

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD AT
PARKERS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE, DELENTY DRIVE, RISLEY
ON TUESDAY 19TH DECEMBER 2017

Present: Councillor Ellis in the Chair
Councillors Allman, Atkin, Breslin, Evans, and Reeves

Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald
Deputy Clerk – Mrs. C Caddock
Business and Finance Officer - Mr. G. Crowe

Apologies: Councillors Bowden, Fitzsimmons, M. Hearldon, T. Hearldon and Nelson

To note the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24th October 2017 were approved at the November Pre-Budget Finance and Strategy Meeting, held on 28th November 2017.

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.

Councillors Allman and Evans – the Friends of Birchwood Forest Park

Councillors Allman and Evans – Oakwood Community Association

322/17-18 **COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION**

Councillor Ellis informed Members that he received notice of Councillor Linney's resignation from the Council late this afternoon.

The Clerk stated that there are now formal procedures which must be followed within a strict timeframe.

The Clerk will inform the Borough Council on 20th December 2017 that there is now a casual vacancy for the Locking Stumps Ward of Birchwood Town Council.

323/17-18 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

There was no Police presence at tonight's meeting.

The Clerk stated that we have asked for an update regarding any recent speed enforcement statistics.

Members requested that the Police be asked to send a written report regarding Police activity in Birchwood during the previous month.

Action Clerk's office to contact the Police to request a written report.

The Police Twitter address is @PoliceWarr.

(b) **Questions from the Public**

As there were no residents in attendance at tonight's meeting the Chair declared Public Participation over.

324/17-18 **PLANNING UPDATES**

- (a) Planning Application No. 2017/31147 New Hall Farm, WA3 6LH. *Full planning – proposed re-use and extension of agricultural barn to accommodate a facility for the generation of electricity from gas and the storage of electricity in batteries comprising 4 containerised gas generators and radiators; 2 transformers; 2 substations in an electrical container; 2 oil tanks, 1 gas kiosk; a battery energy storage system; gated entrance and acoustic fencing. Demolition of existing agricultural building and replacement with new agricultural building.*

The Clerk reported Councillors Atkin and Reeves attended the Development Management Committee meeting at which this application was considered, in order to put forward the Town Council's objection to the proposed development.

The application has been refused.

Councillor Ellis thanked Councillors Atkin and Reeves for attending the meeting and putting the Town Council's case across on behalf of the Council and a number of local residents who had also raised objections to the planned development.

- (b) Planning Application No. 2017/31330 1 Penzance Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6ZP. *Householder - Retrospective application for the retention of the existing boundary wall (at its current height) and the proposed erection of 2 x brick pillars and a gate across the existing drive.*

This application has been approved with conditions.

325/17-18 **QUERY RE: RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOME DRIVES AND ACCESS PATHS IN AN AREA OF OAKWOOD**

At the September meeting a resident asked whether the Town Council could assist in finding out who has the maintenance responsibility for communal drives and access pathways (not footpaths) in an area of Oakwood where there is private housing. At the October meeting, it was reported that this had been chased.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that this remains ongoing; it has been chased again for a response from the Borough Council.

326/17-18 **BROCK ROAD MULTI USE GAMES AREA (MUGA)**

At the October meeting, the Clerk reported that the MUGA on Brock Road, installed by Your Housing Group (YHG) and which they have the responsibility to maintain, was covered in leaf debris. Nobody appears to be looking after it.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that on safety grounds and to make the court usable again, our team has cleared the leaf litter from the MUGA. This had exposed damage to the court, which was reported to YHG.

The damage has now been repaired and YHG have said they will arrange for their contractor to check the MUGA on a weekly basis.

327/17-18 **FLOODING AND POT HOLES - LORDS LANE**

The Clerk stated that work to alleviate the flooding at the junction of Lords Lane and Locking Stumps Lane has now been completed. The issue of pot holes at the junction of Lords Lane and Glover Road is still a problem. This has been chased again with the Borough Council.

328/17-18 **SPINAL PATH**

The Clerk stated that the Borough Council has indicated that, starting in the New Year, it will arrange for the small footpath sweeper to cleanse the Spinal Path approximately once every 12 – 16 weeks. We will try to arrange a joint working partnership with our team when it is scheduled to undertake the work, in order that the path can be cleansed more efficiently.

329/17-18 **UNDERPASS LIGHTING**

Councillor Allman reported that the lights in some of the underpasses are still out or the level of lighting is very poor.

The Clerk reminded Members that, in relation to the underpass lights, orders have been put in by WBC for more robust lighting which should be better suited to the rigours of the underpasses. This is the case for all the underpasses within Warrington.

Councillor Ellis commented that some interim repairs have been done - not all lights are working but those that could be fixed have been.

