

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD AT
PARKERS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE, DELENTY DRIVE, RISLEY
ON TUESDAY 24TH APRIL 2012**

PRESENT: Councillor Bowden in the Chair
Councillors Evans, Fitzsimmons, M. Hearldon, T. Hearldon, Hepworth, Higgins,
Ratcliffe and Spencer

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

PCSO Gina Jones

3 residents

Apologies were received from Councillor Nelson

It was RESOLVED THAT:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council which took place on Tuesday, 27th March 2012, 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.

186/2012 **RECESS**

(a) **Police Monthly Pledge Meeting and Update**

PCSO Gina Jones gave Members a brief update on policing activity in the area since last month and reported some of the statistics for the Birchwood area. She informed Members that the travellers that had been in the area recently had moved on, but there is now a group on Woolston Grange. Gina also informed Members that PCSO Jon Williams has been redeployed from Birchwood to the Great Sankey area.

Members welcomed Gina back to the Birchwood area, as she has recently returned from maternity leave.

Councillor Hepworth gave Gina the registration number of a vehicle that he had concerns about as the occupants had been acting suspiciously. It thought that it had appeared to be a scrap dealer's van. He said he had contacted the Police about two weeks ago when he first saw the vehicle and was asked to report it again if he saw it in future.

Gina said she would look into the matter. She added that as she had just returned to the area, she still needed to be 'brought up to speed' with the more detailed local issues and stated that she hoped to be able to offer further information about any issues of concern to residents and local Councillors at the next meeting.

Members thanked Gina for attending tonight's meeting.

Priorities

The most recently available information regarding local Policing priorities can be found on the Cheshire Police Website: <http://www.cheshire.police.uk/my-neighbourhood/warrington-east/birchwood/priorities.aspx>

(b) **Telecommunications Mast on Admirals Road**

At the March meeting a resident had attended regarding a telecommunications mast installed in February 2012 on Admirals Road. She stated that a sign had appeared on the mast giving an address to write to with any objections, which she had done.

Councillor Bowden had informed the resident that the notice is part of the mandatory legal process, whereby the installer is required to affix a notice to the equipment where the equipment is more than 3m high. It offers an additional complaints route.

The resident had asked if someone could read a letter of objection she had written and advise her if there is anything she should have written differently. The resident's letter had been considered and she had been advised that we believe that she had raised all the salient points.

Since the March meeting the Clerk has been corresponding with the resident, who had asked if the Town Council could further advise her on what grounds she might be able to object to the installation, despite the mast having received approval on appeal.

The grounds on which objections could be made at this late stage were given to the Town Council in a link from a representative of the telecommunications company acting on behalf of the mast owners and are couched in technical language.

The resident attended tonight's meeting along with a neighbour. She confirmed that they were having difficulty in understanding the grounds on which any objections could now be made.

Councillor Bowden reminded the residents that although they sent a petition in, it would only count as one objection. Residents should write separate letters, even if they use a template letter and add their own addresses and signatures.

Councillor Fitzsimmons suggested to the residents that they take additional photographs showing how far the mast stands above the tree line; to prove that it is not obscured and therefore does not blend in with the surrounding area.

Councillor Bowden offered to meet the residents on 25th April at Parkers Farm, to go through the grounds on which they could make further objections to the mast.

Residents agreed a time to meet Councillor Bowden.

The Clerk had also asked the Borough Council to investigate a large generator that appeared at the side of the mast and the associated equipment, which was not on the initial plans.

The resident reported that the large cabinet had now been removed.

Action Councillor Bowden to meet with the two residents on 25th April 2012, at Parkers Farm.

(c) **Prospect Farm Shooting Range Application**

Councillor Higgins declared an interest as he sits on the Planning Committee.

The two residents also raised the matter of a planning application that has again been submitted for a shooting range at Prospect Farm. This relates to Planning Application No. 2012/19709 Prospect Farm, Prospect Lane, Rixton-with-Glazebrook, WA3 6EH. Proposed change of use to provide a clay pigeon shooting club, clubhouse and associated parking.

The residents were again unsure as to on what grounds they could object to this application and asked if the Town Council could offer them any guidelines.

Councillor Bowden stated that the main grounds for objection will be the same as last time and are covered by planning and environmental law, such as loss of amenity to homes and the issues of the noise of shooting.

The residents commented that there is always a very limited time given in which to formulate proper objections and send them in.

It was suggested that that residents could also use a template letter for this application and add their own contact details and signatures.

