

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL,
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE
ON TUESDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2025, 6PM

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

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

1 Member of the Public - Planning Applicant

PCSOs Palfrey and Roberts – Warrington East Police

Apologies: Councillors Allman (away), B. Dhillon (personal) and K. Dhillon (personal)

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

195/25-26 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PCSO Palfrey presented his Police Report for October.

‘Anti-Social Behaviour x6

1x Forbes Close – Suspicious males

2x Campion Close – Youth related ASB

1x Birchwood Forest Park – Youth related ASB

1x Linnet Grove – Suspicious vehicle

1x Birchwood Forest Park – Incident relating to a dog

Burglary Dwelling

N/A

Burglary Others

N/A

Vehicle Crime / Offences – Reports x1

1x Ravenhurst Court – Pallets stolen from trailer

Criminal Damage x1

1x Leacroft Road – Encampment

PCSO Palfrey reported that although incidents of anti-social behaviour appeared to have increased over the past month, the majority of reports received did not amount to anything serious. He explained that, following the Warrington Youth Zone initiative during the summer, the Police team is now familiar with most of the young people involved in such behaviour. He added that the incidents are largely confined to a small group and are generally of a minor or nuisance nature.

PCSO Palfrey explained that Warrington Police will be conducting ‘Operation Treacle’ over the Halloween and Bonfire Night period, with Officers doing late shifts.

Councillor Ellis enquired if there have been any reports of anti-social behaviour at Birchwood Golf Club, as he was aware that young people had been accessing the site on both electric and conventional bicycles, causing damage to the green.

PCSO Palfrey responded that he was not aware of any such reports but confirmed that he would visit the Golf Club following his return from leave.

Councillor Ellis stated that there are multiple high-powered, electric bikes being ridden along Glover Road in a dangerous manner. He said that the riders are often dressed in dark clothing, wearing balaclavas.

Councillor Sheridan reported that this is also a problem along Admirals Road.

PCSO Palfrey advised that a recent operation had been conducted to target the use of off-road and electric bikes. During a four-hour period, nine bikes were confiscated. He confirmed that this operation is ongoing and emphasised the importance of public cooperation in providing intelligence to support Police activity. He encouraged Councillors to share any relevant information by email.

PCSO Palfrey explained that officers are not permitted to pursue offenders either on foot or in vehicles, as doing so could lead to further incidents. He noted that the Police have access to a specialist scrambler unit capable of following offenders safely.

Councillor Price reported that he had recently attended a presentation by the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), during which the concept of ‘hotspot policing’ was discussed. He asked whether the anti-social use of electric bikes might fall within this category.

PCSO Palfrey replied that this was possible, but it would likely be classified more specifically under anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Ellis asked PCSO Palfrey what became of the Warrington Youth Zone activities during the summer, as he had mentioned at a previous meeting that Oakwood Community Association have some funds that could be used to support this incentive.

PCSO Palfrey confirmed that the summer events had been successful but were currently on hold. He explained that, due to recent staffing changes at Warrington Youth Zone, consideration is being given to how and when future events might be organised. He thanked Councillor Ellis for the offer of funding from the Oakwood Community Association and stated that he would contact Councillor Ellis again once further plans had been established.

The Chair thanked PCSO Palfrey and PCSO Roberts for attending the meeting, and they left.

(b) **Public Participation**

The Chair explained that the member of the public was attending on behalf of a planning application which will be discussed later in tonight’s meeting (*Application No. 2025/01365/FUL*) and that, whilst the Council cannot discuss the matter with him present, due to the time constraints for comments on the application, advised Councillors to ask any questions they might have to the applicant whilst he is in attendance.

The Clerk enquired about how the pool would operate, specifically regarding who the target audience will be, and the cost associated with it. She explained that some areas of Birchwood fall within the indices of deprivation map.

The applicant stated that he has worked as a swimming teacher for several years and therefore has first-hand experience of the difficulties caused by overcrowded lessons, both for learners and instructors. He explained that his intention is to limit class sizes to between six and eight pupils, depending on age and ability. He further confirmed that he proposes to have one teacher in the pool and one instructor positioned poolside during each lesson.

