

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

80 Hewell Road, Birmingham, B45 8NF

0121 447 9893

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www.barntgreen.org.uk



Summons and Notice of Parish Council meeting

Monday 17 February 2020 at 7.00pm

at Barnt Green Parish Council Office, 80 Hewell Road, B45 8NF

Parish Councillors are hereby summoned to attend.

The meeting is open to the press and members of the public who are welcome to attend all or part of the meeting but may only speak during the allocated time as listed under agenda item 19/163a below. The public may ask questions or raise concerns regarding matters on this agenda or for future consideration. There is no expectation on the council to respond to any comments made at this time.

Meeting Agenda

- 19/160 Apologies**
To receive apologies from absent members and record the reason for absence.
- 19/161 Declarations of Interest:** Councillors are reminded that to ensure transparency and retain public confidence in the council's decisions they are required to -
- Keep their Register of Interests form up to date;
 - Declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) and any Other Disclosable Interests (ODI) in agenda items and the nature of those interests.
- 19/162 To consider any dispensations**
Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation to a councillor (as per Localism Act 2011, s33) must be with the Executive Officer before the meeting starts
- 19/163 Open Session - Participation to hear from:**
A verbal report may be given during this agenda item.
- Members of the Public**
 - Supporting organisations**, e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Team, Footpath Warden
 - Worcestershire County Councillor** – Peter McDonald (Beacon division)
 - Bromsgrove District Councillor** - Charles Hotham (Barnt Green & Hopwood)
- 19/164 To adopt previous minutes**
- To approve adoption of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 20/01/2020
- 19/165 Chairman's Report** - A verbal report may be given during this agenda item.
- 19/166 Governance – Adoption of the General Power of Competence (England)**
Following recent notification of the successful completion of the portfolio for the Certificate in Local Council Administration by the EO, Barnt Green Parish Council is now eligible to adopt the General Power of Competence. Please refer to supporting information attached detailing the use of GPC.
Currently meeting the specific criteria to qualify for the GPC, the council is asked to consider adoption, approve the GPC Policy and obtain signature from the Chairman.

19/167 Policy and Documents Review - All approved Policies will be uploaded onto the council's website

- a) Child, Young Adult and Vulnerable Person Protection Policy – February 2020. This has been significantly updated, requiring addition of protection for young adults and vulnerable society members within the community. The policy requires approval and signature of the Chairman.
- b) Disciplinary Policy – February 2020. This has been re-written, being outdated and requires approval and signature by the Chairman.
- c) Equal Opportunities – February 2020. This policy has been re-written requiring consideration of equal opportunities for service users and the wider community. The policy requires approval and signature by the chairman.
- d) Grievance Procedure – February 2020. This has been updated and requires approval and signature by the Chairman.
- e) Three Year Forward Plan 2020 – 2022. This newly created three-year plan acts as a vision for the council's purpose detailing its intentions over the next three years. The plan requires adoption and signature of the Chairman.
- f) Action Plan for the year ahead 2020 – In relation to the three year forward plan it is necessary to also produce a twelve-month action plan to ensure that budgets are correctly set and monitored in order to fulfil the council's short term aims. The action plan sets out the strategic aims, how they will be achieved and where possible allocates a costing to each aim and scheduled date. The Action Plan requires approval and signature by the Chairman.

19/168 Executive Officer's Report

To be advised of any decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting and receive updates to ongoing matters and a list of office communications since the previous council meeting.

a) Station	<p>Lifts – As requested at the previous parish council meeting in January, Network Rail were asked to clarify the position of the multi-agency liaison as to whether the work was being carried out in parallel or a sequential timeline. No response has been received as yet.</p> <p>A meeting is due to be arranged with council members to ascertain a plan of legal action.</p> <p>Station Improvements – As requested at the previous parish council meeting, the Station Manager was asked for an additional update on the installation of a PA system and information screen on platform 1. She replied that there was no update to give at this time but would report back accordingly once news was received.</p>
b) Re-Deployable CCTV. Bromsgrove District Council / Bromsgrove CALC	An email has been received from Bromsgrove CALC on behalf of BDC asking if BGPC would like re-deployable CCTV in the village in addition to the current 4 fixed cameras. BGPC is also asked if it is interested in principle to contributing to a BDC fund in order that these cameras are added to the purchase of district wide fixed cameras? A Power point slide presentation is provided for your information.
c) Sports Club Improvements - Questionnaire	BGPC has been approached by a member of the Sports Club who are involved with planning its future development. A request has been made to support the

	<p>distribution of a questionnaire to gauge support for the improvement strategy.</p> <p>The EO has suggested that this may be distributed along with the Bulletin newsletter in early March.</p> <p>The council is asked for comments.</p>
<p>d) Barnt Green Brook – Update from North Worcestershire Water Management</p>	<p>It is reported that following investigation the water course running through the village is mostly culverted but there are in a couple of locations where it is an open channel.</p> <p>NWWM has carried out work with properties on Blackwell Road (3-11) and the section running adjacent to the railway line behind the social club.</p> <p>The intention is to carry out a letter drop to the properties affected by the brook but as yet this has not happened.</p> <p>Complaints have been received regarding the length of stream adjacent to the Scout Hut and it is asked if BGPC will send the Lengthsman to clear this section.</p> <p>The Water Management Engineer has also offered to come to the next parish council meeting to demonstrate the electronic mapping of the village should the council require this.</p>
<p>e) Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch Annual Report</p>	<p>Following provision of grant aid funding during the previous and current financial period, BGPC has been furnished with the Annual Report.</p> <p>Sadly, Barnt Green Parish Council was omitted from the list of financial contributions in the section relating to parish council contributors. An email has been sent to the Administration Manager expressing the council's disappointment.</p> <p>A copy of the report is available in hard copy from the office.</p>

19/169 Finance

- (i) To note the current financial position and bills for payment February.
- (ii) To be advised of any expenditure decisions taken by the Executive Officer. See Monzo reconciliation and request for authorisation to top up the balance to the agreed sum of £200.00. The Top Up request of £151.57.
- (iii) To receive interim report from the Internal Auditor – Please see report attached.
- (iv) Commuter Car Park – The completion of the transfer of land is now complete. The commuted sum of £30,000 minus solicitors' costs and disbursements has been received (£29,519) and deposited into The Cambridge Building Society Bank Account.
- (v) Parish Council Office Lease – The office rental lease is due to expire on 7 April 2020. The landlord is offering a new 5-year lease with an annual increase to £5,500 from £4,940 an increase of 10%. Negotiations have not advanced to establish the responsibility of equality access into the building to comply with Local Government Legislation and the revised Equal Opportunities Policy. The EO has made some provision for potential semi-permanent access in to the building should the responsibility not fall to the landlord to justify that reasonable adjustment has been made. The council is asked if it wishes to enter into a 5-year agreement on the proposed terms.
- (vi) Wayleave Engrossment Lease – Signatures required. Following approval of the lease agreement between Cadent Gas and Barnt Green Parish Council, the Engrossment Lease now requires signature by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman prior to completion.
- (vii) Millennium Park and Grass Verges 2020 Estimate – The annual estimate has been received from the contractor who carries out grass cutting in Millennium Park, and village hedge and verge cutting. The estimate has an average

increase of 5.33% from the previous year in line with the proposed 20/21 budget. It is recommended to accept the proposed estimate accordingly.

19/170 Environment & Community Wellbeing

- a) **SmartWater** – Currently 176 registrations have been recorded in total. Confirmation of 'door knock' dates and volunteers. The 'We Don't Buy Crime' Co-ordinator has reported that she cannot attend on 12 March but is available any dates between 9th – 20 March. Members are asked to bring their diaries to the meeting to firm up further sessions.
- b) **Butterwick Close** – Update from BDC Councillor C Hotham, if any, regarding concerns about locked gated non-access to public open space.
- c) **Butterwick Close** – Adoption by Highways update.
An email requesting an update was sent to WCC on 4 December with a reminder sent on 29 January.
It is now established that Cala Homes have decided not to enter a section 38 Agreement for Butterwick Close and therefore the land will remain private with the assumption of WCC that Cala will now instruct a management company to undertake maintenance and servicing for the road, lighting and open spaces. An informal meeting took place on Monday 10 February between Cllrs Perry, Nilsson, Cholmondeley and the EO to discuss how the matter can be progressed.
- d) **Village Sign** – Receive draft artistic impression from Cllr Polton.
- e) **Storage shed/unit** – Please see separate report attached.
- f) **Replacement LED Bulbs to Street Lighting** – The contractor has completed the installation on all parish council owned lamps other than those in Hewell Lane where the supplier sent the incorrect bulb size. A new lighting schedule will be provided by the contractor upon completion. Going forward the EO has negotiated that the current maintenance retainer will cease and that any bulb failure during the first five-year period will be supplied and installed free of charge, as per the signed contract award agreement. The monthly checks will also cease with any reports of lights out being provided by council staff, councillors, the OPC and members of the public. The last monthly retainer invoice of £264 was paid in January.

19/171 Planning

- a) To consider response to consultations received including:

BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
20/00048/FUL	74 Hewell Road	Improvements to existing room in roof space with front and rear dormers and new stair position

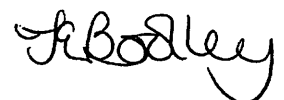
19/172 Future Meetings and items for future agendas

- a) Councillors will be reminded of meetings to be attended and may use this opportunity to raise items for future agendas.

19/173 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Next ordinary parish council meeting will be Monday 16 March 2020, 7pm. Barnt Green Parish Council Office.

Council Members: R Cholmondeley (Chairman), C Hotham (vice-Chairman), J Jagger, J Nilsson, P Perry, H Rone-Clarke, S Whitehand, O Polton



Tracy Bodley
Executive Officer
11/02/2020

The General Power of Competence (England)

The General Power of Competence (GPC) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 taking effect in February 2012¹.

The GPC gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation and becomes the first resort to exercise powers.

Exclusions – The GPC will not:

- Provide councils power to raise tax, precepts or borrowing.
- Enable councils to set charges for mandatory services, impose fines or create offences or byelaws.
- Override existing legislation in place before the Localism act 2011.
- Allow for approval of accounts for audit.

GPC applies to all principal councils and eligible parish/town councils replacing the wellbeing powers in England provided under the Local Government Act 2000.

