

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD AT
PARKERS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE, DELENTY DRIVE, RISLEY
ON TUESDAY 23RD JANUARY 2018

Present: Councillor Ellis in the Chair
Councillors Allman, Bowden, Evans, Fitzsimmons, Nelson and Reeves

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

PC Gareth Frith

Apologies: Councillors Atkin, M. Hearldon and T. Hearldon

The Chair noted that Councillors M. Hearldon and T. Hearldon are both suffering from ill health. Councillor M. Hearldon is currently in hospital. Councillor Atkin is away.

Councillor Evans proposed, Councillor Reeves seconded and it was resolved that: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19th December 2017 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

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

Councillors Ellis and Nelson – the Youth & Community Centre Committee

Councillor Allman – Spectrum Striders

Councillors Bowden, Ellis and Nelson – Birchwood Carnival Committee

374/17-18 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PC Gareth Frith attended tonight's meeting and gave a brief report on Policing activity that had occurred in Birchwood during the previous month, as follows:

The figures of occurrences reported to Cheshire Police for the Birchwood ward for January 2018 are as follows:

Burglary, theft from motor vehicle, theft of motor vehicle

There have been no instances of theft from motor vehicle in the month to date, and no instances of theft of motor vehicle.

There has been one attempted burglary dwelling offence reported in the last month, whereby a resident reported her lock being tampered with.

Anti-social behaviour

There have been a number of low level anti-social behaviour incidents; however there are no patterns or repeat perpetrators identified as yet.

One incident on Fern Close resulted in a number of young people spilling out of a party and causing a number of calls being made to police about their behaviour. Ultimately, a fight broke out and people were injured and threatened, and the investigation is still ongoing with a number of suspects identified.

Traffic management

Speed enforcement has taken place this month, PCSO Bingham has taken the camera out in the Glover Road area and yesterday recorded five motorists speeding with a top speed of 48mph.

The results will be sent to an adjudicator to see what penalties may be applied to those who were speeding.

All PCSOs are now trained in the use of the camera and are being expected to book it out and use it accordingly in their areas.

Councillor Ellis said he understands that Locking Stumps Lane needs to be 'coded' before speed enforcement operations can be undertaken on it. PCSO Bingham is arranging for this to be done.

Other incidents of note

Three males were interviewed in relation to causing criminal damage to two motor vehicles over the Christmas period after wing-mirrors were kicked off cars. All three males have admitted the offence and are being dealt with by youth offending services and the Police.

Councillor Ellis asked about whether the Police have had any involvement with any of the ongoing flytipping incidents on Silver Lane; particularly with regards to what appeared to be the remnants of a cannabis 'farm'.

PC Frith stated that that particular incident had been passed on to the Police and an address was found with the waste. PC Frith said that he would look into whether there has been any progress regarding this matter and update the Council if possible.

Members noted that the entrance to Silver Lane does have a gate, but the farmer will not close it, due to personal access issues.

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.

375/17-18 **COUNCILLOR RESIGNATION**

The Clerk stated that the Borough Council has informed us that a valid request has been received to hold an election. The Borough has asked if the Town Council wishes to have poll cards printed and delivered to those residents eligible to vote, if the election is contested. This will cost £1,037.48.

The BAFO said that in the past, previous Councils had decided to have poll cards printed in the interest of transparency. It is a mechanism to keep people updated as to what is happening within the ward.

Councillor Bowden raised concerns about the cost of the cards.

Councillor Reeves said that he believes issuing poll cards is part of the democratic process and alerts people that an election is taking place.

It was noted that some residents still think they have to have a poll card to be able to go to the polling station to vote, even though this is not the case. It was suggested that it is likely to increase the turnout if people receive poll cards.

A proposal to have poll cards printed and delivered was put to a vote.

Six Councillors voted in favour of having the poll cards printed, one voted against.

It was therefore **resolved** by a majority vote that the Town Council wishes the Borough Council to print and deliver poll cards for the upcoming by-election, if it is contested, in the Locking Stumps ward.

Action Clerk's office to advise the Borough Council regarding this decision.

376/17-18 **QUERY RE: RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOME DRIVES AND ACCESS PATHS IN AN AREA OF OAKWOOD**

The Clerk reported that this remains ongoing; it had been chased again for a response from the Borough Council.