The applicant also confirmed that lessons would be open to all individuals, regardless of age or gender, and that he hopes to offer additional classes such as 'Aquafit' sessions and parent and baby classes.

The applicant explained that, as the business operates as a limited company, it is liable for VAT. Consequently, lesson prices would need to be approximately 20% higher than those currently charged by LiveWire in order to offset this cost. He added that the smaller class ratios and the competitive wage rates he intends to offer swimming teachers would also influence the overall pricing structure. While he noted that final prices would depend on a number of factors, including any unforeseen building repair costs, he estimated that lessons would be priced between £11.50 and £13.00 per session.

Councillor Atkin enquired whether there were any measures proposed to make the lessons more affordable for residents.

The applicant advised that discounted rates were being considered for multiple family members enrolling in lessons, as well as for individuals in receipt of income-based benefits. However, he stated that the specific details of these arrangements were yet to be determined.

Councillor Ball asked whether any market research had been undertaken, noting concern that, should the facility not attract sufficient resident participation, Birchwood Shopping Centre could be left with an unoccupied unit unsuitable for alternative use due to its adaptation for a swimming pool.

The applicant explained that the proposed pool would be an above-ground structure, which would take approximately one week to install and, in the event of closure, a further week to remove. He stated that one of the conditions of renting the space is that the unit must be returned to its original condition upon vacating.

Councillor Price enquired which unit the proposed swimming pool would occupy, noting that the naming of the unit was unclear online.

The applicant confirmed that the proposal relates to the unit currently occupied by B&M Express. He explained that the business does not intend to include additional facilities such as a shop or café, in order to support and complement the existing local businesses within the area.

The Chair thanked the applicant for attending the meeting, noting that his attendance and responses would be helpful to Councillors in their consideration of the matter later in the meeting.

The applicant left the meeting.

196/25-26 **SEPTEMBER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Ellis **proposed**, Councillor Brereton **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd September 2025 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

PROGRESS

197/25-26 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL (WBC)**

Proposed Installation of Visibility Mirror on Chatfield Drive

Councillor Price advised Members that he had made enquiries with WBC pertaining to a site where he and a resident discussed whether there might be a potential to install of a visibility mirror on a bend on Chatfield Drive.

WBC has indicated that it will not be able to install a mirror at this location.

198/25-26 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG) – UPDATES**

The Clerk informed Members that in addition to the various walkabouts that are undertaken with representatives of YHG (*Ref: BTC Strategic Plan 2024-2028 Action 3.11*) she attends quarterly online meetings with YHG. The Clerk shared items that are currently being updated and discussed:

(a) **Birches Playground – Locking Stumps**

The Clerk stated that she has been informed that YHG have had a change of repairs contractor and are waiting on further information regarding this.

(b) **Bracken Close Footpath**

The Clerk stated that this was sent to WBC Enforcement and that YHG have asked for an update.

(c) **Flytipping – Whitethroat Walk and Partridge Close**

The Clerk reported that these have been actioned for removal by YHG.

(d) **Strawberry Close Sightline Issues**

The Clerk reported that the sightline issue is now with the landscaping team who will be addressing the issue.

(e) **Issues on Redshank Estate Following YHG Walkabout**

The Clerk stated that the issues uncovered on the YHG walkabout on the Redshank Estate have now been addressed.

(f) **MUGA (The Cage) at Chatfield Drive**

The Clerk reported that she had raised concerns with YHG regarding the condition of the MUGA, including the presence of overgrown weeds and the state of the flooring. YHG are looking into this.

(g) **Play Area on Centurion Close**

The Clerk stated that, after health and safety concerns for the play area on Centurion Close, YHG have allegedly made the area safe, but BTC operatives are unsure if this is to a satisfactory standard.

(h) **Tenant Surgeries**

The Clerk stated that the last YHG Tenant Surgery for 2025 has now taken place. She has enquired whether these will be resuming in 2026, and has requested that some take place after 5pm. We are currently waiting on confirmation.

