

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
OF BIRCHWOOD TOWN COUNCIL HELD AT PARKERS FARM, DELENTY DRIVE
ON TUESDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 6.00 PM

Present:

Councillor Ellis in the Chair

Councillors Allman, Ball, Brereton, B. Dhillon (*arrived at 6.30pm*), K. Dhillon, Sheridan and Simcock

Mrs Hannah Thomas Deputy Clerk/Deputy RFO

Apologies:

Councillors Price (work) and Reeves (work)

098/26-27

CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

Councillor Ellis started by reporting on the progress made by 'Energy Projects Plus', who attended the March 2026 Council meeting, and provided Members with a detailed report on their Birchwood campaign at the meeting.

He reported that the Birchwood Energy Advice campaign, led by Energy Projects Plus which was launched in April 2026, had delivered 15 community events, engaging with 330 residents, alongside distributing advice cards to over 4,000 households and reaching more than 2,500 people through Facebook. The campaign provided practical energy-saving advice and distributed energy-saving items, while also signposting residents to grants and support with fuel bills.

Councillor Ellis stated that further work is planned, including additional events in September to help residents prepare for winter, promote affordable energy efficiency measures and explore opportunities for renewable energy and reducing fuel poverty.

Councillor Ellis then reported on a visit to The Walled Garden at Oakwood Gate and Locking Stumps Common with the Deputy Clerk and Elis Smits, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy lead for Cheshire and Warrington. He sent his report on his to Members prior to the meeting.

He explained that both sites require significant maintenance and improvement to restore them as safe, accessible public spaces that support local wildlife, with the Walled Garden in need of the most attention.

Potential works include clearing overgrowth, assessing trees, improving pathways and ponds, and planting suitable native wildflowers. He also stated that there would be opportunities for community involvement, including volunteer sessions to tackle Himalayan balsam.

Various funding sources may be available to support the work, and further investigations will be undertaken into the options, costs and ongoing maintenance requirements.

Councillor K. Dhillon asked if the Walled Garden had any historical importance, as there may be some options for heritage funding. Councillor Ellis responded that it could be of significant interest to the Royal Ordnance Factory and will look into this.

Councillor Ellis clarified that both sites are owned by Warrington Borough Council (WBC) and that the visit was an initial assessment to explore whether BTC might be able to take on responsibility for them in the future. No decision or commitment has or can been made at this stage.

099/26-27

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors Reeves and Price due to work commitments.

Signed..... Chairman

Dated:

DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND OTHER INTERESTS

Members were invited to declare their pecuniary and other interests.

- Councillor K. Dhillon declared an interest in Agenda Item 8 – Planning Matters.
- Councillor Sheridan declared an interest in Agenda Item 9 – Deputy Clerk’s Report (Birchwood Acts).

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

a) Police Report

There were no Police present at this meeting.

b) Public Participation

There were no members of the public in attendance at this meeting.

Prior to the meeting, an email was received from a residents’ group enquiring about maintenance arrangements within the Locking Stumps area. The email requested clarification regarding the Council’s approach to seasonal landscaping, litter picking and pathway clearance, and asked how community groups, such as themselves, could report areas where overgrown vegetation was affecting pedestrian access, cycling safety and the general appearance of the village.

Councillors discussed the correspondence and noted that the email had not been signed by the individuals concerned. It was suggested that the Deputy Clerk request that future correspondence be appropriately signed to assist with communication and record-keeping.

Councillors also discussed the role of community groups and the potential for such groups to identify areas of concern, as well as opportunities to support local maintenance initiatives where appropriate.

The Deputy Clerk had responded to the email prior to the meeting, providing clarification on the Council’s maintenance responsibilities. It was explained that there is no fixed schedule for seasonal landscaping, as the Council is not a landowner and must obtain the relevant landowner’s permission before undertaking works. The Deputy Clerk also confirmed that maintenance work is distributed evenly across all areas of Birchwood and that all streets throughout the Parish are included in the weekly litter-picking schedule.

The Deputy Clerk had further advised that residents should report maintenance concerns directly to the relevant landowner, where known. Where ownership is unclear, residents may contact the Council office for assistance in identifying the responsible party or referring the matter appropriately.