The Clerk stated that Birchwood is apparently the first area on the list for new units to be installed once they have been received by the Borough Council.

Councillor Allman stated that in the underpass that runs from the Forest Park to Keyes Close, there are four units that are glowing with a very dim light. He asked for the Borough Council to be contacted to ask that the tubes or possibly the starters be replaced in these units, as a short-term fix, as there is obviously power going to the units. As this underpass is part of a 'safer routes to school' route, he thinks the Borough should be encouraged to do more to ensure there is better light in this underpass and others in Birchwood where possible.

Action Clerk's office to contact the Borough Council regarding the above.

330/17-18 **BIRCHWOOD TENNIS & LEISURE CENTRE; PARKING ISSUES DURING EVENTS.**

The Clerk reported that we have not received any further responses regarding this matter.

331/17-18 **PARISH LIAISON GROUP**

The Clerk stated that she attended the Parish Liaison Group that met on 9th November 2017.

There were some documents presented at the meeting, which have been copied to Members in their papers for information.

Dementia Training

One of the documents, from Warrington Dementia Action Alliance, gave an overview of the condition and how dementia friendly communities are being developed in Warrington. There is an opportunity for staff training, which the Clerk asked Members to consider.

The Clerk stated that our staff have, on several occasions, had cause to interact with people who appear to have dementia. She has asked staff if they would like to undertake awareness training if it was available. All staff would be happy to undertake such training.

Members unanimously agreed that they would be happy for staff to undertake available training.

Action For the Clerk's office to arrange for Dementia awareness training for the Town Council staff.

Casual Vacancies

The other document circulated to Members in their papers is 'Notes for the Guidance of Parish Council Clerks on Casual Vacancies'. This document details the six causes of a casual vacancy and the formal process that must be followed once a casual vacancy occurs.

Training for Councillors/Clerks

The Clerk stated that she has asked whether the Borough Council could offer more local training for Parish Councils, as many of the courses offered by ChALC are quite some distance to travel to, and not easy to access by public transport in some cases.

Lack of Information Regarding the Proposed Reduction in Council Tax Support

Following the Parish Liaison Meeting and the recent receipt of information from the Borough Council regarding the proposed reduction in Council Tax Support being passed on to Local Councils from 2019/2020; which will potentially impact significantly on Local Council finances and services if implemented, the Clerk contacted the Senior Accountant at Warrington Borough Council to ask why such an important upcoming issue was not raised at the November Parish Liaison Meeting.

The Senior Accountant was unaware of the Liaison Meetings, but has requested a slot at the next meeting to talk about this matter (although a time and date have not yet been set).

332/17-18 AIR QUALITY IN BIRCHWOOD

The Clerk reported that she has, as requested, sent a letter to the Borough Council, raising the Town Council's concerns and including a request for fresh monitoring to be undertaken.

At tonight's meeting the Clerk reported that the Borough Council's 2017 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) has been received, which includes a lot of detailed statistics and technical information. However, it appears that the only site where air quality in Birchwood is measured is at Risley Moss.

Councillor Reeves stated that the Borough Council had recently undertaken a public consultation regarding air quality, but there appears to be a reluctance to undertake any additional monitoring within Birchwood. Councillor Reeves added that the Borough does not seem to want to take into account that the 'goal posts' are also moving in Birchwood. There does not seem to be any impact statements available to support some of the larger traffic developments being proposed in Birchwood; which will impact on air quality.

The Clerk stated that she has written to John Nichol regarding the proposed next phase of the Birchwood Pinchpoint Scheme, as we understand that there will be some air quality monitoring being undertaken as part of the proposals. She has asked if we can have a copy of the Birchwood Statistics when they are available.

Councillor Ellis said that he will follow this up with John Nichol.

Action Councillor Ellis to contact John Nichol regarding this matter.

Councillor Reeves stated that he understands that the Borough Council has limited resources to undertake air quality monitoring, but this does not answer the Town Council's immediate concerns.

Councillor Reeves added that he would like to thank the Clerk for raising the issue with the Borough Council. He commented that he thinks we have probably explored this matter as far as possible with the Borough Council at the present time.

Councillor Ellis suggested that we wait until the results are available from the pinchpoint scheme monitoring and then decide if any further progress can be made at that time.

333/17-18 **WARRINGTON'S LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN**

Councillor Ellis stated that he had been able to attend one of the recent Transport Summit sessions, regarding Warrington's Local Transport Plan. He found it to be quite interesting.

334/17-18 **PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON ADMIRALS ROAD**

Work on the installation of the zebra crossing between the junctions of Admirals Road with Chatfield Drive and Admirals Road with Linnet Grove; with speed cushions approximately 40m north of Linnet Grove and 30m south of Chatfield Drive is underway.