(i) **Spinal Footpath**

The Clerk stated that, due to recent confusions over the ownership of the Spinal Footpath in Oakwood, YHG are arranging for a draftsman to look further into this.

(j) **Village Green – Ainscough Common**

The Clerk stated that there have been multiple email exchanges between BTC and YHG regarding the graffiti and vandalism on the Village Green. She said Officers had reported broken benches as a matter of health and safety, but due to lack of response from YHG's contractors, BTC removed the bench.

The Clerk stated that there is still more to be done regarding removal and restoration of some of the benches in this area.

(k) **Fire – Dunnock Grove**

The Clerk stated that she had been in contact with a resident who had a fire at their property in Dunnock Grove. This was determined to be from a signal amplifier. We have been informed that the insurance company has not backed their claim.

(l) **Social Media**

The Clerk noted that she will speak with YHG about the feedback on social media regarding YHG's lack of response with its tenants.

(m) **Lack of Response from Property Agents**

The Clerk stated that she will discuss the lack of response with YHG Property Agents. She noted that one agent, who covers areas including Redshank and part of Oakwood, is generally very communicative; however, the agents responsible for Locking Stumps and the remainder of Oakwood rarely respond to correspondence.

(n) **Mobile CCTV Unit – The Container**

The Clerk stated that she will discuss the potential of a mobile CCTV unit for flytipping offences at the Container on the Redshank Estate. She noted recently, a resident came forward with video footage of flytipping being left outside the container, however, they were not able to ascertain the full number plate.

(o) **Fern Close**

Councillor Ellis asked if the Clerk could discuss a house on Fern Close that had been discussed on a previous walkabout between YHG and BTC, as it allegedly is overrun with ivy. The Clerk responded that she will bring this up during her meeting.

(p) **Landscaping**

The Clerk stated that she will be raising the issue that landscaping in YHG areas has been sub-par this year. She said that this has been mentioned constantly on social media and our team have noticed issues with it.

Councillor Brereton said that there has been some areas, such as Dunnock Grove, which have remained untouched.

199/25-26 **COUNCILLOR EMAIL ADDRESS ISSUES**

The Clerk reminded Members that the Administrative Assistant is available during her office hours to assist any Councillors who require support in accessing their BTC email accounts.

It was noted that three Councillors have yet to access their official email addresses.

The Clerk further advised that, in accordance with Assertion 10, Officers are no longer permitted to contact Councillors via personal email accounts and must now use official BTC email addresses for all correspondence.

200/25-26 **BLOOD DONATION SESSIONS**

The Clerk reported that she has managed to speak with Give Blood, who say that they will consider setting up a blood donation station if a suitable location can be found. They require a space around the size of a tennis court, that nine beds can fit in.

The Clerk said that she has liaised with Birchwood Shopping Centre regarding possible spaces, and was told that the space where the NHS Vaccination Clinic was is currently free until December, however, the monthly business rates are charged at £1600 per month.

The Clerk stated that maybe Birchwood Park would be a more suitable and potentially affordable location.

Councillor Reeves suggested contacting Thomas Risley Church, as he is aware that they have held donation sessions in previous years.

Action Officers to make enquiries with Thomas Risley Church and Birchwood Park.

201/25-26 **ALDI CAR PARK**

The Clerk reported that recent posts on social media indicate that the signage in the Aldi car park has been changed following disputes regarding parking charges at the site. The Clerk noted that the previous wording, which stated, "Aldi customers only" and "no parking outside of store hours", has now been removed.

202/25-26 **ABANDONED TROLLEYS**

The Administrative Assistant reported that she has been liaising with Wanzl/Trolleywise regarding an apparent lack of response to reports of abandoned trolleys in the area.

The Head of Trolleywise arranged for the newly appointed area operative to visit BTC's offices, where the Administrative Assistant and Senior Maintenance Officer discussed several identified 'hotspot' locations, such as the Spinal Path, and provided accompanying maps.

During his visit, the operative explained that he is currently the sole operative responsible for the area and travels from Yorkshire twice a week to collect trolleys from Birchwood.