Councillors discussed the importance of ensuring that community groups do not act as an intermediary between residents and BTC in order to support efficient communication and minimise the potential for information to be delayed or lost when passed between multiple parties.

It was suggested that the Deputy Clerk provide the residents' group with a copy of the litter-picking street schedule for Locking Stumps and reiterate the request for correspondence to include the names of those contacting the Council.

ACTION: Deputy Clerk to respond to the residents' group accordingly.

c) Presentation – Community Catalysts

Councillor Ellis explained that, unfortunately, due to the company shortly ceasing operation, this presentation would not be going ahead.

102/26-27

BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Councillor Price sent apologies for this meeting, but sent across some items for reporting as a WBC Councillor:

- **Planning Applications** – As a member of the DMC, he will not participate in planning debates. However, he will not vote on the Trident or drive-through applications due to my previous involvement with the local garage near Trident and my earlier objection to the original drive-through proposal.
- **Shopping Trolleys** – He recently visited the spinal path to collect and report abandoned shopping trolleys and was pleasantly surprised to find only seven along the path. A further twelve were found elsewhere, several of which belonged to Asda. A WBC officer is now meeting regularly with the shopping centre and retailers to explore improvements to existing measures to prevent trolleys being removed from the area.
He said that he understands that a Public Spaces Protection Order could result in residents being fined. However, believes efforts should focus on encouraging residents not to remove trolleys in the first place, as this behaviour has wider consequences for the community.
- **WBC Finances** – Councillor Price reported that further cuts to WBC services had been agreed at the previous evening's Full Council meeting. He emphasised the need for the Council to live within its means without relying on government bailouts or increases in Council Tax. He stressed the importance of working smarter, rather than simply harder, while protecting essential services, particularly education and social care.

Councillor K. Dhillon reported that approval had been granted for the construction of an Urgent Treatment Centre and an accompanying multi-storey car park at Warrington Hospital. However, no timeframe for the commencement or completion of the works had been confirmed.

Councillor B. Dhillon entered the meeting.

103/26-27

COUNCIL MINUTES

Members received and considered the draft minutes from the Extraordinary Council Meeting held on the 25th August 2026.

RESOLVED: That the draft minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on the 25th August 2026 are approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

Signed..... Chairman

Dated:

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Members were asked to receive and note the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 8th September 2026.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be formally received and noted.

PLANNING MATTERS

a) Planning Decisions

- i) **Application No. 2025/01425/FULM** The Enza Building (formerly Known As The Mercedes Benz - Roanza Truck & Van Dealership) Leacroft Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6NN. Construction of a 9,112sqm warehouse unit (Use Classes B8) with associated parking, service areas, landscaping and infrastructure works. **Granted.**
- ii) **Application No. 2026/00436/FULM** Rutherford House Warrington Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6ZH. Demolition of existing building and erection of one unit for office use and innovation centre (Class E), with ancillary B2/B8 use, roof terrace, new access, parking, service yard, landscaping, and associated infrastructure. **Pending Consideration.**
- iii) **Application No. 2026/00790/FULH** 76 Rockingham Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6UY. First floor side extension and single-storey rear extension. **Granted.**
- iv) **Application No. 2026/00986/DISCON** Land At Junction 11 Of The M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of condition 36B (Remediation Strategy) on Phase 3 only of application 2023/00333 (Motorway Service Area). **Condition Part Discharged/Part Not Discharged.**
- v) **Application No. 2026/00787/FUL** GENESIS CENTRE Garrett Field, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7BH. Refurbishment of roof pitched roof wings. **Granted.**
- vi) **Application No. 2026/01148/FUL** 704 Warrington Road, Warrington, WA3 6AU. Change of use of commercial land to garden space and inclusion within the curtilage of 704 Warrington Road. **Withdrawn.**
- vii) **Application No. 2026/00954/DISCON** Land At Junction 11 Of The M62 Motorway, Warrington. Discharge of condition 31 (BCEMP) for phase 3 on application 2023/00333 (Motorway Service Area). **Condition Part Discharged/Part Not Discharged.**
- viii) **Application No. 2026/00781/FUL** Concentric Business Park Concentric Business Park, Warrington Road, Warrington, WA3 6WX. Change of use of an existing standalone communal cycle shelter (Sui Generis) to a storage unit (Use Class B8) and associated changes to existing ancillary buildings for the storage of refuse, recycling and cycles (retrospective). **Granted.**
- ix) **Application No. 2026/00953/FULH** 15 Woolmer Close, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6TT. Single storey side and rear extension and front porch extension. **Granted.**

b) Planning Applications

- i) **Application No. 2026/01114/ADV** 120 Birchwood Boulevard, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7QH. Proposed Sign.

