

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL**  
**HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE**  
**ON TUESDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2023, 6.00 PM**

**Present:** Councillor Dempsey in the Chair  
Councillors Allen, Atkin, Ball, Brereton, Bowden, Ellis, Sheridan and Simcock  
  
Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald  
RFO / Deputy Clerk – Mrs. C. Caddock  
Administrative Assistant – Mrs. H. Thomas  
  
PCSO Tom Palfrey – Cheshire Police

**Apologies:** Councillors Evans (personal), Reeves (work) and Scott (away)

**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.

*Birchwood Carnival Committee: Councillors Atkin, Sheridan and Simcock.*

082/23-24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PCSO Palfrey provided the following report for the period 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 to 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023:

**‘Anti-Social Behavior – 8 reports**

*1x- Fieldfare Close- front door being kicked by youth.*

*1x- Rawlings Close- Neighbor dispute*

*1x- Strawberry Close- Neighbor dispute*

*1x- Keys Close- Neighbor dispute*

*1x- Birchwood Primary School- Dangerous dog*

*1x- Curlew Grove- Abandoned Vehicle*

*1x- Locking Stumps Lane- Youths throwing things off the motorway Bridge.*

*1x- SYMOLOGY BIRCHWOOD PARK*

*There’s a large gang of teenagers on birchwood park climbing over gates 6ft tall into industrial building property.*

**Burglary (Dwelling) – 4 reports**

*Armstrong Close*

*Wren Close*

*Pheasant Close*

*Mansfield Close*

**Burglary (others) – 0 reports**

**Vehicle Crime / Offences – Reports**

*1x Airmiles Travel Solutions – M.O.P vehicle broken into in the car park and items taken from it.*

*1x Yodel – vehicle stolen from premises.*

### **Criminal Damage**

*1x- Birchwood Forest Park- Fire reporting small fire in rubbish bin*

*1x- Halliday Close- Front door has been smashed in.*

*1x- Redshank Lane - driver's side front and rear tires have been cut.*

*1x- Stonecrop Close- back windscreen has been smashed. Nothing has been stolen from inside the vehicle and there were items worth taking.*

*1x- Fern Close- Window smashed at rear of property, nothing taken.*

*1x- Whinchat- car has been keyed suspected neighbor issues.*

*1x- Spar- drunk male has smashed the windows at the front of store.'*

PCSO Palfrey informed Members that for a third month in a row, there have been no reports of anti-social behaviour from Birchwood Shopping Centre, and that the work that has gone into reducing these reports appears to have been successful. There have still been a few instances of shoplifting.

Councillor Atkin inquired about a situation that recently occurred at Birchwood Forest Park, and wondered whether PCSO Palfrey could give any more information.

PCSO Palfrey stated that he could not disclose the nature of this situation, but wanted to assure Members that the incident was nothing serious and not something that would likely impact the community.

Councillor Ellis asked if there was an update regarding the radar Speed Indicator Device (SID), and whether BTC would be able to position one on a road with a site code already allocated to it.

PCSO Palfrey explained that the Council can position a SID on a road with a site code but advised the Council that a SID may be calibrated slightly differently to a speed camera. He noted that this could make it difficult to conduct speed enforcement operations on this stretch of road because motorists could claim the sign told them they were travelling at an appropriate speed.

It was suggested by Councillor Ellis that SIDs could be on one side of the road and any Police speed enforcement operations could be conducted on the other.

Councillor Ellis asked if there was any update on the cars which are dangerously parked outside Locking Stumps Primary School at opening and closing times. This matter was also raised at the May Annual Town Meeting.

PCSO Palfrey said that this is something he hopes to progress soon, as there have been other incidents recently that have taken priority. He is planning to propose a day/week of action wherein he and a large Policing team will attend all of the local primary schools and ticket any illegally parked vehicles.

PCSO Palfrey stated that something that has proven successful in the past is having the school children write notes and hand them to the parents/motorists. He explained that this is part of the 'Mini Police' program.

The Clerk asked if there was any update on the return of the Council's speed sign. PCSO Palfrey said that he was in contact with an officer regarding this matter and is awaiting an update.

