

**MINUTES OF THE MAY ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL,**  
**HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE**  
**ON TUESDAY 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY 2023, 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. Thomas

**Apologies:** Councillor Bowden (WBC Cabinet Meeting)

040/23-24 **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR 2023/2024**

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 Ellis and **seconded** by Councillor Simcock that Councillor Dempsey be nominated for the office of Chair.

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

**RESOLVED: unanimously** that Councillor Dempsey be appointed Chair for the municipal year 2023/2024.

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

**Councillor Dempsey in the Chair**

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

041/23-24 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

Councillor Dempsey then called for nominations for the office of Vice Chair for the municipal year 2023/2024.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Ellis and **seconded** by Councillor Brereton that Councillor Sheridan 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 Sheridan be appointed Vice Chair for the municipal year 2023/2024.

#### 042/23-24 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 Dempsey noted that Councillor Reeves was the current of Leader of the Council and Councillor Reeves stated that he would be happy to continue in the position for the municipal year 2023/20234.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Evans 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 2023/2024.

#### 043/23-24 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 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007.

Birchwood Town Council's Code of Conduct was last updated in 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 2023/2024.

Members were requested to formally record their adoption of the Code of Conduct to operate for the period May 2023 – May 2024.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Evans, **seconded** by Councillor Scott and **unanimously resolved:** that the Town Council confirms the adoption of its current Code of Conduct (last revised in 2021).

#### 044/23-24 STANDING ORDERS 2023/2024

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.

The Standing Orders have had no additional changes to them for the 2023/2024 municipal year.

As there were no additional changes suggested by Members, the Clerk requested that Members consider formally adopting the Standing Orders May 2023 document.

It was **proposed** by Councillor Reeves, **seconded** by Councillor Evans and **unanimously resolved** to formally adopt the Standing Orders for 2023 - 2024.

045/23-24 **FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2023/2024**

The RFO explained some draft changes to the Financial Regulations which incorporate recommendations raised by the internal auditor in his 2022/2023 interim audit report. These changes include added text and new paragraphs.

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

046/23-24 **APPOINTMENT OF THE COUNCIL'S SUB-COMMITTEES – 2023/2024**

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 four sub-committees for 2023/2024 as follows:

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

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

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (i) Finance, Audit and Personnel Sub-committee                 | Councillors Atkin, Dempsey, Ellis, Evans, Reeves and Scott             |
| (ii) Youth, Leisure, Community and Environmental Sub-committee | Councillors Allen, Atkin, Dempsey, Ellis, Reeves, Sheridan and Simcock |
| (iii) Policy, Strategy and Engagement Sub-committee            | All Members  |
| (iv) Climate Change  | Councillors Brereton, Dempsey and Ellis                                |

047/23-24 **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES:**

Councillors discussed the appointment of representatives to outside bodies and **resolved that**: the representatives on outside bodies 2023/2024 would be as follows:

- (a) **Your Housing Group**  
Councillor Brereton and Councillor Scott
- (b) **Police Representatives**  
Councillor Dempsey and Councillor Evans
- (c) **Risley Moss**  
Councillor Evans
- (d) **Birchwood Carnival Committee**  
Councillor Atkin, Councillor Sheridan and Councillor Simcock
- (e) **Warrington Rights of Way Forum**  
Councillor Evans
- (f) **Friends of Birchwood Forest Park**  
Councillor Evans and Councillor Simcock

## **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 Register of Interest Forms within 28 days of any changes being made.

Councillors had been given blank copies of Register of Interest Forms, in case anyone needs to update their information.

**Action** Members to update their Register of Interest Forms, if necessary, and return to the office as soon as possible.

A query was raised regarding ‘sensitive information’ in regard to the Register of Interest Forms.

The Clerk stated that the Monitoring Officer at WBC was the person who could advise Councillors regarding this query.

## 048/23-24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

### (a) **Police Monthly Update**

No police were in attendance and no police report was provided to the Council.

### (b) **Public Participation**

No public were present at the meeting.

## 049/23-24 **APRIL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Ellis **proposed**, Councillor Simcock **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2023 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

## 050/23-24 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### (a) **Street Lighting**

The Clerk reported that this matter is still ongoing regarding the significant number of lights still out in the Locking Stumps / Birchwood Park Avenue area. This is due to a supply issue.

Councillor Ellis said that he had written to Electricity North West. They have advised that the matter is complicated, particularly as the cabling runs through a number of residents gardens.

### (b) **Admirals Square**

The Clerk stated that WBC has said that BTC needs to write directly to the landowners regarding the ongoing maintenance issues in Admirals Square. WBC has not committed to offering any further assistance with this matter.

### (c) **Armstrong Close and Ainscough Road (potential adoption of street lighting)**

We have still not had any updates from WBC regarding this matter.

051/23-24 **YOUR HOUSING**

The Clerk had received a brief response following a query raised by a resident regarding chippings being left in piles after YHG contractors had undertaken tree work in the area.

YHG said that it is bio-degradable and they keeps the weeds down.

052/23-24 **TRAVELLER TRAINING**

The Clerk advised that there would be in-person training taking place on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023, at Parkers Farm, as Dawn Taylor has advised that she prefers to deliver the training face-to-face.

A number of Councillors indicated that they wished to undertake the training, along with the three office staff members.