For eligibility to adopt the GPC, a council must have at least two thirds of its members being declared elected and the Clerk must hold an appropriate qualification (Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012).^{2 3}

Confirmation must be carried out at a full parish/town council meeting and cannot be delegated to other committees, however this is not verified or monitored.

Reaffirmation must be carried out following the first annual meeting following an election.

¹ *Localism Act 2001, 1. Local authority's general power of competence - (1) A local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally may do.*

² Article 2, Conditions of eligibility, 2(b) the clerk to the parish council holds— (i)the Certificate in Local Council Administration; (ii)the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy; (iii)the Certificate of Higher Education in Local Council Administration; or (iv)the first level of the foundation degree in Community Engagement and Governance; and (c)the clerk to the parish council has completed the relevant training, unless such training was required for the purpose of obtaining a qualification of a description mentioned in paragraph (b). - (2) "relevant training" means training— (b) provided in accordance with the national training strategy for parish-councils adopted by the National Association of Local Councils, as revised from time to time.

³ Relevant training refers to the clerk and not any other council staff i.e. deputy clerk.

Excerpt from the Financial Spreadsheet for February Payments

Barnt Green Parish Council
PAYMENTS LIST

Voucher	How Paid	Description	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
193	DD	Pension contributions	E	138.27	0.00	138.27
194	DD	Landline and Broadband	S	39.99	8.00	47.99
195	SO	Grounds maintenance at playing field	S	232.41	46.48	278.89
196	BACS	Data Protection Annual Fee	E	40.00	0.00	40.00
197	BACS	Dog bags	S	137.25	27.45	164.70
198	BACS	Outdoor Parish Caretaker	X	416.66	0.00	416.66
199	BACS	Christmas Tree Lights Dismantle	S	1,975.00	395.00	2,370.00
200	BACS	Salary	E	1,109.15	0.00	1,109.15
201	BACS	Petty cash top up	E	151.57	0.00	151.57
202	BACS	Local Councils Direct Subscription	E	100.00	0.00	100.00
203	DD	Dusk to dawn footpath lighting energy	S	241.38	48.28	289.65
204	DD	Street Light Energy	L	13.38	0.67	14.05
Total				4,595.06	525.88	5,120.93

Current financial position (bank reconciliation to 31 January 2020)

Bank Reconciliation 31st January 2019			
Cash in hand at 1 April 2019			
Unity Bank current account	1,066.56		
Unity Bank deposit account	22,465.64		
Cambridge Building Society	55,212.14		
Opening bank balances		£78,744.34	
Less unrepresented cheques			
	360.00		
Opening Cash Book balance		£78,384.34	
Add receipts between 1 April - 31 Jan 2019	91,979.26		
Less payments between 1 April - 31 Jan 2019	80,484.10		
Cashbook balance at 31 Jan 2019		£89,879.50	A
Cash in hand per bank statements at 31 Jan 2019			
Unity Bank current account	625.84		
Unity Bank deposit account	34,041.52		
Cambridge B/S	55,212.14		
Pocket account	-		
less unrepresented payments, as list below	-		
Bank balances at 31 Jan 2019		£89,879.50	B

A - B = £0.00

Petty Cash Monzo Bank Reconciliation (January 2020)

Monzo Reconciliation as at			
Date		Expenditure	Deposit
	Opening Balance		£ 18.80
16/11/2019	BGPC Top Up		£ 181.20
			£ 200.00
05/01/2020	Morrisons - Milk, Tea, Kitchen Paper	£ 4.50	
09/01/2020	Amazon - Surge Protector Tower Extension Cable	£ 25.99	
09/01/2019	Amazon - 4 x A4 Display Frames	£ 31.16	
09/01/2020	Vista Print - New Window Sign Decal	£ 17.08	
18/01/2020	Waitrose - Coffee	£ 3.85	
21/01/2020	Tesco - Milk	£ 0.50	
21/01/2020	Adobe Pro Software	£ 15.17	
22/01/2020	Amazon - Index Dividers	£ 3.40	
22/01/2020	Amazon - Black ink Cartridge	£ 34.49	
22/01/2020	Amazon - Jan - Dec Dividers	£ 2.98	
22/01/2020	Amazon - Lever Arch Files x 4	£ 12.45	
	Total	£ 151.57	
	Balance		£ 48.43
	Top up Authorisation Request	£ 151.57	

Report on Suitable Storage Shed for Millennium Park

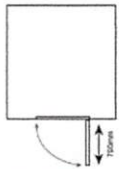


Asgard Flexistore 1533 galvanised metal shed 5'1 x 10'11
 Product code: SHS24602 - ShedStore

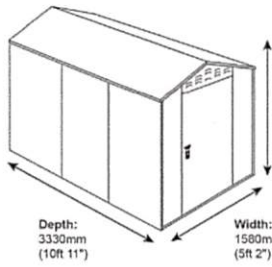
- 10-year guarantee
- Built in the UK from heavy-duty galvanised steel
- Integral metal floor
- Single pick and drill-resistant 3-point locking system door
- Weatherproof, rust-resistant and maintenance-free

EXTERNAL MEASUREMENTS

Weight:
 248kg (39 stone)
 Door Aperture:
 1710mm (5ft 7") x
 747mm (2ft 5")



Door Clearance
 790mm
 (2ft 7")



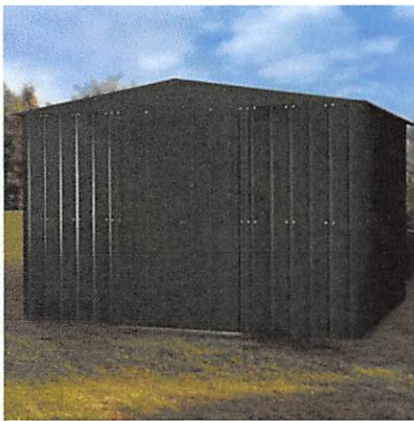
Height:
 1990mm
 (6ft 6")

Depth:
 3330mm
 (10ft 11")

Width:
 1560mm
 (5ft 2")

NET COST:

Shed -	£783.33
2 Pack Shelf -	£ 58.33
Wooden Floor -	£ 99.99
Installation -	£274.99

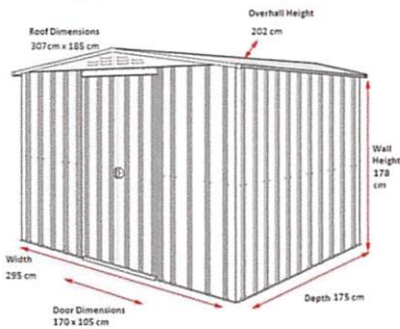


Lotus Heritage Green Apex Galvanised Shed 10' x 6'
 Product code: SHS20162 - ShedStore

- 15-year anti-rust guarantee
- Heaviest gauge, hot dipped galvanised steel in its category
- No maintenance required
- Taller wall height and higher eaves

NET COST:

Shed -	£341.66
5 tier shelf -	£ 34.99
Floor -	£ 83.33
Installation -	£199.99



Overall Height
 202 cm

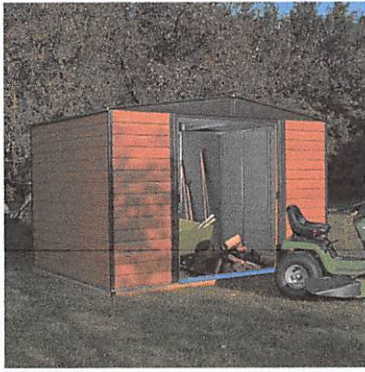
Roof Dimensions
 307 cm x 185 cm

Wall Height
 179 cm

Width
 295 cm

Depth 175 cm

Door Dimensions
 170 x 105 cm



Rowlinson Woodvale Metal Apex Shed 10' x 6' - Built from durable steel with a 60mm softwood floor

Product code: BSD24446 – Buy Sheds Direct

- Fire-retardant, rot-resistant and rust proof
- Sliding double doors with a padlock fixing

NET COST:

Shed - £691.66

Includes Floor & Installation

DKE AUDIT SERVICES

INTERNAL AUDITOR & INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Specialist provider to Parish Councils, Small Public Sector, Charitable, Community and Voluntary Organisations

Annual Internal Audit Report

Barnt Green Parish Council

80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green, Birmingham. B45 8NF

Financial Year Ending 31 March 2020

Name of Clerk to the Council	Tracy Bodley
Name of RFO (if different)	As above
Precept (for audit year)	£63,480
Gross budgeted income	£71,418

Internal audit carried out by	Duncan Edwards
Audit type	ANNUAL
Date of Audit Visit	21 January 2020
Date of Report	Draft Report 5 February 2020 Final Report xx xxx 2020

1 Introduction and summary

I have concluded the Council's annual internal audit. I have therefore been able to complete the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20 which forms part of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return.

My internal audit plan considers the evidence available to assess and ensure the Council has effective governance arrangements in place. In examining the governance framework focus has been placed on compliance with the Council's key governance 'rules', its management of risk and its financial controls.

The internal audit is not designed to identify all weaknesses in the Parish Council's systems but, it is a sample examination of systems and of testing those systems. Where weaknesses are identified during the internal audit process, which impact on governance and control, recommendations have been made in this report. These recommendations will have been discussed and agreed with the Parish Clerk.

The responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with law or regulations rests with the Council. The internal audit should not be relied upon to disclose all material misstatements or frauds, errors or instances of non-compliance as may exist.

2 Due Process / Governance

The Council has adopted the key policies and documents associated with effective governance. The Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Members' Code of Conduct and these are reviewed periodically by the Council. As part of the audit these documents have been examined and are appropriate to support and maintain effective governance arrangements. Compliance with the requirements of these documents has been reviewed and evidence and explanations obtained supports this.

Financial Regulations have been examined in particular detail, these are the financial rules upon which all Members, the Clerk (and the Responsible Financial Officer) must comply. The Council has a number of other policies, processes and documents that support its governance arrangements which have been reviewed. Policies have been reviewed and approved within the year.

The minutes of meetings appear comprehensive and are formally approved as required. The calendar of meeting, agendas and minutes are all published. The assessment of the internal control arrangements has been undertaken.