He further advised that he had been contacted by a local resident who has been assisting by providing information on the locations of abandoned trolleys. As a result, he has concentrated on retrieving these specific trolleys and has not yet been able to cover other areas within Birchwood, which led to the misunderstanding that collections had not been taking place.

The Administrative Assistant confirmed that, going forward, she will provide location details to the operative via WhatsApp or text message, as this is his preferred method of communication rather than email.

203/25-26 **MEMBERS REFERRAL UPDATES**

The Clerk reported that she has written to Highways regarding both of Councillor Atkin's Members' Referrals from the September Meeting.

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

204/25-26 **WARRINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

- (a) Sent/Received – Various emails/online reports/telephone calls following queries/contact from residents regarding a variety of local issues on WBC land.
- (b) Received – a response from the Operations and Commercial Services Manager regarding ideas put forward about limiting access to Silver Lane.

Councillor Ellis stated that the response did not seem to mention the idea of using concrete blocks as deterrents, only mounds of soil, which was dismissed by WBC. He said that he has responded to WBC, enquiring again about the possibility of using concrete blocks.

WBC have stated that they will not contribute towards the cost.

- (c) Received – information about WBC's 2025 Christmas Appeal and an email regarding Christmas and Burns Night events.
- (d) Received – an email for Community Groups to get involved with the Community Resilience Maturity Index (CRMI) which aims to help communities assess and strengthen their resilience to emergency situations.

205/25-26 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP**

- (a) Sent/received – Various emails/reports following queries/contact from residents regarding various issues including landscaping and flytipping.
- (b) Sent – an email to YHG on behalf of a resident of Lyster Close regarding cat litter being improperly disposed of.
- (c) Sent – an email to YHG on behalf of a resident who reported an alleged 'illegal fence' on Heather Close.
- (d) Sent – multiple emails to YHG regarding benches on Ainscough Common which had been vandalised by graffiti and structural breakage. After several reports made within YHG to remove the broken bench, the BTC Maintenance Team removed it due to the immediate health and safety risk posed by exposed rusty nails. This was also discussed earlier in the meeting.

206/25-26 **MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Sent/Received – Various emails regarding ‘day-to-day’ queries from residents, including questions about trees, grass cutting, housing, alleged abandoned vehicles, parking, etc.
- (b) Received – an email from Birchwood Fire Station/Cheshire Fire Service enquiring if BTC would like to get involved with their local event ‘One Tonne Waste Challenge’ which focuses on collecting waste from public spaces.

Officers asked for further information and were told that they propose to hold the event on 12th November at 11am for approximately one hour.

The Clerk stated that, due to the location of the event, and that the BTC maintenance team does not litter pick within the Forest Park as this is under the remit of WBC, it would not be appropriate to join in with the event.

- (c) Received – a Freedom of Information request regarding precept figures, Council costs, events and Councillor details. Whilst most of the information was freely available on our website, the Clerk responded and provided all the relevant details.
- (d) Received – an email from a resident regarding road safety management on Strawberry Close, Locking Stumps.
- (e) Received – an invitation from Birchwood Lions to attend the Annual Remembrance Service which is being held outside Birchwood Shopping Centre on Saturday, 8th November 2025 at 11am.

Councillors Atkin, Brereton, Ellis, Evans, Price, Sheridan and Reeves confirmed their attendance at the event.

Councillor Reeves, as Chair, will lay a wreath on behalf of the community of Birchwood.

207/25-26 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Received – Various Neighbourhood Alerts.
- (b) Received – a letter from Dan Price, the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner, to thank the Clerk for taking part in a recent survey and informing that he will be sending out regular e-newsletters. He provided flyers for information to residents which has been shared via our Facebook page and on our noticeboard.

208/25-26 **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.

209/25-26 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC and WVA e-mail correspondence/briefings.

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

- (i) There was a meeting of the DMC held on 15th October 2025. There were no items specific to Birchwood on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

The next DMC meeting is scheduled for 6th November 2025.