377/17-18 **POT HOLES - JUNCTION OF LORDS LANE AND GLOVER ROAD**

The Clerk stated that we have received an update regarding work to repair pot holes at the junction of Lords Lane and Glover Road. The pot holes have been filled with temporary material until they can be properly dealt with.

Tex banding will be used to reinstate the carriageway; this is a process where the road surface is sealed with a bitumen mastic sealant. This means that no excavation is required, resulting in a faster repairs process.

The work order has been issued to contractors who will undertake the works on behalf of Tarmac. They are currently working through a prioritised list at a number of locations. We do not yet have a date as to when the work will be completed.

378/17-18 **UNDERPASS LIGHTING**

The Clerk reported that we have received an update from Warrington Borough Council stating that the replacement units are currently being manufactured and the Borough Council is due to start installing these units within the next month.

Councillor Allman stated that he is extremely annoyed that several lighting issues were reported over 16 weeks ago now and hardly any of the issues have been addressed.

As reported at the December meeting, these include lighting in the underpass that runs from the Forest Park to Keyes Close, there are four units that are glowing with a very dim light. Councillor Allman had 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. The Clerk's office had made this request following the December meeting.

Members reiterated that as this underpass is part of a 'safer routes to school' route, the Borough should do more to ensure there is better light in this underpass and others in Birchwood where possible, prior to the new units being installed.

The Clerk reported that although the Town Council cannot do anything about the lighting issues, the maintenance teams had been working to open up the shrubbery around the underpasses to make them more open and feel less intimidating.

Action Clerk's office to contact the Borough Council regarding the ongoing lighting issues.

379/17-18 **DEMENTIA TRAINING**

The Clerk stated that dementia training dates have not yet been arranged, but that all staff will be undertaking the training.

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

380/17-18 **AIR QUALITY IN BIRCHWOOD**

At the December meeting the Clerk stated that she had 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 asked if we can have a copy of the Birchwood Statistics when they are available.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk said that she has received an email from Mr. Nichol. He has not yet received the draft report relating to the air quality monitoring, but will forward the information when he can.

The Clerk added that Mr Nichol has asked if he can attend a Town Council meeting to offer a ten minute update to Members regarding the next phase of the Birchwood Pinchpoint Scheme.

Members agreed that they would be happy for Mr. Nichol to attend either the February or March 2018 Council meeting.

Action Clerk's office to contact John Nichol to invite him to attend a Town Council meeting.

381/17-18 **PEDESTRIAN CROSSING ON ADMIRALS ROAD**

The Clerk reported that work on the installation of the zebra crossing between the junctions of Admirals Road with Chatfield Drive and Admirals Road with Linnet Grove has been 'completed'; with repairs to the speed cushions having been undertaken. However, only one of the belisha beacons is currently working.

The Deputy Clerk reported that several of the white 'zebra stripes' painted on the road are already breaking up.

Members expressed their disappointment at the quality of the workmanship in relation to this crossing and wondered who, if anybody, was monitoring the quality of the work.

A few Members commented that some of the houses, as they are being built, appear to be much closer to the footpath than they had initially anticipated.

382/17-18 **FOOTPATH MAINTENANCE**

At the December meeting it was reported that an email had been sent to the Borough Council re: maintenance on a footpath between Smithills Close and Kelvin Close. The Borough Council indicated that the shrubbery and footpath issues will be dealt with in the New Year.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk said that we have chased the Borough Council and asked if there is a timetable yet for this work to be done.

383/17-18 **LIGHTING ISSUES IN PART OF THE FOREST PARK**

The Clerk stated that we have chased the Borough Council for a reply to emails sent relating to lighting that is/was not working for the path from Gorse Covert through the park to the fire station. We are unsure whether this has been dealt with or not.

384/17-18 **STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

Councillor Ellis stated that he had almost completed the update of the Town Council's Strategy and Action Plan, to incorporate items taken from the results of the community consultation and actions agreed following the Policy, Strategy & Engagement Sub-Committee Meeting that took place in November 2017.

Councillor Ellis said once it is completed he will circulate it to Members, with a view to it being considered and approved at the February 2018 meeting.

Councillor Ellis stated that two of the key issues raised by local businesses in the report circulated to Members in December 2017, were the poor quality of the maintenance on the approach roads to local businesses and a wish to improve links between businesses and the local community.

Regarding the next part of the BID proposal process, Councillor Ellis said that a local organisation (that aims 'to bring together the private and public sector in order to promote economic development and physical regeneration in Warrington') might be willing to pay for the funding for this section of the study. If the BID goes ahead, any money it puts in to the study will be returned.

At this point in time it looks as though the BID could be 'off the ground' in around twelve months' time.

Councillor Ellis stated that there has been interest expressed in approaching the Town Council to be paid to undertake some of the landscaping work that would be involved. He sees this as a vote of confidence in the work that our team does in the area.

Councillor Bowden said that this raises similar issues to those that have been considered when other local Parishes have asked if they can pay for the Town Council's team to do some work in their areas. Notably, if they are doing work for another organisation, they will not have the time to undertake the work that they would normally be doing for the residents of Birchwood; even if it is still within the Birchwood area.

Councillor Ellis suggested that this could be considered again once any proposals are put forward at a future date.

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

385/17-18 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) Sent/received – emails re: flytipping on Silver Lane – first reported by a resident to Warrington Borough Council in spring 2017. The resident met Borough Council Officers on site at that time regarding this waste. We are currently awaiting an update from Environmental Crime at Warrington Borough Council.
- (b) Sent – email re: tree by the pond near Roberts Fold subway / Walled Garden. A concern has been raised over its safety. We are awaiting a reply.

- (c) Sent – email re: flytipping on Ordnance Avenue over the Christmas period.
- (d) Sent/received – emails re: land to the rear of a property on Palliser Close. Warrington Borough Council has now undertaken the work in that area and will apply weed killer once the weather is warmer.
- (e) Received – notification of some advance vegetation clearance and tree felling works in preparation for the start of works for the Warrington East phase 2 project later in the year. These works started on 23rd January 2018.
- (f) Received – Minutes from the Oakwood Community Association meeting which took place on 8th January 2018.
- (g) Received – details of a memory walk in aid of the Alzheimer’s Society, taking place on 25th March at Victoria Park. Details posted on our boards and Facebook page.
- (h) Sent/received – emails re: flooding in front of some properties on Roberts Fold. Warrington Borough Council has advised that there are areas where there is no drainage as these are parts of the road/paths that are unadopted. Our team did a visual check of the drains that are there which appeared to be running freely.

Councillor Nelson queried why part of the path is unadopted as she believes that at least two of the properties were/are owned by Golden Gates and assumed that the path in front of them would therefore be adopted by the Borough Council.

Councillor Bowden said that there are no drains in front of about six of the properties.

Councillor Nelson suggested that the situation be monitored.

- (i) Received – Minutes of the Warrington Public Rights of Way Forum Meeting held on 7th December 2017 and notification of the next meeting to be held on 12th April 2018.
- (j) Received – details of the Borough Council’s draft Housing Strategy consultation. The formal deadline for comments is 26th January 2018.
- (k) Sent – following concerns raised by a resident, email asking the Borough Council to investigate a potentially dangerous tree to the rear of a property in Hamsterley Close.
- (l) Received – Email link to ‘The Wire’ – the Borough Council’s e-newsletter.

386/17-18 **BIRCHWOOD FORUM**

Received – Details of a visit to B&M waste services on 25th January 2018.

387/17-18 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – Various update/information emails from Warrington Voluntary Action.
- (b) Received - Various LGC briefing emails.
- (c) Received – iCAN alert – cavity wall insulation cold callers.
- (d) Received – poster for upcoming local blood donation sessions.
- (e) Received – bank survey results from Croft Parish Council.

- (f) Received – notification of Poynton Town Council’s Neighbourhood Plan consultation.
- (g) Received – email from CWU Preston Brook, Bury and Retail Branch requesting support for the campaign for the removal of the Mersey Gateway toll within the North West area.
- (h) Received – email from the Mersey Forest Team re: wood allotments.

The Clerk stated that she is in the process of arranging a meeting to discuss this in more detail.
- (i) Received – Details of Cheshire Fire Authority council tax precept consultation (via the neighbourhood alert emails). The link to the consultation was included in the alert circulated to Members.
- (j) Received – Poster for the Friends of Gorse Covert Mounds’ January meeting. Displayed on our notice boards and Facebook page.

388/17-18 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG)**

Sent/received – emails re: shrubbery and litter on the Brook Footpath, to the rear of properties on Lyster Close which back onto the path. The Borough Council has stated that the area in question belongs to YHG – these emails have been forwarded on to YHG.

389/17-18 **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) To note that we have published a link on our website to a brief survey being undertaken by David Keane, Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cheshire, re: residents’ and businesses’ views on the Police precept.

Following a discussion, Members **resolved** that the Town Council wishes to send a formal written response to the survey, directly to David Keane, expressing the opinion that Cheshire Constabulary, as a precepting body, should increase its own precept as it sees necessary, to raise the finance required to maintain necessary resource levels. This would negate the need to pass that financial burden on to local Parish and Town Councils, by asking them to fully fund additional PCSOs at a current cost of around £33,000 per year.

Action Clerk’s office to write to the PCC regarding the above.

- (c) Received – Stakeholder Bulletin – Christmas 2017

390/17-18 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (CHALC), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC) AND SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS (SLCC)**

- (a) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins.
- (b) Received - NALC Chief Executive Bulletins.
- (c) Received- Link to a ‘Training Needs Survey’ from the SLCC.
- (d) Received – SLCC News Bulletin 11th January 2018.
- (e) Received – Invitation to nominate outgoing chair to be put into a draw to attend a Royal Garden Party.

391/17-18 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

LGC – 11/01/18
Clerks & Councils Direct – January 2018
The Clerk – January 2018
LCR – Winter 2017/2018

392/17-18 **MEMBERS' REFERRALS MADE VIA THE CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING FOR CONSIDERATION AT THIS COUNCIL MEETING**

Councillor T. Hearldon – Zebra crossing installation on Admirals Road

Although Councillor T. Hearldon was unable to attend tonight's meeting, this was discussed earlier in the meeting (see Minute 381/17-18).

393/17-18 **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 10/01/18. There are no items specifically relevant to Birchwood on the main agenda for discussion.

394/17-18 **ENFORCEMENT CASES**

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

395/17-18 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

No planning decisions specific to Birchwood were received prior to the publication of the Clerk's report.

396/17-18 **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. 2017/31846 Land bounded by Admirals Road, Linnet Grove and Curlew Grove. Proposed discharge of conditions 5 (noise levels), 23 (details of LEAP), 25 (provision of affordable housing) and 26 (samples of roofing and facing materials) on application 2016/28810.
- (b) Application No. 2017/31859 Land on the east side of Kelvin Close, WA3 7PB. Proposed change of use from use Class B1(b) a research and development instrumentation laboratory, to a multi-purpose use Class B1(c) and use Class B2 for the manufacture and storage of aluminium frame windows.

We have been copied into a letter of objection from a local resident regarding this application.

Members discussed the content of the letter, but were reminded that the Town Council can only make objections on what would be considered to be planning issues.

As there was no information at this point in time with the planning documentation regarding potential noise levels if the proposed application were to go ahead, Members asked that an observation be made to the Planning Department that there is the possibility of unacceptable levels of noise from such a manufacturing operation and to ask that this be mitigated as part of any conditions put on the application (if it is approved) and to ask that working hours would be limited to 'normal working hours'.

Action Clerk's office to write to the Planning Department regarding Application 2017/31859.

- (c) Application No. 2018/31905 The Breeze, Kelvin Close, WA3 7BL. Non-material amendment – proposed Latin roof replaced with flat roof. Elevation 'A' glazed windows now full height as opposed to half height.
- (d) Application No. 2018/31880 Retrospective application for widening of the existing car park entrance to accommodate speed gates for staff vehicles entering and leaving site, the re-siting of 2 pedestrian crossings and relocation of existing barrier to a new location.
- (e) Application No. 2018/31948 59 Woolmer Close, WA3 6TT. Proposed single storey (part two storey) and single storey rear extensions.

Members did not have any comments or objections to make to applications (a), (c), (d) or (e) at this point in time.

This part of the meeting concluded at 6.55pm.