3 Risk Management & risk mitigation

The Council's approach to risk management has been reviewed. The Council is risk aware, it has a comprehensive risk management policy and operates processes that assesses, reviews, records and scores its key risk activities and implements appropriate mitigating actions. The Council's assets are risk assessed with appropriate controls in place. Insurance arrangements mitigate the risk of asset loss and negligence. Effective internal control mitigate the risk of financial loss and the system of internal control has been reviewed in support of the last Annual Governance Statement.

The Risk Assessment and Management document (risk register) is periodically reviewed by the Clerk and is reviewed by Members. Specific events are risk assessed with mitigating actions put in place.

4 Budget

The budget setting process has been reviewed and is appropriate. Precept setting stems from the budget requirement. Regular budget monitoring and reporting operates and this supports effective financial management. The Council holds appropriate earmarked and contingency reserves.

5 Book-Keeping

The book-keeping arrangements have been reviewed. Receipts and payments are accurately recorded and all payments are listed and presented to Members and are approved.

A review of both the minutes and the payment files have found no unusual financial activity. Statutory payments, have been identified, recorded and processed. The financial records are well structured using the new finance package, supporting evidence provide a full audit trail.

6 Expenditure / payments and procurement controls

The Council has procurement rules. The Councils Financial Regulations specify how the procurement and contracting process must operate. In order to demonstrate both compliance with the regulations and the overarching principle of securing and evidencing value for money, appropriate records of processes followed when inviting, evaluating and awarding contracts should be retained.

A sample number of payments were examined, the payments were for items in accordance with budget, were supported by invoices or appropriate records, and had been approved by Members. Payments were verified to the bank account which had been reconciled. The bank account signatory controls are followed.

7 Procurement, credit or debit cards (inc. internet procurement)

The Council uses a preloaded payment card. Use and payments were reviewed and appropriate controls are present.

8 Payroll and Staffing – Parish Clerk and others

Employment and payroll processes have been reviewed. The employment contract for the Clerk sets the terms for the role and that of the Responsible Financial Officer and salary is set in accordance with Nalc pay structure. For the sample selected, salary payment calculations are correct and statutory deductions made.

9 Income (receipt) Controls

The Council has minimal activities that generate income, the main receipt being the precept. The payments received have been properly recorded in the accounting records and have been banked.

10 Petty Cash & Change Floats

The Council does not operate petty cash or change float systems.

11 Asset Control

The Council has a comprehensive asset register that is risk assessed. Assets are valued based on purchase price. The correlation between the value of the assets stated in the asset register and the insured values could be reviewed. This matter was raised in last year's internal audit report.

12 Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation is a key financial control. The bank reconciliation process was reviewed and found to be effective and provides sound control. The bank reconciliation is periodically approved by Members.

13 Information Technology

The Councils financial records are maintained on a recently acquired specialist software system. The computer is password controlled with the access arrangements being in accordance with Financial Regulations. Back-up arrangements are in place as the Clerk saves all data and information on the 'Cloud'.

14 Information management, DP, FOI & Transparency

The Council has arrangements in respect of data protection, freedom of information and records management.

15 Year-End Procedures

This is the drafting assuming the end of year documents provided support the statement.

The key end of year records have been examined after 31 March 2020 to seek evidence that the accounting records and funds statement agree to sums held at the bank, and formal verification has been given by Members. The end of year accounting records examined were the:

- Final cash book summary, showing for each budget head the final actual payments and receipt sums to budget
- Final bank statements
- Final bank reconciliation signed off by Members
- Year-end accounts, those submitted or to be submitted to Members

No issues have arisen from the review of the above records. This concluded the internal audit review, enabling the completion of the annual 'internal audit report' that accompanies the accounting and governance statements submitted to the external auditor.

16 Miscellaneous / other control matters

The matters raised in the last internal audit report to be actioned were;

Risk Management

There is no formal overarching risk management policy, it is recommended that a policy is introduced (see example in the Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England – Practitioners' Guide – Section 5). The policy should set out how the Council assesses, controls, records and monitors risks, in doing so it should aid and support decision making particularly where there is competing demand for limited resources.

Although the Council is risk aware, there remains no overarching Risk Management Policy to determine and govern how risks will be identified, assessed, managed and the level of the Councils risk appetite set (the risk levels the Council will accept). The Councils Financial Regulations (17.1), (1.9), (1.15), refer to a risk policy, and reference and define 'proper practice', the guidance for which detail a suggested approach to risk management.

This has now been addressed.

Asset value to insured value

The correlation between the value of the assets stated in the asset register and the insured values could be reviewed.

The review of the value of assets shown on the asset register to the value of the items insured has not occurred. However, work is in progress to add the insured value and the replacement cost of assets to the asset register. This will identify any variance between the values that need consideration. At the time of the audit the approximate value of the items on the asset register was £210,000 the value of assets on the insurance schedule was £110,000.

This matter remains outstanding

Verification of invested sums

A significant sum is held in an investment account, it is recommended that evidence, by way of Members verifying the bank statement, should occur at least half yearly and include the verification of the final year end statement at 31 March.

The verification of the sums held in the investment account to a statement has not occurred. However, the account is due to be closed with the sum being transferred to a new investment account. This process will confirm to Members the sum held. The recommendation that sums held in investment accounts are verified by Members at least half yearly remains.

Members agreed to maintain the Councils existing investment arrangements. The sums in the account have been verified. This has now been addressed.

The internal auditor wishes to acknowledge the support and assistance provided by the Parish Clerk during the internal audit review.

xxxx

Duncan Edwards

30 January 2020

Our Ref: JTT/IP/LM.39328

Ms T Bodley
Barnt Green Parish Council
Ground Floor Front Office
80 Hewell Road
Barnt Green
B45 8NF

Sales
Lettings
Acquisitions
Investments
Valuations
Building Surveying
Management
Rating
Rent Reviews
Lease Renewals

**SUBJECT TO CONTRACT
& WITHOUT PREJUDICE**

Dear Tracey

Re:- 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green

I note from our files that the Lease of the above premises expires on 7 April this year, and we have been instructed, as part of our Management duties, to contact you to discuss terms for Renewal.

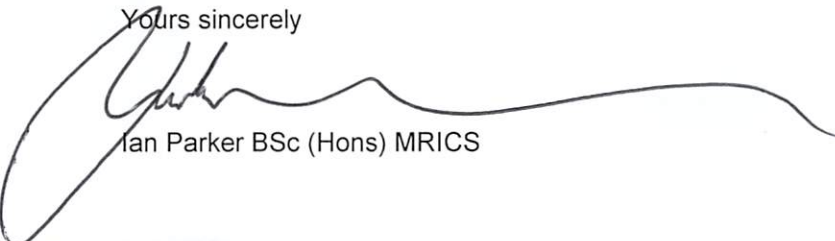
I can confirm that the Landlord will be pleased to offer you terms, as follows:-

1. 5-year Lease.
2. Rent - £5,500 (Five Thousand, Five Hundred Pounds) per annum.
3. All other terms to be as contained within the existing Lease.

I look forward to hearing from you once you have had chance to consider the above in order that a new Lease can be drafted; however, if you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely



Ian Parker BSc (Hons) MRICS

Mobile: 07711 474648

07876 493515

Sort Code: 20-98-61

Acc. No: 50278246

HARTLEY HOUSE

PRIORY ROAD

DODFORD

BROMSGROVE

B61 9DA

JOHN S. BISHOP

GARDEN CONTRACTORS

Lawn Mowing - Rotovating - Hedge Trimming

Rough Grass Cutting - Chain Sawing

Fencing - Turfing - Seeding

Mini Digger Hire - Landscaping

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

21/1/20

ESTIMATE

ESTIMATE FOR CUTTING GRASS IN
VILLAGE GARDEN AND CHILDRENS
PLAY AREA ON A FORTNIGHTLY BASIS
FROM MARCH TO OCTOBER ALL GRASS
REMOVED FROM SITE.

FOR 15 CUTS PRICE PER CUT 2020

£59

00

FOR CUTTING BEECH HEDGES ONCE AT
END OF SEASON FOR 2020

£130

00

FOR CUTTING THE 3 VERGES UP THE
HIGH STREET AND THE ONE IN
ORCHARD CROFT, EVERY THREE WEEKS.

FOR 12 CUTS PER CUT FOR 2020

£32

00

FOR RAKING UP THE LEAVES WHEN ALL
OFF THE TREE AT END OF SEASON AND
REMOVING FROM SITE FOR 2020

£115

00

FOR CUTTING THE SIDE OF HEDGE AT
FAR SIDE OF PLAY AREA ONCE AT
END OF SEASON FOR 2020

£65

00

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

80 Hewell Road, Birmingham, B45 8NF

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DRAFT

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting
held at Barnt Green Parish Council Office, B45 8NF**

on Monday 20 January 2020 at 7.00pm

Members present: Cllrs R Cholmondeley, C Hotham, P Perry, S Whitehand, J Nilsson, J Jagger and O Polton from 19:15

In attendance: A representative of The Village magazine
Executive Officer, Tracy Bodley
1 Member of the public

19/145 Apologies
Cllr Rone-Clarke

19/146 Declarations of Interest: Councillors were reminded that to ensure transparency and retain public confidence in the council's decisions they are required to -

- Keep their Register of Interests form up to date;
- Declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) and any Other Disclosable Interests (ODI) in agenda items and the nature of those interests.

- Cllr Hotham has a standing declaration in his role as a member of the district council's planning committee; any comments made at parish council meetings on planning matters are made prior to possession of the full facts and would not amount to pre-determination.

No other declarations were received.

19/147 To consider any dispensations
No dispensation requests had been received.

19/148 Open Session - Participation to hear from:

a) Members of the Public –

A member of the public made representation from the residents of Greenbank regarding the parking problems in the road. He reported that he had written several times to the local press and forwarded photographs of the damaged grass verge and accessibility issues. Predominantly related to school drop off/collection times, it was reported that there is also an issue with long stay parking from rail commuters. There were also reports of damage to vehicles.

Suggestions from residents include:

- Installation of retractable or permanent bollards
- Extension of the double yellow lines
- Issuing parking permits to residents
- Installation of 'no parking' signs

Cllr Hotham stated that it needs to be established if the land is adopted highway. If it is then as most residents benefit from off road parking then parking permits would not be approved.

Cllr Cholmondeley stated that all highways issued needed to be reported by the residents directly to Worcestershire County Councillor Peter McDonald.