- ii) **Application No. 2026/01010/FUL** Arne Clo, 602 Aston Avenue, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6ZN. Proposed erection of a raised platform, clear panels and lighting in association with the installation of 2 no. padel courts.
- iii) **Application No. 2026/00566/FUL** Car Park, Birchwood Shopping Centre Dewhurst Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7PG. Proposed coffee drive thru unit, vehicle & cycle parking and associated development (Sui Generis use), including alterations to existing car park (Updated description). **Notice that amendments have been received.**

c) Other Planning Matters & Enforcement Issues

- i) To note that the August meeting of the DMC was held on 13th August 2026. There were no items specific to Birchwood on the Agenda.
- ii) To note that the September meeting of the DMC will be held on 24th September 2026. There are two items of interest specific to Birchwood on the Agenda:
 - **Application No. 2026/00507/FUL** Unit T45 Trident Way, Warrington, WA3 6AX. Vehicle repair centre including roof mounted extraction equipment (chimneys and flues), additional Solar PV roof mounted panels, ancillary enclosure, layout amendments, new foul drainage, new gate, and refuse storage.
 - **Application No. 2026/00566/FUL** Car Park, Birchwood Shopping Centre Dewhurst Road, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 7PG. Proposed coffee drive thru café (Sui Generis use), vehicle & cycle parking and associated development, including alterations to existing car park (Updated description).

Councillor Ellis informed Members that he intended to speak on behalf of the Town Council about the above applications at the DMC.

106/26-27

DEPUTY CLERK'S REPORT & PROGRESS

a) Warrington Borough Council (WBC)

The Deputy Clerk reported that she was still awaiting information from WBC regarding potential additional mowing opportunities. She had advised WBC that this information would be required to inform BTC's budget-setting process and determine whether it would be feasible for a BTC operative to undertake additional mowing duties.

b) Your Housing Group (YHG)

The Deputy Clerk informed Members that YHG had requested a further walkabout with BTC; however, this had not been possible due to current staffing constraints. She advised that the Senior Maintenance Operative had suggested the next walkabout take place in the Dunnock/Redpoll area of Oakwood, where there were concerns he wished to raise with YHG.

c) Birchwood Acts – Request to Use BTC Barn for Storage

Councillor Sheridan declared an interest.

The Deputy Clerk reported that Birchwood Acts had been in contact to enquire whether they could lease some space in one of BTC's barns to store some items for their upcoming shows.

Members asked Councillor Sheridan how much space the group would need and she responded that it would not be a lot, however, they are currently paying £600 every 6 months at their current storage unit.

The Deputy Clerk explained that the barn space would only be able to be accessed during

Signed..... Chairman

Dated:

the Council's working hours, as it is alarmed and requires a member of staff opening it up.

Councillor Sheridan left the room so that Members could discuss.

Members stated that they would like to support a local community group, pending BTC have the space to provide. The Deputy Clerk stated that some space is designated for the NWCC, who store items for a fee, so that would need to be taken into consideration and respected, along with an agreement to keep the area safe and tidy, with a contract drawn up for both parties.

Members **unanimously agreed** to charge £240 per year to Birchwood Acts for a small space in one of our barns.

RESOLVED: that BTC leases out some barn space for storage for Birchwood Acts for £240.00 per year, subject to a signed contract from both parties.

Councillor Sheridan re-entered the room.

107/26-27

REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports or updates to note from outside bodies.

