

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING**  
**OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL,**  
**HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE, WA3 6AN,**  
**ON TUESDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2021, 6PM**

**Present:** Councillor Bowden in the Chair  
Councillors Allen, Atkin, Ball, Brereton, Dempsey, Ellis, Scott and Simcock.

Clerk – Mrs. F. McDonald  
RFO / Deputy Clerk – Mrs C. Caddock

PCSO Titans

**Apologies:** Councillors Evans (health), Sheridan (work) and Reeves (away)

**Code of Conduct – Declaration of Interests**

The Chair reminded members of their responsibility to declare any personal interest or prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when the item is reached.

*Councillor Ellis – Birchwood Youth and Community Centre, and Development Management Committee (WBC)*

*Councillor Atkin – Birchwood Carnival Committee*

285/21-22 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PCSO Titans presented his Police Report to the Council, which had also been circulated to Members, earlier in the day. The report is as follows:

*The following comprises the Police report to Birchwood Town Council for the month of September 2021 to date.*

**Burglaries**

- One incident of burglary from a residential premise in the vicinity of Layton Close in which a garage was targeted, resulting in forced entry and items being taken.
- One incident in the vicinity of Woolmer Close in which entry was forced through the front door of a property. The property was empty and nothing of value was taken.
- One incident in the vicinity of Montcliffe Close in which access was gained to a residential property resulting in the theft of two sets of car keys and their respective vehicles.

**Thefts**

- One incident of a suspect failing to pay for fuel at a petrol station on Oakwood Gate.
- One report of a theft of pedal cycle from the front of a residential property in the vicinity of Dove Close.
- One report of theft of pedal cycle from a communal area of a block of flats in the vicinity of Daniel Close.

### **Vehicle Thefts/Crime**

- One reported attempted theft of motor vehicle in the vicinity of Noble Close, in which an unknown offender attempted to gain access to a vehicle parked in the street, causing damage to the door in the process.
- One report of license plates stolen from a vehicle in the vicinity of Curlew Grove.
- One stolen vehicle recovered by police from the area of Lyster Close.

### **Criminal Damage**

- One incident in the vicinity of Redshank Lane in which a brick was thrown through the kitchen window of a residential property.
- One incident in the vicinity of Noble Close in which a residential property was targeted by multiple projectiles, resulting in damage to the living room window and glass door panel.
- One incident in the vicinity of Swallow Close in which eggs were thrown at a residential property and a vehicle belonging to the resident of said property is believed to have been scratched.
- One report of damage to the front door of a residential property following a dispute between neighbours.

### **Antisocial Behaviour**

- Adult antisocial behaviour affecting the area of Nightingale Close, caused by a local resident. This is being handled in conjunction with Your Housing Group.
- One report of a motorbike being driven antisocially in the area of Admirals Road.
- One incident of adult antisocial behaviour in the vicinity of Redshank Lane involving a group of males under the influence of alcohol/drugs causing noise nuisance and behaving aggressively towards residents.
- One incident of adult antisocial behaviour in the vicinity of Mallard Lane involving a dispute between two families.
- Reports of youths causing harassment to staff at a takeaway in Oakwood. Youths are believed to have thrown water bottles and other projectiles into the business premises.
- One report of an unknown male in a white van offering drugs to passers-by and behaving erratically in the area of Admirals Road/Redshank Lane.
- One report of two youths “acting suspiciously” in the area of Armstrong Close.
- One report of youths trespassing on the railway at Birchwood Train Station and throwing stones.

### **Hate Incidents**

- No reported hate incidents.

### **Other Incidents of Note**

- One report of a suspicious male with a camera on a tripod on a children’s play area in the vicinity of Trefoil Close.

(b) **Police & Crime Commissioner’s (PCC) Community Action Fund – re: proposed Livewire Project**

The Clerk reported that Mr. Flannery, a representative of Livewire had been in touch with the Town Council, in relation to a youth activity project that he is hoping to bring into Birchwood. She outlined the types of activities Livewire plan to include in the project.

They have some funding for six months, but hope to extend the project and will need to look for additional assistance, for example, with room hire costs.

The Clerk asked PCSO Titans if he thought that this might be something that the PCC's Community Action Fund might be able to assist with. The project is aimed at children who are eligible for free school meals, who attend years 7, 8 and 9 at school.

PCSO Titans said that he is in favour of bringing youth activities into the Birchwood area. He said that the criteria would need to be clarified.

