

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL,
HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE
ON TUESDAY 25TH NOVEMBER 2025, 6PM

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

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

2 Residents

PC Shevlin – Warrington East Police

Apologies: Mrs. F. McDonald – The Clerk

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

234/25-26 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

(a) **Police Monthly Update**

PC Shevlin apologised that there has been no formal Police Report sent over, but gave a verbal update.

PC Shevlin said there has been a slow increase in shoplifting, which is common at this time of year, and that preventative work is ongoing. He mentioned the Shop Watch scheme which is a collaborative initiative amongst the businesses aimed at reducing crime by receiving their input and data to help build intelligence.

PC Shevlin said that plain clothes operations have taken place at Birchwood Shopping Centre.

PC Shevlin said that there have not been any unusual anti-social behaviour issues and that they are making some slow progress regarding setting up the youth club, which could combat some of the youth related anti-social behaviour.

Councillor Ellis stated that Birchwood Youth and Community Centre have been approached by Warrington Youth Zone regarding the possibility of using the space for the youth club.

PC Shevlin stated that they have also enquired about the community room at Birchwood C of E primary school and will look into both options.

Councillor Allman enquired if the Police were aware of any problems at the Morrisons Daily shop in Oakwood, and explained that due to recent bouts of theft, staff have been left worried and anxious.

PC Shevlin stated that the Police are aware of the instances that Councillor Allman is referring to, but that due to the age of a suspect, specific processes must be followed, and they can be lengthy. He said that Police will monitor the shop when possible.

PC Shevlin stated that he is aware of the reports from the Chief Constable regarding the potential reduction from 87 to 27 PCSOs. He assured the Council that operations will continue as normal until the end of the financial year and confirmed that no further updates are currently available.

Councillor Ellis asked if there would be a poll sent out to residents regarding the Police precept, as it has been in previous years, with Councillor Evans enquiring if the Police themselves can have an input into how the budget might be spent.

PC Shevlin responded that, he is unsure who publishes the poll regarding precept, so does not know if this is something that will be sent out again this year. He confirmed that the Police have an option to add counter proposals regarding the reduction of PCSO's, but it is not clear if these will be reviewed.

Councillor Price asked if there were any issues with drugs coming into Birchwood from further afield.

PC Shevlin replied that he is not familiar with anything specific but would be interested in any intelligence that can be provided. He added that the Police know that the issue with drugs will never be solved, but that they will do everything they can to solve issues on individual streets when they are able to.

The Chair thanked PC Shevlin for attending, and PC Shevlin left the meeting.

(b) **Public Participation**

Two members of the public were in attendance for tonight's meeting.

The first resident had sent an email prior to the meeting that was shared with Councillors at the meeting.

In the email, the resident raised concerns about the growing problem of abandoned shopping trolleys across the area, noting both their environmental impact and the financial burden placed on the Council. He stated that under Schedule 4 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, as amended, the Council has the authority to seize abandoned trolleys and recover associated costs from retailers. He urged the Council to formally adopt a cost-recovery schedule, proactively remove abandoned trolleys, and to notify local retailers of a shift to an active enforcement approach.

Councillor Atkin thanked the resident for raising the issue and assured him that abandoned trolleys are discussed regularly at Town Council meetings and by Officers throughout the week.

He acknowledged the valid points made regarding the Environmental Protection Act but clarified that Birchwood Town Council does not have the authority or the powers to enforce this legislation. Responsibility for any enforcement lies with Warrington Borough Council as the Local Authority.

Councillor Atkin explained that, over many years, BTC has contacted both WBC and local retailers to address the problem and has previously sought enforcement action from both parties. He stated that a voluntary group, Trolley Angels, had once operated locally, during which time a potential £100 penalty was publicised for removing trolleys from the shopping centre, however, this did not deter the behaviour.

Councillor Atkin added that Officers have written to the head offices of Aldi and Asda, as well as to Birchwood Shopping Centre, to request consideration of reinstating the automatic brake-locking system.