Councillor Bowden stated that the Planning Department at the Borough Council is bound by a legal time frame in which it has to process planning applications. However in this instance the local Borough Councillors have persuaded the Borough Council to widen the consultation due to the potential effect it will have on Birchwood residents; this could involve an extension to the date by which comments have to be received.

Councillor Bowden added that he could talk about this application further with the residents when he meets them on 25th April.

(d) Flytipping on Silver Lane

Another resident who attended tonight's meeting raised the issue of flytipping along the farmers track on Silver Lane, just off the junction of the M62.

Councillors stated that we have assisted the Borough Council to clean this area on a number of occasions previously. However, it is private land and the landowner refuses to take any steps to stop unauthorised access to this land.

Members feel the Town Council should not keep footing the bill to clean up private land when there is no effort being made on the landowner's behalf to stop the flytipping happening in the first instance.

(e) Footpath in Gorse Covert marked on a Woodland Trust map as 'Cherry Lane'

A resident had been in correspondence with the Town Council, the Borough Council and the Woodland Trust regarding a footpath in Gorse Covert, which the Woodland Trust has marked on one of their maps as 'Cherry Lane'. He has asked whether a 'Cherry Lane' sign could be installed so that people know where it is.

Councillor Bowden stated that he has been informed by the Borough Council that the formal designation for this path is 'Leacroft Road footpath', so it would be up to the Borough Council to decide whether it would consider re-naming the path.

Councillor Higgins stated that any re-naming would probably mean that the Borough Council would have to go through some legal procedures, which could prove costly.

Councillor Bowden suggested that the resident continues to speak with the Borough Council to ask if it would consider re-naming the path.

Action Resident to continue to liaise with the Borough Council regarding this matter.

187/2012 **TRAVELLERS IN BIRCHWOOD**

At the March meeting, a number of residents had attended to express their concerns over the ongoing incursion of members of the travelling community on Kinsale Drive.

Following the March meeting, the travellers moved to the Oliver Plunkett site on Admirals Road. The Borough Council had to start the legal process again to remove the travellers from this site.

Both sites were cleaned by contractors hired by the Borough Council when the travellers left.

At tonight's meeting the Clerk reported that concrete defender bollards have been put in place. The gate at the Oliver Plunkett Site that had been lifted off its hinges was still off and we are waiting for it to be replaced and welded so that it cannot be lifted off again. We have been informed that the Borough Council has put in an order with their contractors for this to be done.

The Clerk stated that she had written to the Borough Council and Frontis to suggest that they might wish to consider identifying areas of their land that might be open to future traveller incursions and consider taking preventative action before any issues arose. Some areas in Birchwood had been identified as being potentially vulnerable.

She said that the Borough Council has done this exercise for Birchwood.

Councillor Bowden said that the Borough Council has taken this suggestion on board and will be rolling out the same exercise to the rest of the Borough.

188/2012 **POWELL AVENUE UNDERPASS**

(a) **Drainage Issues**

A resident had attended the February 2012 meeting, following an accident her husband had when he slipped on black ice near the Powell Avenue underpass, to express her concerns that the subway needed attention regarding the drainage. The resident also attended the March meeting to inform Members that she had not received any formal correspondence from the Borough regarding her initial correspondence with them.

Members unanimously agreed, at the March meeting, that the Town Council should continue to liaise with the Borough Council regarding this matter with a view to solving the matter permanently.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that this matter remains ongoing and correspondence continues to be exchanged between the resident, the Borough Council and the Town Council.

The Clerk stated that one of the suggestions put by Mr. Jenkins from the Borough Council is for a grit bin to be installed at this location, so that if the problems arise outside of working hours, then there is an option for residents to spread some grit on the area themselves. This would be an additional bin, separate to those supplied under the Winter Resilience Scheme.

However, this would still not resolve the matter of the water running diagonally across the underpass.

Councillor Spencer stated that he believed that this would be a good idea and all the other Members present concurred.

The Clerk stated that she would speak to the Borough Council about having a grit bin installed in the area.

Action Clerk's office to continue to liaise with the Borough Council and the resident regarding the above.

(b) **Ongoing Vandalism of the Underpass**

The Clerk stated that she has contacted the Borough Council regarding the lighting which has again been vandalised in the underpass and about some of the block paving that has been lifted and loosened. She added that the Borough Council has been out to mark up the block paving that requires attention and that she has asked the PCSOs if they can undertake additional patrols in the area.

189/2012 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST ON ADMIRALS ROAD**

This was discussed earlier in the meeting during Recess (see Minute 186/2012 (b)).

190/2012 **TREES ON LAND AT THE REAR OF TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES**

At the March meeting two residents who live on Renown Close enquired as to the ownership of some trees to the rear of his property. One resident said that after 5pm there is no sun reaching his property.

