Business Park, Daten Avenue, Birchwood, Warrington. Discharge of Conditions no's 19 (Travel Plan Co-Ordinator), 23 (Northern Boundary Treatment), 29 (Lighting Assessment) and 34 (BREEAM Assessment) attached to planning permission 2021/40696. **Condition Part Discharged / Part Not Discharged.**
- (ii) **Application No. 2023/01530/DISCON** Land at Trident Business Park, Warrington. Discharge of Condition no's 6 (Local Employment Scheme), 21 (CHEMP), and 22 (Construction Method Statement) attached to planning permission 2021/40696. **Discharged.**

(c) **Planning Applications**

*All plans can be viewed via:*

[http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport\\_planning\\_and\\_environment/Planning/Se  
arch\\_planning\\_applications/](http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport_planning_and_environment/Planning/Se<br/>arch_planning_applications/)

Certain applications are not Planning Applications; therefore, there is no statutory opportunity to allow 21 days for comments, e.g.: Non-material amendment applications, Lawful development certificates (S192) and 28 day prior approval/determination applications. These types of applications are received for information only.

- (i) **Application No. 2024/00081/FULH** 14a Keyes Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6RU. Two storey side extension and changes to porch.
- (ii) **Application No. 2024/00078/FULH** 34 Gilderdale Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6TH. Demolish existing garden wall, new garden wall and outbuilding.
- (iii) **Application No. 2024/00134/HPA** 9 Jay close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6QJ. Proposed single storey rear extension to extend beyond the rear wall by 4.95m, height of 3.15m and height of the eaves 3.00m.
- (iv) **Application No. 2023/00847/FULH** 99 Carrington Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7QB. Proposed front extension at first floor level over existing garage. Resubmission of 2022-42737.

Councillors had no comments to make regarding the above applications.

**This part of the meeting concluded at 7.00 pm.**