The Clerk reported that when the BTC maintenance team were litter picking on Forest Park on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June, they discovered that the bandstand had large amounts of smashed glass covering the floor.

PCSO Palfrey said that because of an incident that occurred at Birchwood Forest Park recently, he is committed to providing additional monitoring of the area so is hopeful this will deter anti-social behavior like this.

(b) **Public Participation**

No public were present at the meeting.

083/23-24 **ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Ellis **proposed**, Councillor Allen **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

The Clerk stated that items raised by residents at the Annual Town Meeting will now be combined with these main minutes, where appropriate.

084/23-24 **MAY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Brereton **proposed**, Councillor Atkin **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**PROGRESS**

085/23-24 **REGISTER OF INTEREST FORMS**

(a) **Register of Interest Forms**

The Clerk reminded Members that they must, by law, fill out and return any updates to their register of interest forms within 28 days of a change occurring.

(b) **‘Sensitive Information’ regarding Register of Interest forms**

The Clerk stated that she has been in contact with the Director of Law and Governance at Warrington Borough Council regarding removing certain details within Councillor’s personal information and has explained that it can be done but permission must be requested through WBC.

**Action** The Clerk to contact WBC to receive further information and instruction.

086/23-24 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)**

**Communication**

(a) **Uneven Paving**

Following the WBC monthly report which has already been circulated to members, the Clerk wanted to clarify which area was being referred to in regard to ‘Trip Hazards such as uneven paving’, which is noted as a closed case and has been dealt with. She was able to confirm that the section of Heather Close which was brought to our attention by residents has now had some of the old block paving removed and replaced with Tarmac.

(b) **Street Lighting**

The Clerk reported that the street lighting issues on Armstrong Close and Ainscough Road are still ongoing.

Councillor Ellis reported that he has sent a letter to Electricity North West to follow up on the outage on Glover Road but has had no response yet. He stated that he will follow this up should no updates be given in a timely manner.

(c) **Bus Stops on Glover Road**

Councillor Ellis requested an update, from WBC, on the bus stop renovations in Warrington and was told they are almost complete. He was informed that there may be one or two 'surplus' bus shelters that might be able to be allocated to BTC for use on Glover Road, but is waiting to hear whether this is practicable and of any associated costs.

(d) **Wastebins on Leacroft Road**

Councillor Ellis reported that, during a walk in the area, he noticed new wastebins along Leacroft Road. He stated that need for these receptacles was something initially raised by BTC with WBC but he was not aware this work had been completed.

The Clerk commented that Officers had not received any update regarding this matter.

(e) **Issues raised regarding Lyster Close**

The Clerk stated that regarding some reported issues in Lyster Close, YHG and WBC have agreed to undertake some work on it. This includes the handrails as a matter of health and safety concern. She noted that the residents had reported the issue themselves and raised it with the Chair.

A monthly report had been received from Warrington Borough Council just prior to the meeting regarding some other outstanding issues:

- *'Locking Stumps Play Area has been completed. Formal opening to be arranged with councillor. **Live***
- *Work throughout borough such as facing off plantings surrounding verges and weeds. Work live to be completed in due course, pending ground conditions. **Live***
- *Annual Flowers have been germinated. **Live***
- *Specific Lyster Close raised queries. All responded to via separate document which states where owned by WBC the structure planting of low overhanging growth is to be cut back in the next month. Removal of perimeter growth planned for Winter 23/24. **Live***

(f) **Working with WBC**

At the May 2023 Annual Town Meeting, Councillor Atkin had asked if more could be done to improve partnership working arrangements with WBC. He added that this matter was raised last year, but there does not seem to have been any improvement since then.

The Chair had suggested contacting Mr. David Boyer at WBC to invite him to a meeting.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk asked the Council if they wish her to contact Mr. Boyer to invite him to a meeting with members.

This was unanimously agreed.

**Action:** Clerk's office to contact Mr. Boyer to invite him to a meeting.

(g) **Admirals Square**

Regarding the ongoing maintenance issues in Admirals Square, the Clerk reported that she has sent a letter to the landowners. We have not yet received a response.

The Clerk added that if we do not receive a reply, she will ask WBC Highways if they can intervene.