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

(b) **Planning Decisions**

- (i) **Application No. 2025/00636/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of Condition 36 B (remediation and verification strategy) on application 2023/00333/VARC. Attached to Planning Permission Reference no. 2019/35726. **Condition Part Discharged/Part Not Discharged.**
- (ii) **Application No. 2025/00848/FUL** Unit C3, Trident Business Park Daten Avenue, Birchwood, Warrington. Change of use Class B2/B8 to a Sui Generis use for the operation of a dog day-care facility, including associated grooming services. **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. 2025/01365/FUL** Heron Foods, Unit Nu2, Birchwood Shopping Centre Dewhurst Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7PG. Proposed Change of Use of a vacant retail unit (Class E) to an indoor swimming pool (Class F).

The application was also discussed earlier in the meeting (Minute 195/25-25 (b)).

With the exception of Councillor Ball, Members did not have any objections to make relating to the application. Several Members were supportive of the plans.

Councillor Ball objected to the application. He raised concerns including the costs of lessons and of using the facility, whether a full marketing exercise had been undertaken, and whether the unit could be restored properly to its original format should the venture not succeed.

As there were no specific planning grounds on which to object, and the Council were not unanimous in their thoughts about the application, Members **resolved** not to make any comments either in support of, or against the application.

- (ii) **Application No. 2025/01364/DEM** The Enza Building (formerly Known As The Mercedes Benz - Roanza Truck & Van Dealership) Leacroft Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6NN. Proposed Demolition of existing building.
- (iii) **Application No. 2025/01353/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of conditions 13 (Construction, Highways & Environmental Management Plan) and 18 (Construction plan working method statement) attached to planning permission 2023/00333/VARC.

- (iv) **Application No. 2025/01350/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of condition 31 (Biodiversity Construction Environmental Management Plan) attached to planning permission 2023/00333/VARC.
- (v) **Application No. 2025/01348/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of condition 36B (Submission of Remediation and verification strategy) attached to planning permission 2023/00333/VARC.
- (vi) **Application No. 2025/01355/NMA** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Non-material amendment of planning permission 2024/00963/REMM to amend Condition 1 (approved drawings) to allow for changes to drainage layout.
- (vii) **Application No. 2025/01354/NMA** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Non-material amendment of planning permission 2023/00333/VARC to amend Condition 5 (approved drawings) to reference the updated Combined Parameters Plan containing minor changes to the spot heights.
- (viii) **Application No. 2025/01352/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of Condition No. 22 (Surface Water Drainage and Oil and Petrol Inceptors) attached to planning permission 2023/00333/VARC.
- (ix) **Application No. 2025/01343/DISCON** Land at Junction 11 of the M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of Conditions No's 13 (Construction, Highways & Environmental Management Plan (CHEMP)) and 18 (Construction Plan Working Method Statement (CMS)) attached to planning permission 2023/00333/VARC
- (x) **Application No. 2025/01297/FULH** 24 Ringwood Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6TQ. Single storey extension to the front of the property.
- (xi) **Application No. 2025/01250/FULM** Washington House Birchwood Park Avenue, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6GR. Demolition of existing building and erection of one unit for B8 use, with ancillary office space (use class E(g)(i)), parking, service yards, landscaping, and associated infrastructure.

Councillors commented that, whilst this land lies within a business park, the original intention of this area was to create high value science and technology employment opportunities. Members feel that replacing the office with a light industrial unit with low employment rates, would not be in keeping with the intended use of the land.

Members unanimously agreed to object to the proposed development.

Action

Clerk's office to submit objection comments on the application, for reasons stated above.

- (xii) **Application No. PRE/24/00106** Significant Major - Land to the east of the M6 motorway, to the south of the Chat Moss Line and to the west of Winwick Lane. Intermodal Logistics Park North Development Consent Order.

The Clerk stated that we have received documents for the consultation of the Intermodal Logistics Park North (ILPN).

The consultation period lasts from 28th October to 23rd December 2025. There are four in-person consultation events, and an online webinar on 3rd December for those unable to attend.

This part of the meeting concluded at 7.15 pm.