053/23-24 **PLANNING UPDATE**

Planning Application 2021/40696 – Trident Business Park – Proposed demolition of existing premises and redevelopment of the site.

Councillor Ellis stated that Historic England had recently raised the point that about eight of the buildings on the site might be of significant historical interest, as they were part of one of the old Royal Ordnance Factories. They are some of the last examples of Royal Ordnance Factories in the UK.

054/23-24 **WILDFLOWERS**

The Clerk informed Members that WBC will now seed four sites in Birchwood. The small Fisherfield Drive site can no longer be included, as the wooden blocks are now preventing the necessary equipment from accessing the area.

055/23-24 **BIRCHWOOD CARNIVAL**

The Clerk reminded Councillor Dempsey that, as the new Chair of the Council, he will be invited by the Carnival Committee to open the event.

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

056/23-24 **BRIDGEWATER NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

The Bridgewater NHS foundation Trust will be having a stall at this year's Birchwood Carnival on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2023 so that they can inform residents about the project that is ongoing in Oakwood and to speak to residents about any issues they might wish to raise with them.

057/23-24 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) The Clerk has circulated the WBC report to Councillors prior to the meeting
- (b) Sent/Received - Various emails/online reports/telephone calls following queries/contact from residents regarding flytipping, tree/shrubbery issues, grass cutting, potholes, land ownership queries, etc.
- (c) Received – various Traffic Notices.

058/23-24 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

Sent/Received - Various emails/reports following queries/contact from residents including issues with flytipping, shrubbery maintenance, etc.

059/23-24 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Received – Various emails from Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA).
- (b) Received – pdf copy of the presentation from the recent John Lennon Airport Airspace Change Proposal Stage 2 Engagement Review Sessions.
- (c) To note as a ‘one-off’, our team litter picked an area of woodland that was highlighted as a ‘grot spot’ by a resident.

The team does not usually litter pick within the woods, so the work was done when other priority work had been undertaken.

The Chair passed on his thanks to the BTC maintenance team for undertaking this clean-up.

060/23-24 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Various Neighbourhood Alerts.
- (b) Sent – information from residents (received in emails) re: ongoing off-road bike issues in several areas of Birchwood.

061/23-24 **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, a link to the 2023 ‘The Good Councillor’s Guide to Employment’, events information, etc.
- (b) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins with various attachments, details of training sessions, etc.
- (c) Received – SLCC – various updates, briefings, new items, etc.
- (d) Received – ChALC – Vacancy for ChALC Board.

062/23-24 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC e-mail correspondence/briefings.

063/23-24 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

Councillors have all read and considered the planning matters.

**Planning Query**

The Clerk mentioned that a resident spoke to the RFO regarding the housing development to the rear of the old Police Station on Delenty Drive.

It appears that houses on the development are being advertised by an estate agent online and that the properties are perhaps being sold 'off plan'.

The Clerk explained that upon viewing the advert herself, it appears that the layout and windows are different than in the initial plans and that two oak trees which are protected with a tpo are not obvious on those plans.

**Action:** Clerk's office to contact WBC regarding both the apparent alterations from the previous plans and the protected trees.

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

- (a) The next DMC is scheduled to take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2023. There were no items specific to Birchwood on the main agenda for discussion.
- (b) A comment was made regarding the Trident application, that it had not yet gone to DMC as there is some outstanding information from another organisation that needs to be considered.

### **Planning Decisions**

- (a) **2023/0024/ADV** – Birchwood Tennis And Leisure Complex, Brock Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7PT – Proposed signage **Granted**
- (b) **2023/00387/DISCON** – 1&2 Kelvin Close, Warrington, WA3 7PB – Discharge of condition 6 (Surface water drainage) and Condition 14 (CHEMP) on previously approved application 2020/36968 (Multi-storey car park.) **Discharged**
- (c) **2022/42405** – 4 Cadshaw Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7LR – First floor extension above existing ground floor extension. (Full planning – householder.) **Refused**
- (d) **2022/42661** – 23 Deanwater Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6ER – Rear extension and a front porch. (Full planning – householder.) **Granted**
- (e) **2022/42766** – 16 Jay Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6QJ – Demolition of rear conservatory and proposed erection of a single storey rear and side extension and a new porch below existing front canopy. (Full planning – householder.) **Granted**

### **Planning Applications**

*All plans can be viewed via:*

[http://www.warrington.gov.uk/home/transport\\_planning\\_and\\_environment/Planning/Search\\_planning\\_applications/](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.

- (a) **2022/42766** – 16 Jay Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6QJ – Demolition of a rear conservatory and proposed erection of a single storey rear and side extension and a new porch below existing front canopy.

- (b) **2023/00387/DISCON** – 1&2 Kelvin Close, Warrington, WA3 7PB - Discharge of condition 6 (Surface water drainage) and condition 14 (CHEMP) on previously approved application 2020/36968 (Multi-storey car park).
- (c) **2023/00631/CLDP** – 7 Picton Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6NL – Proposed demolition of existing conservatory and construction of a single storey rear extension.
- (d) **2023/00617/CLDP** – 21 Killingworth Lane, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6TA – Proposed single storey side extension.
- (e) **2023/00586/FULH** – 33 Havisham Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7NB – Demolition of existing side garage/office to be replaced with two storey side extension.

**This part of the meeting concluded at 7.00 pm.**