

MINUTES OF THE JUNE COUNCIL MEETING
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL,
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE
ON TUESDAY 25TH JUNE 6PM

Present: Councillor, Ellis in the Chair
Councillors Allman, Atkin, Brereton, B. Dhillon, K. Dhillon, Evans, Price,
Sheridan and Simcock.

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

Apologies: Councillors Ball and Reeves (personal)
Birchwood Police

1 Resident

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.

Councillor Atkin – Birchwood Carnival

071/24-25 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PCSO Palfrey was unable to attend the meeting but sent his Police Report from the period of 28th May – 25th June 2024 prior to the meeting.

‘Tru Cam has been deployed to areas around the East and Birchwood, we have had 7 activations for Birchwood this month.

Anti-Social Behaviour – 9

2 x Youth ASB

6 x Environmental ASB

1 x Personal ASB’

Following this report, Officers requested additional information via email in order to accurately feedback to Members.

PCSO Palfrey subsequently emailed further details, stating that the two main sites for Tru Cam activations this month were on Ordnance Avenue and Warrington Road. Tru Cam has also been deployed in Gorse Covert and in Locking Stumps on Glover Road.

Regarding the nine anti-social behaviour incidents, PCSO Palfrey explained that the youth incidents occurred around the shopping centre, and environmental cases were mainly off-road bikes around the Gorse Covert area.

(b) **Public Participation**

The Chair welcomed the resident in attendance and explained that there is 30 minutes allotted for public participation.

The resident stated that Birchwood Carnival is a great event for the local community, and wanted to know how it is funded.

Councillor Atkin, as the Chair of the Carnival Committee, explained that it is all donor funded, either by grants or sponsorships from local businesses. He stated that the Tow Council funded the marquee, tables and chairs and the portable toilets with a grant, and WBC also provided the Carnival with a grant, from its Community Initiative Fund.

The rest of the funding came from local businesses, which show support in various ways; by donating funds, loaning equipment, printing posters, etc. free of charge, and/or volunteer support.

This year, the sponsors for the Carnival included: Your Housing Group, Sellafield Ltd, Birchwood Shopping Centre, Birchwood Park, Orano, Aldi, Buddha Group, Birchwood Lions, PPL PRS music and The Friends of Birchwood Forest Park.

In addition to this, Councillor Atkin explained that stallholders pay a certain amount depending on criteria, e.g. whether they have a charity or commercial stall, and the fairground also pays to be in attendance.

The Chair stated that the funds provided enable the Carnival Committee to hire acts and attractions, providing some activities/entertainment that are free of charge. These are always well-used by the event attendees.

The resident stated that she has noticed the excess mud and debris leftover from the Carnival, in and around Birchwood Forest Park, and wondered if anything was being done to clean this and repair the damage that vehicles have done to the field.

Councillor Atkin stated that the Park Ranger in charge of the Forest Park had been in touch to say that a street sweeper was being deployed to the area, and that he is liaising with the fairground owners in an effort to recoup the costs of reseeding the damaged parts of the field.

Councillor Allman stated that, although a fire engine got stuck on the field on the day of the event, the Fire Service repaired the damage caused by their vehicles.

The resident also raised the issue of repeated flooding to the fire station underpass.

The Chair stated that this is something BTC have reported numerous times to WBC, and the issue has now been resolved.

The resident also stated that many of the pathways appear to be littered with abandoned shopping trolleys. She stated that it is hard to always give an accurate location to the stores of where a trolley is because there are no street signs nearby.

The Chair suggested using the mobile apps for reporting trolleys, as this utilises the phone's geolocator to send information to the collection company without needing to add additional information like an address. The Chair added that the Collex app is used to report ASDA trolleys and Trolleywise is used to report trolleys from Aldi and Home Bargains.

The Chair thanked the resident for attending the meeting and at this point, the resident left.

072/24-25 **MAY ANNUAL TOWN MEETING MINUTES**

- (a) Councillor Evans **proposed**, Councillor Simcock **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 14th May 2024 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.
- (b) It was **unanimously resolved** to incorporate items raised at the 14th May Annual Town Meeting into the June 2024 main minutes.

