

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE
ON TUESDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2023, 6.00 PM

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

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

PCSO Tom Palfrey – Cheshire Police

Apologies: Councillors Ellis (Climate Change Meeting) and Evans (health).

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 Reeves declared that he is no longer a Governor at Birchwood Community High School. He will amend his Register of Interests accordingly.

221/23-24 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PCSO Palfrey provided the following report for the period 25th October – 27th November 2023:

“Tru Cam has been deployed to areas around Birchwood, we have caught 7 drivers going over the speed limit, the highest being 45mph.

Anti-Social Behavior 6 reports

*1x Heather Close- Incident involving a possible XL bully.
1x Medina Close- Fireworks being set off in the street.
1x Lyster Close- Suspicious male.
1x Keyes Close- ongoing neighbour dispute
1x Admirals Road-off Road bike
1x Chadwick House- Youths throwing stones at windows*

Burglary Dwelling 2 reports

*1x 174 Redshank Lane- resident came home to find door insecure with valuables lined up at door ready to take.
1x Deanwater Close*

Burglary Others

N/A

Vehicle Crime / Offences – Reports

4x Leacroft Road- Stolen wagons and stock

Criminal Damage

*1x Greenfinch Grove- Youths damaging Halloween decorations outside a property.
1x Birchwood Shopping Centre- Damage to a vehicle in car park.”*

PCSO Palfrey stated that TruCam speed enforcements have been carried out in the area, one on Warrington Road in Risley, which caught 7 drivers speeding in the space of half an hour, and on Glover Road in Locking Stumps, during which one driver was caught speeding within half an hour. He explained that there is only one TruCam for Warrington East so this resource has to be shared, but he hopes that the visible presence of the enforcement operation in the area will be enough to deter drivers in future.

The Chair thanked PCSO Palfrey for his attendance, and PCSO Palfrey left the meeting.

(b) **Public Participation**

There were no residents in attendance at the meeting.

222/23-24 OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Councillor Simcock **proposed**, Councillor Ball **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 24th October 2023 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

PROGRESS

223/23-24 WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)

Communication

The Clerk circulated the November WBC report to Members prior to the meeting.

(a) **Locking Stumps Play Area**

After liaising with WBC, the Clerk’s office has still not received a draft press release.

(b) **Graffiti in the Area**

The Clerk stated that the graffiti on the side of Birchwood Tennis Centre has been removed, and that the offensive graffiti at Lowes Farm subway has also been removed, however more has since appeared in its place.

Action: Clerk’s office to report new graffiti via Firmstep.

(c) **Blocked Drains**

The Clerk said that the BTC Maintenance Team assessed the drains at Keyes Close and Strawberry Close and reported back that it appears the work has been completed and there were no current issues. The team will continue to monitor the area.

Since the last meeting, the underpass near Birchwood Fire Station had been flooded for a number of weeks and, after several reports via Firmstep, it was escalated to BTC's WBC contact, Simone. The work has now been completed on clearing the drains, and it appears that some tree work has been undertaken in the vicinity of the underpass.

(d) **Admirals Square**

The Clerk stated that this is still ongoing and there has been no communication from the landowners.

Councillors enquired if WBC could be encouraged to put a Compulsory Purchase Order in for the land in question so that it can be properly maintained, or if it has been escalated to the legal team.

The Clerk stated that this has been passed to various departments and Directors within WBC, and she is not aware if it has been delegated to the legal team, who would know more about any future steps that could be taken.

Councillors asked if BTC could keep 'putting pressure' on WBC to do something about this, emphasising the health and safety issues.

Action: Clerk's office to continue to liaise with WBC regarding this matter.

(e) **Annual Wildflowers**

The Clerk said that the wildflowers have now been cut down on the roundabout near the Asda petrol station and probably will not be replanted in that location next year due to feedback about sightlines from residents.

(f) **Walled Garden Boardwalk**

The Clerk stated that the boardwalk at the Walled Garden has now been fixed by WBC.

(g) **Street Lighting**

The Clerk stated that the reports Councillors Atkin and Ellis had compiled of their local areas street lighting issues, had now been sent over to our contact at WBC.

The Clerk said that the area of Oakwood is yet to be assessed.

Action: Councillors to complete report for street lighting issues in Oakwood.

224/23-24 **BIRCHWOOD ROYAL ORDNANCE FACTORY (ROF) MEMORIAL**

The Clerk noted that both Councillor Ellis and Councillor Sheridan attended the Memorial on 12th November and laid a wreath on behalf of BTC to acknowledge the dedication of the people who worked in the Risley ROFs during WWII.

Councillor Sheridan said that it was a lovely event which was well-attended, with around thirty residents who came in harsh weather conditions. She said many passers-by were attracted to the event and the display put on at the Ranger's Centre was excellent.

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

225/23-24 WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/online reports/telephone calls following queries/contact from residents regarding flytipping, tree/shrubbery/hedge issues (including ownership) etc.
- (b) Received – Email from a resident enquiring about the absence of windows on bus shelters in Birchwood. The Clerk's office followed up with WBC, but to date, no response has been received.
- (c) Sent – Email to WBC Environmental Enforcement Officer to report dumped milk crates and bottles on Ordnance Avenue.
- (d) Sent – Email to WBC Operations and Commercial Services Manager with a report on the issues BTC have had with Firmstep, as requested by representatives at a meeting with BTC.
- (e) Received – Email from WBC's Heat Network Study asking if BTC could support WBC's bid to the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero for grant funding.

The Clerk asked Members if they would like for BTC to support this, and it was **unanimously resolved** to support WBC's bid.