The Town Council was generally supportive of what the Livewire representative is aiming to achieve. The Town Council's terms and conditions of awarding of grants unfortunately prohibits us from awarding funding for venue hire.

The Chair suggested looking at different ways that the Town Council might be able to help fund the project.

**Action** Clerk's office to contact the Livewire representative to discuss potential support options in more detail.

The Clerk said that Mr. Flannery had enquired about using the Birchwood Youth and Community Centre for the project.

Councillor Ellis said that it would depend on the days and times required, as there are already some groups booked in on certain evenings, for the long-term.

(c) **Mobile Speed Sign**

Over the last few months, at our request, PCSO Titans has been trying to locate the Council's mobile speed indicator device (photo attached) purchased by Birchwood Town Council, for use by the local Police.

The Clerk asked PCSO Titans if he has been able to find it.

PCSO Titans said that he did locate a speed sign, but the serial number does not appear to match ours.

Members resolved that the Council would like to be refunded for the sign (inc. tripod, battery and charger) if it cannot be found.

**Action** Clerk's office to contact the Police re: the speed sign.

(d) **Travellers**

PCSO Titans asked if there was any information regarding a Transit Site for the travelling community in Warrington, as the Police could then direct unauthorised encampments to leave an area, to go to the site.

The Chair reported that WBC are committed to delivering a Transit Site in Warrington, once a suitable site has been identified. The next WBC working group will be meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> October regarding this matter.

(e) **Residents' Queries**

As there were no residents present at tonight's meeting, the Chair declared Public Participation closed.

286/21-22 **JULY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Ellis **proposed**, Councillor Scott **seconded** and it was **resolved** that: The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

287/21-22 **BIRCHWOOD CARNIVAL COMMITTEE**

The Clerk stated that the first Birchwood Carnival Committee meeting to discuss the 2022 carnival arrangements, will be taking place on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

288/21-22 **MANAGEMENT OF ROADSIDE VERGES / WILDFLOWERS**

Councillor Atkin raised his concern that, as reported at the July 2021 meeting, two areas being trialled, that should have been left to grow wild, were mown, as they were not showing any evidence of wildflower growth, or significant insect activity, and were looking unkempt. He said that it would take time for native wildlife to display the full benefits of being left to grow naturally.

The Clerk stated that the area had been mown accidentally, but confirmed that they will be left to grow 'wild' next year.

289/21-22 **ACCESS ISSUES – BIRCHWOOD RAILWAY STATION**

Councillor Dempsey advised Members that the lifts at Birchwood Railway Station have been or are currently "out of order" because the BT line inside the lifts, for emergency contact, needs repairing.

There are signs at the station stating that the lifts are in operation from the first to the last train service, however, some users have reported that this is not the case.

Councillor Simcock said that when the lifts are actually in operation they are locked once the attendant leaves the station; usually at around 10pm, which limits the timescale for people who need to use the lifts for access, who wish to be out later in the evening.

Some rail users have been advised, by a train attendant, that if somebody is unable to cross the platform, they would need to continue their journey to Warrington Central (free of charge) and then either cross the platform using the lifts at Warrington, catching a train back to Birchwood (also free of charge) or they can get a taxi home at their own cost. However, this pre-supposes that there will be an available train travelling back to Birchwood.

We have been told that the lifts have now been out of operation since at least 18th August; more than 6 weeks ago. Several people have commented that the lifts being inoperative is a frequent issue and that often there are no staff at the station available to assist.

This situation severely impacts people with mobility issues or those with young children in prams.

Councillor Brereton wondered if some sort of system could be put in place where people who struggle to cross the platform using the steps could register for some form of key, to allow them access.

The Chair commented that it took over 30 years, and a lot of funding to have the lift installed at Birchwood, to enable access for all to the station; it is unacceptable that it cannot be used for its intended purpose.

A suggestion was made to contact our local MP regarding this matter.

Members unanimously resolved, in the first instance, to contact Northern Rail directly.

**Action** Clerk's office to contact Northern Rail regarding this matter.

290/21-22 **UNEVEN SURFACE – FOOTBRIDGE DELENTY DRIVE TO WARRINGTON ROAD**

The Clerk reported that since asking if WBC will revisit the bridge, and look again at what could possibly be done to resolve the issue, we have still not received any response.

291/21-22 **REGISTERING WITH THE INFORMATION COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE (ICO)**

The Clerk stated that she has had an online chat with the ICO.