RESOLVED: That an investigation to determine if the road was adopted highway would take place with the outcome reported to the resident.

- b) **Supporting organisations**, e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Team – None present
- c) **Worcestershire County Councillor** – Peter McDonald (Beacon division)
Not Present
- d) **Bromsgrove District Councillor** - Charles Hotham (Barnt Green & Hopwood)
Cllr Hotham reported that from April 2020, the policing areas would change. The Barnt Green policing area would be moved into the Alvechurch area whereas currently it was under the Rubery area for policing.
Cllr Hotham stated that attendance at the Annual Parish Council Meeting may be accepted if an invitation was sent.
Planning Review matters – It was reported that the annual cost amounted to £300,000.
BDC Council Tax – The likely increase for Barnt Green residents on 20/21 council tax would be 2%.
Barnt Green Waters Meeting – Following attendance at the recent meeting on water quality, it was reported that the reservoir is now at full capacity but there is still a phosphate problem and possible sewage leak. There is a current issue with the number of cormorants exhausting stocks of medium sized fish.

19/149 To adopt previous minutes

- a) To approve adoption of the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 18/11/2019
AGREED

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 18/11/2019 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

19/150 Chairman’s Report

The Chairman asked for it to be noted that the stile leading up to the motorway footpath bridge had been replaced by a kissing gate.

The Chairman also reported that an email had been received from a resident concerning the brook and asked the EO to make enquiries with Thomas Curwell of North Worcestershire Water Management regarding the water source and making residents aware of their responsibilities on clearing the brook if it runs through their land.

19/151 Policy and Documents Review

- a) **Complaints Policy – January 2020.**

This has been updated requiring council approval and signature.

- b) **Community Engagement Strategy.**

This newly created document required adoption and signature by the Chairman. As part of the CiLCA qualification it is recognised that the main aim of any first-tier local council should be to provide quality services to improve the life of village residents. It is therefore imperative that the council adopt an appropriate strategy to engage with its community.

- c) **To review the Policy Review Calendar 2020/2022.**

<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Complaints Policy 2020 be approved and signed by the Chairman. 2. That the Community Engagement Strategy be adopted and signed by the Chairman. 3. That the Policy Review Calendar 2020/2022 be noted. 4. That all the reviewed policies would be placed on the council’s website.
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19/152 Executive Officer's Report

To be advised of any decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting and receive updates to ongoing matters and a list of office communications since the previous council meeting.

<p>a) Station</p>	<p>Lifts – An update was received regarding the funding process of the installation of station lifts. It was reported that following successful progress of investment papers through Network Rail's investment process, consisting of the DfT's investment process and the joint programme/portfolio boards, as of 14th January the officer at DfT was still awaiting the outcome between senior civil servants and Network Rail Directors regarding if any funding can be found within Network Rail for progressing the Barnt Green Lifts project.</p> <p>There is uncertainty that these funds exist, hence the application for funds through the DfT 'enhancements pipeline'. If the outcome of the discussions confirm that funding is available, Ministerial and Treasury approval will be sought.</p> <p>Meanwhile the project team await in readiness to lead the design and award the contract.</p> <p>Cllr Cholmondeley reported that he had requested a meeting with MP Sajid Javid but as yet had not received a response and was due to attend a meeting of the Bromsgrove Equalities Forum so would update them accordingly.</p> <p>Cllr Hotham asked for clarification on if the reported work from both Network Rail and DfT was in parallel or sequential.</p> <div data-bbox="619 1108 1439 1355" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"><p>RESOLVED:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">i) That further clarification would be sought on the perspective of the multi-agency liaison.ii) That a small group be formed to strategise a way forward.</div> <p>Improvements – The station Manager has reported that she has been liaising with Richard Brooks and WMT Property Team regarding the various improvements suggested at the parish council meeting in September 2019.</p> <p>It is reported that WMT are continuing to investigate matters raised, including moving the self-serve ticket machine on platform 3 over to the entrance area on platform 1 and installation of a lockable noticeboard.</p> <p>The installation request for a cycle rack on platform one was also investigated, however due to the limited width of the platform this will not be possible.</p> <p>It was further reported that some items may take time to come to fruition, however it is advised that WMT are working to try and address as many issues raised as possible.</p>
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	<p>Cllr Cholmondeley was disappointed that there was no mention of installation of PA announcements and a screen on platform 1.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the EO would report back accordingly.</p>
b) Scribe Accounting Software	<p>It was reported that under consultation the Chairman and using delegated authority the parish council has subscribed to Scribe accounting software specifically designed for parish and town councils. The cloud-based software has complex security firewalls and is compliant with both external audit and HMRC legislation.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report was noted.</p>
c) Prohibition of Wating Order – Hewell Lane	<p>It was reported that notification had been received from WCC proposing to extend the existing ‘Prohibition of Waiting at Any Time’ restrictions on Hewell Lane from its junction with Fiery Hill Road.</p> <p>The implementation of double yellow lines will prevent parking, aiding visibility, preventing, congestion and ensure a safe free flow of traffic. The proposals have the support of the local member, County Councillor Peter Mcdonald with comments welcomed as part of the consultation process.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That BGPC would welcome the proposal to extend the existing ‘Prohibition of Waiting at Any Time’ restrictions on Hewell Lane from its junction with Fiery Hill Road.</p>
d) BDC Rapid Electric Vehicle Charger project update	<p>RESOLVED: That the report was noted.</p>
e) Internal Auditor visit – DKE Audit Services	<p>RESOLVED: That the report was noted.</p>
f) RoSPA Inspection – Playing Field and Millennium Park	<p>RESOLVED: That the report was noted.</p>
g) Public Path Order	<p>It was reported that a letter had been received from WCC regarding the consultation of the public footpath proposal via the constructed footbridge.</p> <p>Members were asked to submit comments to revert to the Mapping Officer.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the public footpath proposal be approved.</p>

19/153 Finance

- (i) To note the current financial position and bills for payment

RESOLVED:

- a. That the current financial position was noted.
- b. That the list of payments was agreed.

- (ii) To be advised of any expenditure decisions taken by the Executive Officer.

The Monzo (Petty Cash) reconciliation requesting authorisation to top up the balance to the agreed sum of £200.00 was authorised in December. Top Up request £181.20

RESOLVED: That authorisation of top up of the Monzo card (Petty Cash Purchases) was noted.

- (iii) To receive budget recommendation from Finance and General Purposes Committee 06/01/2020

RESOLVED: That budget recommendations from the Finance and General Purposes Committee be approved.

- (iv) To approve the precept for 2020/21 of £64,000 (Band D impact of £62.47pa)

RESOLVED:

1. That the recommendation that the 20/21 precept be set at £64,000 (Band D impact of £62.47pa) be approved.
2. That the BDC Precept form be signed by the Chairman and countersigned by the EO.

19/154 Committee, Working Party and Members' reports on meetings attended

- a) **Finance and General Purposes Committee** meeting held 06/01/2020 to receive minutes.

- i) Commuter Car Park - At the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting the contract was signed by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.
- ii) Wayleave – At the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting the lease agreement between Cadent Gas and Barnt Green Parish Council was approved.

RESOLVED:

1. That the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee be approved for adoption
2. That ratification of the previously signed Commuter Car Park contract was undertaken.
3. That Ratification of the Wayleave agreement was undertaken.

19/155 Events

- a) Christmas Switch On – To receive feedback

The event was well received with only minor matters arising;

- i) It was considered that the location of the children's choir would be better suited in Millennium Park rather than in the archway facing out as this limits possible risk to onlookers spilling out onto Hewell Road.
- ii) The grassed area in Millennium Park was extremely muddy and it was thought that temporary flooring could be installed to eliminate this problem for future events. If purchased by the parish could then storage may be an issue.

RESOLVED: That options would be sourced for a secure vandal proof and aesthetically pleasing storage shed/unit.

- b) Christmas Best Shop Window Competition

It was reported that the competition winner was Bliss Estate Agents who were awarded a trophy and certificate.

It was thought that in future events all shops would be considered for judging without the necessity to sign up for entry to encourage wider participation

RESOLVED: That the report was noted.

- c) **Wassail Walk** - To receive feedback.
The event was well received with over 120 participants.

RESOLVED: That it be approved that if donations at the event did not cover the costs then BGPC would meet these costs up to the sum of £100.00.

19/156 **Environment & Community Wellbeing**

- a) **Smart Water Project Update**
176 registrations have been recorded in total.
Door Knock registration – New dates would be considered for second/third week of March.
These sessions would be carried out by councillors, the ‘We don’t Buy Crime’ Co-Ordinator and the local Community Support Officer.
Further publicity would include an article in the spring edition of ‘The Bulletin’ and the installation of banners.

RESOLVED:

- i. That Cllrs would make themselves available for ‘door knock’ sessions.
- ii. That suggested dates would be between the second/third week of March
- iii. That the SmartWater article would be placed on the front cover of ‘The Bulletin’.

- b) **Butterwick Close – Gated access / public highway**
Cllr Hotham reported that he met on site with BDC Planning Officers who since have wrote to Cala Homes expressing that they wish to arrange a meeting. A reminder has also been sent in the new year chasing up the lack of response from Cala.

RESOLVED: That the report was noted.

- c) **Tiered Planters**
It was reported that a meeting was held between the contractor, Cllr Hotham and the EO. It was agreed to plant Surfinia Petunias in both tiered planters to enable a voluminous trailing display. The Outdoor Parish Caretaker has agreed to increase summer watering and although having an impact to the budget this has been accounted for in the 2020/2021 budget provision.

RESOLVED: That the report was noted.

- d) **Village Sign**
A report was circulated detailing the proposal of the installation of a village sign. Cllr Nilsson wished to table the proposal as he thought that it was a nice focal point for the village centre that would promote community pride.
Cllr Cholmondeley stated that as Barnt Green was a relatively new settlement he was unsure if it was fitting and appropriate to have traditional village sign.
Cllr Perry stated that possible artwork could include the Barnt Green Inn or the railway bridge.

Cllr Polton remarked that she had contact details for a blacksmith specialising in bespoke metal ware.

Cllr Cholmondeley added that a taxpayer may ask the question why is the council spending money on such folly?