Action: Clerk's office to confirm support in writing to the Department for Energy and Net Zero.

- (f) Received – Multiple emails from a resident who is unhappy about a WBC owned tree near her property. The resident has reported via Firmstep and has received minor feedback and asked if BTC could undertake the work. The Clerk's office informed the resident that BTC's Maintenance Team do not undertake tree work and advised them to follow the complaints process.

The resident has since contacted Councillors and is unhappy with the response given and with the lack of response from WBC.

Action: Clerk's office to liaise with WBC and the resident regarding this matter.

226/23-24 YOUR HOUSING GROUP

- (a) Sent/received – various emails/reports following queries/contact from residents including issues with flytipping, shrubbery maintenance, trees blocking light from street lamps, etc.
- (b) Received – Email from resident regarding unsafe sightline at the exit to Lyster Close. An email was sent to YHG and subsequently the vegetation was faced off.
- (c) Sent – Email to YHG regarding a damaged brick wall. YHG has booked a repair.

227/23-24 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE/ISSUES**

- (a) Received – various emails from Warrington Voluntary Action (WVA).
- (b) Received – a request from Cheshire Fire Authority asking to attend a future Council Meeting to discuss the draft 2024 – 2028 Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). This has been circulated to Councillors via email.

Councillor Atkin offered a brief precis regarding the (negative) effect that the changes will have at Birchwood Fire Station.

Councillor Scott stated that the justification for the changes seems to be that the fire service wants to do more work in the community as well as being on call. He wondered how much more work will be undertaken in the Birchwood community to mitigate for the lost response time.

Action: To invite a representative from Cheshire Fire Authority to deliver a 10 minute presentation at the start of the December meeting.

- (c) Received/Sent – Emails from/to the Chair of Locking Stumps Primary School PTA regarding the use of BTC’s Sleigh for their school Christmas Market event on Monday 18th December 2023.
- (d) Received – Email from resident enquiring if surface improvement can be made to the 5-a-side kickabout pitch in Forest Park. The resident was referred to WBC, as the landowner.

228/23-24 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Received – Various Neighbourhood Alerts
- (b) Received – Email from PCSO Palfrey regarding PCC Survey – Victim Focus – A study looking at the experiences and prevalence of abuse and violence against women and girls from birth. This was circulated to Members and shared on Facebook.

229/23-24 **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, events information, etc.
- (b) Received – ChALC weekly e-bulletins with various attachments, details of training sessions, etc.
- (c) Received – SLCC – various updates, briefings, news items, etc
- (d) Received – Email from ChALC containing document of guidance in respect of climate change for commenting on planning applications.

230/23-24 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC e-mail correspondence/briefings.

231/23-24 **MEMBER'S REFERRAL REGARDING WASTE BIN STORAGE AREAS ON CHATFIELD DRIVE ESTATE – COUNCILLOR DEMPSEY**

Councillor Dempsey stated that in his Ward of Chatfield, there are many communal waste storage areas. He reported that these communal spaces are often misused, especially regarding the recycling bins, and that there are many times they have suffered missed collections. He said that there have been multiple rodent sightings and residents are unhappy.

Councillor Dempsey stated that, while this problem is escalated during the current bin strikes, this has been an ongoing issue for some time.

Councillor Dempsey stated that he would like more pressure to be put on Your Housing Group to consider a way forward with regards to a build up of refuse in the area and to look at a way of containing the resident's household rubbish safely and in a way that makes the area look presentable.

Councillor Scott confirmed that the recycling bins in Hamnett Court also tend to fill up very quickly between collections.

Councillor Dempsey said that he would like a YHG walkabout to be arranged in the area of Chatfield Drive, so that he and other Councillors could discuss these concerns with YHG representatives directly.

Councillor Ball asked whether YHG could alleviate some of the waste issues for their residents during the current bin strikes, and consider emptying some of the more full, communal bins, as a duty of care.

Action Clerk's office to liaise with YHG regarding these concerns.

232/23-24 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

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

- (i) There was nothing of specific relevance to Birchwood on the agenda at the November 2023 DMC meeting.

At the time of the Town Council Meeting, there were no documents currently available for the DMC scheduled for 7th December 2023.

- (ii) Information re: enforcement cases specific to Birchwood have been circulated to Members.

(b) **Planning Decisions**

- (i) **Application No. 2023/00925/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of Condition 43 (HS2 Ecology safeguarded area) on previously approved application 2023/00333 (Motorway service area). **Discharged.**
- (ii) **Application No. 2023/00926/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of Condition 42 (HS2 Utilities safeguarded area) on previously approved application 2023/00333 (Motorway service area). **Discharged.**

- (iii) **Application No. 2023/00927/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of Condition 41 (Design and Method statement) on previously approved application 2023/00333 (Motorway service area). **Discharged.**
- (iv) **Application No. 2023/01096/FULH** 8 Langwell Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6TB. Detached garage in front of principal elevation of property. **Granted.**
- (v) **Application No. 2023/00847/FULH** 99 Carrington Close, Birchwood, Warrington WA3 7QB. Proposed front extension at first floor level over existing garage. Resubmission of 2022-42737. **Refused.**

(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. 2023/01386/DISCON** Land at Trident Business Park, Warrington. Discharge of Condition 7 (Ecological, tree and Hedgerow protection scheme), Condition 10 (Bat Assessment) and Condition 12 Bio diversity enhancement management plan) on previously approved application 2021/40696 (Employment Use).

Councillors had no comments to make regarding the above applications.

This part of the meeting concluded at 6.50 pm.