Councillor Allman expressed his disappointment that a full flat cushion had not been installed as had initially been requested by the Town Council. He reported that the speed cushions do not appear to be slowing some vehicles down at all, especially those with a wide wheel base.

It was, however, acknowledged by Members that the reason given for this is that it is a route for emergency vehicles and patients in ambulances might require a 'smoother' journey. It also allows fire engines and Police cars to travel on emergencies without slowing their journeys. In addition, it is a main bus route.

335/17-18 **PAPERS RECEIVED DURING RECESS**

A list of new items (under 6(a)) that had already been circulated/dealt with during recess under delegated powers had been circulated to Members.

Members received the list and agreed all items were for noting.

Councillor Allman reported to Members that the Oakwood Community Association's Community Carols event on 8th December (6.3.9) had been a great success.

NEW ITEMS RAISED UNDER THE CLERK'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL 6(b)

336/17-18 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) Received – Agenda for the Warrington Public Rights of Way Forum (7/12/17) along with the minutes of the previous meeting. The minutes note a few items of specific interest to Birchwood including:
- That the new bridleways at the Biffa Risley Site are not yet open.
 - John Thorp has been unable to progress the recording of the Birchwood Way to Locking Stumps Lane footpath.
 - That some members of the Local Access Forum had been on a visit to the Biffa Risley Landfill site during which some issues and suggestions were raised (see item 5 in the Forum minutes)
 - That Cllr Evans reported that the Brook Footpath had been improved.
- (b) Received – WBC's Flood & Coastal Risk Management – Performance & Review November 2017.
- (c) Sent – Email re: an allegedly very slippery road surface near the Scout Hut on Kinsale Drive, following a complaint received from a local resident. WBC is looking into this matter.
- (d) Sent – Email re: maintenance on a footpath between Smithills Close and Kelvin Close. Our team has tidied it up a bit, but cannot scrape the path to make it wider without exposing damaged tarmac, thus creating a trip hazard. We have contacted the Borough Council and they have indicated that both the shrubbery and footpath issues will be dealt with in the New Year.

- (e) Received – poster re: ‘Ageing Well, Feeling Great Sessions for the over 50s’ – starting 22nd January 2017 at Padgate Community Centre, 10am to 12 noon. Places need to be booked – call 01925 241360 or email eastneighbourhoods@warrington.gov.uk
Published on our Facebook page and notice boards.
- (f) Sent/received – emails regarding the enforcement of parking tickets on Birchwood Park, following a query raised by a resident via Councillor Reeves.

The Clerk stated that we have enquired whether the private roads within Birchwood Park will become adopted, but we have not yet received a definitive answer from the Borough Council.
- (g) Sent/received – various emails relating to lighting that is not working for the path from Gorse Covert through the park to the fire station.
- (h) The Clerk reported that we have receive two reports today regarding flytipping of what appears to be corrugated asbestos, one on Silver Lane and one on Ordnance Avenue. These have been reported to Warrington Borough Council and have been passed on to the Public Protection department.

337/17-18 **BIRCHWOOD FORUM**

Received – Details of planned road works in the north west – w/c 4th December 2017.

338/17-18 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – Various update/information emails from Warrington Voluntary Action.
- (b) Received - Various LGC briefing emails.
- (c) Received – From Active Cheshire – November 2017 newsletter.
- (d) Received – Request for a letter of support for the next phase of the proposed Pestfurlong Moss Project. A letter was sent, with the approval of the Chair, Vice Chair and Leader of the Council as it was time sensitive and the request arrived between meetings.
- (e) Received – dates of Christmas services from Thomas Risley Church – displayed on notice boards and published on our Facebook page.
- (f) Received – Invitation for the Chair to attend the Rixton with Glazebrook Parish Council Civic Service on 28th January 2018.

The Chair hopes to be able to attend.

Action Clerk’s office to reply to the invitation.

- (g) Received – from Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council – correspondence re: complaints relating to Birchwood Railway Station – including a copy of a letter sent to Helen Jones MP. Officers have spoken to the Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council Clerk on the telephone regarding these matters.
- (h) Received – from Oakwood Community Association - minutes of their December 2017 meeting. The date for the January 2018 meeting is 8th January 2018.
- (i) Received – From Cheshire Fire Authority – Summary of draft Integrated Risk Management Plan proposals for 2018/19 (consultation).
- (j) Received – Big Lottery funding newsletters.

- (k) Received/sent – emails relating to a query by the Friends of Birchwood Forest Park about defibrillator installation and running costs.

Councillor Allman, for information, said that the Friends of Birchwood Forest Park are considering, for the short term, possibly getting a defibrillator and keeping it in the Ranger Centre, where it will be available when the Rangers Centre is open.