RESOLVED: That a decision would be carried over until the following parish council meeting on supply of rough artistic impressions from the associate of Cllr Polton.

e) Parking problems at the end of Greenbank

It was reported that the damaged verge has been rectified by another agency therefore eliminating the need for further debate on the subject, however it was remarked that similar damage to other verges within the village had been reported and photographs circulated demonstrating the condition of verges on Bittell Road. A request for pollinating trees to be planted was suggested by the complainant. It was considered that if BGPC were to carry out any repairs then a precedent would be set implying that the parish council would carry out verge repairs village wide.

RESOLVED: That a response would be given to residents to canvass Worcestershire County Councillor Peter McDonald in order that verge repairs were carried out by the appropriate agency.

19/157 Planning Applications

a) Members' response to the following consultations:

BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
19/01566/FUL	Westmead, Aqueduct Lane	Proposed two storey extension and re-modelling works to Westmead
<p>BGPC Recommendation:</p> <p>Approval subject to comments made by the Conservation Officer</p>		
19/01501/FUL	67 Fiery Hill Road	Alterations and Extensions to Dwelling house and Replacement Carport
<p>BGPC Recommendation:</p> <p>Approval subject to submission of a satisfactory conservation area report.</p>		

19/158 Future Meetings and items for future agendas

- a) Councillors were reminded of meetings to be attended and asked to use the opportunity to raise items for future agendas.
- i) Storage Shed/unit
 - ii) Adoption of Butterwick Close - Update from WCC

19/159 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Next Parish Council meeting will be Monday 17/02/2020, 7pm at the Parish Office

This meeting ended at 20:49hrs

Signed:..... Date.....
 Chairman, Barnt Green Parish Council 17/02/2020

Excerpt from the Financial Spreadsheet for January Payments

How Paid	Description	Payments Gross	Payments VAT	Payments Net
DD	Pension Contributions	239.55		239.55
DD	Office Landline, broadband and calls	45.42	7.57	37.85
DD	Continuous footpath lighting energy	13.90	0.66	13.24
DD	Dusk to dawn footpath lighting energy	280.80	46.80	234.00
DD	Office Energy 28 Sep - 07 Jan 20	168.01	8.00	160.01
SO	December Retainer, footpath lighting maintenance	264.00	44.00	220.00
SO	Grounds Maintenance at playing field	278.89	46.48	232.41
BACS	Outdoor Parish Caretaker Dec 2019	416.66	-	416.66
BACS	Replace Damaged Street Lamp - 81 Bittell Road	428.10	71.35	356.75
BACS	Replacements lamps - Sandhills Rd, Poplar Dr, Margesson Dr	412.44	68.74	343.70
BACS	January Salary	1,705.78	-	1,705.78

Current financial position (bank reconciliation to 31 December 2019)

Bank Reconciliation 31st December 2019			
Cash in hand at 1 April 2019			
Unity Bank current account	1,066.56		
Unity Bank deposit account	22,465.64		
Cambridge Building Society	55,212.14		
Opening bank balances		£78,744.34	
Less unpresented cheques	360.00		
Opening Cash Book balance		£78,384.34	
Add receipts between 1 April - 31 Dec 2019	91,979.26		
Less payments between 1 April - 31 Dec 2019	75,300.55		
Cashbook balance at 31 Dec 2019		£95,063.05	A
Cash in hand per bank statements at 31 Dec 2019			
Unity Bank current account	309.39		
Unity Bank deposit account	39,541.52		
Cambridge B/S	55,212.14		
less unpresented payments, as list below			
Bank balances at 31 Dec 2019		£95,063.05	B

A - B = £0.00

Petty Cash Monzo Bank Reconciliation (December 2019)

Monzo Reconciliation as at 03/12/2019			
Date		Expenditure	Deposit
	Opening Balance		£ 4.47
18/11/2019	BGPC Top Up		£ 195.53
			£ 200.00
03/12/2019	Vista Print - Wassail Walk Flyers	£ 31.20	
03/12/2019	Cash Withdrawal - Payment for Chairman's Buffet	£ 150.00	
	Total	£ 181.20	
	Balance		£ 18.80
	Top up Authorisation Request	£ 181.20	

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GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE POLICY

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Parish (and latterly town) councils are corporate bodies that have accumulated powers through legislation since 1894. Their powers were constrained to specific and appropriate legislation. This means that before undertaking anything, members must be satisfied that a town council has the power (under a specified statute) to undertake that activity.
- 1.2 Town and Parish councils have many specific powers (e.g. the provision of open spaces and recreational facilities) in addition to section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, permitting the expenditure up to certain limits for “purposes not otherwise authorised”. Typically, the expenditure on grants and sponsorship is covered by section 137 of the Local Government Act, 1972.
- 1.3 Despite the wide range of powers Town and Parish councils are always at risk of being challenged, especially if they undertake an unusual activity.
- 1.4 In consequence, the Government included a “general power of competence” in the Localism Act 2011 (Part 1, Chapter 1, ss 1-8). It was brought into force by SI 965. The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 in April 2012.

2. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND:

- 2.1 Legislation dictates that eligible local authorities no longer have to identify specific powers to undertake an activity, resulting in reduced risk of legal challenges. The Statutory Instrument states that;

“The Government’s intention in providing eligible parish councils with the general power of competency is to better enable them to take on their enhanced role and allow them to do things they have previously been unable to do under existing powers”.

- 2.2 Under this legislation, eligible town councils have “the power to do anything that individuals generally may do” as long as it does not break other laws.

It is intended to be the power of first not last resort. The eligible council must ask itself if an individual can do it. If the answer is “yes” then a town council is normally permitted to act in the same way.

3. TYPES OF ACTIVITIES:

3.1 Examples of activities covered by the legislation include:

- Running a community shop or post office
- Purchase of derelict buildings
- Legal Representation costs
- Lend or invest money
- Establish a company or co-operative society to trade and engage in commercial activity
- Establishing a company to provide services such as local transport
- Providing grants to individuals

3.2 The power is not restricted to use within the parish --- an eligible town/parish council can use it anywhere.

4. RESTRICTIONS AND RISKS:

4.1 The only real limitation is that the general power of competence cannot be used to circumvent an existing restriction in an existing specific power. The general power of competence cannot be used to raise the precept.

4.2 Existing duties remain in place, such as having regard to the likely effect on crime/disorder and biodiversity. There are also many existing procedural and financial duties that remain in place for the regulation of governance (e.g. no delegation to a single councillor). Furthermore, councils must comply with relevant existing legislation (e.g. employment law, health and safety, equality legislation and duties relating to data protection and freedom of information).

4.3 If another council has a statutory duty to provide a service (e.g. education social service, highways, footpaths, rights of way) it remains their duty to provide it. Nonetheless, eligible town and parish councils may assist. The eligible town/parish council would need to ask itself whether an individual private company or community trust could help. If the answer is "yes" the town/parish council can assist.

4.4 Whist councils are encouraged to be innovative they should be aware of the risks of:

- Being challenged
- Their trading activities damaging other local enterprises
- Damage to the council's reputation and public money if a project or investment goes wrong.

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (s137):

5.1 Expenditure under the Local Government Act (s137) is limited and must be budgeted for separately. Expenditure is restricted in that it cannot be used to give money to individuals and the amounts must be commensurate with the benefit. Section 137 is a power of last resort.

5.2 A council that is eligible to use the general power of competence can no longer use Section 137 as a power for taking action for the benefit of the area. However, Section 137 which permits the council to contribute to UK charities public sector funds and public appeals remains in place.

6. ELIGIBILITY:

6.1 The three conditions for eligibility are set out in the Statutory Instrument (paragraph 1.4 above) as follows:

1. **Resolution:** the council must resolve at a meeting that it meets the criteria for eligibility relating to the electoral mandate and relevant training of the clerk.
2. **Electoral mandate:** at the time the resolution is passed, at least two thirds of the council must hold office as a result of being declared elected (i.e. not co-opted).
3. **Qualified clerk:** At the time that the resolution is passed, the clerk must hold a recognised professional qualification (e.g. Certificate in Local Council Administration, Certificate of Higher Education in Local Policy).

6.2 Having decided at a full meeting of the council that it meets the criteria for eligibility at that time a resolution to this effect must be clearly written in the minutes. The council is then required to revisit that decision and make a new resolution at every 'relevant' annual meeting of the council to confirm that it still meets the criteria. A 'relevant' annual meeting is the annual meeting of the council after the next ordinary election has taken place (i.e. the next 'relevant' date for Barnt Green Parish Council is May 2023).

6.3 In consequence eligibility remains in place until the 'relevant' annual meeting, even if the conditions of the eligibility criteria have changed. If the council loses its qualified clerk or has insufficient elected councillors it must also record its ineligibility at the next 'relevant' meeting.

6.4 There is no requirement for members to be trained in the general power of competence.

Barnt Green Parish Council satisfies all the conditions as:

1. It has 7 out of 8 councillors elected (1 Co-opted member May 2019)
2. The Clerk of the Council holds both the Certificate in Local Council

Adopted at Barnt Green Parish Council Meeting, Monday 17 February 2020

Signed _____

Date _____

Next Review: May 2023

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Child, Young Adult and Vulnerable Person Protection Policy

1. Definitions

Where the following terms are used in this policy they shall have the meaning indicated below:

Child(ren)	anyone under the age of 18 years;
Young Adult	generally a person ranging in age from their late teens or early twenties
Vulnerable Person	as defined by the Department of Health, a vulnerable person is aged 18 years or over and is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm
Parents	this term is used in its broadest sense and includes parents, carers and guardians.
Council	Barnt Green Parish Council
Council Representatives	employees, councillors, volunteers representing Barnt Green Parish Council.

2. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to make clear to all Council Representatives as defined above and contractors what is required in relation to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable people. Children, young people and vulnerable people have the right to participate, have fun and be safe in the services provided for them and the activities they choose, or their parents / carers choose for them. This policy will help to maintain a safe and positive environment for children and vulnerable adults.

3. Policy Coverage

This policy applies to all Council Representatives and contractors working in partnership with the Council. Under the Children Act 2004, the Council has a duty to co-operate with Worcestershire County Council in discharging its duties as a Children's Services Authority and to promote the well-being of children and young people. Worcestershire County Council is also the lead agency for the protection of vulnerable adults.