073/24-25 **MAY ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Atkin **proposed**, Councillor Brereton **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on 14th May 2024 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

074/24-25 **ITEMS BROUGHT INTO THE JUNE MINUTES FROM THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING:**

As resolved in minute 072/24-25 (b) above, the following items raised at the 14th May Annual Town Meeting will now be incorporated within the minutes of this evening's meeting:

- (a) **Chair's Report**
To note that the Chair's Report from former Councillor Dempsey was presented at the Annual Town Meeting.
- (b) **Community Issues**
 - (i) **Communal Bin Areas on Harcourt Close**
Complaints have been raised by residents regarding these bin areas. The Clerk advised that YHG will need to liaise with WBC regarding this matter.
 - (ii) **Speeding Around Birchwood**
A discussion took place at the Annual Town Meeting where Councillor Atkin enquired if there is any data to support whether the new SIDs that were installed along Admirals Road and Warrington Road have been effective, and if this is the case, whether the Council could look into other sites that may be able to benefit from 30 MPH signs or SIDs.
Councillor Ellis stated that he has been looking into downloading data from the SIDs and hopes to have some data to share at an upcoming Council Meeting.
 - (iii) **Parking Issues**
Several Councillors, in their capacity as local residents had raised their concerns about inconsiderate and dangerous parking in various areas of Birchwood.
A query was raised as to whether additional signage could be installed on Gorse Covert Road, directing visitors to Mosslands to the ample parking facilities that are there.
Councillor Atkin stated that near the Spar Shop in Risley, road markings, including double yellow lines, have been repainted, but vehicles are still parking dangerously.
The Clerk has also spoken to Birchwood Police about the irresponsible parking around the Spar Shop and PCSO Palfrey has written to WBC to request enforcement and is awaiting a reply.

In addition, PCSO Palfrey has been into Locking Stumps Primary School to discuss parking with the school, and he has agreed to observe parking around the Gorse Covert shops. The Clerk also informed PCSO Palfrey of Members' comments regarding parking around Mosslands.

(iv) **Shopping Trolleys**

The Clerk had stated that this is an ongoing issue and that Officers will continue to liaise with the stores and collection agencies accordingly.

(v) **Community Gardens in Birchwood**

A discussion took place at the Annual Town Meeting regarding the possibility of creating a community garden in Birchwood. It was pointed out that there are no public allotments in the area and there are many residents who do not have access to a garden.

PROGRESS

075/24-25 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

(a) **Garrett Field Roundabout**

The Clerk reported that WBC have looked into data regarding collisions at the Garrett Field roundabout and have said that they prioritise their capital investment in road safety engineering measures based on data collected from over the previous three years. During the last three years, there have been two collisions recorded at the roundabout.

WBC stated that they understand there may have been more 'damage only' collisions, but as they are not required to be recorded by the Department for Transport, they might not have this data.

On this basis, WBC believes that Garrett Field roundabout is unlikely to reach the necessary criteria required to draw on the funds needed to deliver a collision remediation scheme while their priorities are in other locations.

(b) **Flooding on Delenty Drive and Lords Lane**

The Clerk stated that we assume work has been completed in these locations, as we have seen no further flooding on Delenty Drive and have not been contacted by residents regarding Lords Lane.

BTC will monitor the situation during heavy rainfall, and report accordingly to WBC if issues still arise.

(c) **Information Board for Cross Lane South Cemetery**

The Clerk stated that, despite multiple attempts to liaise with WBC about this matter, there has still been no update from WBC.

(d) **Wildflowers**

The Clerk confirmed that most of the areas chosen for Wildflowers have now been prepared.

076/24-25 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG) - UPDATES**

- (a) The loose barriers on Ainscough Common were reported to YHG, but we have received additional reports from residents and BTC staff that there are still issues with them. They have been reported to YHG again.
- (b) The Clerk stated that the bin stores at Layton Close have now been cleared, however the other issues raised such as flytipping still remains. The Clerk said that YHG are having issues as their 24-hour flytipping removal service is currently taking 2-3 weeks to be collected. BTC's contact at YHG is now escalating this to senior management.

