

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING OF
BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL, HELD AT
PARKERS FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE, DELENTY DRIVE, RISLEY
ON TUESDAY 15TH MAY 2012

PRESENT: Councillor Bowden in the Chair
Councillors Balding, Evans, Fitzsimmons, M. Hearldon, T. Hearldon,
Liz Hearldon, Higgins, Lines-Rowlands, Nelson and Spencer

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

PCSO Mark Culleton

Apologies were received from Councillor Allman

242/2011 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2012/2013**

This being the Annual Council Meeting, Councillor Bowden thanked Members, Officers and Town Council staff for their support during his time as Chair and called for nominations for the office of Chair for the next municipal year.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Fitzsimmons and **seconded** by Councillor Higgins that Councillor M. Hearldon be nominated for the office of Chair.

Councillors voted on this proposal. Nine Councillors were in favour; one Member abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED: that Councillor M. Hearldon be appointed Chair for the municipal year 2012/2013.

Councillor M. Hearldon accepted the appointment and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk and Business and Finance Officer.

Councillor M. Hearldon in the Chair

243/2011 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

On accepting the office of Chair, Councillor M. Hearldon thanked Members for their support.

Councillor M. Hearldon then called for nominations for the office of Vice Chair for the municipal year 2012/2013.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Fitzsimmons and **seconded** by Councillor Spencer that Councillor Nelson be nominated for the office of Vice Chair.

Councillors voted on this proposal. Nine Councillors were in favour; one Member abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED: that Councillor Nelson be appointed Vice Chair for the municipal year 2012/2013.

244/2010 **APPOINTMENT OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

This is a position that Birchwood Town Council chooses to elect a Member to. The role and function of the Leader is set out in the Council's Standing Orders, regarding appointments.

Councillor M. Hearldon called for nominations for the office of Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2012/2013.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Nelson and **seconded** by Councillor Evans that Councillor Fitzsimmons be nominated as Leader of the Council.

Councillors voted on this proposal. Nine Councillors were in favour; one Member abstained from the vote.

RESOLVED: that Councillor Fitzsimmons be appointed Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2012/2013.

245/2011 **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Clerk stated that all Members have a duty to abide by the official national guidelines regarding the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) Order 2007 (S1 No 1159) which came into effect on the 3rd May 2007.

Members were requested to formally record their adoption of the National Code of Conduct including the opting in of paragraph 12(2) to operate for the period June 2012 – May 2013.

Paragraph 12(2) states that: *If the Council does not provide members of the public with any right to speak, paragraph 12(2) will have no effect at our authority. This means that Councillors with a prejudicial interest would have to continue to leave the meeting after declaring the nature and extent of their interest.*

It was **proposed** by Councillor Fitzsimmons and **seconded** by Councillor Evans and subsequently **RESOLVED:** that the Town Council formally record their adoption of the National Code of Conduct and that paragraph 12(2) be opted in to operate for the period June 2012 – May 2013.

246/2011 **STANDING ORDERS 2012/2013**

The BAFO asked Members to consider the adoption of the Town Council's Standing Orders for 2012/2013 which the auditor has passed without any recommendations for change.

He added that an amendment has been made by Officers to the wording of item No.2 under the 'Meetings' heading to make the sense of the paragraph clearer.

What had read: *"The Statutory Annual Meeting (a) in an election year shall be held on the day next following the fourth day after the ordinary day of elections to the Council and (b) in a year which is not an election year shall be held on the fourth Tuesday in May."*

Now reads: *"The Statutory Annual Meeting shall be held on the fourth Tuesday in May except in an election year when it must take place within fourteen days after the day on which Councillors are elected to take office. Councillors actually 'take office' three days after the election day."*

There were no additional changes proposed for the Standing Orders for 2012/2013.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Spencer and **seconded** by Councillor Evans and subsequently **RESOLVED:** that the Standing Orders as presented be adopted for the 2012/2013 Municipal Year.

Councillor Balding commented that he had read the Standing Orders carefully and believes that they might benefit from some updating. He suggested that this be considered at a future meeting.