It is not the role of the Council to investigate allegations of abuse. However, all Council Representatives and contracted services providers have a responsibility to act when they suspect or recognise that a child or vulnerable adult may be a victim of significant harm or abuse. This policy is to be used in conjunction with the Council's Risk Management Policy, Health and Safety Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Complaints Policy and Procedure, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.

4. Child, Young Adult and Vulnerable Person Protection Statement

This policy affects all Council Representatives.

The Council recognises that all children and vulnerable persons have an equal right to protection from abuse accepting the moral and legal responsibilities associated with this.

The Council is committed to safeguarding children, young adults and vulnerable people ensuring that they are protected and kept safe from harm or abuse whilst engaged in services and activities organised and provided by, or on behalf of the Council.

Referrals of suspicion of abuse cannot be anonymous and should be made in the knowledge that during enquiries, the agency making the referral will be named.

The Council will not tolerate harassment of any Council Representative or contracted service provider or child/vulnerable persons who raises concerns of abuse.

5. Policy Statement

The Council is committed to taking all reasonable precautions safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable persons that use its services and will promote a safeguarding culture and environment.

6. The Council aims to do this by:

- (i) making Council Representatives aware of their statutory "duty of care" relating to children and encouraging good practice;
- (ii) creating safe and healthy environments for its services and activities;
- (iii) responding appropriately to any allegations;
- (iv) requiring Council Representatives to abide by this policy;
- (v) appointing a Child Protection Officer.

By doing so the Council will;

- (i) endeavour to keep children and vulnerable adults safe from abuse;
- (ii) report suspicion of abuse promptly and appropriately;
- (iii) always act in the best interests of the child or vulnerable person;
- (iv) proactively seek to promote the welfare and protection of all children and vulnerable people living in the local community;
- (v) endeavour to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children and vulnerable people through, as appropriate, its recruitment and selection policy and by reminding hirers of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- (vi) take any concern made by Council Representatives or contracted service provider or child / vulnerable adult seriously, treating it with sensitivity.

7. Procedures and Systems

Definitions of Abuse

- Abuse covers any form of physical, emotional, mental and sexual abuse including bullying, lack of care that leads to injury or harm. For vulnerable persons abuse may also be financial.
- Neglect is where people fail to meet a child's or vulnerable person's basic physical / psychological needs and is likely to result in the serious impairment of their health or development, e.g. failure to ensure that a child is protected from unnecessary risk of injury, or exposing them to undue cold.
- Physical Abuse is where physical pain or injury is caused, e.g. hitting, shaking, biting, etc.
- Sexual Abuse is where children or vulnerable persons knowingly or unknowingly take part in an activity that meets the sexual needs of the other person or persons involved. This includes inappropriate photography or videoing.

- Emotional / Mental Abuse is where there is persistent emotional ill treatment that causes severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's or vulnerable person's emotional status e.g. bullying (including cyber and text bullying), constant criticism and unrealistic pressure to perform.
- It is important to recognise that disabled children may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and may have difficulties in communicating what is happening to them. Dependency on others for primary needs, e.g. feeding and clothing may make a person feel powerless to report abusive treatment.

Use of Video and Photography

The use of photographs and images of young people will be controlled to prevent possible misuse. In general, agreement will be sought from parents or guardians that images can be used as appropriate.

Consent must be sought from a parent or guardian prior to recording a recognisable child's image.

Unsupervised access to children or one to one photographic sessions is not permitted. Children's names should not be used in photographs or video footage, unless with the express permission of the child's parent or guardian.

Special Events – Photography

It is an unfortunate fact that some people have used children and young people's events as opportunities to take inappropriate photographs or footage of children, every attempt should be made to ensure that this does not happen.

Council Representatives and contracted service providers should always be vigilant. Anyone using cameras or film recorders for or on behalf of the Council should obtain consent from the parents of children being photographed or filmed before the activity commences.

When commissioning professional photographers or inviting the press to cover Council services, events and activities the Council's expectations must be made clear in relation to child protection by checking the credentials of any photographers, ensuring identification is worn and by not allowing unsupervised access to children or one to one photographic sessions.

Responding to Allegations

If a person discloses abuse by someone else:

- Stay calm, take the allegation seriously,
- Allow the person to speak without interruption, accepting what is said, but DO NOT investigate,
- Only ask questions for clarification, do not ask leading questions,
- Alleviate feelings of guilt and isolation, while passing no judgement. Reassure them that they did the right thing by talking to you,
- Advise that you will try to offer support, but that you MUST pass the information on, do not offer to keep secrets,
- Record the facts as you know them,
- Record your observations – a description of the child or young person's behaviour, physical and emotional state and any visible injuries.
- Refer the allegation immediately and directly to the Council's Child Protection officer. If the Child Protection Officer is implicated refer directly to the Executive Officer. If the Executive Officer is implicated, refer to the Chairman. All allegations must be referred, no matter how insignificant they seem to be, or when they occur.
- Try to ensure that no-one is placed in a position which could cause further compromise.

As soon as possible after the event as occurred:

- Write down notes, dates, times, facts, observations, and verbatim speech.
- Ensure the correct details are available, the young person's / vulnerable adult's name and address, and the name and address of their parent or guardian.
- Sign and date what has been recorded.
- Immediately contact the Social Services Department at Worcestershire County Council. Ask for a duty officer and indicate that you wish to discuss a matter of child / vulnerable person protection. Ask for the name of the person with whom you are speaking. Do not filter out or withhold any information. Ask if there is anyone else who should be informed.
- Inform the Local Authority's Monitoring Officer (Head of Legal Services, Bromsgrove District Council).
- Prepare a confidential file. Record all notes, conversations and advice from Social Services. Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained for all concerned.
- Store information in a secure place with limited access to designated people, in line with data protection legislation.
- Follow the advice from Social Services; take no other action unless advised to do so by Social Services.

In the case of an emergency, where a child is in danger, phone 999 immediately.

Every effort should be made to ensure that confidentiality is maintained as any breach of confidentiality could be damaging to the child, their family, those who are the subject of allegations and any child protection investigations that may follow.

Recorded information should be handed over to Social Services or the Police and any copies stored in a secure place with limited access in line with data protection laws (e.g. that information is accurate, regularly updated, relevant and secure).

Council Representatives should not inform the child's parents or guardians. This will be done by Social Services.

Council Representatives should make no comment to the public or media.

Responding to concerns about the welfare of a child/vulnerable/young adult where there is no specific disclosure or allegation;

All Council Representatives and organisations contracted to provide services on behalf of the Council are encouraged to share concerns with the Executive Officer who will, if appropriate, make a referral to Social Services.

Recognising abuse is not always easy. The list below provides some indicators of abuse; however, the list is not exhaustive and contains only indicators, not confirmation, of abuse:

- unexplained bruising, marks or injuries on any part of the body e.g. cigarette burns, bite marks,
- bruises which reflect hand marks or fingertips (from slapping or pinching),
- an injury for which the explanation seems inconsistent or which has not been treated adequately,
- sudden changes in behaviour, including becoming withdrawn or becoming aggressive, severe temper outbursts,
- reluctance to get changed e.g. for swimming,
- neglected in appearance, dirty or 'smelly',
- constant hunger, sometimes stealing food from others,
- inappropriately dressed for the conditions,

- fear of parents or carers being approached for an explanation,
- flinching when approached or touched,
- neurotic behaviour e.g. hair twisting, rocking,
- being unable to play,
- fear of making mistakes,
- self-harm,
- fear of being left with a specific person or group of people, lack of trust in adults,
- sexual knowledge, which is beyond their age or development age,
- sexual drawings or language,
- saying they have secrets they cannot tell anyone about,
- not allowed to have friends.

8. **Child Protection Officer**

The Council's Child Protection Officer is Councillor Charles Hotham.

The role of the Child Protection Officer is to:

- ensure that procedures are in place to enable the Council's aims to be met;
- initiate appropriate action should any allegation of improper conduct be made.

9. **Confidentiality**

Council Representatives and contracted service providers must not discuss allegations of abuse, substantiated or not, with anyone other than in connection with the formal investigation. Where it is necessary to put in procedures to prevent continuing abuse the matter should be shared with the Executive Officer so that appropriate risk assessments may be undertaken.

10. **Prevention**

Recruitment - Prospective employees will be interviewed and previous, relevant experience will be noted. Two appropriate references will be taken up for all employees. All employees will undergo a probationary period.

All Council Representatives who are required to carry out duties that involve working with children or vulnerable people or whose roles mean they come directly into contact with children or vulnerable people will be checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and / or appropriate safeguarding agency. In line with best practice, these checks will be repeated every three years.

Training - The council will make the Child, Young Adult and Vulnerable Persons Protection policy available to all Council Representatives. Line managers will encourage good practice and identify any training needs required through the Council's Appraisal System. Members will be offered appropriate training on safeguarding children and vulnerable people.

All Council Representatives will be expected to read this policy.

Reporting - The Council is committed to maintaining an open culture where members, employees, volunteers, children, vulnerable persons, parents, guardians and carers feel able to express concerns both about child protection and issues of poor practice. In addition to the procedures outlined in this policy, the Council's Complaints Policy and Procedure are available to all members, staff, volunteers, and the general public.

Codes of Practice and Behaviour - These guidelines have been devised to protect children and vulnerable people from abuse, as well as to protect Council Representatives from situations where false allegations may occur.

The guidelines apply to those working with children or vulnerable persons involved in

activities organised by or on behalf of the Council or services provided by the Council.

Council Representatives must:

- Treat everyone with respect, regardless of their age, ethnicity, social background, ability, sexual orientation, culture or religious beliefs,
- Provide an example of good conduct they wish others to follow,
- Plan activities which involve more than one other person being present, or at least which are within sight or hearing of others,
- Respect a person's right to personal privacy,
- Provide access for young people to talk to others about any concerns they may have,
- Encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and aid identification of attitudes or behaviours they do not like,
- Remember that someone else might misinterpret their actions, no matter how well-intentioned,
- Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues, such as bullying, bereavement, abuse or personal development,
- Recognise that some children or vulnerable people will be more vulnerable to abuse than others and may face extra barriers in getting help because of their race, gender, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, social background or culture,
- Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse,
- Be identifiable and wear a name badge where possible.