Individual Councillors do not need to register with the ICO as Data Controllers in their own right, as long as the work they are doing is specifically related to their work as local Councillors. They are covered under the Town Council's registration with the ICO.

292/21-22 **TRAINING**

The Clerk reported that Councillors Ball and Dempsey had recently undertaken a 'Roles and Responsibilities' training course, delivered by Cheshire Association of Local Councils (£50). ChALC also delivered a training course for Birchwood Town Councillors on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021.

The Clerk said that the Borough Council has given us several dates that they could deliver a face-to-face Code of Conduct training session. Two of the dates were agreeable for most Members.

**Action** Clerk's office to contact WBC to ask which date they prefer to deliver the training.

The Clerk said that she is still waiting to hear from WBC about dates for planning training, which will be delivered over Microsoft Teams.

293/21-22 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG)**

The Clerk informed Members that she and the Senior Maintenance Operative had an online meeting with several members of the YHG team, including several new faces. Paul McNeilly, who is the new Regional Manager for the Warrington, St Helens and Knowsley areas will be liaising with the Clerk regarding meetings and walkabouts.

The Clerk added that another online meeting is planned for next week. The meetings cover operational matters, such as landscaping, flytipping, etc. The Town Council does not get involved with any of their housing or tenancy issues.

The Clerk asked Councillors Brereton and Scott, if they wished to be invited to these meetings as the BTC representatives to YHG. Both Councillors indicated that they did wish to be invited, but attendance might depend on work commitments.

Councillor Brereton asked if Town Councillors can take part in the walkabouts; which they can.

The Clerk asked if the Council would like to invite a YHG representative to a future meeting.

The Chair suggested allowing YHG's new team members to settle in their roles first, and to see if they bring a positive change to the area, before inviting them to a meeting.

This was agreed by Members.

294/21-22 **ACTION / STRATEGIC PLAN**

Councillor Ellis said that he will circulate options of dates for a Policy, Strategy and Engagement working party meeting, to be held online, at which Members will formally consider details to be included in a new Strategic Plan for 2021 – 2024.

295/21-22 **FLOODING ON ROBERTS FOLD**

The Clerk has asked WBC to ‘chase’ Torus again, regarding this matter.

296/21-22 **HS2 HIGH SPEED RAIL (CREWE – MANCHESTER)**

The Clerk stated that we are still awaiting notification of when a ‘suitable device’ on which the documents can be viewed (in digital format) will be delivered to us.

297/21-22 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Clerk reported that she had an online meeting with a senior Officer of WBC, at which various issues were discussed, mainly relating to landscaping, including the issue of overgrown shrubbery causing health and safety problems for our operatives on the grass mowing routes. The Clerk added that this matter had also been raised with another WBC Officer at the recent Parish Liaison meeting.

The Clerk stated that during the online meeting a discussion had also taken place about a number of problems regarding communicating with, and receiving responses from, WBC, both for BTC staff and residents.

BTC has published information on our website and Facebook page regarding the instructions that we have received from WBC about the way they wish residents to contact them in future – i.e. directly, rather than via our office.

298/21-22 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

The Clerk reported that, as requested by Members, a letter had been sent to the Chief Executive of YHG to express the Council’s dissatisfaction at the way a traveller encampment issue (on the Village Green just off Ainscough Road) had been handled, and that despite being advised a few times (since 2015) that some of their land remains vulnerable to unauthorised access.

The Clerk said that although we have not received a direct response from the Chief Executive, a number of concrete blocks had been placed on the Village Green once the travellers had left. Unfortunately, one of them was placed so that it is preventing one of the waste bins on the site being emptied. We have asked if it can be moved slightly.

The Clerk added that these blocks are only temporary, and YHG intends to consult residents as to what measures to prevent unauthorised access onto the land they might like to see in place of the blocks.

299/21-22 **SPEEDING ON GLOVER ROAD**

At the July meeting, Councillor Allen raised the issue of ongoing speeding on Glover Road.

The Clerk reported that we have since received correspondence from a resident regarding this ongoing matter.

Councillor Ellis said that he has spoken to the Director of Transport and Environment at WBC, who he recently met on site, along with another WBC Traffic Officer, to show them the current issues, and to consider some suggestions for potential traffic calming or reduction measures on Glover Road, and also on Locking Stumps Lane, Lords Lane, parts of Birchwood Park Avenue and Warrington Road in Risley Village.

Councillor Ellis said that WBC will be installing traffic monitoring strips, and once they have gathered data, will look into what options can be considered going forward.

