

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE
ON TUESDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2023, 6.00 PM

Present: Councillor Sheridan in the Chair
Councillors Atkin, Ball, Ellis, Scott and Simcock

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

PCSO Tom Palfrey – Cheshire Police

Apologies: Councillors Allen (away), Bowden (personal), Brereton (away), Dempsey (health), Evans (health), and Reeves (work)

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.

184/23-24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PCSO Palfrey provided the following report for the period 23rd September – 24th October 2023:

“Anti- Social Behavior (2 reports)

1x Redpoll Lane – Harassment by ex-partner

1x Mansfield Close – Youths drinking in front of caller’s address

Burglary – Dwelling (2 reports)

1x Fieldfare Close – Sus male in neighbor’s garden. It is believed that male did not gain entry to the property.

1x Woodhouse Close – Safe has gone missing from home.

Burglary – Others

N/A

Vehicle Crime / Offences – Reports

1x Trefoil Close – Stolen vehicle

1x Rendlesham Close – Stolen vehicle

Criminal Damage

2x Goldfinch Lane – Tires have been slashed of caller’s vehicle.

1x Roberts Fold – Caller’s windows have been smashed.

1x Redshank Lane – Tires have been slashed of caller’s vehicle

1x Halliday Close – Brick has been thrown through caller’s front window of their property

1x McDonald’s – A customer has pushed the till causing significant damage

1x The Beacons – Panel damage to a vehicle, windows have been smashed”

PCSO Palfrey informed members that there had been a lot of burglaries, but that the Police have managed to apprehend a few of the people involved.

He also mentioned that there have been several instances of criminal damage this month, and after surveillance by himself and residents' CCTV, had found some of them to be neighbour disputes.

PCSO Palfrey said that Birchwood Shopping Centre had seen a spike in anti-social behaviour (ASB), but that the problem appears to be related to one specific group of youths.

PCSO Palfrey said he has asked WBC Traffic Wardens to patrol at Birchwood Community High School during school opening and closing times, which then frees him up to patrol at the local primary schools. He stated that he can only give words of advice to those parked in contravention of traffic signage, so it would be better suited to be monitored by the Traffic Wardens.

The Clerk informed PCSO Palfrey that the lock at the BTC offices had been vandalised with super glue. She said that this usually happens overnight and occurs around once a quarter.

The Clerk also confirmed that Birchwood Police had picked up the knife mentioned at the September Town Council meeting (*minute 150/23-24 (a)*).

PCSO Palfrey reported that he has done a few talks on ASB and Halloween at local schools and spoke about knives at these talks.

The Chair of the meeting thanked PCSO Palfrey for his attendance, and PCSO Palfrey left the meeting.

(b) **Public Participation**

There were no residents in attendance at the meeting.

185/23-24 **SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Ellis **proposed**, Councillor Simcock **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 26th September 2023 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

PROGRESS

186/23-24 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)**

Communication

The Clerk circulated the October WBC report to Members prior to the meeting.

(a) **Locking Stumps Play Area**

After discussion at the last meeting, The Clerk said that WBC is drafting a press release regarding the refurbishment of the play area.

(b) **Graffiti in the Area**

The Clerk stated that on the Keyes Close Underpass, the offensive words that were reported to WBC appear to have been painted over.

The Clerk also said, that regarding the graffiti on the side of Birchwood Tennis Centre, Livewire are still looking into this.

The Clerk said that there is a large amount of offensive graffiti on Lowes Farm Subway, which has been reported via Firmstep.

(c) **Blocked Drains**

The Clerk said that WBC appear to have attended several blocked drain locations and cleared them. However, they stated that the footpath gullies on Strawberry Close and Keyes Close were showing no fault at the time of inspection and WBC reported that they inspected them on a morning following heavy rainfall.

The Clerk said this is something that the BTC maintenance team would investigate, as these drains are known to flood regularly due to sediment and dropped foliage.

Action

Clerk's office to ask the maintenance team to assess the state of the drains on Strawberry Close and Keyes Close.

(d) **Speed Signage and Traffic Management**

The Clerk reported that WBC had hoped to introduce the advisory speed limits outside Locking Stumps Primary School during the October half term, but this has been delayed due to issues between WBC and their contractor. It is now likely that this will be completed after Christmas.

The Clerk reported that TROs for both Warrington Road, Risley and Birchwood Park Avenue, have been advertised.

Councillor Ellis said that these have now been approved and it is hoped that the work will be completed within four to six weeks.

(e) **Admirals Square**

The Clerk stated that there has been no communication from the landowners. She said that Birchwood C of E Primary School have also raised their concerns about health and safety issues on Admirals Square and are going to report the issue via Firmstep, and also to the WBC Education Department.

The Clerk reported that WBC have said their internal legal team are exploring options.

Councillor Ellis suggested contacting Morrisons, as the local shop is now under their ownership. He said that they might have some interest in assisting in making the car park safer for their patrons.

(f) **Annual Wildflowers**

The Clerk said that a resident had raised concerns over the visibility on the Asda petrol station roundabout due to tall wildflowers.

WBC said that a team has been out to investigate and did not believe there was a sightline issue.

The Clerk added that they should be cut down soon and we will not ask for any wildflowers to be sown at this location next season.

(g) **Walled Garden Boardwalk**

The Clerk stated that one of the BTC Maintenance Team had reported that the boardwalk in the Walled Gardens had become rotten and unsafe. This was reported via email to WBC as there was not an obvious place to report it via Firmstep.

WBC have reported that they have passed the concern on to the 'Environment Team'.