Council Representatives must not:

- Engage in physical horseplay, such as wrestling or tickling,
- Have any inappropriate verbal or physical contact with children or vulnerable people, or make suggestive remarks or gestures,
- Permit abusive youth peer activities (e.g. initiation ceremonies, ridiculing, bullying etc.),
- Play physical contact games with children or vulnerable adults,
- Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts,
- Ask children or vulnerable adults to do things that are potentially dangerous, illegal or otherwise unreasonable,
- Exaggerate or trivialise abuse issues,
- Show favouritism to any individual,
- Rely on just their good name to protect them,
- Believe it could "never happen to me",
- Take chances when common sense, policy or practice suggest a more prudent approach,
- Allow allegations made to go unchallenged, unrecorded and not acted upon.

The Council takes its responsibility very seriously. Employees who breach these guidelines will face investigation and may face disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal. Volunteers in breach of the above Code of Conduct will have their services terminated with immediate effect and their parent organisation (as appropriate) will be informed. If a member does not adhere to the policy, there may be grounds for reporting their behaviour to the Standards Committee, where an investigation may be carried out under the Member Code of Conduct. Where there is evidence of illegal activity, Council Representative will be reported to the relevant authorities and may face a criminal investigation.

11. Procedure in Relation to Specific Services

Use of Contractors

Contractors, engaged by the Council in areas where workers are likely to encounter children and young people, should have a similarly robust Child Protection Policy, or failing this, must comply with the terms of this policy.

Contractors will be monitored by the Council's Executive Officer.

Although it is not the place of any Council Representative to investigate allegations, they do have a duty of care to children, young and vulnerable adults which means they must report any suspicions they may have.

In general, there are 3 situations that may require Council Representatives to respond to a concern or case of alleged or suspected abuse:

- responding to a child, young and vulnerable adult disclosing abuse;
- responding to allegations or concerns about a Council Representative based on personal observation or due to a complaint.
- responding to allegations or concerns about any other person.

Internet and Email

Please refer to the councils' Press and Media Policy.

First Aid

The administration of first aid to children, young adults and vulnerable people can present risks. Under ordinary circumstances, a child or young person can be administered with first aid only if their parent or guardian expressly permits this course of action.

When administering first aid, wherever possible, Council Representatives should ensure that another adult is present, or is aware of the action being taken. Parents/carers should always be informed when first aid is administered.

Child welfare is of paramount importance. In certain circumstances Council Representatives and contracted service providers may undertake first aid as a last resort, notifying parents / carers as soon as possible, to minimise a child's or vulnerable adult's distress.

12. Misuse of Procedure

Malicious complaints about a member or an employee(s) and/or serious and/or persistent abuse of these safeguarding policies and procedures will not be tolerated and will be dealt with through the Council's disciplinary process.

13. Policy Monitoring and Review

All incidents, allegations of abuse and complaints will be recorded and monitored.

This policy will be reviewed every two years and will also be revised should the need arise relating to changing requirements, legislation and guidance, or in the light of experience.

14. Sources of Information

Barnt Green Parish Council
Child Protection Officer
Councillor Charles Hotham
26 Blackwell Road
Barnt Green
B45 8BU

0121 445 2930

ChildLine

Free helpline for children and young people in the UK. Children and young people can call to talk about any problem

www.childline.org.uk

0800 1111

NSPCC

Information for children and adults

www.nspcc.org.uk/html/home/needadvice/needadvice.htm

0808 800 5000

Samaritans

www.samaritans.org

08457 909090

Reviewed 17 February 2020

Review date February 2022

Date:

Signed.....

Chairman, Barnt Green Parish Council

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

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Disciplinary Procedure

1. References in this document to the "employee's manager" will normally be the EO to the Council. The EO 's manager will be the Chairman of the Council or another member appointed to act in that capacity.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This disciplinary procedure is designed to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct and job performance at all times, including the need to: -

- Fulfil the duties specified in their contract of employment.
- Be honest and act beyond suspicion of dishonesty.
- Maintain high standards of integrity and conduct to protect the council's image and reputation with the public.

The aim is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for the individual. In accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996, Human Rights Act 1998 and the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary Procedures this procedure sets out the framework for resolving issues relating to misconduct and unsatisfactory performance.

This procedure will apply to all employees unless it conflicts with contractual or statutory requirement, which will take precedence. It will be applied fairly, consistently and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

- 2.2. This policy indicates the disciplinary procedure that will normally be followed in the event of misconduct. The following list provides examples of conduct that will normally be regarded as misconduct leading to disciplinary proceedings. The list is not exhaustive. These are examples only:

- Unsatisfactory time keeping.
- Unjustifiable absenteeism, including any absence from work during a working day without prior authorisation or instruction.
- Failure to comply with rules and regulations applicable to job requirements.
- Negligence or failure in performance of duty and responsibility.
- Insubordination.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

- 2.3. For first instances of minor misconduct the employee's manager may speak to the employee informally before implementing a formal disciplinary procedure. However there is no obligation for the employee's manager to do this.

3. SCOPE AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 The procedure applies to all employees of Barnt Green Parish Council.
- 3.2. The procedure is not a substitute for good management practices and should only be invoked when initial attempts to improve conduct have been made following discussions between the employee and their manager. However, where there has been a serious first-time breach of disciplinary rules or gross misconduct the formal procedure should be actioned immediately.
- 3.3. No disciplinary action will be taken against an employee until the circumstances have been fully investigated.
- 3.4. At every stage in the procedure the employee will be advised of the nature of the complaint against him or her and will be given the opportunity to state his or her case before any decision is made.
- 3.5. The employee has the right to be represented at disciplinary hearings and appeals.
- 3.6. In all instances of alleged misconduct, the employee will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the requirement to attend a hearing or appeal. Should the employee fail to attend without an acceptable reason, then the Chairman of the hearing or appeal may proceed in the employee's absence.
- 3.7. Any disciplinary action taken will depend on the nature of the offence, the past recorded behaviour of the employee concerned, the consequence to the Council of the offence and any explanation presented by the employee.
- 3.8. Employees' have the right to appeal against any disciplinary warnings and dismissal.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 Where a minor disciplinary issue arises the line manager or Executive Officer will normally consider the matter and will resolve it if they can without recourse to the formal procedure.
- 4.2 Allegations of more serious misconduct or where a previous warning has been given but the required improvement has not been made, should immediately be referred to the Executive Officer who will then be responsible for nominating an Investigating Officer. If the misconduct relates to the Executive Officer this should be referred to the Chairman.
- 4.3 The Officer who carries out an investigation should not participate in any subsequent decision to act under the procedure. Likewise, the officer hearing the case should not be involved in the investigation beforehand. It is important that respective roles are identified at an early stage so that those roles are not compromised. The investigating officer need not be the employee's supervisor or line manager although this would normally be the case.
- 4.4 Only the Executive Officer has the right to suspend an employee and provide verbal or written warnings for minor misconduct.

5. REPRESENTATION

- 5.1 Employees have the right to representation at hearings and appeals relating to any stage of the formal procedure. This can be a trade union representative, non-union employee representative or a work colleague.
- 5.2 Representatives have the right to address the hearing or appeal. They may also ask questions and present the employee's case. However, they have no right to answer questions on the employee's behalf.

6. THE INFORMAL PROCEDURE

6.1 Informal Advice & Guidance

6.1.1 Where a minor breach of acceptable/ established standards of conduct occurs which does not justify formal disciplinary action, the line manager will advise the employee concerned of the conduct or standard expected in the future. In many cases this will provide sufficient encouragement for the employee not to commit further acts of misconduct.

6.1.2 The employee will be offered guidance, support and where appropriate additional training to achieve the necessary standards. Representation will not normally be appropriate. Managers should make a note of such informal advice and guidance and should set out in writing the required improvements and standards of conduct that are expected in the future. Records of informal advice/counselling should be kept on employee's personal files. However, the formal procedure will apply when:

- previous informal advice or warnings have proved ineffective;
- the allegation is of a serious nature;
- several minor allegations are made which taken together constitute a serious breach of discipline.

7. THE FORMAL PROCEDURE

7.1 Suspension

7.1.1 In some circumstances the Executive Officer may consider suspension, with pay, pending further investigation or until the disciplinary hearing takes place. Suspension may be appropriate where: cases potentially involve gross misconduct; relationships have broken down; there is a risk to the employer's property or to other people. An employee should be advised that suspension does not constitute disciplinary action.

7.1.2 An employee should be advised of the reasons for suspension. The period of suspension should not normally last for more than 20 working days, however where necessary this period can be extended.

7.1.3 The decision whether suspension is necessary can be reviewed at any time in the disciplinary process.

7.2 Investigation

7.2.1 Before any decision can be made about whether a disciplinary hearing is necessary, an investigation must take place. The Executive Officer (or the Finance & General Purposes Committee, in relation to matters concerning the EO) should appoint an appropriate investigating officer, who could be an external adviser, that will report back with their findings and make recommendations as to whether a disciplinary hearing should be convened.

7.2.2 The responsibilities of the Investigating officer are to collect evidence by interviewing any relevant witnesses and gathering all documentation. An Investigatory Interview should be held with the employee concerned whereby the employee is given 5 working days' notice, in writing, outlining the general nature of the allegation. The purpose of the interview is to present the findings of the investigation to the employee and allow them to answer or shed light on the potential allegations to assist the investigating officer to decide if he or she should recommend a disciplinary hearing and/or whether any further investigation is needed.

7.2.3 For the benefit of the employee and the Council any investigation must be concluded within a reasonable timescale. If there is a delay in completing the investigation it is the responsibility of the Investigating Officer to regularly update the employee or their representatives on the progress of the investigation.

7.2.4 Once the Investigating Officer has gathered all the relevant facts and reviewed the evidence, a report should be drafted to the Executive Officer (or Finance & General Purposes Committee) recommending one of the following:

- take no further action and inform the employee accordingly;
- advise the arrangement of counselling, training, extra supervision or written advice as appropriate;
- arrange a disciplinary hearing.

7.3 Arranging a Hearing

7.3.1 If, following the recommendations of the Investigating Officer, the Executive Officer concludes that a hearing is required then the necessary arrangements should be made by the EO. The employee should be given at least 5 working days' notice in writing. The letter should include a clear written statement of the allegation and should enclose any documentary evidence being relied upon and a reminder of the employee's right to be represented.

7.3.2 The Investigating Officer is responsible for presenting the case and planning for any witnesses that he or she relies upon, to attend the meeting.