Councillor Ellis has also been in contact with the resident to update them on the current steps that are being taken regarding this matter.

**Action** Councillor Ellis to continue to liaise with WBC regarding this matter.

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

#### 300/21-22 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) Sent/received – various emails / online reports following contact from residents re: flytipping, concerns regarding trees, height of shrubbery and sight line issues, overgrown footpaths, parking on grass verges, drainage matters, road surface issues, damaged safety railing, damaged road signs, ownership of shrubbery. Also chased issue of long stretch of street lights out on Admirals Road.
- (b) Sent/received – emails re: partnership working.
- (c) Sent/received – emails re: an ongoing enquiry first raised in June 2021.
- (d) Sent/received – various emails re: verge parking in a business area (following an enquiry from Councillor Atkin). The initial response received indicated that WBC could not assist – but they would ask Highways for their input. Between 14.26 pm and 14.32 pm on the same day, we received four automatic emails from Highways – going through the whole process – culminating with ‘Please be advised that the work has now been completed’. We assumed this to mean that Highways cannot assist either.

Councillor Atkin stated that one of the companies on Risley Road appears to be using the grass verges as car storage areas. He said that has now made a complaint via the planning enforcement route.

The PCSO cannot ticket vehicles unless they have no tax, etc. as they are not technically breaking any laws.

- (e) Sent/received – various emails re: traveller encampments (shared with the local Police). Numerous emails, telephone calls and visits to the office from residents were also received regarding the matter.

Councillor Balding telephoned the office re: enquiries he has received from residents asking if there are any plans for some form of barrier to be installed on the patch of land that the recent encampment in Gorse Covert was on.

- (f) To note that the Register of Interests form for Councillor Ball has been sent to the Monitoring Officer, and published online, as required. The Monitoring Officer / Director of Law and Governance at WBC will be presenting some Code of Conduct training to BTC Councillors, once a date is formalised.
- (g) Received – Draft Revised Gambling Policy for 2022-2025.
- (h) Received - Agenda for the Parish Liaison Meeting (held on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2021). The Clerk attended this meeting. Planning training is being arranged for local Councils.
- (i) Received – email informing BTC that the street supplies to the lighting columns on Gorse Covert Road are going to be renewed during the next couple of weeks.

- (j) Sent/received – emails re: overgrown footpath running on the Liverpool line side on the railway station. This is the responsibility of Network Rail. They have cut back the overgrowth on the Liverpool line side.

On the Manchester line side, half the path has been cut back. We think there are different landowners who own the part not yet cut back.

301/21-22 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

- (a) Sent/received – various emails regarding the traveller encampment on the Village Green (land owned by YHG). Also, numerous telephone complaints were received.
- (b) Sent/received – various emails / reports following contact from residents re: flytipping, overgrown shrubbery, etc.

302/21-22 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – various emails from Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA)
- (b) Received – update re: Manchester Airport Future Airspace project.
- (c) Received – Invitation to the Birchwood Service of Remembrance 2021. Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2021, 10.30am. The Clerk asked Members to let her know who will be attending the event, as an RSVP has been requested.
- (d) Received – post re: Woodland Management Activity Day with the Friends of Gorse Covert Mounds.

303/21-22 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Received - Stakeholder Bulletin – August 2021, and various Neighbourhood Alerts.
- (b) Sent/Received – emails re: the Town Council’s mobile speed activated awareness sign.
- (c) Sent/received – various emails re: verge parking in a business area, and traveller encampments.

304/21-22 **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 – PC5-21 – NALC call for evidence – National Resilience Strategy.
- (c) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins with various attachments, details of training sessions, etc.
- (d) Received – SLCC – various updates, briefings, news items, etc.

305/21-22 **BTC AUTUMN / WINTER MEETINGS**

The Clerk asked Members are asked to consider whether they wish to return to using the community meeting room within the main building for Town Council meetings, as the weather starts to turn colder.

Members still have some hesitation about returning to the meeting room, but it would be set out so that Members are not all directly facing each other round tables, and with windows open.



306/21-22 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC e-mail briefings. 'Clerk's & Councils Direct' and 'The Clerk' (September 2021).

307/21-22 **MEMBERS' REFERRALS MADE VIA THE CLERK PRIOR TO THE MEETING FOR CONSIDERATION AT THIS COUNCIL MEETING**

A number of Councillors had been contacted by the Chair of RIMAG requesting an update on plans regarding the Observation Tower in Risley Moss, that had been destroyed by an act of arson in 2017.