(h) **Street Lighting**

The Clerk reported that Councillors Ellis and Atkin had done walkabouts of their local areas to note down any streetlights which were obscured by vegetation or not working.

Councillor Ellis investigated the area of Locking Stumps and reported that Heather Close was the most affected street, and he believes that it directly correlates to the amount of crime which also occurs there.

Councillor Atkin investigated in Gorse Covert and sent his findings to Officers.

Councillor Scott stated that he would look into assessing Chatfield, with a focus on the Spinal Path.

(i) **Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)**

The Clerk reported that the two new Speed Indicator Devices have now been installed.

Councillor Ellis said that they seem to be proving effective, as he parked up near the SID on Warrington Road, Risley, after it had been installed, and saw multiple vehicles slowing down upon seeing the device.

187/23-24 **BIRCHWOOD ROYAL ORDNANCE FACTORY (ROF) MEMORIAL**

Councillor Ellis stated that a wreath will be laid at the Memorial on Sunday 12th November. He said that accounts of ROF workers will be read, and a display of historical photos will be on show at the Ranger's Centre. He said that the Forest Park café will also be open on that day for refreshments.

Councillor Ellis said that he will aim to advertise this event next week.

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

188/23-24 WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/online reports/telephone calls following queries/contact from residents regarding flytipping, tree/shrubbery/hedge issues (including ownership) etc.
- (b) Received – Email from resident regarding Cherry trees along Gorse Covert Road that was reported at the last Town Council Meeting.
- (c) Received – List of Traffic Notices to be advertised in the Warrington Guardian, which included Faraday Street in Birchwood.
- (d) Received – Email regarding the Polling Districts and Polling Places Review 2023 with link to documents.

189/23-24 YOUR HOUSING GROUP

Sent/received – various emails/reports following queries/contact from residents including issues with flytipping, shrubbery maintenance, trees blocking light from street lamps, etc.

190/23-24 MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE/ISSUES

- (a) Received – various emails from Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA).
- (b) Received – Email from resident enquiring about notes/minutes taken during a 2022 meeting with St. Modwen which BTC Officers attended. A response was sent.
- (c) Received – from Cheshire Fire Authority – consultation on its draft 2024-2028 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This has been circulated to Councillors via email.

191/23-24 CHESHIRE POLICE

Received – Various Neighbourhood Alerts

192/23-24 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

193/23-24 PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Various LGC e-mail correspondence/briefings.

194/23-24 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

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

- (i) There was nothing of specific relevance to Birchwood on the agenda at the October 2023 DMC meeting.

At the time of the Town Council Meeting, there were no documents currently available for the DMC scheduled for 9th November 2023.

- (ii) Information re: enforcement cases specific to Birchwood have been circulated to Members.

(b) **Planning Decisions**

- (i) **Application No. 2023/00742/FULH** 14 Picton Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6NL. Proposed demolition of conservatory, single storey side extension, plus new entrance door at front elevation. **Granted.**
- (ii) **Application No. 2023/00968/FULH** 2 Turton Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7LU. Proposed single storey rear extension, garage conversion and widening of driveway. **Granted.**
- (iii) **Application No. 2023/00918/FULH** 40 Sandicroft Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7LA. Single storey rear extension. **Granted.**
- (iv) **Application No. 2023/00586/FULH** 33 Havisham Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7NB. Proposed demolition of existing side garage/office to be replaced with two storey side extension. **Refused.**

(c) **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 for information only.

- (i) **Application No. 2023/00895/FUL** G & J Greenall, Melbury Park, Clayton Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6PH. Proposed semi-permanent storage building with external concrete ramp and extension to external hardstanding.
- (ii) **Application No. 2023/01221/DISCON** Trident Business Park, Daten Avenue, Birchwood, Warrington. Discharge of Condition no's 19 (Travel Plan co-ordinator), 23 (Northern Boundary Treatment), 29 (Lighting Assessment) and 34 (BREEAM Assessment) attached to Planning Permission 2021/40696.

- (iii) **Application No. 2023/01239/NMA** Land at Trident Business Park, Warrington. Proposed changes to Condition 2 (Approved plans), Condition 15 (Boundary treatment), Condition 17 (Parking and servicing area), Condition 18 (Parking and servicing area), and Condition 31 (Landscaping scheme) on previously approved application 2021/40696 (Employment use and associated works) to allow changes to maintenance track, footway and fencing.
- (iv) **Application No. 2023/01085/VARC** Unit 722 Birchwood Park, Warrington. Variation of Condition 1 (Plan) on application 2022/42689 (Proposed industrial unit and associated ancillary research and development office space) to allow for the addition of a third furnace and associated alterations.

Councillor Ellis declared an interest as he was a member of the planning committee when the original application was approved.

For information, Councillor Ellis stated that there have been some residents airing their concerns online regarding this application. He took no further part in discussions.

Councillor Atkin commented that the Council considered the original application in detail and at that point it was satisfied that all the necessary controls would be put in place.

This is an important facility that specialises in safety testing.

No resident had attended tonight's meeting to raise their concerns with the Council.

Members **resolved** that they did not wish to make any comments regarding this variation of conditions application.

- (v) **Application No. 2023/01268/PA14J** Trident Business Park, First Floor Chepstow House, Warrington, WA3 6BX. Installation of PV panels to roof of existing office building.
- (vi) **Application No. 2023/01208/VARC** 3 Delenty Drive, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6AN. Variation of Condition 2 – To reflect changes in materials and removal of Condition 4 – in relation to the proposed materials. In relation to application 2019/34700.

This part of the meeting concluded at 6.30 pm.