

MINUTES OF THE MAY ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL,
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE
ON TUESDAY 24TH MAY 2022, 6.30 PM

Present: Councillor Ellis in the Chair
Councillors Allen, Atkin, Ball, Brereton, Dempsey, Evans, Reeves, Scott, Sheridan and Simcock

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

Apologies: Councillor Bowden (WBC Cabinet Meeting)
PCSO Palfrey (not on shift)

034/22-23 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2022/2023**

Councillor Ellis welcomed everyone to the meeting.

This being the Annual Council Meeting, Councillor Ellis then called for nominations for the office of Chair for the next municipal year.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Reeves and **seconded** by Councillor Brereton that Councillor Ellis be nominated for the office of Chair.

There were no other nominations for the office of Chair of the Council.

RESOLVED: unanimously that Councillor Ellis be appointed Chair for the municipal year 2022/2023.

Councillor Ellis accepted the appointment and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office in the presence of the Clerk.

Councillor Ellis in the Chair

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

035/22-23 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

Councillor Ellis then called for nominations for the office of Vice Chair for the municipal year 2022/2023.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Ellis and **seconded** by Councillor Sheridan that Councillor Dempsey be nominated for the office of Vice Chair.

There were no other nominations for the office of Vice Chair of the Council.

RESOLVED: unanimously that Councillor Dempsey be appointed Vice Chair for the municipal year 2022/2023.

036/22-23 **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 Ellis called for nominations for the office of Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2022/2023.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Ball and **seconded** by Councillor Atkin that Councillor Reeves be nominated as Leader of the Council.

There were no other nominations for the position of Leader of the Council.

RESOLVED: unanimously that Councillor Reeves be appointed Leader of the Council for the municipal year 2022/2023.

037/22-23 **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEMBERS**

The Chair reminded Councillors 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.

The Model Code of Conduct was updated in 2021 when Members expressed their preference to adopt the same Code of Conduct also adopted by Warrington Borough Council on 10th May 2021.

The purpose of the Code is to promote and maintain high standards of conduct. The Code has been adopted under section 27 of the Localism Act 2011 and is based on the following core principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. It sets out general obligations about the standards of conduct expected of members and co-opted members of the Council, together with provisions about registering and declaring interests. It can be viewed on the Town Council's website: <https://www.birchwoodtowncouncil.org.uk/council/code-of-conduct>

The RFO stated that there are no proposed changes to the Code of Conduct for 2022/2023

Members were requested to formally record their adoption of the Code of Conduct to operate for the period May 2022 – May 2023.

It was **unanimously resolved:** that the Town Council confirms the adoption of its current Code of Conduct (last revised in 2021).

038/22-23 **STANDING ORDERS 2022/2023**

The RFO reminded Members that this document was amended to incorporate amendments and updates made to NALC's Model Standing Orders in 2020. Statutory and/or legal text is published in bold type and cannot be removed.

Any references to 'the Clerk', 'Responsible Finance Officer', etc. have been altered to 'Proper Officer'.

The Standing Orders had already been considered by Members at the April 2022 meeting (see minute 027/22-23 (c)). Amendments have since been made as per Councillor Atkin's request for consistency, regarding references to 'he' or 'he/she', etc., throughout the document.

The RFO asked if Members have any comments to make or additional changes?

As there were no additional changes suggested by Members, the Clerk requested that Members consider formally adopting the Standing Orders May 2022 document.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Dempsey **seconded** by Councillor Evans and unanimously **resolved** to formally adopt the Standing Orders for 2022 - 2023.

039/22-23 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2022/2023**

The Clerk asked Members to consider formally adopting this new Financial Regulations document, which had previously been considered by Members at the April 2022 meeting (see Minute 027/22-23(b)).

It was **proposed** by Councillor Evans, **seconded** by Councillor Allen and **unanimously resolved** to formally adopt the amended Financial Regulations, which had been copied to Members in their papers.

040/22-23 **APPOINTMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S SUB-COMMITTEES – 2022/2023**

Councillors discussed the appointments to sub-committees and Members were asked if they wished to be considered for any particular committee.