Councillor Bowden gave an update on the issues that have been experienced in trying to create a replacement for the tower.

It had become apparent that the original site cannot be built on again as there are still the remains of some ordnance under the ground in the area, left over from when the site was occupied by ordnance factories.

A new design had been drawn up for a different location on the Moss, and this had been put out to public consultation. At that time concerns were raised about access for people with mobility issues, pushchairs, etc.

Initially the cost of the project had been expected to be around £500,000. WBC had earmarked £250,000 and WREN had awarded £250,000 grant funding (although this had a time limit on it). The community also raised around £10,000 thousand pounds for the project (currently being held by RIMAG on behalf of residents).

Councillor Bowden said that when tenders for the work were received the lowest was around £1.2 million, which was clearly much more than expected. Since then, projected costs have continued to rise.

The money from WREN is no longer available, as despite them offering one time extension, no work could be undertaken in their timeframe, so the grant funding had to be withdrawn.

WBC cannot reapply, as WREN has now become the FCC Community Action Fund. Only applications for projects sited within 10 miles of an eligible FCC Environment waste facility can be accepted. Birchwood is no longer within a 10-mile radius of such a facility.

Councillor Bowden stated that alternative options are being considered, but disappointingly, it is not going to be the landmark visionary replacement that was hoped for. Any alternative design proposals will be communicated and publicised for consultation with the community.

Councillor Ball said that he hopes that any replacement will include some sort of recognition for the contribution from the community, which rallied round very quickly after the tower was burned down.

It was suggested that the old site could be re-used specifically as a community area, maybe with picnic tables, as part of a remediation plan.

Councillor Bowden said that RIMAG do great work in the area and that he will call their Chair with any information he can pass on regarding this matter.

**Action** Councillor Bowden to call RIMAG regarding the above.

(a) **Warrington Borough Council**

(i) Development Management Committee (DMC)

There were no items specific to Birchwood on the main agenda for discussion at the DMC meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.

(ii) To note that Councillor Allen was contacted by a resident after they were contacted by an Enforcement Officer regarding the moving of a fence line. WBC has advised that this constitutes a change of use of the land to residential garden. The resident is now required to apply for retrospective planning permission.

(iii) To note that a pre-application document for the grant of a Street Trading consent has been received. Members did not have any specific comments to submit, but hoped that eco-friendly utensils, etc. would be used.

(b) **Planning Decisions**

(i) Application No. 2021/39361 19 Kinsale Drive, Birchwood, WA3 6LX. Proposed single storey front extension. **Approved with conditions.**

(ii) Application No. 2021/39614 17 Palliser Close, Birchwood, WA3 6RT. Proposed 2 storey side/rear and single storey extensions with re-location of boundary fences. **Application withdrawn.**

(iii) Application No. 2021/39661 Existing base station, Rutherford House, Birchwood, WA3 6ZH. Class A Prior Approval – proposed upgrade of an existing base station consisting of the removal of 3 antennas and the installation of 6 antennas (top height of masts 26.1m (3.0m support pole) and 22.2m (5.4m support pole partially screened behind parapet) together with internal works to the existing cabinet and ancillary development. **Application approved.**

(iv) Application No. 2021/39745 14 Mansfield close, Birchwood, WA3 6QN. Proposed single storey rear extension to extend beyond the rear wall by 3.7m, height of 3.7m and height of the eaves to be 2.6m. **Prior approval not required.**

(v) Application No. 2021/39599 Admirals Road, Birchwood, WA3 6RN. Prior approval – Proposed 18.0m telecommunications monopole C/W wraparound cabinet at base and associated ancillary works. **Application approved.**

(c) **Planning Applications**

*All plans can be viewed via:*

[http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport\\_planning\\_and\\_environment/Planning/Se\\_arch\\_planning\\_applications/](http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport_planning_and_environment/Planning/Se_arch_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. 2021/39972 25 Ashmore Close, Birchwood, WA3 6QY. Proposed single storey side extension and front porch.

(ii) Application No. 2021/39086 3 Lords Lane, Birchwood, WA3 7AB. Proposed bedroom extension over existing garage to side elevation and extension to front of garage.

(iii) Application No. 2021/40072 1 Daniel close, Birchwood, WA3 6QL. Single storey front and side extension.