087/23-24 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG) – UPDATE**

(a) **Parking Issues**

Regarding a query raised at the Annual Town Meeting, the Clerk stated that she had contacted YHG regarding the possibility of installing additional parking spaces in Lyster Close and other areas in Oakwood and was told that currently, it is not in their budget to do so, but may investigate it again in the future.

(b) **Possible Meeting with YHG**

Councillor Scott, via email, proposed a walkabout in the Strawberry Close area be arranged with YHG for him and Councillor Brereton to discuss any issues residents have. He noted that, while no residents have contacted him directly, Strawberry Close is in his ward.

**Action** Clerk's office to arrange meeting with YHG.

088/23-24 **TRAVELLER AWARENESS TRAINING**

The Clerk confirmed that the rescheduled date and time for the in-person Traveller Awareness Training at Parkers Farm will be on the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 18:00.

Councillors Atkin, Ball, Brereton, Dempsey, Sheridan, Scott and Simcock have expressed an interest in attending the training.

089/23-24 **BIRCHWOOD CARNIVAL UPDATE**

The Clerk stated that Birchwood Carnival was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and was opened by Councillor Dempsey.

Members commended the Chair on his efforts during the procession including the two speeches made.

Councillor Dempsey extended his thanks to the Birchwood Carnival Committee for their hard work organising the event.

The Clerk also stated that the Royal Ordnance Factory (ROF) Memorial was officially unveiled by the Chair during the carnival procession.

Councillor Ellis felt that due to short notice, the unveiling had not been widely publicised and was concerned that residents who may have wanted to attend, were unaware that it was taking place. He proposed a second unveiling to take place so that residents and anyone with close links to the former ROF could attend.

Councillor Ellis suggested that Remembrance Day might be a good time to have an official ceremony and the Chair proposed that the Council could consider the laying of a third wreath in the community by placing one at the new memorial.

A discussion took place regarding logistics of another unveiling and Councillor Ellis stated that he is happy to ask the opinions of the Ranger Service.

Councillor Bowden reminded the Council that the Park Rangers used to conduct walking tours of Birchwood, and wondered if this could be another option for residents to see the memorial and learn about the ROF.

**Action** Councillor Ellis to speak to the Park Rangers regarding the possibility of an additional formal unveiling and future walking tours.

#### 090/23-24 **PLANNING UPDATE**

##### **Planning Application 2021/40696 – Trident Business Park – Proposed demolition of existing premises and redevelopment of site**

It was noted that the proposed redevelopment of Trident Business Park was granted at the DMC meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023.

The Chair thanked Councillors Atkin and Ellis for their efforts supporting the residents with their objections during this process.

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

#### 091/23-24 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)**

- (a) The Clerk circulated the WBC report to Councillors prior to the meeting
- (b) Sent/received – various emails/online reports/telephone calls following queries/contact from residents regarding flytipping, tree/shrubbery issues, lack of maintenance on footpaths, rubbish bin collections, noise complaints, damage to play areas, etc.
- (c) Received – email regarding weighbridge service.
- (d) Received – we have been copied into an email from resident (sent to WBC) regarding Warrington Road, Risley about HGV's, sunken drain covers and the possibility of speed indicator devices in the area.

**Action** Clerk's office to respond to resident with update on speed indicator devices.

**Action** Clerk's office to report drain covers to WBC with Councillor Ellis providing pictures.

#### 092/23-24 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/reports following queries/contact from residents including issues with flytipping, shrubbery maintenance, fallen trees, etc.
- (b) Several Councillors have been contacted regarding various issues arising on YHG estates.

- (c) Received – Proposal to remove play area at Kingfisher Close and replace with grass.

Councillor Bowden asked for clarification regarding the playground in question. He stated that at one time, Birchwood had around 20 different playgrounds in various locations, but most are now lost and wanted to confirm that the residents were not further losing something of value.

The Clerk stated that it is an old playground with very little play equipment (only a wooden see-saw which had failed a recent ROSPA inspection).

093/23-24 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE/ISSUES**

- (a) Received – various emails from Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA).
- (b) Received – Report of unauthorised encampment on Silver Lane, from Cheshire and Warrington Traveller Team.
- (c) Received – Reports of anti-social behaviour relating to off-road bikes. Residents have been directed to contact the Police either via 101 or their website.
- (d) Received - complaints re: cars parking on the grass verges for the duration of Birchwood Carnival.
- (e) Received / sent – emails re: complaints about shrubbery maintenance on Gorse Covert Road, on the stretch from the Moss Gate Roundabout heading towards the local shop.

This shrubbery is maintained by The Land Trust. They were contacted and have undertaken some of the work.

It was suggested that part of the sight line issue coming out of Ashdown Lane seems to be caused by the end of a brick wall.

Councillor Atkin commented that the ivy encroaching into the road still needs to be dealt with.

- (f) Received – email from a resident stating they will be assessing the unmown areas that have been left to re-wild to see what species of plant might grow there. The resident commented that they noticed significant numbers of butterflies in the unmown areas.

094/23-24 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Received – various Neighbourhood Alerts, and ‘Our News’ – April 2023 – the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter.
- (b) Received – May’s Police Report.

095/23-24 **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

096/23-24 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC e-mail correspondence/briefings.

097/23-24 **MEMBER’S REFERRAL**

Councillor Atkin stated that he was approached by a resident regarding the difficulty of accessing Risley Moss using a mobility scooter without having to drive it along the road.

Because of missing dropped kerbs on the roundabout outside, the only way to access Risley Moss on a scooter or wheelchair is to safely take a 120m+ detour up Killingworth Lane to use resident’s dropped kerbs.

He acknowledged that able-bodied people can cross the road at this junction with ease. However, the paths inside Risley Moss are accessible for all and the lack of dropped kerbs is an impediment to some people visiting a facility that is designed with accessibility in mind.

Councillor Atkin requested that BTC contacts WBC to request tactile dropped kerbs be installed on the Killingworth Lane arm of the roundabout outside Risley Moss.

Councillor Atkin said that he would also would like to request that the accessibility provision on the Moss Gate arm of the same roundabout is adequate, as there are tactile dropped kerbs in place, but the central splitter island has high kerbs and so the road must be crossed in one go, avoiding the island.

The Council **unanimously resolved** to ask WBC for tactile dropped kerbs to be installed at this location.

**Action** Clerk’s office to contact WBC regarding this matter.

098/23-24 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

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

- (a) The DMC took place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2023. There was one item of note on the agenda, which was the Trident Business Park development – Application No. 2021/40696 (see minute 090/23-24).
- (b) Information regarding enforcement cases specific to Birchwood have been circulated to Members

**Planning Decisions**

- (a) **Application No. 2022/42737 (Householder)** – 99 Carrington Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7QB. Proposed front extension at first floor level over existing garage. **Refused.**
- (b) **Application No. 2022/42513 (Householder)** – 15 Mansfield Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6QN. Proposed single storey side extension. **Granted.**



## Planning Applications

*All plans can be viewed via:*

[http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport\\_planning\\_and\\_environment/Planning/Search\\_planning\\_applications/](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 for information only.

- (a) **Application No. 2023/00698/DISCON** – (for information only) – Unit 722 (within development parcels 701 and 702), Daten Avenue, Birchwood Park, Warrington. Discharge of Condition 10 (verification report) attached to outline planning permission (major) 2015/26044.
- (b) **Application No. 2023/00699/DISCON** – (for information only) – Land East of Kelvin Street, Birchwood Park, X-365626 Y-392445, Warrington. Discharge of Condition 12 (Remediation) attached to 2022/42690 variation of conditions.
- (c) **Application No. 2023/00473/TPO** – 708 Warrington Road, Warrington, WA3 6AU. Remedial pruning to 5no. trees.
- (d) **Application No. 2023/00773/DISCON** – 2 Kelvin Close, Birchwood, Warrington. Discharge of condition no. 6 (boundary treatments/additional planting), condition no. 1 (electric charging/cycle storage), condition no. 8 (parking strategy), attached to planning permission reference no. 2022/42751.

Members did not have any comments to make regarding the above applications at this point in time.

**This part of the meeting concluded at 7.10 pm.**