It was **resolved**: that there would be three sub-committees for 2022/2023 as follows:

1. Finance, Audit and Personnel
2. Youth, Leisure, Community and Environmental
3. Policy, Strategy and Engagement

It was **resolved**: that the appointments to the three sub-committees are:

- | | | |
|-------|---|---|
| (i) | Finance, Audit and Personnel
Sub-committee | All Members |
| (ii) | Youth, Leisure, Community, and
Environmental Sub-committee | Councillor Allen, Atkin, Dempsey,
Ellis, Reeves, Sheridan and
Simcock |
| (iii) | Policy, Strategy and Engagement
Sub-committee | All Members |

041/22-23 **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES:**

Councillors discussed the appointment of representatives to outside bodies and **resolved that**: the representatives on outside bodies 2022/2023 would be as follows:

- (a) **Your Housing Group**
Councillor Brereton
Councillor Scott
- (b) **Police Representative**
Councillor Dempsey
Councillor Evans
- (c) **Friends of Birchwood Forest Park**
Councillor Simcock
Councillor Evans
- (d) **Risley Moss**
Councillor Evans

- (e) **Oakwood Community Association** (currently inactive)
Councillor Brereton, Councillor Evans, Councillor Simcock and Councillor Evans
- (f) **Birchwood Carnival Committee**
Councillor Atkin, Councillor Reeves and Councillor Simcock
- (k) **Warrington Rights of Way Forum**
Councillor Evans

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.

The Chair also reminded Members that it is a legal requirement for them to update their declaration of interest forms within 28 days of any changes being made.

Action Clerk's office to circulate copies of Members' current registration of interest forms and a copy of the blank form for them to complete and return to the office as soon as possible, if changes are needed. Hard copies will be sent to Councillors who do not have printers, if required.

042/22-23 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

The following comprises information taken from the Police report to Birchwood Town Council for the month of May to date.

Burglaries

- 4 reported burglaries of private dwellings

Thefts

- Increasing reports of theft of a bicycle

Criminal Damage

- 5 reports of criminal damage

Antisocial Behaviour

- 3 reports of nuisance/antisocial behaviour

The Police have reported that they caught an offender on the 22/05/2022 regarding the spate of bike thefts within Birchwood. The police have also been running bike marking events within the local area to help reduce thefts in the area. They have also been working with Birchwood Shopping Centre and have set up a business watch.

Within the last few weeks operation Sceptre (whereby people can anonymously surrender knives into knife bins) has begun, resulting in 31 knives being handed in.

This month a True Cam was also set up on Ordnance Avenue and Locking Stumps Lane. No activations were made. This is seen as positive as drivers will naturally slow in these areas if they think the Police will re-visit.

Mobile Speed Sign

The Clerk reported that Sgt Gulum has provided us with costings for the missing parts for the speed sign. The price comes to £500. He also advised that there would be no Police resource available to stand with the sign. The sign cannot be left unattended as it would be easy to remove or deactivate.

The Clerk stated that there are few options the Council could consider regarding this issue.

The Council has asked the Police to arrange for the sign to be serviced and the missing parts to be replaced, at their cost, and then find volunteers to help man the sign.

Alternatively, BTC could apply for funding from the PCC's fund or elsewhere for more permanent speed signs. This comes with its own costs as the amount requested would need to be match funded by the Council.

Members discussed the options and resolved to ask for the return of the mobile sign and accessories (in working order) and also investigate the possibility of applying for funding to help purchase a more permanent speed awareness sign solution.

The Chair confirmed that as per the action from the last meeting, he has emailed the results from the last speed monitoring operations to Members.

Actions Clerk's office to contact the Police regarding the above.
Clerk's office to investigate options and prices for speed awareness signs.

043/22-23 APRIL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Councillor Atkin **proposed**, Councillor Brereton **seconded** and it was **resolved** that: The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 26th April 2022 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

044/22-23 YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG) – UPDATE

Your Housing Group have confirmed that the work on installing bollards on the village Green is due to commence on the 20th June 2022.

There will be a residents meeting on the 9th June 2022 at 6pm for residents of Redshanks Lane. This is part of the Birchwood Priority Neighbourhood Plan.

045/22-23 BIRCHWOOD LEISURE AND TENNIS COMPLEX

(a) The Clerk contacted Birchwood Shopping Centre regarding parking concessions for users of the leisure centre on days that events are being held at the complex. The centre advised that due to ANPR it was not possible in that section of the car park. They stated that there is an all-day pay and display on the other side of the centre for those who wish to stay for longer than the permitted three hours. The centre management has to ensure that there are spaces available for the customers of the shopping centre.