108/26-27

MEMBERS REFERRAL – COUNCILLOR JULIE BRERETON – NUISANCE PARKING AT BIRCHWOOD MEDICAL CENTRE

Councillor Brereton raised concerns regarding reports of nuisance parking outside Birchwood Medical Centre, which had been discussed on social media. She explained that some visitors were parking on double yellow lines and across the dropped kerb, which incorporates tactile paving.

Councillor Brereton acknowledged that she was unsure what action the Town Council could take to address the issue but felt that the matter needed to be addressed.

Councillor Simcock reported that signage has been places on the gates near the dropped kerb.

Councillor Ellis suggested that BTC contact our local PCSO to discuss ways that the Police may be able to assist with patrolling the area.

ACTION: Officers to contact Birchwood Police and report the above.

109/26-27

LOCKING STUMPS MUGA – JOINT USE AGREEMENT

The Deputy Clerk stated that there are no updates for this due to office workload, but that it will need to be progressed as soon as is practicable.

110/26-27

FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Bank Reconciliation

Members received and considered the bank reconciliation statement for August 2026 together with the Scribe transaction report.

- Petty Cash as of 27/05/2026 - £62.51
- The Co-Operative Business Select Account as of 31/08/2026 - £10,610.85
- The Co-Operative Charity Account as of 31/08/2026 - £135,568.45
- Nationwide Business Instant Saver as of 31/08/2026 - £250,844.03
- CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund as of 31/08/2026 - £200,000.00
- **TOTAL BALANCES: £597,085.84**

Signed..... Chairman

Dated:

RESOLVED: That the bank reconciliation statement for August 2026 together with the Scribe transaction report be received and noted.

b) Payments Schedule

Members reviewed the Payments Schedule, which detailed all payments made under delegated authority, including pre-authorised payments, direct debits, internal bank transfers, and income received.

RESOLVED: That the payments for September 2026 are approved (attached as an appendix to the minutes).

c) Employment Costs

Members received the salary, pension and HMRC payments for the month of September 2026 which were paid in accordance with employment contracts. The pay date for employees is the 7th of the month, covering the pay period for the whole month.

Payroll Period	Total	Details	Take-Home Pay	PAYE	Pension
06 – Sept	£24,629.80	8 Employees: (2 Admin & 6 Maintenance Staff)	£14,619.85	£5,092.51	£4,917.44

RESOLVED: that the payroll for September 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair.

d) Remembrance Day – Wreaths

The Deputy Clerk asked Members to consider the purchase of wreaths to be presented on behalf of the people of Birchwood on Remembrance Day. She stated that in previous years, the Council has wished to purchase three wreaths; one for the service held at the Birchwood Shopping Centre, one for the Memorial at the graveyard on Cross Lane South, and one at the ROF Memorial at Forest Park.

RESOLVED: Members agreed the purchase of three wreaths with an added donation to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal at the same as last year (£150.00 Total donation).

e) Conclusion of Audit

The Deputy Clerk reported that the 'Notice of Conclusion of Audit' has been received from the External Auditor and that the fee of £1,050.00 (+VAT), has been paid.

111/26-27

ELECTRONIC SUMMONS AND MEETING PAPERS

Members were asked to consider arrangements for the electronic service of Council summons and meeting papers.

Members were reminded that, pursuant to the Council's Standing Orders, the Proper Officer may serve summons on Councillors by delivery, post or email, provided that the Councillor has consented to service by email.

In order to support efficient administration, reduce printing and distribution costs, and minimise paper usage, Members are invited to consider consenting to the receipt of

Signed..... Chairman

Dated:

summons, agendas and associated meeting papers electronically. Members are advised that:

- Councillors consenting to electronic service will receive summons and meeting papers via email.
- Councillors may access papers on their own electronic devices during meetings.
- Hard copies of meeting papers can be made available at meetings upon request.
- Councillors who do not consent to electronic service will continue to receive hard copy summons and meeting packs in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders.

Should Members support greater use of electronic documentation, the Council will also need to consider and adopt an appropriate Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy to ensure the secure handling, storage and access of Council information when personal devices are used for Council business

The Deputy Clerk stated that Members can withdraw their consent at any time.

Consent forms were enclosed with Members' September Meeting papers.

RESOLVED: that Members who wish to receive Council summons and meeting papers electronically return their consent forms to the office.