- (iv) Application No. 2021/39835 704 Warrington Road, WA3 6AU. Proposed erection of two storey side extension, single storey front and rear extensions.
- (v) Application No. 2021/39954 Car parking areas adjacent to 2 Kelvin Close, Birchwood, WA3 7PB. Part retrospective alterations to the layout of the site to provide additional car parking, landscaping and associated works.

The Clerk's office asked for a time extension for the Council to consider this application, at tonight's meeting. We have until tomorrow in which to make any comments.

Members discussed this application in detail, including the following concerns:

There is a very well-used public footpath (public realm) that borders the site, which was originally shielded from the car park with shrubs and trees. These have been removed, leaving a direct view across a large expanse of tarmac, severely affecting the visual amenity. In addition, some homes, where there should have been screening left in place, are now fully exposed to the car park and have no privacy.

Councillors discussed the increase in parking (c99 spaces) which includes several spaces that will not be accessible if another vehicle is parked in front/behind. Members believe that the application fails to comply with the Borough's current maximum number of parking spaces allowed, compared to WBC's standards.

In addition, it appears that no Travel Plan has been documented, and Councillors commented that the plans go against national and local policies which look to promote the use of public transport. An additional 99 vehicle movements will create more noise and pollution close to the affected homes, with the potential to significantly affect our residents' quality of life.

Following detailed discussions, Councillor Atkin **proposed**, Councillor Scott **seconded**, and it was **unanimously resolved** to object to this application on the following grounds:

1. Out of the additional 99 spaces being applied for, there are at least 13 parking spaces on the southwest side of the car park which are not independently accessible, and which would require a vehicle behind to be moved to be able to exit which is not practical. There are also a number of spaces which would require awkward manoeuvring to exit.
2. The site appears to have no cycle parking spaces at all and has no EV charging points that we are aware of, both extremely important if Warrington is to work towards its climate emergency plans of zero carbon by 2030 and its corresponding goals for sustainable travel.
3. At least two groups of parking spaces are now occupying areas which were originally planted with a mixture of trees and bushes with resulting loss of amenity. The much-used public footpath which borders the car park in a north-south direction now has a direct view of the buildings across a continuous expanse of tarmac, which is part new and partly deteriorated.
4. It is the Town Council's understanding from residents that when the buildings on Kelvin Close were originally constructed in around 1985, a condition imposed at the time was that there should be a buffer zone of several metres area between the car park and the properties on Smithills Close and Cadshaw Close to ensure minimum impact on residential amenity. Unfortunately, due to destruction of older planning documents from this period, there is no record.

Since that time, there has been substantial expansion of the car park back in the mid-90s, increasing traffic movements and related disturbance. Since then, further expansion, including this one has turned the site into a tarmac wasteland, with loss of attractive planting.

The current work which has taken place without seeking approval in advance, has taken out several sections of trees/bushes in the buffer zone in the southwest corner leaving some properties with no barrier whatsoever between their property and the car park, leading to substantial loss of amenity and potential for significant disturbance. Note that many of the spaces referred to in 1 above have been responsible for this loss.

5. The number of parking spaces on this plot is very high compared to the building size, and Councillors believe that it already failed to comply with the Borough Council's standards, before the current work was carried out. The Council's objectives are also to reduce private car usage and increase the use of public transport and active travel as a means of travelling to and from work. This expansion conflicts with this objective.
6. The number of car parking spaces on site is such that there will be significant disturbance for adjoining residents, and we believe that conditions based on hours of operation should be imposed regarding vehicle movements.
7. While the car park expansion work has been completed without any planning permission, it is evident that the work referred to in drawing 1145-PL-2009A to install fencing and additional planting to provide mitigation, has not been done.
8. The only publicly visible notice of the planning application was placed on a lamppost on Cadshaw Close, but on the other side of the street where affected parties were unlikely to see it.

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

It was agreed that if this application goes to a Development Management Control meeting, Councillor Ellis would be prepared to speak as a BTC Councillor. He would declare his interest (as he is on the DMC) and not take any part in any vote on the application.

### 309/21-22 **STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

As mentioned in Minute 294/21-22 above, confirmation of a date for a Policy, Strategy and Engagement working party meeting is still to be agreed (Councillor Ellis will circulate some date options). This working party meeting will discuss a number of considerations, including the creation of a new Strategy & Action Plan 2021-2024.

It was subsequently agreed that the Policy, Strategy and Engagement working party meeting will be held online, on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

**This part of the meeting concluded at 7.35 pm.**