247 /2011 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2012/2013**

The BAFO asked Members to consider the adoption of the Town Council's Financial Regulations for 2012/2013.

The BAFO informed Members that there are two recommended changes to be made to the Financial Regulations following the 2009/2010 comprehensive review.

- (i) The BAFO stated that the first recommended change was in section 11. 'CONTRACTS'. Sub-section 11.1 (ii) had stated: *"for specialist services such as are provided by solicitors, accountants, surveyors and planning consultants;"*

This now reads: *"for specialist services such as are provided by e.g. solicitors, accountants, surveyors, planning consultants, electrical work and specialist building and repair contractors;"*

This change is proposed in light of previous and recent experiences in trying to obtain specialist services for work to be carried out at the Town Council's premises (as Parkers Farm and barn are listed buildings).

- (ii) The BAFO stated that the second recommended change was also in section 11, sub-section 11.1 (i) (6) which had stated: *"Where the value is below £5,000 and above £1,000 the Clerk or RFO shall obtain competitive quotations for the consideration of the Council, following the above general principles."*

This now reads: *"Where the value is below £10,000 and above £2,000 the Clerk or RFO shall obtain competitive quotations for the consideration of the Council, following the above general principles."*

The BAFO said that this proposed change is made to reflect updated market values on works that have been undertaken in the past and for those that may be required in future.

Members considered this matter and agreed that the recommended change be made.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Higgins and **seconded** by Councillor Evans and subsequently **RESOLVED:** that the Financial Regulations as presented with the above two changes be adopted for the 2012/2013 Municipal Year.

248/2011 **APPOINTMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S SUB-COMMITTEES – 2012/2013**

IT WAS RESOLVED: that there would be three sub-committees for 2012/2013 as follows:

1. Finance, Audit and Personnel
2. Youth, Leisure and Environment
3. Policy and Strategy Committee

IT WAS RESOLVED: that the appointments to the three sub-committees are:

- | | | |
|-----|---|---|
| (i) | Finance, Audit and Personnel
Sub-committee | Councillor Bowden
Councillor Evans
Councillor Fitzsimmons
Councillor Liz Hearldon
Councillor T. Hearldon
Councillor Higgins
Councillor Nelson
Councillor Spencer |
|-----|---|---|

The BAFO stated that as there are still five Members (previously six) on this committee who are authorised to sign cheques, he would recommend not increasing this number at present due to the extensive formalities that have to be undertaken to change and add signatories on the bank accounts.

This was agreed by Members.

- | | | |
|-------|---|--|
| (ii) | Youth, Leisure and Environment
Sub-committee | Councillor Allman
Councillor Balding
Councillor Bowden
Councillor Evans
Councillor M. Hearldon
Councillor Lines-Rowlands
Councillor Nelson |
| (iii) | Policy and Strategy Sub-committee | All Members |

It was agreed that each sub-committee should choose its own Chair.

249/2011 **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES:**

It was proposed by Councillor Fitzsimmons that the representatives on outside bodies for 2012/2013 would be as follows:

- (a) **Frontis Homes**
Councillor T. Hearldon
- (b) **Birchwood Forum**
Councillor Bowden
Councillor Fitzsimmons
- (c) **Police Forum and Community Engagement**
Councillor Allman
- (d) **Risley Landfill Liaison Committee**
Councillor Bowden
Councillor Fitzsimmons
- (e) **Risley Moss**
Councillor Evans
Councillor Liz Hearldon

(f) **Birchwood Youth and Community Centre Committee**

Councillor Bowden
Councillor Nelson

(g) **Birchwood Partnership & Steering Group**

Councillor Bowden

(h) **Birchwood Sports Hall Management Committee**

Councillor Evans

(i) **Neighbourhood Area Board**

Councillor Nelson
Councillor Evans

(j) **The Friends of Oakwood Local Park**

Councillor Nelson

(k) **Birchwood Carnival Committee**

Councillor Liz Hearldon
Councillor M. Hearldon
Councillor T. Hearldon
Councillor Nelson

Councillor Balding stated that he would ask to be considered as a representative with regard to all the organisations and committees listed above.