112/26-27

NOTICE OF ELECTION

The Deputy Clerk reported that an election will be held for the casual vacancy in Gorse Covert. No further information has been received at this time.

113/26-27

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That, pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, agenda item 17 be considered in Part II due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, including staffing matters and information prejudicial to the public interest.

114/26-27

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE UPDATES & EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

Councillor Ball, as the Chair of the Personnel Committee confirmed that the Committee are still awaiting some reports from our HR and Law advisors, WorkNest. He said that due to this, there is no update worth noting at this time.

115/26-27

ITEMS FOR A FUTURE AGENDA

- Grant Application – Birchwood Lions.
- Possible installation of new benches.

116/26-27

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Meeting of the Town Council will be held on Tuesday, 27th October 2026 at 6.00pm.

This meeting concluded at 7.30pm.

Signed..... Chairman

Dated:

Appendix A

Payment Schedule - September 2026

Vouche Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Payment Ref.	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
174	26/08/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Mobile Contract	O2 (Telefonica UK Limited)		22.00	4.40	26.40
175	27/08/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Phone Charges - July	Firstcom Europe		69.18	13.84	83.02
177	01/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Payroll services	James Todd & Co.		69.81	13.96	83.77
176	01/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Scribe Finance Software - Sept	Starboard Systems Limited		89.00	17.80	106.80
178	02/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Water and Wastewater service:	Waterplus		38.28		38.28
179	02/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		365 Cloud backup (unlimited cl	labdesk ltd		48.00	9.60	57.60
180	02/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Fuel	Allstar		87.45	17.49	104.94
181	02/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Trimmer Line, Masking Tape, C	B&Q (TradePoint)		23.74	4.75	28.49
185	03/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		x2 New Starter Medicals	Latus Group		450.00	90.00	540.00
182	03/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Vehicle Tax - HK64 NNM	DVLA Electronic Vehicle Lic		360.00		360.00
183	03/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Replacement Lightbulb for Veh	Risley MOT & Truck Ltd		23.40	4.68	28.08
184	03/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		x2 Safety Boots, Work Trouser:	J&K Ross Ltd		233.12	46.62	279.74
186	03/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		x2 Ear Defenders, x6 Safety Gl	Viking		81.87	16.38	98.25
187	03/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Doormat, Stapler, Staples, Wal	Viking		93.50	18.70	112.20
188	04/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Ill Health Liability Ins Cover - S	Legal & General		232.08		232.08
189	04/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Worknest - PAYG Support	Worknest		336.00	67.20	403.20
191	07/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Payroll - September	Birchwood Town Council		14,619.85		14,619.85
190	07/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Microsoft 365 Subscriptions	labdesk ltd		88.74	17.75	106.49
192	07/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Pension September Contributio	Cheshire Pension Fund		4,917.44		4,917.44
194	07/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		HMRC PAYE - September	HMRC (PAYE)		5,092.51		5,092.51
195	09/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Fuel	Allstar		6.25	1.25	7.50
196	09/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		HK64NNM - MOT and Repairs	Risley MOT & Truck Ltd		440.08	77.02	517.10
197	10/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Public Works Loan Board	Public Works Loan Board		8,570.00		8,570.00
198	10/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Cleaning Services	PremiClean		546.00	109.20	655.20
199	14/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Water and Wastewater service:	Waterplus		127.55		127.55
200	14/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Electricity - Parkers Farm	British Gas Limited		116.63	5.83	122.46
201	14/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Radius (van cameras and track	Radius Telematics Limited		92.00	18.40	110.40
202	15/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Gas Charges - Parkers Farm	British Gas Limited		16.53	0.83	17.36
203	15/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Photocopier charges and lease	Automated Systems Group		59.76	11.95	71.71
204	15/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Bank & FD Online charges	Co-operative Bank		53.80		53.80
205	16/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Fuel	Allstar		84.55	16.91	101.46
206	16/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Audit fees	PKF Littlejohn LLP		1,050.00	210.00	1,260.00
207	18/09/2026		The Co-operative Bai		Electricity - Locking Stumps ML	E-on Next		18.58	0.93	19.51
Total								38,157.70	795.49	38,953.19

Signed..... Chairman

Dated: