

**MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD AT
PARKERS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE, DELENTY DRIVE, RISLEY
ON TUESDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2019**

- Present:** Councillor Reeves in the Chair
Councillors Atkin, Breslin, D. Ellis, J. Ellis, Evans, Fitzsimmons
and T. Hearldon

Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald
Deputy Clerk – Mrs C. Caddock
- Apologies:** Councillors Bowden, M. Hearldon and Nelson
Business and Finance Officer - Mr. G. Crowe
PCSO Jones

214/19-20 **OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Breslin proposed, Councillor Evans seconded and it was resolved that: The Minutes of the October Council Meeting held on 22nd October 2019 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair with one amendment – to remove Councillor Bowden’s name from the Declaration of Interest re: Birchwood Youth and Community Centre.

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 Breslin, D. Ellis and J. Ellis– Birchwood Youth & Community Centre Committee
Councillor Reeves – Birchwood Community High School
Councillor J. Ellis - YHG*

215/19-20 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There were no Police representatives or members of the public present at tonight’s meeting.

216/19-20 **PLANNING UPDATES**

- (a) *Application No. 2019/34700 3 Delenty Drive, Birchwood, WA3 6AN. Proposed residential development of 11 dwellings. This application was approved with conditions. However, at the October meeting it was noted that the decision notice lists the number of dwellings as 10 (not 11 as per the original application).*

The Clerk reported that we requested clarification regarding this change. The Planning Department at WBC confirmed the reduction in the number of dwellings on a slightly amended proposal.

- (b) *Application Number: 2019/35322 Heathfield House, Delenty Drive, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6AP. Application to vary Condition 2 to replace plan 77/12/BP with 77/12/BP1 to amend approved car park to 14 spaces; Condition 3 to increase the number of children to 56 children. There shall be no more than 56 children at the Nursery at any one time. Following Planning Appeal APP/M065/A/13/2209344 and Planning Refusal 2013/22163.*

This application was refused by the Development Management Committee.

217/19-20 UPDATE RE: ACTION ITEMS FROM MEETINGS WITH WBC OFFICERS

The Clerk stated that all items below still remain ongoing.

- (a) **A list was provided by BTC to WBC in October 2018 re: areas of overhanging shrubbery which need to be cut back to prevent injury to our team when they are mowing. The shrubbery on the list is owned by WBC.**

Update: The Clerk has sent photographs to illustrate the matter to WBC on several occasions and to several different Officers. The shrubbery continues to be a health and safety issue to our team when they are mowing.

The Clerk has still not received a response from the most recent emails to WBC.

- (b) **Damaged Wall – Gorse Covert Shop**

Update: We still do not have any information from WBC as to whether additional work could be done to this raised bed which would make it less liable to damage and ongoing repair costs.

- (c) **Street Lighting**

Update: The Clerk had requested formal feedback from the evening walkabout that took place on Thursday 7th March, covering quite a lot of ground in Oakwood.

The Clerk has chased this matter several times but has still not received a reply.

218/19-20 YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG) - UPDATE

The Clerk reported that she and Councillor J. Ellis had attended a recent meeting with several representatives of YHG following an impact day event that took place on 28th November 2019, and the Clerk also had a separate meeting with Mr. Mike Redford at which various matters were discussed including the following:

- YHG staff changes – some very experienced staff are coming into / back into the area
- Door knocking – some tenants had raised concerns re: anti-social behaviour and parking issues – the costs of increasing the number of parking spaces could be prohibitive as well as being dependent on planning permission being obtained
- Fix 360 (hope to attend the next Tenants' Association meeting)
- Potential for a 'handyman' scheme – not yet finalised
- Feedback from issues raised with YHG via the BTC office
- The Repairs Roadshow (five tenants attended)

The Clerk said that she and two Maintenance Operatives had attended the impact day in November. They had done a lot of scraping of footpaths to remove moss, mud, etc.

Three skips had been put in three different roads for tenants to place unwanted items. Some tenants required assistance in getting their items to the skips. A number of metal items were put to one side and were collected by a scrap man. Four bicycles were given to a recycling scheme, which repairs them for the benefit of people who cannot afford a new bicycle.

The Clerk said that over the last few weeks we appear to be getting better feedback from queries sent to YHG. She added that the working/partnership arrangement with YHG seems to be improving again.

Councillor J. Ellis cautioned that we have heard promises of improvement previously from YHG which have not then come to fruition, but she is hopeful that this time positive progress will be made.

219/19-20 **CHATFIELD DRIVE DOUBLE YELLOW LINES**

The Clerk stated that the work to install the double yellow lines along the full length of Chatfield Drive, past the high school, has been completed.

220/19-20 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

Councillor D. Ellis reported that, following the amendment of a few small typographical errors, the detailed draft Climate Emergency Action Plan prepared following the Climate Change working party meeting held on 11th September 2019 (which was included in Member's September meeting papers for consideration) is now finalised.

Councillor D. Ellis said that he had attended the first meeting of the Warrington Climate Emergency Commission. He added that the Commission has a wide-reaching scope and has some ideas that might positively impact Birchwood and its surrounding areas.

Councillor D. Ellis commented that the changing of speed limits between roundabouts in the area from 50mph back down to 30mph for the roundabout and back up to 50mph for a short distance to the next roundabout, can contribute to increased vehicle emissions. He said that we appear to be getting nowhere with WBC in requesting a review of the speed limits when siting safety issues relating to speeds that some drivers approach the roundabouts at; perhaps, WBC will now look again at all speed limits, given the evidence that slower speeds reduce emissions, which will help in the battle against climate change.

221/19-20 **FOOTPATH SMITHILLS CLOSE TO WARRINGTON ROAD**

The Clerk reported that we have not received any further updates from Warrington Borough Council about this footpath.

222/19-20 **BIRCHWOOD SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE**

The Clerk stated that the service had been very well attended and the number of young people in attendance and participating was well received.

223/19-20 **LAND TRUST WORKS – GORSE COVERT ROAD**

The Clerk reported that it appears a start has been made to landscaping maintenance work on Gorse Covert Road, which The Land Trust informed us would be done during their winter works programme.

224/19-20 **MEMBER'S REFERRALS – UPDATE**

(a) **Asda Trolleys**

Councillor D. Ellis said that he has been into Asda a few times since the October meeting. He has been informed that the re-installation of the pound coin locks on the trolleys will not be happening this year; that it will have to come out of their next year's budget. He expressed his concern that reintroduction of the pound coin locks might not happen.

Following further discussions, it was **resolved** that Councillor D. Ellis would draft a letter to the Chief Executive Officer and the Chief Operating Officer at Asda regarding this ongoing problem and circulate the letter to Councillors prior to it being sent.

Action: Councillor D. Ellis to draft a letter and circulate to Members, as agreed above.

(b) **Councillor D. Ellis – WBC – lack of progress and/ or response re: various issues**

At the October meeting, Councillor D. Ellis expressed his frustration about the lack of progress on a number of issues that remain ongoing and the lack of any response to queries, which have been repeatedly raised with WBC, such as those mentioned earlier in the meeting (see Minute 217/19-20).

Members had discussed this matter in detail, citing a street lighting walkabout as an example. The Town Council expected to receive a report following the walkabout, however, despite repeated requests for updates nothing has been received. It was resolved that Councillors would send details of a lighting column where the light is being obstructed by the tree canopy, to the Borough Council; to monitor how long it would take for any action to be taken.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk said that we had reported a lighting column that Councillor Atkin had suggested. Light number 84P on the path between Redpoll Lane and Ordnance Avenue on 31st October 2019. We had chased this up and were informed that landscaping had until tonight, 10th December 2019 within their timescales to investigate.

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

225/19-20 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) A letter, expressing the Town Council's sincerest condolences was sent to Mrs O'Neill and her family following the sad news of the death of Councillor Terry O'Neill.
- (b) Sent/received – various emails / online reports following contact from residents re: flytipping, overgrown shrubbery, blocked drains/flooding, abandoned bins, parking on grass verges, broken glass on pavements at various locations in Birchwood, potentially dangerous trees on the Brook Footpath, etc.
- (c) Sent – emails, with photos, and telephone calls made re: vandalism on the old railway footbridge, as several of the glass panels were smashed over two consecutive weekends; a single panel was smashed after that.

The Clerk stated that our team tidied the glass up when this occurred, and the vandalism has been reported to the Borough Council which still has responsibility for this bridge. Our team normally cleanses the station area twice a week.

Although the bridge is technically within the jurisdiction of the Transport Police, we have asked our local Police team to also monitor the area when they are passing.

The Clerk added that the Borough Council is currently looking into various options for the design of the bridge and replacing the glass panels with something more robust and suitable for this location. They will share the design options with the Town Council once they are available.

Councillor D. Ellis commented that he would like to see a Friends of Birchwood Station formed to help improve the aesthetic of the station.

- (d) Sent/received – emails following concerns raised by residents about the speed of vehicles coming off the roundabout on Birchwood Park Avenue, turning left onto Warrington Road.

WBC contacted Cheshire Constabulary's Traffic Management Officer and was advised that, in the case of Warrington Road, there is no record of previous concerns about vehicle speed and no reported traffic collisions for the last 3 years on this road. WBC said that it is therefore difficult to prioritise resources to this location. However, Cheshire Police have informed WBC that they will monitor this location.

PSCO Callum Jones advised us that he has spoken to the resident and that he will be giving them training on using the Community Speedwatch equipment.

- (e) Sent – email re: Light from column 84P on the footpath between Redpoll Lane and Ordnance Avenue being obscured by trees. The reply indicates there is a 28 working day response time. CRM 907153. This has been chased for an update.
- (f) To note that Councillor Atkin has contacted WBC regarding leaf litter creating a slip and trip hazard on a footpath adjacent to Stanford House, requesting that the path be cleared.

Councillor Atkin reported that this has now been cleared.

- (g) Received – Election guidance re: Purdah – applying rules, if necessary, to avoid any political activity which could bring a council into disrepute.
- (h) Sent/received – emails re: a request from a resident for a road sign to be installed at the entrance to Cross Lane South, indicating that it is a no through road. WBC is considering options. There is already a street pole in place at the junction of Cross Lane South with Warrington Road, without any sign installed on it.
- (i) Email sent re: road safety on Birchwood Boulevard, following an email received regarding an RTA between and cyclist and car.

The Clerk said that the PCSOs have been contacted by one of the companies on Birchwood Boulevard regarding parking issues. Only part of the roads on the business park are the responsibility of WBC Highways, the rest are privately owned. If additional enforcement is needed in the privately owned areas, the landlord will have to arrange for this to be put in place.

Councillor D. Ellis informed Members that there had also recently been two incidents in one day near the roundabout junction of Glover Road with Birchwood Park Avenue, at the junction across from Garret Field. The second was quite a serious RTA; the driver had to be cut out of the vehicle. There had been some sand put on the road from the earlier incident, presumably to try to soak up some spilt oil, diesel or petrol; which might have left the road slippery. The planter on the verge has been destroyed and the green telecommunications box has also been damaged.

The Clerk said we have asked the Police whether we are able to remove the remains of the planter, or if they need to take photos, etc. first.

226/19-20 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG)**

Sent/received – various emails re: flytipping, overgrown shrubbery and trees.

227/19-20 **MISCELLANOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – Various update/information emails from Warrington Voluntary Action.

- (b) Received/sent – email re: a request from a local company wondering if they could restore the Walled Garden and use part of it to create a garden or allotment. A reply was sent, with an offer to potentially put them in touch with the new ‘Incredible Edibles Birchwood’ group.
- (c) Received – Information Commissioner’s Office newsletter – 7th November 2019.
- (d) Received – Invitation to the Chair re: Rixton with Glazebrook’s Civic Sunday Service in January 2020.

The Chair said that he hopes to be attending.

Action Clerk’s office to accept the invitation on behalf of the Chair.

- (e) Received – Warrington East Phases 2 and 3 project update – Issue 24.
- (f) Received – from Birchwood Forum: New from Warrington & Co ‘Steve Park’s Update’, and an invitation to support Brainwave by supporting their ‘Message in a Bauble’ campaign.
- (g) Received – copies of email correspondence, sent from/received by Councillor Atkin re: blocking of electric car charging points near the Vets at Birchwood Shopping Centre.
- (h) Received – request from a resident for the concrete bridge leading from Gorse Covert to Leacroft Road to be gritted when necessary. Our team will add this to our gritting list.
- (i) Received – Newsletter from the Information Commissioner’s Office – December 2019.
- (j) Received – Dates for Christmas Services at Thomas Risley Church
- (k) To note that a disclaimer has been prepared re: the loan of the sleigh and reindeer to Locking Stumps Primary’s PTA for their Christmas Grotto.
- (l) Received – an invitation to the Chair to attend a tree planting ceremony at Birchwood Forest Park on Saturday the 15th of February 2020 at 11.30 to commemorate the centenary of Cheshire Federation W.I. & the 30th anniversary of Birchwood W.I.

The Chair said that he hopes to be attending.

Action Clerk’s office to accept the invitation on behalf of the Chair.

228/19-20 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Received – various neighbourhood alerts.
- (b) Received – Birchwood Police Reports – October and November 2019
- (c) Received – letter from the Police and Crime Commissioner re: policing of Remembrance Day services.
- (d) Sent – emails asking if PCSO Jones could monitor parking on Glover Road, the Hinton House end, following complaints from a resident that vehicles had started parking there again, in increasing amounts.

- (e) Received – via ChALC – details of an Anti-Bullying Commission - Call for Evidence: The Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cheshire put together a team of community representatives to look into the issue of bullying.

The PCC called for evidence to give victims of bullying the opportunity to tell their story. The Call for Evidence closed on 30 November 2019. Full details were posted on our Facebook page.

229/19-20 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (CHALC), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC), SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS (SLCC)**

- (a) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins with various attachments.
- (b) Received - NALC Chief Executive Bulletins, Blogs and Newsletters.
- (c) Received – SLCC – various News bulletins and details of Branch meetings, conferences, etc.

230/19-20 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC magazines & e-mail briefings, The Clerk – November 2019

231/19-20 **MEMBERS' REFERRALS MADE VIA THE CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING FOR CONSIDERATION AT THIS COUNCIL MEETING**

There were no Members Referrals received via the Chair prior to the publication of the Clerk's Report.

232/19-20 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

(a) **Warrington Borough Council - Development Management Committee**

At the Development Management Committee meeting on 6th November 2019 one item specific to Birchwood was on the main agenda; Application No. 2019/35322 Heathfield House Nursery, Delenty Drive, WA3 6AP. (See Minute 216/19/20 (b) above). The application was **refused** by the Committee

(b) **Proposed Upgrade of a Telecoms Mast from 4G to 5G**

To note the receipt of pre-planning consultation documents relating to a proposed upgrade of a telecoms mast on Dewhurst Road to 5G technology. The proposed new mast would be 5.3M taller than the mast currently in place; requiring additional antennas and a new equipment cabinet – a formal planning application was subsequently received.

(c) **Old Foxwood School Site Development**

A representative of Warrington & Co. has asked if they would be able to address the Town Council to present proposals regarding the redevelopment of the Foxwood School site (for a new housing development). They also plan to arrange a public meeting at Birchwood Tennis Centre (date tbc).

Members agreed that they would be pleased to receive a presentation of the proposals.

The Clerk reported that the developer's agent asked if there were additional areas that the Town Council would like correspondence to be sent to, other than those required within the planning process, and indicated on a map that they sent to us.

It was suggested by the Clerk and agreed by Members that a wider area, to include the whole of Harcourt Close, Layton Close, Talbot Close, Forbes Close and Ramsay Close should be included.

Action Clerk's office to contact the developer's agent regarding the above.

(d) **Enforcement Cases**

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

(e) **Planning Decisions**

- (i) Application No. 2019/34478 Land adjacent to units 720 and 730 Birchwood Boulevard, Birchwood, WA3 7PS. Proposed erection of B8 self-storage unit, new access off Dewhurst Road, parking and associated works including demolition of garage together with provision of additional parking for adjacent office building. **Refused**
- (ii) Application No. 2019/35531 19 Copperfield Close, Birchwood, WA3 7PF. Proposed change of use of the existing dwelling to a C2 unit (residential institution) for the care of children between the ages of 7 – 17 years old. **Approved with conditions** (*only 2 children residing in the unit at any time*).
- (iii) Application No. 2019/23166 31 Hazelborough Close, Birchwood, WA3 6UL. Proposed two storey side and single storey rear extension. **Withdrawn**
- (iv) Application No. 2019/34689 Land bounded by Admirals Road, Linnet Grove and Curlew Grove – Application for Approval of Details reserved by Condition 4 on Planning permission ref 2016/28810. **Approved**

(f) **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%20arch_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. 2019/36033 Land on west side of Faraday Street, Birchwood Park, WA3 6AR. Proposed discharge of condition 7 (investigation and assessment methodology, remediation scheme) on previously approved application A02/45636.
- (ii) Application No. 2019/35710 Locking Stumps Post Office/Nisa Shop, Glover Road, WA3 7PA. Proposed subdivision of existing units to create a health shop with new shop front.

- (iii) Application No. 2019/36019 Concentric Business Park, Warrington Road, Birchwood Park, WA3 6WX. Proposed construction of new stand-alone cycle shelter for use by the businesses within the 3 office buildings on Concentric Business Park. Building to be constructed in existing car park/landscaped area.
- (iii) Application No. 2019/36068 24 Patterson Close, Birchwood, WA3 6QR. Two storey side extension and single storey rear extension.
- (iv) Application No. 2019/34689 Land bounded by Admirals Road, Linnet Grove and Curlew Grove, Birchwood. Proposed discharge of condition 24 (LEAP) on previously approved app. 2016/28810.
- (v) Application No. 2019/36061 Area of vacant land located to adjacent, Daten Avenue, Warrington, WA3 6YN. Proposed discharge of condition 7 (Landscaping implementation) from original planning application 2018/33212.
- (vi) Application No. 2019/36078 Site of existing Cheshire Fire & Rescue, Birchwood Fire Station, Ordnance Avenue, WA3 6QS. Full planning – Proposed material alterations to existing fire station to include the removal of existing rear concertina appliance bay doors and installation of new rear sectional overhead door, new facias and soffits, new render and horizontal timber cladding finishes to existing facing brick on the front elevation. Works also include replacement of all windows and access doors, new access door to communal and recreation areas, refurbishment of existing roof coverings and minor internal works, including the conversion of an existing gymnasium into a base of ops for Cheshire Constabulary.
- (vii) Application No. 2019/36070 Land at Kelvin Street, Birchwood Park. Application for approval of details reserved by Condition 4 (full details of the bollards (including fixings) following Planning Approval 2018/33281 (Full Planning – proposed widening of existing road)).
- (viii) Application No. 2019/36101 Ground Floor 304 Bridgewater Place, Birchwood, WA3 6XG. Proposed internal sub-division of the suite and in order to meet Building Regulations, a secondary means of escape is proposed.
- (ix) Application No. 2019/36136 3 Norden Close, Birchwood, WA3 7NJ. Proposed single storey side extension creating a home gym area (can be later converted into additional bedroom when needed) and a front recessed garage/stores.
- (x) Application No. 2019/36157 Area of land located to adjacent to the north boundary of Birchwood Park, known as the Quadrant, Daten Avenue, WA3 6YN Non Material Amendment-Proposed removal of Condition 11 (Prior to first occupation of each unit hereby permitted confirmation of the use of the building shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.) attached to Reserved Matters Application ('RM') (LPA REF. 2018/33212).
- (xii) Application No. 2019/36170 Land at Birchwood Park, Warrington, WA3 6AE. Non-material amendment – proposed addition of condition: A schedule of approved and occupied floorspace relating to the quantum of floorspace approved pursuant to this permission shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority every time a subsequent reserved matters application is made attached to an outline application (LPA Ref: 2015/26044).

- (xiii) Application No. 2019/36175 Dewhurst Road, Birchwood, WA3 7QS. Proposed telecommunications upgrade. Proposed phase 7 monopole C/W wrap around cabinet at base and associated works.

The Clerk said that the mast will have to be craned into place. It is a busy road and a busy bus route and it is likely to cause some traffic disruption. She asked if Members wished to make any comments, should the application be approved, perhaps to ask if consideration of the timing of the installation of the mast has been taken into account, to be undertaken preferably when the road is likely to be quiet.

Members agreed that this would be a sensible request to make.

Action Clerk's office to contact the Planning Department regarding the above.

- (ixx) Application No. 2019/36232 North Cheshire House, Kelvin Close, Birchwood, WA3 7RB. Proposed discharge of condition no. 3 (noise management plan) and condition no. 5 (acoustic validation report) on original application 2017/31859.

233/19-20 **STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

Councillor D. Ellis suggested that the Policy, Strategy and Engagement Sub-Committee, of which all Councillors are Members, arrange to meet in January 2020 to revise the Action Plan.

Councillor D. Ellis said that although there will not be a pantomime this year, which was one of the items in the action plan that residents had listed as wishing to have again, there is a Christmas Spectacular taking place on 21st December 2019 at the high school; to be performed by the recently formed Birchwood Acts group. It is hoped that a pantomime can be put together for next year.

It was mentioned that there had been some concern that the group might not be able to use the high school due to high booking fees.

Councillor Reeves (who declared an interest, as a Governor at the high school) said that this had been sorted out. He added that lettings management are being brought back 'in-house' at the high school next year.

Councillor D. Ellis said that Dr Joseph is now the lead partner at Birchwood Medical Centre. The practice is moving towards 'social prescribing' as another way of helping people to manage their health and wellbeing. On the gov.uk website it gives the following explanation of what this is: *'Social prescribing - sometimes referred to as community referral - is a means of enabling GPs, nurses and other health and care professionals to refer people to a range of local, non-clinical services.'*

He added that there is also more work being done by the practice to identify pre-diabetic patients; to try to help them reduce their risks of becoming (Type 2) diabetic.

Councillor D. Ellis said that the medical centre will also be a place for food vouchers to be collected by those who have been identified as requiring assistance and have been referred for them. It is more central than some other places.

Councillor J. Ellis confirmed that NHS England is funding this.

Action For a Policy, Strategy and Engagement Sub-Committee to be arranged for sometime in January.

This part of the meeting concluded at 6.35 pm.