This resident was asked to come round to the office and highlight the trees that are of concern, so that we could ascertain whether or not they are on the land that is owned by the Town Council.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that one of the residents had come to the office and had pointed out three trees that he thought were the ones in question. She had then asked a representative of the Borough Council to come and offer us a quote for taking these trees down, as they are on Town Council owned land.

The Clerk stated that she has also written to the resident who actually raised the matter, asking him to come to the office to confirm if the trees indicated by the other resident are in fact the ones he has concerns about that block the light from his property. We cannot progress the matter until this has been done.

The Clerk added that she had stated in the letter that the office would be open late tonight (due to the meeting) but he has not yet been round. We do not know if the resident might be away; so we will wait for him to contact us.

Action Clerk's office to continue to liaise with the resident regarding the above and progress the matter when we have confirmation from him about the trees he has concerns over.

191/2012 **PARKING ON RENOWN CLOSE**

At the March meeting a resident who lives on Renown Close came to ask for the Town Council's assistance with regard to parking issues. He stated that people who live in other areas of the small estate, who already have garages and additional parking spaces, are still parking their cars outside his and his neighbours' properties, leaving them with nowhere to park.

The Clerk's office was asked to contact Frontis about the parking issue and to ask if a walkabout could be arranged on this estate, which will have to take place after the May elections.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that she had spoken to Frontis about the parking issue. She was told that all but one of the properties on Renown Close are now privately owned.

A walkabout has been arranged to take place on the 2nd July 2012, 10.30am, meeting outside No. 1 Renown Close. The issue of parking can be raised again during this walkabout.

Action Clerk's office to send a reminder regarding the walkabout to Councillors nearer the time.

192/2012 **MEETING WITH INSPECTOR TOMLINSON**

The Clerk stated that a recent meeting had been held with Inspector Tomlinson, which had been attended by some Councillors and the Business and Finance Officer (BAFO) to discuss some of the issues regarding the deployment of the PCSOs throughout the area.

The BAFO reported that Inspector Tomlinson confirmed that the staffing levels of the PCSOs would be reduced by one in the Warrington East area, but no other changes were currently envisaged.

The BAFO informed Members that a long discussion had taken place regarding the roles of the PCSOs and who has control over their day to day work schedule; which is ultimately down to Inspector Tomlinson. The discussion had covered the impression that sometimes the PCSOs are spending a lot of time in the shopping centre and the business areas.

Inspector Tomlinson said that a minimal amount of time is spent in the shopping centre, but it is a focal point for obtaining information and there are times when the PCSOs need to be there due to criminal activity. However some of the perceptions and rumours are untrue – for example, there is no ‘hot line’ between the PCSOs and Birchwood Mall Security.

The Inspector was asked whether she could contact the businesses to encourage them to part-fund another PCSO for the area.

Inspector Tomlinson felt that she could not approach the businesses directly. It was suggested, however, that the businesses could possibly be approached via the Birchwood Forum.

Inspector Tomlinson confirmed that at some time in the future the Police will all be moving to the Birchwood Fire Station premises, but there is no date available yet. It is not likely to be for some time.

Inspector Tomlinson said that she will arrange for an article to be written for the next issue of Birchwood Community News, which should be published and delivered in July 2012.

Action Clerk’s office to contact Inspector Tomlinson about the proposed article.

193/2012 **PROPOSED BIKE MARKING EVENT**

The Clerk reported that although PCSO Williams, who had first spoken to us about his plans for a bike marking event, has now moved from the Birchwood area to Great Sankey, she has spoken to PCSOs Davies and Pickering who are hoping to undertake bike marking days in the schools during ‘Bike Week’ later in the year (during June). The Clerk added that she had suggested that the PCSOs might want to consider doing free bike marking at the Birchwood Carnival in order to make the offer available to a larger portion of the Birchwood population.

194/2012 **PARKING ON ORDNANCE AVENUE**

The Clerk reported that we had contacted the Borough Council about the issue of parking on Ordnance Avenue.

We had received a reply from Mark Tune at Warrington Borough Council who stated that he has asked Sean Halewood, Traffic Management Team Leader, to add it to a list of traffic issues to be investigated.

For information he stated that the Borough Council progresses Traffic Regulation Orders in two batches per year as they can save significant amounts on advertising costs and therefore deliver more measures. They will investigate this issue as part of the second batch to ascertain if they have sufficient justification to promote an order. They anticipate batch two to be delivered late summer/early autumn.

195/2012 **FOOTPATH OWNERSHIP**

The Clerk reported that we are still trying to ascertain land ownership regarding the path from the underpass to Chadwick House, which is on private land. We have asked the Borough Council to help us find out who the land belongs to, but are still awaiting a reply. In the meantime our team still have it on a two weekly litter picking cycle.

Action Clerk's office to continue to try to ascertain who owns the land.

196/2012 **UPDATE RE: TRAFFIC RELATED QUERIES**

Puffin Crossing to the Forest Park from Gorse Covert

The Clerk reported that work is almost complete on the installation of the puffin crossing.

Councillor Bowden stated that he believes that the lights will be operational from this coming Thursday, 26th April 2012.

197/2012 **PLAY EQUIPMENT IN BIRCHWOOD**

At the March meeting the Clerk reported that she and the BAFO had met with two representatives of Warrington Borough Council regarding some proposals about enhanced/new play equipment in and around Birchwood Forest Park. They had agreed, in principle, to working towards the implementation of the proposals, dependent on many factors, including securing funding and consultation with the local community.

We are currently waiting for the Borough Council to prepare some overlays with suggestions that have been made and these will then be used to consult with the Birchwood Community.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that PCSO Allison Davies had told us that she has been speaking to some of the young people who use the park and they would like to see improvements made to the skateboard park in particular.

The youngsters are hoping, with the help of some students from Birchwood College, to make a short film about how, in an ideal world, they would like to see the area rejuvenated.

The Clerk said that if they were to do this, it would enhance the consultation process and could perhaps accompany any future funding bid for the project.

The BAFO reported that we had been contacted by Veolia, which had heard of the proposals and were very positive about us making a funding bid to them; if we can put together a strong bid that relates to their grant awards scheme.

The BAFO added that given the amount of match funding that the Town Council has earmarked for the proposed scheme, we should be able to apply for a significant amount of funding.

The next step is to put together a pre-application pack and to try to formulate some consultation documents in time to go in the next issue of the Birchwood Community News, which is due to be published and delivered in July 2012.

Action Clerk's office to continue to liaise with the Borough Council re: the above.

198/2012 **JOINT POLICE/TOWN COUNCIL SURGERY**

These surgeries currently take place, the third Saturday of each month (except August) in the Community Corner in the Encounter Café, from 10.30am to 12 noon.

Councillor Evans attended the surgery on 21st April, but said that no residents had been. He asked about the posters that were supposed to have been put up regarding the surgeries.

The Deputy Clerk stated that she had made a poster, advertising all the dates for the year and had given them to PCSO Davies for distribution to local groups and organisations. It was assumed that one had been given to the Encounter Café to put on their board.

The Deputy Clerk stated that she would print off some more posters which Councillor Evans said he would take to the café and ask for one to be put on their notice board.

Members were concerned that time is being 'wasted' each month by a PCSO and at least one Councillor as very few people attend the surgeries – often no one turns up. They believe that if people have an issue they wish to raise with the Town Council or a Councillor, they usually contact the Town Council office directly.

It was suggested that if no one or very few people turn up to the next few surgeries, then the Town Council should reconsider if it is a suitable use of time and effort, particularly as it takes a PCSO off patrol for at least an hour and a half.

Councillor Bowden suggested that the matter should be raised with Inspector Tomlinson. This suggestion was unanimously agreed with by those Members present.

Councillor T. Hearldon will be available to attend the next surgery on 19th May 2012.

Action Clerk's office to contact Inspector Tomlinson regarding the above.

199/2012 **REQUEST FOR A GIVE WAY SIGN**

At the Police/Town Council surgery held on 19th March 2012 Councillor Nelson had been asked by a resident whether 'give way' marking could be installed at the junction of Killingworth Lane with Ashdown Lane, due to ongoing 'near misses' at this junction.

The Clerk contacted the Borough Council regarding this matter, but the response from Warrington Borough Council's Traffic Management Department stated '*. . . in order to abide by the Government Regulations and to keep consistent with other residential areas across the Borough and in the immediate area, we do not think it appropriate to provide a 'Give Way' sign or marking at this junction.*'

200/2012 **FRONTIS WALKABOUTS**

The Clerk stated that a recent walkabout took place on 16th April, which Councillors Fitzsimmons and Evans attended. She reminded Members that, as requested, she has asked Frontis to arrange a walkabout to take place around Trefoil Close, Strawberry Close and Violet Close. This walkabout will take place on 30th April 2012.

Action Clerk's office to send a reminder to Councillors.

The Clerk reported that we have been informed by the Borough Council that the missing nameplate for Swallow Close has been ordered.

201/2012 **BULKY WASTE COLLECTIONS**

The Clerk informed Members that we are still awaiting information from the Borough Council which is looking at whether the Town Council can 'bolt on to' their collection service in some way.

Action Clerk's office to continue to liaise with the Borough Council regarding the above.

202/2012 **PLANTERS**

The Clerk reported that we are still awaiting the receipt of our licences from Warrington Borough Council before the new planters can be installed. We have been informed that they are still going through the necessary processes that are required to have the licences properly approved.

203/2012 **WASTE BINS**

The Clerk reported that we are still trying to contact the person we need to speak to at the local McDonalds Restaurant. We have the name and telephone number of a contact, but the lady has, so far, been on a different shift or unavailable when the Clerk has telephoned.

Action Clerk's office to continue to try to make contact with the representative of McDonald's.

204/2012 **LIGHTING ISSUES ON THE 'SPINAL PATH'**

The Clerk reported that the Borough Council has said that they are still waiting for Norweb to do their final bit of work required before the Borough can complete the process.

Action Clerk's office to continue to keep the residents updated, who have contacted us regarding this matter.

205/2012 **UPDATE ON PLANNING MATTERS**

- (a) **Application No. 2011/18954 Land adjacent to Carrington Close, Birchwood. Application to establish land as Village Green.**

Councillors Fitzsimmons and Spencer declared an interest

The Clerk reported that we have not received any update regarding this application which is still going through the relevant application process. She telephoned the Borough Council to ask for an update and it was confirmed that the application is still going through the process.

- (b) **Application No. 2011/19009 Prospect Farm, Prospect Lane, Rixton-with-Glazebrook. Proposed change of use to provide target shooting club with associated parking.**

- (c) **Application No. 2011/19014 Prospect Farm, Prospect Lane, Rixton-with-Glazebrook. Retrospective application for upgrade of existing track surface.**

Regarding (b) and (c) above, the Clerk reported that an additional application has come in for Prospect Farm, which will be discussed later on in the meeting.

- (d) **Application No. 2012/19531 6 Wigmore Close, Birchwood, WA3 6UN Proposed change of use from residential dwelling (use class C3 to house of multiple occupation (use class C4)).**

At the March meeting, Members discussed this application and were concerned that Wigmore Close would be an inappropriate area for such a development. They asked for a letter of objection to be sent to the Borough Council outlining our concerns.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that we had since received numerous requests from residents of Wigmore Close asking the Town Council to object to this application and a letter of objection had been sent.

However, we have since been informed by the Borough's Planning Department that due to changes in planning regulations in April 2012 and again in October 2012 that it appears that the proposal regarding the development at this property is 'permitted development'.

In October 2012 planning regulations were changed to allow the change of use without planning permission of a single dwelling house (class C3) to a house of multiple occupation (HMO) (class C4). Class C4 HMOs are defined as small shared houses or flats occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals who share basic amenities. This proposal is for six people to share the property. More than six individuals would take the use into another class, which does require planning permission.

The applicant was therefore advised by the Planning Officer to withdraw the planning application and to submit an application for a 'Proposed Certificate of Lawfulness' in order to certify that the proposal is lawful.

The Borough Council Planning Officer who is dealing with the case has now advised us that following a conversation with the applicant, he (the applicant) has decided to allow the application to run its course. It is now the intention for the application to be discussed at the next available Planning Committee – unless the Town Council wishes it to be a delegated item if the recommendation is for refusal.

Councillor Bowden stated that he has spoken to Jason Lewis (Planning Officer) to express his belief that the changes in the regulations are preposterous as the new 'lawful developments' are now in direct contravention of some planning policies.

However, from what he has been told by the Borough Council, Councillor Bowden believes that the application is now going to be withdrawn – but he has asked for formal confirmation when this happens.

Councillor Bowden added that there is still the impending issue of speculative planning applications such as this potentially being made under the new 'relaxed' regulations within the Birchwood area in the future.

Action Clerk's office to update residents who have contacted us regarding this matter when we have a confirmed outcome of this application.

206/2012 **WILDFLOWER MEADOWS**

The Clerk reported that work will soon be starting on the preparation of the ground for the wildflower meadows. She stated that we have received approval, in principal, to plant some new bulbs in some areas of Locking Stumps as they do not have the benefit of any wildflower meadows; although we will be installing some planters in Locking Stumps once we have received the licences.

207/2012 **BIRCHWOOD CARNIVAL**

Councillors Nelson, M. Hearldon and T. Hearldon declared an interest.

The Clerk informed Members that another Carnival committee meeting took place this afternoon at Parkers Farm.

Councillor M. Hearldon stated that the plan is to theme this year's carnival as the 'Jubilee Carnival'.

208/2012 **LAND OWNERSHIP/GRITTING OUTSIDE GORSE COVERT SPAR SHOP**

At the February and March meetings the Clerk reported on conflicting information that we had received regarding the ownership of the land outside the Spar shop in Gorse Covert.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that we had received a diagram of the area around the Spar shop, showing that it is all owned by the Borough Council, albeit with different departments owning different bits of the land. The diagram had been copied to Members in their papers.

209/2012 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS - PROPOSED AREA MEETINGS**

At the February meeting, the Clerk reported that we had been asked by ChALC to take part in a consultation requesting views on the proposal for Area Working – there is currently no Area Meeting in Warrington.

ChALC will accept comments after the May elections; therefore this will be discussed further at the May 2012 meeting.

Action Item to be to be put on the agenda for the May meeting.

210/2012 **UPDATE BY WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL ON PLANNING MATTERS**

The Clerk reported that Mr. John Groves will be attending the June 2012 meeting in order to provide General Updates for Planning Policy, Development Control & Planning Enforcement.

211/2012 **BUILDING WORK AT BIRCHWOOD PARK**

At the March meeting the Clerk reported that we had received a telephone call to the office from a local resident and copies of correspondence between the resident and MEPC regarding a request for additional planting to screen Fernbank Close from the new build that work started on recently.

Members asked that the Clerk's office check the conditions of the original application to see if planting is covered in them.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that the plans for the new building (relating to original Planning Application No. 2004/03527) appear to show the planting as it has been done. However, she has written to Jonathon Walsh at MEPC to ask whether there is any possibility of them planting some additional large evergreen trees and we are currently awaiting his feedback.

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

212/2012 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) Received – Templates from the Borough Council for the Declaration of Acceptance and Register of Interest forms, which must be completed by all Local Councillors following their election to a Parish or Town Council; before they can officially take office.

The Clerk reported that these will be available from the Town Council offices to all newly elected/re-elected Members to Birchwood Town Council following the elections on 3rd May 2012 and once we know who has been elected we can arrange for them to be completed.

- (b) Received – Notice of uncontested results regarding the Parish Council Elections, taking place on 3rd May 2012. Councillors Mike Evans and Terry Hearldon have been elected as Parish Councillors for the Chatfield Ward without contest.

- (c) Received – Following the close of nomination for the upcoming elections; a copy of the Statement of Persons Nominated for the Birchwood area.
- (d) Received – Response from Warrington Borough Council’s Traffic Management Department to an enquiry regarding a request we passed on from a local resident for a ‘Give Way’ sign at the junction of Killingworth Lane and Ashdown Lane. *‘. . . in order to abide by the Government Regulations and to keep consistent with other residential areas across the Borough and in the immediate area, we do not think it appropriate to provide a ‘Give Way’ sign or marking at this junction.’*
- (e) Received – Newsletter ‘Warrington LINK/HealthWatch’.
- (f) Received – Poster regarding an engagement event (18th April 2012) being held by the Warrington Autism Partnership Board. This has been displayed on our notice boards
- (g) Received – Details of some free cycle training courses. Information can be found at www.bikeright.co.uk/freewheeling
- (h) Received – From Diane White – Details regarding the new network ‘North Cheshire Professionals Network’, starting in the Community Room at the Sanctuary Café in Lymm from 18th April 2012 – from 10am to 1pm during term time.
- (i) Received – LINKs email bulletin; information on some health related events.
- (j) Received – Email asking for opinions regarding the Parish Liaison Meetings and asking for guidance from the Local Councils about how they would like these meetings to be organised in the future.

Members were surprised that the Borough Councils asking this question just prior to local elections. They unanimously agreed that this is a question that should be put to new Councils following the elections in May.

Action Clerk’s office to contact the Borough Council to let them know this will be discussed by the new Council following the May elections, a response will then be sent.

- (k) Received – Transport questionnaire on behalf of some Salford University students.
- (l) Received – East Area Neighbourhood Board papers for the meeting held on 25th April 2012.
- (m) Received – Details of a Warrington Health Consortium ‘Market Place Event’ taking place on 9th May 2012 at the Gateway.
- (n) Received – Details of this year’s Disability Awareness Day, taking place on Sunday, 15th July at Walton Hall Gardens. Posters will be placed on our notice boards. Further details can be found at www.disabilityawarenessday.co.uk
- (o) Received – Copies of a letter of complaint from a resident, sent to various organisations relating to a re-housing complaint. A response was sent. However, the Town Council has no jurisdiction over any housing within Birchwood or Warrington as it does not own any properties.
- (p) Received – New posters relating to the Mobile Youth Base being in Oakwood. These will be put on the notice boards, replacing the old ones.