As there is frequent flytipping in this location, the Clerk has suggested to YHG that they contact WBC's enforcement team to see if they can help with a mobile CCTV unit to monitor the area.

YHG are currently in discussions with WBC's Community Safety Team regarding this.

- (c) The Clerk stated that we have not received cutting schedules from YHG regarding when they will undertake maintenance in the area.

Councillor Brereton stated that YHG tenants have received a job frequency matrix which she can pass onto Officers for information, although this differs from the landscaping schedule BTC usually receives from YHG.

Action

Councillor Brereton to send YHG matrix to Officers.

Councillor Atkin stated that a resident has contacted him regarding the pathway between Stainmore Close and Rendlesham Close.

The Clerk stated that she has made enquiries about this area with YHG in a recent email and is currently awaiting a response.

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

077/24-25 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) Sent/Received - Various emails/online reports/telephone calls following queries/contact from residents regarding flytipping, tree/shrubbery issues, grass cutting, potholes, dog fouling, etc.
- (b) Received – various Traffic Notices.
- (c) The Chair stated that he would like to propose a meeting between the Chair, the Clerk and Dave Boyer from WBC to discuss the working relationship, as Members feel they are 'wasting their time' reporting and looking into things when no action is taken in response to it and no feedback or updates have been received.

Action

Clerk's office to arrange a 'Teams' or 'in-person' meeting with Dave Boyer from WBC.

078/24-25 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/reports following queries/contact from residents including issues with flytipping, shrubbery maintenance, land enquiry, damaged barriers, etc.

- (b) Sent/received – emails with YHG re: a manhole cover near Redshank Common which keeps being removed. After some confusion re: land ownership, this has been reported and actioned by YHG.
- (d) The Chair stated that he believes the working relationship is not working the way it is supposed to, and proposed a meeting between the Chair, the Clerk and the new CEO of YHG to discuss how we can improve the relationship and to enquire about how the business operates

Action Clerk to write to the CEO of YHG to request a meeting to discuss concerns.

079/24-25 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – Various emails from Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA).
- (b) Received – email from a resident regarding the accessibility at Gorse Covert Mounds. Officers enquired with The Woodland Trust before responding to the resident accordingly.

080/24-25 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

Received – Various Neighbourhood Alerts.

081/24-25 **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, consultations, etc.
- (c) Received – SLCC – various updates, briefings, new items, etc.

082/24-25 **BIRCHWOOD CARNIVAL**

To note that Birchwood Carnival took place on 9th June 2024. Once again, it was well attended. Several members of BTC staff attended to assist with the logistics on the day, along with a number of Councillors. The funding of the Carnival was discussed earlier in the meeting (*minute 071/24-25 (b)*).

083/24-25 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC e-mail correspondence/briefings.

084/24-25 **MEMBER’S REFERRAL**

Councillor Atkin asked Members to consider The Civil Aviation Authority’s current consultation on the ‘Manchester Low Level Route’. He gave a brief outline of the consultation for information:

- The MLLR is a narrow low altitude uncontrolled route that small aircraft can use to avoid the busy Manchester and Liverpool Airport controlled airspace. It runs north-south from Leigh to Winsford and most of Birchwood is underneath this route. The CAA are concerned about the increasing risk of mid-air collisions in this route and so are proposing modifications.

- Many of these modifications are only relevant to pilots but, from the Birchwood community's point of view, the key proposal is to increase the maximum altitude from 1300ft to 1500ft (so aircraft can glide further in the event of engine failure over a populated area, and also to allow increased separation between aircraft). Another proposal is to limit the speed and maximum weight of aircraft using the route and to prohibit its use in poor visibility, to minimise the risk of mid-air collisions.

Councillor Atkin asked Members if they were happy to support the proposed changes, and if so, would they consider responding to the consultation?

Councillor Atkin offered to respond on behalf of the Council, as he is familiar with the consultation.

Members **unanimously agreed** to support the proposed changes mentioned in the consultation and **unanimously resolved** to give Councillor Atkin delegated responsibility to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Town Council.

Action Councillor Atkin to respond to the consultation on behalf of BTC, and circulate a copy of the response to Officers.

Some Councillors queried whether this consultation would incorporate some low-flying planes which set off from Rixton/Woolston area, which fly over Birchwood. Members commented that the noise associated with it can be excessive.

The Clerk stated that BTC objected to a planning application many years ago regarding a proposed airstrip in a similar location, and wondered if it was the same location.

Action Clerk's office to look into previous planning application regarding an airstrip in Woolston / Rixton.

Action Councillor Atkin to look into the process for an aviation application and investigate if the airstrip is operating lawfully.

085/24-25 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

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

- (i) A DMC meeting took place on 20th June 2024. There were no items of specific interest to Birchwood on the Agenda for this meeting.
- (ii) Information re: enforcement cases specific to Birchwood have been circulated to Members.
- (iii) Re: **Application No. 2024/00312/FULM** Spencer House Dewhurst Road, WA3 7PG. Proposal for 11 no. small industrial units contained within 2 no. buildings to be located on land adjacent to Spencer House.

As resolved at the May 2024 meeting, the Clerk sent a letter of objection to WBC regarding this application.

The Clerk reported that she had checked online yesterday, and the Town Council's formal response was not showing, despite being submitted online and via the planning officer. However, having checked again prior to the meeting, it was now online. Several other bodies have also objected to the application.

(b) **Planning Decisions**

- (i) **Application No. 2024/00288/FULH** 9 Jay Close, Birchwood, WA3 6QJ. Demolition of pergola and erection of a single storey rear extension to provide an accessible ground floor bedroom and shower room. **Granted.**
- (ii) **Application No. 2023/00781/FULH** 50 Woolmer Close, Birchwood, WA3 6UU. Proposal for the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP) at the rear of the property. **Withdrawn.**
- (iii) **Application No. 2024/00357/FULH** 15 Palliser Close, Birchwood, WA3 6RT. Erection of part two/part single storey side extension, single storey rear extension and porch. **Granted.**
- (iv) **Application No. 2024/00433/FULH** 6 Redvales Court, Birchwood, WA3 7NN. Proposed single storey rear extension. **Granted.**
- (v) **Application No. 2024/00359/FULH** 27 Stonecrop Close, Birchwood, WA3 7PD. Single storey side extension. **Granted.**
- (vi) **Application No. 2024/00303/FULH** 9 Montcliffe Close, Birchwood, WA3 7LX. Demolition of conservatory and canopy, and erection of single storey side extension. **Granted.**
- (vii) **Application No. 2024/00225/FUL** Unit D, E and F Birchwood Shopping Centre, WA3 7PQ. Proposed external alterations to existing retail units to facilitate their operation as a single foodstore (Use Class E); modifications to vehicular access and car parking; relocation of mechanical plant; and, associated site works. **Granted.**
- (viii) **Application No. 2024/00391/FULH** 71 Woolmer Close, Birchwood, WA3 6TT. Part single part double rear extension. **Refused.**
- (ix) **Application No. 2024/00653/NMA** 34 Gilderdale Close, Birchwood, WA3 6TH. Proposed amendment to previously approved application 2024/00078 (Outbuilding) to rotate home gymnasium in Westerly direction. **Granted.**
- (x) **Application No. 2023/01208/VARC** 3 Delenty Drive, Birchwood, WA3 6AN. Variation of Condition 2 – To reflect the changes in material and change in site layout and removal of Condition 4 – in relation to the proposed materials. In relation to application 2019/34700. **Granted.**

(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. 2024/00687/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of conditions 12 (scheme for highway improvement works) and 16 (design and construction details for Junction 11 improvement works) on application 2023/00333/VARC (Variation of conditions 5 and 26 on Outline Application 2019/35726)

This part of the meeting concluded at 6.55 pm.