Following a brief discussion it was **proposed** by Councillor Fitzsimmons that the representatives and committees as originally proposed above should stand. This proposal was **seconded** by Councillor Higgins.

Councillors voted on this proposal. Ten Councillors were in favour; one Member was against.

It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the representatives on outside bodies for 2012/2013 would be as listed above.

It was RESOLVED THAT:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council which took place on Tuesday, 24th April 2012, be approved by those Members who were present at that meeting, 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.

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

PCSO Culleton gave apologies from PCSO Gina Jones who is absent due to illness. He is standing in for her in Birchwood, which isn't his usual area. He confirmed that the three PCSOs for the Birchwood area currently are PCSO Allison Davies, PCSO Phil Pickering and PCSO Gina Jones.

PCSO Culleton gave Members a brief update on policing activity in the area since last month and reported some of the statistics for the Birchwood area.

Priorities

PCSO Culleton stated that the priorities for the last month had been offering reassurance and advice to local shops regarding robberies and burglaries – although there have not been any recent issues in Birchwood; and pro-actively patrolling areas like Birchwood Forest Park to prevent/tackle any problems with anti-social behaviour.

PCSO Culleton stated that these priorities will be carried forward to the next month and he asked if there were any issues that the Council would like to be considered as a priority.

The Clerk stated that at the Annual Town meeting a number of parking issues had been raised by residents.

This had included parking on Ordnance Avenue, near to the junction of Redshank Lane, causing residents to experience sight line difficulties when they are coming out of Redshank Lane on to Ordnance Avenue.

Councillor Higgins reported that he has seen the parking cause obstruction issues and congestion in this area. He is aware that as there are currently no road markings, the vehicles are not necessarily parking illegally, but in his opinion, it is dangerous especially as some park closer to the junction with Redshank Lane than they should do.

Councillor Fitzsimmons informed PCSO Culleton about an issue related to parking on Glover Road, near to the junctions with Heather Close and Armstrong Close. Two vehicles in particular have been parking on the grass verge. His concerns relate to sight lines and the potential damage that may be caused to the grass verges.

The Clerk informed Members that one of the PCSOs has spoken to a resident of Warrington Road who had also previously raised some concerns about parking. The resident has been advised by the PCSO to phone 101 if she has any concerns in the future.

PCSO Culleton said that he would pass the above comments on.

Members thanked PCSO Culleton for attending the meeting.

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>

251/2012 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST ON ADMIRALS ROAD**

At the April meeting Councillor Bowden had agreed to meet with two residents regarding a telecommunications mast installed in February 2012 on Admirals Road; in order for him to offer some advice on what grounds that they could make further comments/objections regarding the installation.

Councillor Bowden reported that he met with the two residents on 25th April 2012 to offer suggestions on what to put in a letter regarding this matter.

Councillor Bowden added that the residents had been wrongly led to believe – by the agent acting on behalf of the applicant who installed the mast - that only the owner of the land on which it has been built can object at this stage. Councillor Bowden stated that anyone who believes they are directly affected can object and as this mast is adjacent to the gable end of one of the residents' properties, she certainly has every right to put in an objection. He added that the Town Council can learn from this matter and be better prepared for any similar cases that may occur in future.

252/2012 **FLYTIPPING ON SILVER LANE**

Councillor Balding declared an interest

At the April meeting the issue of flytipping along the farmers track on Silver Lane, just off the junction of the M62 had been raised.

At tonight's meeting Councillor Balding stated that he has been trying to progress this matter in his role as Chairman of the Friends of Gorse Covert Mounds, in partnership with the Woodland Trust.

Clare Burnside of the Woodland Trust has asked that flytipping on their land and the farmer's part of the lane (private land) be reported as a criminal offence. Councillor Balding said that this will then appear on the Police database and build up a picture of the problem to allow the Police to better target their patrols – if it isn't reported as a crime, it doesn't hit their crime figures.

The Clerk stated that the Maintenance Team has confirmed that the lane is filthy again. She has asked Louis Banks at Warrington Borough Council to reconsider the use of CCTV in the area. Unfortunately, the equipment only has a short (three day) battery life for the mobile CCTV unit and the flytipping is not restricted to just one area, it occurs down the whole length of the lane, so placing the CCTV in the most effective place might be a challenge.

Councillor Higgins stated that there are also very strict rules regarding privacy laws.

The Clerk added that the Police would have to be involved regarding the deployment of any CCTV in the area.

Councillor Spencer stated that this has been going on for over 20 years and as of yet no one has been able to persuade the farmer to take steps to stop unauthorised access to this land.

Councillor Evans reminded Members that one of the main arguments against a gate was that access was required for an individual who has disabilities that might make it difficult to open and close a gate/barrier.

Councillor Bowden said that the Woodland Trust is also very keen to solve this ongoing issue. Clare Burnside would like to arrange a meeting with the farmer – although Councillor Bowden thinks it may need enforcement and potentially a prosecution in order to encourage the farmer to install a locked gate to the lane to allow only authorised access.

Councillor Spencer said that Warrington Borough Council would have to be the enforcing agent with regard to any potential prosecutions as the Town Council does not have the relevant powers. He added that he would support any action that could possibly solve this matter, but in his opinion, the Town Council should not commit itself to any financial involvement relating to the issue.

Members agreed that they support any action to try to solve this long standing problem, with the exception of becoming financially involved.

Action Councillor Balding to continue to work with the Woodland Trust regarding this matter and to update the Council at future meetings.

253/2012 **POWELL AVENUE UNDERPASS**

(a) **Drainage Issues**

The Clerk reported that following the recent rain, the main water chamber in the underpass is currently clear, but another has a small pool of standing water around it – the situation had improved slightly now that regular gulley cleansing is being undertaken.

The Clerk added that she has spoken to Colin Jenkins at the Borough Council and that Street Services will be cutting some of the vegetation in the area to try to create a natural ditch to divert some of the water away from the underpass. The only other option would be to install land drains, but these would require metal grating; with the potential for them being stolen for scrap metal value – leaving a trip hazard. The Borough Council is still investigating how best to address the issue of drainage in this underpass.

The Clerk also stated that she has put in a request for a grit bin to be installed in the area.

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

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

The Clerk stated that some of the block paving that has been reset. There is some paving that still requires attention.

254/2012 **TREES ON LAND AT THE REAR OF TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES**

At the April meeting, the Clerk stated that she had written to the resident who actually raised the matter, asking him to come to the office to confirm if the trees indicated by another resident are in fact the ones he has concerns about. It had initially been decided not to progress the matter until we had received confirmation from the resident about the trees in question.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk stated that as we had not heard anything further from the residents, it had been considered prudent to progress with the work on the trees (prior to them coming in to full leaf, when the job would be more difficult). Two have been taken down and one has been pollarded and its crown has been reduced in height.

255/2012 **PARKING ON RENOWN CLOSE**

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.

256/2012 **FOOTPATH OWNERSHIP**

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.

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

257/2012 **UPDATE RE: TRAFFIC RELATED QUERIES**

Puffin Crossing to the Forest Park from Gorse Covert

The Clerk reported that the lights are now operational.

258/2012 **PLAY EQUIPMENT IN BIRCHWOOD**

The Clerk stated that this matter remains ongoing.

The next step is to put together a pre-application pack and to try to formulate some consultation documents to go in the next issue of the Birchwood Community News. The next issue of Birchwood Community News will be held over until the consultation is ready to go out to the community.

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

259/2012 **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 T. Hearldon will be available to attend the next surgery on 19th May 2012.

260/2012 **FRONTIS WALKABOUTS**

A walkabout took place around Trefoil Close, Strawberry Close and Violet Close on 30th April 2012. A follow up walkabout on Dunnock Grove is scheduled to take place on 28th May 2012.

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

261/2012 **BULKY WASTE COLLECTIONS**

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.

262/2012 **PLANTERS**

The Clerk reported that some of the areas have been approved for planters, but we are still awaiting the receipt of our licences from Warrington Borough Council before they can be installed.