Members asked if the leisure centre had thought about placing cones to prevent drivers parking where it is not permitted. Members also discussed other options to potentially alleviate the issue.

It was also suggested that Livewire could instruct any group or organisation that hire the centre for an event, to let their attendees know where they should and must not park.

Action Councillor Ellis will liaise with Livewire regarding the ongoing parking issue.

(b) The plans for the renovation of the Birchwood Leisure and Tennis Complex are now ready for viewing. There are also public consultation meetings planned for the coming weeks.

046/22-23 **PROPOSED PUBLIC MEETING**

Arrangements for the meeting are currently on hold due to attendees not being able to confirm a date due to unforeseen circumstances.

Members commented that residents are becoming frustrated with the lack of communication in regard to the matter of a Traveller Transit site and also the legal processes that must be followed prior to the moving on of Traveller encampments.

The Chair stated that at this time we could work to create a document to inform the residents of Birchwood regarding the legal processes and other matters relating to Traveller encampments. This document could be used to answer questions that resident might have to try to give some clarity to the situation.

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

047/22-23 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) Sent/Received - Various emails/ online reports / telephone calls following calls from residents re: flytipping, fallen trees, damaged pavements, etc.
- (b) Received – Survey regarding the consultation on Warrington's Draft Dog Control Public Space Protection Order – Closing date 29th July 2022
- (c) It was noted that BTC has still not received any feedback or reports from WBC, that had been promised at the last partnership meeting.

Councillor Ellis said that he will write to a WBC representative who attended the partnership meeting held on 25th March 2022 to ask why we have not been receiving the promised communications from them.

Action Councillor Ellis to contact WBC regarding the above.

048/22-23 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

- (a) Sent/Received - Various emails / online reports / telephone calls re: fallen trees, overgrown shrubs, fly-tipping, maintenance, etc.

049/22-23 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – Various update/information emails from Warrington Voluntary Action.
- (b) Received – Various LGC e-briefings.
- (c) Received - Poster from Friends of Gorse Covert Mounds for the meeting on the 1st June 2022 at 7.30pm.
- (d) To note that Councillor Atkin commented that he had attended one of the virtual engagement sessions relating to Stage 2 of the seven stage, fourteen step, four gateway Airspace Change process outlined in the [Civil Aviation Authority CAP1616 document](#) that the Manchester Airport Future Airspace Team are working through. He added that it does not appear that Birchwood will be greatly affected, if at all.

050/22-23 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Various Neighbourhood Alerts.
- (b) Stakeholder Bulletin for April 2022.
- (c) The meeting of the PCC is confirmed for the 31st May. Councillor Dempsey will represent the Town Council at this meeting.
- (d) The Police Museum will be opening for guided tour for Parish Councils – Members were asked if they were interested in attending one of the tours when offered. A few Members expressed an interest.

051/22-23 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (CHALC), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC), SOCIETY OF LOCAL COUNCIL CLERKS (SLCC)**

- (a) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins with various attachments, details of training sessions, etc.
- (b) Received – from SLCC – news updates, training information, details of conferences, etc.

052/22-23 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

(a) **Planning Query**

Councillor Dempsey has been in contact with a resident regarding a refused planning application. The resident is currently considering appealing using the appeals process.

(b) **Planning Decisions**

2022/40818 – 5, Penzance Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6ZP – Single storey extension – **Approved**

2021/39976 - 12, Nelson Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6NF - Retention of change of use of land from waste land to residential curtilage. **Approved.**

2022/40949 – Birchwood Children’s Services, Ainscough Road Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7PW - Retention of Change of use to School for Special Educational Needs – **Approved with conditions**

(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.

2022/41563 Location: 24, Jay Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6QJ
Description of development: Two storey rear extension

2022/41186 – 6, Eccleston Close, Birchwood, WA3 7NL. Proposed amendment to size of porch, change of position of window from front to side, change window type to high level window on the side

2022/41331- Terberg Matec UK. – Leacroft Rd, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6PJ – Change of use of storage and distribution unit to ambulance station and training centre with parking and associated works

2022/41560 – Birchwood Leisure and Tennis Complex – Brock Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7PT – Proposed change of use from Leisure Centre to Library.

This part of the meeting concluded at 7.00 pm.