Once all the refurbishments have been undertaken they will then look to progress the installation of the defibrillator in a cabinet on an outside wall. As the costs of a cabinet and installation are quite high, it makes financial sense not to install a cabinet, for it then to have to be un-installed during any refurbishment works.

339/17-18 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

- (a) Sent/received – emails re: the cleansing/maintenance regime for Your Housing Group's (YHG) MUGA on Brock Road. The Town Council team, for H&S reasons, recently spent 10 man hours cleansing the court and surroundings of over two tonne bags of leaf litter. This exposed a damaged part of the court. YHG will now inspect the area on a weekly basis and their contractors will undertake any necessary work.
- (b) Sent/received – emails regarding bin stores on Layton Close.

The Housing Officer reported on 14th December, that the (current) flytipped items had been removed from the area.

340/17-18 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Received – Various alerts from the Cheshire Police Alert System. For details re: Cheshire Police Alerts and how to sign up go to www.cheshirepolicealert.co.uk/ Registering is completely free.
- (b) Received – Birchwood Report to 27/11/2017 (as there was no public participation at the November meeting).
- (c) Received – Stakeholder Bulletin – Autumn 2017
- (d) To note an article published in the Warrington Guardian – 'Have your say on the future of force funding in Cheshire'. The consultation can be found at: <https://www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/news/news/have-your-say-on-the-future-of-cheshire-police/>

341/17-18 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (ChALC), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC), SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCILS (SLCC)**

- (a) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins; including a reminder that the ChALC AGM will be held on 19th October in Middlewich. Also information re: training courses.
- (b) Received - NALC Chief Executive Bulletins, 'NALC News' and details of the annual conference.
- (c) Received- SLCC News Bulletin – 7th December 2017.

342/17-18 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

LGC – 23/11/17, 07/12/17

North West Air Ambulance Charity – 'Your Lifeline 365 Days a Year – A year in review'

343/17-18 **MEMBERS' REFERRALS MADE VIA THE CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING FOR CONSIDERATION AT THIS COUNCIL MEETING**

There were no Members referrals made via the Clerk prior to the publication of the Clerk's Report.

344/17-18 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

Warrington Borough Council

Received – Documents for the Development Management Committee meeting taking place on 20/12/17. There are no items specifically relevant to Birchwood on the main agenda for discussion.

345/17-18 **ENFORCEMENT CASES**

Lists of enforcement cases recently opened/closed have been received.

346/17-18 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

- (a) Application No. 2017/31281 1 Marlow Close, WA3 7PE. Proposed two storey extension side extension, part of extension is over existing garage. **Approved with conditions.**
- (b) Application No. 2017/31260 75 Sandicroft Close, WA3 7LY. Proposed single storey rear extension. **Approved with conditions.**
- (c) Application No. 2017/31326 35 Armstrong Close, WA3 6DH. Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 1, 2, 3 and 4 following planning approval 2016/27327. **Condition discharged**
- (d) Planning Application No. 2017/31147 New Hall Farm, WA3 6LH. (For full details see Minute 324/17-18 above.) **Application refused**
- (e) Planning Application No. 2017/31330 1 Penzance Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6ZP. (For full details see Minute 324/17-18 above.) **Application approved with conditions**

347/17-18 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

All plans can be viewed via:

http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport_planning_and_environment/Planning/Search_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 on an information basis only.

- (a) Application No. 2017/31684 10 Rockingham Close, Birchwood, WA3 6UY. Proposed demolition of existing conservatory and replacement flat roof rear extension, internal alteration and reworked drive frontage.
- (b) Application No. 2017/31360 14 Leacroft Road, WA3 6PJ. Proposed portable office building.
- (c) Application No. 2017/31733 730 Birchwood Boulevard, WA3 7QY. Proposed construction of a compound for air condenser units and bin store.

Members had no objections at this time regarding the above planning applications.

Councillor Ellis stated that had received a copy of the final report on the scoping exercise regarding the Birchwood and Woolston Grange Business Improvement District (BID) proposal.

Councillor Ellis reported on some of the points raised in the report. He noted that the report does not identify any split between Birchwood and Woolston Grange; therefore the statistics cover both areas jointly. He added that the outlook appears to be positive for the BID to progress, although it will probably be another 12 months before this happens.

Action Clerk's office to circulate the document to Members for their information and consideration.

Councillor Allman stated that he would like to formally thank the Chair for driving the BID forward as he believes it will be positive for Birchwood. Those Members present agreed.

Councillor Ellis stated that he is now in the process of incorporating the survey results into the Strategy, in order that it will become a formal document, once approved by Members, rather than a draft. He will also bring items into the Action Plan and will bring both to the next Strategy Sub-Committee meeting for discussion (date tbc).

This part of the meeting concluded at 6.40pm.