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

263/2012 **LIGHTING ISSUES ON THE 'SPINAL PATH'**

The Clerk reported that we have been informed that Norweb had a large team working on this job today and it is hoped that the lighting will finally be operational again tomorrow (16th May 2012).

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

- (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

We have not yet received any update regarding this application.

- (b) **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.**
- (c) **Application No. 2011/19009 Prospect Farm, Prospect Lane, Rixton-with-Glazebrook. Proposed change of use to provide target shooting club with associated parking.**
- (d) **Application No. 2011/19014 Prospect Farm, Prospect Lane, Rixton-with-Glazebrook. Retrospective application for upgrade of existing track surface.**

Regarding (b) (c) and (d) above, there is currently no further information available regarding these applications.

- (e) **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).**

Councillor Bowden stated that the planning application has been withdrawn and we believe that an application for a 'Proposed Certificate of Lawfulness' will not now be made.

- (f) **Application No. 2012/19763 34 Rockingham Close, Birchwood, WA3 6UY. Proposed demolition of existing garage and construction of two storey side extension.**

Councillor Higgins left the room

This application had been received at the April meeting, but at that time we had not been contacted by any residents regarding the application.

At tonight's meeting, Councillor Bowden informed Members he had since been contacted by a number of residents of Rockingham Close who have concerns about the application and asked if the Town Council would support them with their objections. Councillor Bowden viewed the plans and the proposed development is, in his opinion, imposing and out of keeping with the rest of the street scene. He asked Members to consider whether they wished to support the residents who have contacted him.

Members considered the matter and agreed that the approach the Council usually takes is to represent the views of residents when they make reasonable requests for assistance.

Councillor Bowden proposed that the Town Council puts in an objection of behalf of the residents and asks that the proposal goes before the planning committee for discussion.

All those Members present agreed with this proposal.

Action Clerk's office to contact the Planning Officer attached to this application regarding the above.

Councillor Higgins was invited back into the room.

265/2012 **WILDFLOWER MEADOWS**

The Clerk reported that wildflower seeds have already been scattered on some of the prepared beds – others will be seeded soon. She said that the Borough Council has asked whether the Town Council would approve the addition of sunflowers to some of the mixes to attract bees to the area.

Members were happy for sunflowers to be included in some of the mixes.

Action Clerk's office to contact the Borough Council regarding the sunflowers.

Councillor M. Hearldon asked about the roundabout near the Fire Station.

The Clerk replied that the maintenance team had tried everything to get rid of the mare's tail – but it was proving impossible. Plants that survived the recent hard winters have been moved to the middle and top soil was spread over the rest of the roundabout. This has been seeded with grass seed. We hope that when the grass gets established that mowing will keep the mare's tail in abeyance. The Borough Council has agreed to mow the roundabout once the grass is established.

Councillor Nelson said that by having the plants in the middle, with a grass border, it might help with sight line issues that some residents had raised with us in the past.

266/2012 **BIRCHWOOD CARNIVAL**

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

Another Carnival committee meeting will be taking place on 24th May 2012 at Parkers Farm.

267/2012 **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 agreed to accept comments after the May elections.

The Clerk asked Members for their thoughts on this item that had been held over since February.

Councillor Evans suggested asking what the other local Councils thought of the proposal.

The BAFO stated that not all local Councils in the area are members of ChALC.

Following a discussion by Members, Councillor Fitzsimmons proposed that the Town Council has no objection in principal to a local area meeting.

Action Clerk's office to contact ChALC regarding the above.

268/2012 **UPDATE BY WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL ON PLANNING MATTERS**

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

269/2012 **BUILDING WORK AT BIRCHWOOD PARK**

At the March meeting the Clerk reported that a resident had requested additional planting to screen Fernbank Close from the new build that work started on recently.

At the April meeting, the Clerk reported that 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 were awaiting his feedback.

At tonight's meeting, the Clerk reported that we are still waiting for feedback regarding this matter.

270/2012 **PARISH LIAISON MEETINGS**

At the April meeting, the Clerk reported that we had received an 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.

The Clerk had contacted the Borough Council to let them know this will be discussed by the new Council following the May elections.

The Clerk stated that from a Clerk's point of view she thinks that meetings on an 'ad hoc' basis could be useful, particularly if something of significance to local Councils arose. A meeting gives a chance for debate and discussion and to share good practice.

The BAFO agreed that it is a practice that the Officers would like to continue.

Members were also of the opinion that Parish Liaison meetings were useful on an 'ad hoc' basis – when there is something particular to be discussed.

Action Clerk's office to contact the Borough Council regarding the above.

271/2012 **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT AMENDMENT ACT 2010**

At the April meeting an email had been received asking for the Town Council's help regarding; *'... the Sustainable Communities Act Amendment Act of 2010 – (which) 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 asked that the Town Council writes to our local MP regarding the delay.

At tonight's meeting the Clerk confirmed that she had written to our local MP, Helen Jones.

272/2012 **BIRCHWOOD JOB CLUB**

Councillor Nelson declared an interest

At the April meeting the Clerk reported that we had 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 was passed to the Youth and Community Centre Committee for consideration as the Centre would be more suitable for this purpose.

At tonight's meeting Councillor Nelson stated that the Youth and Community Centre could not afford to offer the space for free; but she believes that the job club will now be running in the Encounter Centre, at the shopping centre.

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

273/2012 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) Received – Details of a 'Hate Crime Awareness' event taking place on 24th May 2012 at the Golden Square Shopping Centre.
- (b) Received – From Diane White – Details of a 'Step out for Stroke Walk' taking place at Walton Gardens on 16th May 2012.

- (c) Received – Posters re: a ‘Read to Relax’ group that meets every Thursday 10.30am to 11.30am at the Encounter Centre’s Community Room in Birchwood. For further details contact Diane White on 07827 232561 or email dwhite@warrington.gov.uk Posters were displayed on our boards
- (d) Received – Link to a ‘Design a Mascot Competition’ for the Rugby League World Cup: <http://www.rlwc2013.com/rugby-league-world-news/article/741/design-the-rugby-league-world> the deadline for entries is 29th June.
- (e) Received – ‘It’s All Going on in Warrington Summer Brochure 2012’.
- (f) Received – Email asking whether anyone is interested in becoming a volunteer mentor in Young People’s Services.
- (g) Received – Warrington Annual Property Review.
- (h) Received – Neighbourhoods Bulletin – May 2012.
- (i) Received – Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy consultation document.

274/2012 **BIRCHWOOD FORUM**

Received – Information on volunteering opportunities in Warrington.

275/2012 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – Request from the Big Lottery Fund for us to update our database permission contact form.
- (b) Received – Poster for the 2012 Disability Awareness Day event being held on Sunday, 15th July at Walton Gardens. Posters have been displayed on our boards
- (c) Received – New posters for the Mobile Youth Base, which has been going to the Nelson’s Quarterdeck car park each Wednesday from 7pm – 9pm. The posters were displayed on our boards.
- (d) Received/Sent – Correspondence between a resident, the Town Council and the Borough Council regarding the speed limit on the A574 spur from the M62 Junction 11 towards Risley Moss.

The Borough Council has confirmed that the speed limit on this stretch of road is 60mph, but because there is no change in the speed limit when joining Birchwood Way from the M62 the Borough Council is not permitted by national legislation, to erect any speed limit signage other than repeater signs.

The Clerk reported that Sean Halewood from the Borough Council stated in his email that; *“The speed limit may currently appear unclear due to some of these speed limit repeater signs being obstructed by overgrown vegetation or alternatively being in need of replacement.”*

In view of the above I would confirm arrangements have been made for an inspection of the current signage along Birchwood Way to be carried out with a view to rectifying any faults.”

- (e) Received – Details of the Cheshire and Warrington Sustainability Alliance Annual Meeting, taking place 14th June, 9.30am in Frodsham.
- (f) Received – From Biffa – a letter of response to correspondence received from the Risley Liaison Group.
- (g) Received – An email regarding the sighting of a rat on Kestrel Lane – a response was sent advising the resident to contact the Environmental Health Department at Warrington Borough Council, along with the relevant contact details.