Councillor Ellis reported that he had spoken with WBC's legal department, who advised that enforcement is challenging as individuals must be caught in the act. He gave an example from his time volunteering with Trolley Angels, when even with a Police Officer present it was difficult to intervene, as proving theft rather than temporary borrowing is problematic. He also noted that enforcement would be costly.

Councillor Atkin stated that Warrington Borough Council may be able to require retailers to cover the costs associated with holding and releasing abandoned trolleys, however, the challenge lies in how to encourage WBC to implement and enforce such measures.

Action Councillor Price, in his capacity as a WBC Councillor, to write to WBC to see if these powers can be enforced.

A second resident was in attendance. He stated that he is new to the area and was attending the meeting to observe.

The Chair thanked both residents for attending the meeting, and it was at this point that one resident left the meeting.

235/25-26 **OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

Councillor Ball commented that his objection to a planning application had not been recorded in the draft October 2025 Minutes. It was **resolved** to add Councillor Ball's comments to October Minute No. 210/25-25 (c) (i) prior to publishing them online.

Councillor Ellis **proposed**, Councillor Atkin **seconded** and it was **unanimously resolved** that; with the change made as resolved, the Minutes of the Meeting held on 28th October 2025 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

PROGRESS

236/25-26 **YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG) – UPDATES**

- (a) The RFO stated that the notes from a meeting that took place on 4th November 2025 (online) were circulated to Members in their papers. The meeting was attended by the Clerk, Senior Maintenance Operative and four representatives of YHG.
- (b) The RFO reported that the latest walkabout had taken place on 20th November 2025. The Administrative Assistant, Senior Maintenance Operative, and Councillors Brereton and Price had attended the walkabout. The RFO asked the Administrative Assistant to report how this went.

The Administrative Assistant reported that during the walkabout, which took place around the Dunnock Grove area of Oakwood, several flytipping hotspots were identified. These have now been actioned by YHG for removal of the flytipping. She stated that, even though Locking Stumps was not subject of the walkabout, due to the numerous complaints regarding flytipping on Heather Close which has already been reported to YHG, herself and the Senior Maintenance Operative visited the site and confirmed that this waste was still in situ.

The Administrative Assistant stated that YHG have been in further contact to report that the waste on Heather Close is in the process of being removed.

- (c) The RFO stated that she does not have any follow-up information at this point regarding the other YHG items noted at the October meeting. The Clerk may wish to give an update on these at a future meeting.

237/25-26 **COUNCILLOR EMAIL ADDRESS ISSUES**

The RFO stated that she believes that with the exception of Councillors Evans and K. Dhillon, everyone should now have their BTC emails up and running.

238/25-26 **BLOOD DONATION SESSIONS**

The RFO informed Members that there is no update to give at this point in time, regarding the Council's attempts to arrange a local blood donation session.

239/25-26 **ABANDONED TROLLEYS**

The Administrative Assistant advised that trolley reports are ongoing and are being forwarded to the responsible collection agencies. Reports can be submitted through the office or via the Collex and Trolleywise mobile apps.

240/25-26 **MEMBERS REFERRAL UPDATES**

The RFO said that she is unaware of any response from WBC as of yet, regarding the Clerk's correspondence sent to Highways regarding both of Councillor Atkin's Members' Referrals from the September 2025 Meeting.

241/25-26 **ANNUAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE**

The RFO reported that she understands that the Annual Remembrance Service, which was held at Birchwood Shopping Centre on Saturday, 8th November 2025 had a good attendance and went well. Several Councillors and the Administrative Assistant represented BTC and the Chair laid a wreath on behalf of the Birchwood community.

242/25-26 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS UPDATE**

- (a) **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).

This application has been granted with conditions.

- (b) **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.

The RFO stated that the Clerk has submitted an objection letter, as requested at the October meeting. We have not had any further updates regarding the application to date. She added, that looking online, it appears that an Environmental Protection Officer from Public Protection & Prevention has requested that the Ground Gas Risk Assessment be re-run.

- (c) **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 RFO reminded Members that there is a webinar taking place tomorrow night, between 6.30pm to 8pm, specifically for Parish Councils regarding this proposed application. Details have already been circulated to Members.