- (q) Following the recent tragic death of a young boy on the multi use games pitch in Locking Stumps, the Clerk reported that the area has been locked and it has been agreed with the school that the area will not be accessed by our team whilst the personal tributes are in place.

The Clerk spoke to the Headteacher of Locking Stumps Primary School who asked if the Town Council would have any concerns if a tribute bench was installed in the area. The Clerk has asked Warrington Borough Council to liaise directly with the school about installing the bench.

The Town Council Members and staff were all saddened to hear of the young boy's death and extended their sincere condolences to the family.

213/2012 **BIRCHWOOD FORUM**

- (a) Received – 'Parklife' e-bulletins, 2nd and 4th April 2012.
- (b) Received – Notification regarding the next Forum meeting - 17th April 2012 at the Genesis Centre, at which Dr Carsten Kressel will deliver the results of the Birchwood Business Consultation Survey.
- (c) Received - First view information relating to the new Birchwood Forum website.

214/2012 **FRONTIS**

- (a) Received – Details of the walkabout which took place on 16th April 2012.
- (b) Received - Details of a follow up walkabout taking place on 28th May 2012; and of the walkabout taking place on 30th April around Trefoil and Strawberry Close.
- (c) Received – Details of a 'Free Food Walk' – Wednesday 16th May, 1pm – meeting at the Nelsons Quarterdeck public house.
- (d) Details of the walkabout taking place

215/2012 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – Copy of an article being placed by Birchwood Lions in the Essential Guide (distributed locally).
- (b) Sent/Received – Correspondence with a resident, the Borough Council and The Woodland Trust, regarding the resident's request for a sign to be installed marking a footpath in Gorse Covert as 'Cherry Lane'.

This was discussed earlier in the meeting during Recess (see Minute 186/2012 (e)).

- (c) Received – Posters relating to raising the awareness of Carbon Monoxide poisoning. These have been placed on our main office notice board.
- (d) Received – Cheshire County Playing Fields Association – Annual Report 2011.
- (e) Received/Sent – Email correspondence with a resident regarding parking on the service road opposite the garage on Warrington Road in Risley apparently being used as a car park for people working in nearby offices. Her details have been passed on to the PCSOs (with her permission) to ask if they can possibly help with this matter.

- (f) Received – From Steve Shaw (Unlock Democracy) asking for the Town Council’s help ‘*in an important matter that directly concerns Town and Parish Councils. An Act of Parliament - the Sustainable Communities Act Amendment Act of 2010 - requires the government to make regulations that will create a new legal right for Town and Parish Councils to be able to drive the actions and assistance government takes to create and protect thriving local communities. However, these required regulations have been delayed for over nine months. The result is that Town and Parish Councils still do not have the involved rights that all parties in Parliament wanted them to have when they passed the above mentioned Act back in April 2010.*’

Mr. Shaw asks that the Town Council writes to our local MP and to Communities Minister, Gregg Clark regarding the matter – a sample letter is included.

Members discussed the matter and unanimously agreed for the Town Council to send a letter of support regarding this matter.

Action Clerk’s office to write to our local MP and Communities Minister, Gregg Clark re: the above.

- (g) Received – A request to use the Town Council Community Room – free of charge – from a lady who would like to set up a Job Club in Birchwood. This has been passed to the Youth and Community Centre Committee for consideration as the Centre would be more suitable for this purpose.
- (h) Received – Email regarding a new mobile car valeting servicing service, offering services to local businesses in the area.

216/2012 **RECENT iCAN ALERTS**

Full details regarding the following iCAN alerts and details of free membership to the service can be found at <http://www.tswarrington.co.uk/ican>

- (a) Information has been received regarding the Home Heat Helpline. If you are struggling to pay your fuel bills this free Helpline may be able to assist you. It is available to individual consumers, advice agencies or people calling on behalf of a friend, neighbour or family member.

The helpline 0800 33 66 99 is open: Monday to Friday 9am - 8pm, Saturdays 10am - 2pm. A minicom service is available on 0800 027 2122 for callers with hearing difficulties.

- (b) Following several recent tragedies in which campers have lost their lives after taking lit barbecues into tents or caravans for warmth, information has been received regarding Carbon Monoxide awareness. Carbon Monoxide is a highly poisonous gas that has no colour, taste or smell and can be produced by appliances that use gas, wood, oil or coal. Carbon Monoxide can also be present in smoke from solid fuel or oil appliances.

Often people don’t realise that they are being overcome by fumes until it is too late.

Carbon Monoxide is potentially fatal and even low-levels of the poison can cause lasting damage to your health. For further helpful information or advice on Carbon Monoxide, go to <http://www.cheshirefire.gov.uk/> Enter through the A-Z search button at the top of the page and select C to take you to the appropriate link.

217/2012 **SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS**

- (a) Received – Cheshire Branch newsletter April 2012.
- (b) Received – Some upcoming dates for courses and conferences.

218/2012 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Received – Birchwood – April 2012 News Bulletin.

219/2012 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

- (a) Received – Details of how to access the new ‘Members Only’ area of the website.
- (b) Received – Briefing paper from Cheshire Rural Access Forum relating to best practice regarding countryside access and public rights of way.
- (c) Received – Details of a Public Speaking Skills – Development Training Event.
- (d) Received – Details of a vacancy for a part-time Parish Clerk in Lymm.

220/2012 **PRESS ARTICLES**

Copies of various articles from local publications of relevance/interest to Birchwood.

221/2012 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

There were no publications received at the time of writing the Clerk’s Report.

We have contacted the LGC to ask why we have not received copies of their publication recently. They are investigating the matter and will send back copies out to us.

222/2012 **MEMBERS’ REFERRALS MADE VIA THE CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING FOR CONSIDERATION AT THIS COUNCIL MEETING**

There were no Members’ referrals made prior to the time of writing this report.

223/2012 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

(a) **Warrington Borough Council**

- (i) Received – Notification that the Planning Applications Sub-Committee meeting would be taking place on Wednesday 18th April 2012.

There were no items of specific relevance to Birchwood on the agenda for discussion.

- (ii) Received – Notification that the Development Management Committee meeting would be taking place on Thursday 19th April 2012.

There were no items of specific relevance to Birchwood on the agenda for discussion.

224/2012 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

- (a) Application No. 2012/19608 9 Darnaway Close, Birchwood. Application for approval of details reserved by condition 5 (parking and turning). **Condition discharged**
- (b) Application No. 2012/19451 6 Elton Close, Birchwood. Proposed first floor front extension and two storey side/rear extension. **Approved with conditions**
- (c) Application No. 2012/19522 41 Falstone Close, Birchwood. Proposed single storey rear extension and part garage conversion (lawful development certificate). **Planning permission not required**

225/2012 **PLANNING APPEAL**

Appeal Reference APP/M0655/D/12/2172730 9 Ecclestone Close, Birchwood, WA3 7NL.
Proposed two storey rear extension (Re: Planning App No. 2011/19284 - resubmission of 2011/18878)

226/2012 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

All plans can be viewed via the Borough Council's website:

http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport_planning_and_environment/Planning/Search_planning_applications/

- (a) Application No. 2012/19729 10 Benson Road, Birchwood, WA3 7PQ. Proposed change of use of Unit 43 from A1 Retail to A3 Café.
- (b) Application No. 2012/19763 34 Rockingham Close, Birchwood, WA3 6UY. Proposed demolition of existing garage and construction of two storey side extension.
- (c) Application No. 2012/19915 2 Sovereign Court, Birchwood, WA3 7NA. Proposed addition of single storey utility room to existing bungalow.
- (d) Application No. 2012/19845 138 Rockingham Close, Birchwood, WA3 6XA. Proposed single storey rear extension and garage conversion.

Members discussed the above applications and did not have any objections to make.

- (e) Application No. 2012/19709 Prospect Farm, Prospect Lane, Rixton-with-Glazebrook, WA3 6EH. Proposed change of use to provide a clay pigeon shooting club, clubhouse and associated parking.

This was also briefly discussed earlier in the meeting (see Minute 186/2012 (c)).

Councillor Higgins declared an interest and left the room as Members were going to discuss this application in some detail at this point.

Members (with the exception of Councillor Higgins) discussed this application in detail. It is the third time that an application has been made regarding proposals to develop a clay pigeon shooting range/shooting club on this site.

All Members present remained strongly opposed to the application for many different reasons, including their belief that it will impact on the lives of a large number of Birchwood residents, as well as the wildlife at Risley Moss, a site of special scientific interest (SSSI).

Councillor Bowden proposed that a strongly worded letter of objection be sent along the same lines as the Town Council's previous letter of objection.

All Members present unanimously agreed with this suggestion.

Action Clerk's office to send a letter of objection regarding the above.

Councillor Higgins was invited back in to the room.

The meeting concluded at 8.15pm