276/2012 **iCAN ALERTS**

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

- (a) Colleagues in Social Services have brought to the attention of Trading Standards that a letter is currently circulating relating to pyramid selling. The letter is typical of a pyramid type scheme:

How It Works

A fee is requested to join the scheme and the only way to ever recover any money is to convince other people to also join up. In fact this letter suggests forwarding to 200 randomly selected people asking them to also part with £10 of their money.

The people at the top of the pyramid make their money by having people join the scheme. Then they pocket the fees made by those who join under them. The only people who have any real chance to make money are the people who start the scam.

Pyramid selling is illegal and can cost a lot of people a lot of money.

Chain Letters

Chain letters are a type of pyramid scheme that is spread through the post, or sometimes by email. They promise a large financial return for a relatively small cost. Typically, the letter will ask you to send a small amount of money to everyone listed in the letter. You then put your name on the list and send out copies of the letter to as many people as you can. The letter claims you will receive a large amount of money in a short space of time.

Rules & Regulations

Pyramid selling is a banned practice under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations, Schedule 1 (14). Unfortunately, anyone who sends this letter out is effectively in breach of the legislation as they are effectively operating and promoting a pyramid promotional scheme!

If you believe that an offer is a pyramid scheme, do not take part it is very likely that you will lose your money and you could be breaking the law.

277/2012 **SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS**

Received – Details of the Summer Symposium taking place in Cheltenham.

278/2012 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

Received – News Bulletin – May 2012.

279/2012 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS**

- (a) Received – Time sensitive email from ChALC asking for support in contributing to the lobbying on Planning Appeals and Planning Applications. A template letter from NALC is attached.

Members discussed this matter and agreed that the Town Council would support the lobbying.

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

- (b) Received – Details of a Chairmanship 1 training session taking place in May at Cotebrook Village Hall. The Chair, Cllr M Hearldon expressed an interest in attending a future course.

Action Clerk's office to enquire re: future dates.

- (c) Received – Details of a training session regarding the 'General Power of Competence'.

280/2012 **PRESS ARTICLES**

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

281/2012 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Clerks and Councils Direct - May 2012

The Clerk – May 2012

LGC - 01/03/12, 08/03/12, 15/03/12, 22/03/12, 29/03/12, 05-12/04/12

Playing Field – Spring 2012

282/2012 **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.

283/2012 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

Warrington Borough Council

- (a) Received – Notification that the Planning Applications Sub-Committee meeting will be taking place on 9th May 2012.

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

- (b) Received – Notification that the Development Management Committee meeting would be taking place on Thursday 10th May 2012.

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

284/2012 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

- (a) Application No. 2012/19496 Chadwick House, Warrington Road, WA3 6AE. Application for consent to display one non-illuminated sign. **Approved with conditions**

- (b) Application No. 2012/19573 Land adjacent to Thompson House, Warrington WA3 6GA. Application for consent to display two internally illuminated signs. **Approved with conditions**
- (c) Application No. 2012/19459 Site 1, Dalton Avenue, Birchwood Park. Application to extend time limit for implementation of permission 2008/12744 (outline application for office building). **Approved with conditions**
- (d) Application No. 2012/19636 Birchwood Community High School. Proposed single storey building with three classrooms and ancillary accommodation. **Approved with conditions**
- (e) Application No. 2012/19574 Land at Faraday Street and Aston Avenue, Birchwood. Application for consent to display two free-standing non-illuminated signs. **Approved with conditions**
- (f) Application No. 2012/19921 58 Sandicroft close, Birchwood. Proposed works to trees. **Approved with conditions**
- (g) Application No. 2012/19531 6 Wigmore Close, Birchwood. Proposed change of use from residential dwelling (use class C3) to house of multiple occupation (use class C4). **Withdrawn**

285/2012 **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)

286/2012 **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. 2012/19973 86 Armstrong Close, Birchwood. Proposed two storey side extension.

The meeting concluded at 8.10pm