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

243/25-26 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 – an email response from the interim CEO of WBC regarding improving communications between Town and Borough Council.

The RFO stated that the response suggests setting up a meeting to discuss the issues raised, but we have not yet received any potential dates for this to take place.

Councillor Price said that, as Mr. Park is the interim CEO, it may be that a meeting will be postponed until a new CEO has been appointed, as there may be a change in personnel. If there is a change, any meeting might need to be arranged with the new CEO. It is expected that the CEO announcement will be made in the next few days.

The RFO asked if any Councillors might like to be included in a meeting with the CEO.

Several Members indicated that they would like the opportunity to meet and speak to the CEO, in order to try to improve partnership working with WBC, going forward.

- (c) Received – an email from WBC outlining proposals for the Culcheth Access Improvement Scheme, funded through the Local Regeneration Fund.

The scheme aims to improve walking, wheeling, and cycling links between Culcheth and Birchwood via a new surfaced shared-use path, with associated signage, surfacing and potential lighting. Details of the public engagement were provided, including drop-in events on Tuesday 2nd December (12pm - 7pm) at The Village Club, Culcheth, and Saturday 6th December (10am - 1pm) at Culcheth Community Centre.

The RFO stated that this has been the subject of various conversations on local social media.

Members had a brief discussion regarding any future potential for improvements to be extended into Birchwood. This is not currently being planned, and would depend on funding being made available.

244/25-26 YOUR HOUSING GROUP (YHG)

Sent/received – emails/reports following queries/contact from residents regarding various issues including landscaping and flytipping.

245/25-26 MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE

Received/sent – various emails regarding 'day-to-day' queries from residents.

246/25-26 **CHESHIRE POLICE**

- (a) Various Neighbourhood Alerts received (already circulated).
- (b) Received – an invitation to watch the November Scrutiny Meeting. An online event where the Police and Crime Commissioner holds the Chief Constable to account regarding Cheshire Constabulary's performance. This will be held online at 10am on Tuesday 25th November 2025. Members should register prior to the event.
- (c) Received – information from Warrington East Police about a knife surrender bin at Birchwood Shopping Centre on 19th November from 4pm – 6pm as part of their Operation Sceptre initiative.
- (d) Received – a letter from the Police and Crime Commissioner regarding the Government Announcement regarding the PCC Role

247/25-26 **CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (CHALC), NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS (NALC) AND THE 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.

248/25-26 **PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED**

Various LGC and WVA e-mail correspondence/briefings have been received. Related emails have been circulated to Members.

249/25-26 **MEMBERS' REFERRALS**

The RFO said that no Members' Referrals have been received for consideration at tonight's meeting.

250/25-26 **CURRENT PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR COMMENT AND OBSERVATION AND OTHER RELATED PLANNING ISSUES**

- (a) **Warrington Borough Council - Development Management Committee (DMC)**
 - (i) At the meeting of the DMC held on 6th November 2025, there was one item specific to Birchwood on the agenda: Application No. 2025/01266/VARC - Unit 722 Birchwood Park, Warrington. Variation of condition 1 (plans) to allow for amendments to the fencing, ducting and vents on previous application 2023/01085/VARC. The recommendation was for it to be granted subject to conditions.
 - (ii) The next DMC is scheduled to take place on 11th December 2025. No documents were available for this meeting at the time of publishing the Clerk's Report.
 - (iii) Information re: any enforcement cases specific to Birchwood have been circulated to Members.

(b) **Planning Decisions**

- (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). **Granted.**
- (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. **Granted.**
- (iii) **Application No. 2025/01297/FULH** 24 Ringwood Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6TQ. Single storey extension to the front of the property. **Granted.**
- (iv) **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. **Granted.**
- (v) **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. **Condition Part Discharged/Part Not Discharged.**
- (vi) **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. **Condition Part Discharged/Part Not Discharged.**

(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. 2025/01324/FULH** 20 Woodhouse Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6QP. Replace an existing conservatory with a new one.
- (ii) **Application No. 2025/01501/FULH** 22 Deanwater Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6ER. Retention of fencing in new position.

This part of the meeting concluded at 6.55 pm.