7.3.3 The employee is responsible for arranging any representation they choose to have and any witnesses that they may wish to call. Details of any witnesses the employee intends to call and a copy of all documents that the employee may wish to refer to at the hearing must be submitted to the Investigating Officer at least 3 working days prior to the hearing.

7.4 Conduct a Hearing

7.4.1 The Panel for a hearing would normally comprise of the Executive Officer (or three members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, in relation to matters concerning the EO) and an independent HR representative to advise, as appropriate.

The objective is:

- to hear the evidence in respect of the allegation, the employee's response and to decide whether the allegation is substantiated;
- if the allegation is substantiated, determine the disciplinary sanction to be applied reflecting the seriousness of the offence and having regard to previous relevant disciplinary history.

The procedure to be followed is:

- introduce panel members and specify their roles;
- clarify the purpose of the hearing and state the allegation;
- presentation of the case by the investigating officer with witnesses called as necessary;
- questions by employee and/or their representative;
- questions by the panel;
- employee and/or their representative to state their case with witnesses called as necessary;
- questions from investigating officer;
- questions from panel;
- investigating officer to sum up;
- employee/representative to sum up;
- panel adjourn to make their decision;
- hearing reconvened and the employee/representative informed of the decision and, if necessary, their rights of appeal.

7.4.2 Requests for an adjournment can be made at any stage and it is up to the Chairman to decide whether a request should be granted.

7.4.3 The decision of the Panel must be confirmed to the employee in writing within 5 working days.

The letter should clearly set out:

- the panel's decision;
- the length of time that any warning will be active for;
- the expected improvement in conduct;
- any assistance that will be provided to achieve this;
- the employee's right to appeal.

7.5 Levels of Disciplinary Action

7.5.1 In determining the appropriate disciplinary action, regard should be given to the employee's previous record, the gravity of the offence and any explanation given.

7.5.2 Although the procedure implies a sequential approach there may be certain circumstances where the matter needs to be considered immediately under Stages 2, 3 or 4 (below).

Stage 1	Oral Warning	For a minor offence, a formal verbal warning (confirmed in writing) making it clear that further misconduct will render the employee liable to further disciplinary action including more severe consequences. A note confirming the Verbal Warning will be placed on the employee's personnel file and a copy will be provided to the employee. A Verbal Warning will normally remain in force for 6 months.
Stage 2	First Written Warning	For a more serious offence or where a previous warning to the employee has not resulted in the required improvement to their conduct. A First Written Warning will be issued by the employee's manager and will set out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature of the offence and the improvement required (if appropriate) and over what period. The agreed improvements should be managed via an action plan to be reviewed on a regular basis. • the likely consequences of any further offence or failure by the employee to improve his/her conduct to an acceptable standard; • that further offences will result in more serious disciplinary action; and • the employee's right of appeal. A first Written Warning will normally remain in force for 6 months.
Stage 3	Final Written Warning	If further misconduct occurs within the time period specified in a First Written Warning or if a sufficiently serious offence, which might warrant only one written warning but is insufficiently serious to justify dismissal, or where previous warnings have been ineffective. A Final Written Warning will be issued by the employee's manager and will set out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the nature of the offence and the improvement required (if appropriate) and over what period. The agreed improvements should be managed by an action plan to be reviewed on a regular basis. • the likely consequences of any further offence or a failure by the employee to improve his/her conduct to an acceptable standard; • that further offences will result in more serious disciplinary action up to and including dismissal; and • the employee's right of appeal. Final Written Warning will normally remain in force for 12 months.
Stage 4	Dismissal with notice	For an act or acts of misconduct, other than gross misconduct, by an employee who is under a final written warning. The employee will be liable to dismissal with notice or pay in lieu of notice.
	Dismissal without notice	In cases where gross misconduct is established the employee will be liable to summary dismissal, that is without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

7.6 The Right of Appeal

7.6.1 An employee has the right to appeal against disciplinary action resulting in a warning or their dismissal. Three members of the Appeal Committee will hear

the appeal, providing that they have had no previous involvement in the matter, assisted by an independent adviser.

7.6.2 An employee who wishes to appeal must do so in writing to the Executive Officer (or Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, in relation to matters concerning the EO). This must be done within 10 working days of the disciplinary hearing informing them of the disciplinary action taken. The appeal letter must set out the grounds for the appeal, normally under one of the following headings:

- the severity of the disciplinary action;
- the findings of the Panel on a point of fact which is pertinent to the decision of the hearing;
- a failure to adhere to the disciplinary procedure.

7.7 Arranging an Appeal

7.7.1 The date and time of the appeal will be organised by the Executive Officer (or Chairman of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, in relation to matters concerning the Parish EO). It is the responsibility of each side to prepare themselves for the appeal including arranging for any witnesses to attend.

7.7.2 The Chairman of the original Panel and the employee or their representative will, where possible, agree papers for submission to the appeal five days prior to the hearing.

7.8 Conducting an Appeal Hearing

7.8.1 The objective is:

- to review the decision of the disciplinary hearing and decide whether that action is warranted or not;
- and, if the action is not warranted, to determine what action if any is appropriate;
- in doing so the Appeal Panel will have regard to seriousness of the offence and any previous relevant disciplinary history.

7.8.2 The procedure to be followed is:

- the appellant puts their case including calling any witnesses;
- the Manager can ask questions of the appellant and witnesses;
- the Manager (Chairman of the previous hearing) who took the disciplinary action puts their case for having done so, which may include calling any witnesses;
- the appellant can ask questions of the Manager and witnesses;
- the Appeals Panel can ask questions of both parties and witnesses;
- both parties can sum up should they wish to do so. No new information should be introduced at this stage and the appellant should have the opportunity to sum up last;
- the appeal is adjourned to allow the Panel to reach a decision;
- the appeal is reconvened and both parties are informed of the decision;

- the Appeals Panel write to both parties informing them of their decision within 5 working days.

7.8.3 The Appeals Panel has the right to call its own witnesses should it consider this to be of assistance in making its decision.

8. TRADE UNION OFFICIALS

- 8.1 In normal circumstances no action will be taken against an officer of a recognised trade union until the matter has been discussed with a full-time officer of that union.

9. DISCIPLINARY RULES

- 9.1 It is difficult to define all the acts of misconduct which may lead to disciplinary action. Barnt Green Parish Council will apply a test of reasonableness by considering whether a reasonable person would be aware that disciplinary action would result from a certain act or omission.
- 9.2 As specified in point 2.2 examples of the types of conduct which are unacceptable, and which may lead to disciplinary action are provided. The list is not exhaustive and other behaviour not listed may lead to disciplinary action when necessary.

10. TYPES OF GROSS MISCONDUCT

- 10.1 Unacceptable conduct, which may be regarded as gross misconduct, is likely to lead to an employee's summary dismissal. This means dismissal without notice and occurs when the employment relationship between the Council and employee, and the trust which is inherent in that, is irrevocably broken.
- 10.2 The following list gives examples of matters likely to be regarded as gross misconduct and is not exhaustive:
- Refusing to follow reasonable management instructions
 - Theft from the Council, its members, employees or the public
 - Physical assault or verbal abuse
 - Fraud or deliberate falsification of records
 - Falsification of qualifications
 - Serious negligence which causes unacceptable loss, injury or damage
 - Serious acts of insubordination
 - Serious breach of confidence
 - Use of privileged information for personal gain
 - Malicious damage to the Council's property
 - Sexual misconduct at work
 - Discrimination, victimisation or harassment
 - Serious breaches of safety rules
 - Serious incapability through alcohol or drugs
 - Accessing or distributing pornography on the Council's IT facilities

11. TRAINING

11.1 Appropriate training will be given to the Executive Officer or any members who might be involved in disciplinary or appeals meetings to ensure they fulfil their responsibilities under this procedure

Signed

Date

Date of next review: February 2022

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

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www.barntgreen.org.uk



Equal Opportunities Policy

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ORGANISATION

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Barnt Green Parish Council (the Council) recognises that it is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

age	disability	gender reassignment
	pregnancy and maternity	race
religion or belief	sex	sexual orientation
marriage	civil partnership	

Under the Equality Act 2010 these are known as “protected characteristics”.

2. POLICY AIMS

- 2.2 Barnt Green Parish Council’s intention is to be an effective Equal Opportunities organisation. This means it will do everything in its power to ensure that everyone has equal access, and is treated with respect, in relation to employment opportunities, to its services and to all its activities.

3. AS AN EMPLOYER

- 3.1 Barnt Green Parish Council provides equal opportunities to all employees, irrespective of their characteristics (unless there are genuine occupational qualifications or objectively justified reasons for a different approach to be taken). The Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, victimisation or harassment on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.2 All employees are required to treat one another with mutual respect. Actions, behaviour and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual, irrespective of the position they have within the organisation.
- 3.3 Barnt Green Parish Council makes every effort to create a workplace where individuals are valued, listened to and treated with respect.
- 3.4 Barnt Green Parish Council maintains a work environment that seeks out and values, insight, experience, contribution and full participation of all staff.
- 3.5 Harassment and discrimination in any form is unacceptable behaviour and offenders will be subject to disciplinary action.

4. THE COUNCIL’S COMMITMENT AS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

- 4.1 All employees whether full-time, part-time, fixed term contract, agency workers or temporary staff, will be treated fairly and equally. Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration or any other benefit will be based on aptitude and ability. All

employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the council.

- 4.2 Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated. This is further defined in the Dignity at Work policy adopted by the council.
- 4.3 Breaches of the equal opportunities policy will be regarded as serious misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- 4.4 Barnt Green Parish Council aims to achieve fulfilment as an Equal Opportunities Employer by:
 - ensuring its employees are made aware of their rights and responsibilities to each other, the customer and the organisation regarding equal opportunities issues;
 - providing a way in which individuals can communicate any concerns via competent named personnel;
 - treating any unacceptable behaviour seriously;
 - ensuring all Managers/Members realise they have a key role in implementing this policy and are expected to take personal responsibility in ensuring its success;
 - providing awareness training for all employees and Councillors, ensuring opportunities to develop relevant competencies are available to implement the policy;
 - meeting the commitments and living the aims of being a "Positive about Discrimination" employer.

5. AS A SERVICE PROVIDER

- 5.1 Barnt Green Parish Council will strive to ensure that all services provided by, or on behalf of, the Council are made accessible to all individuals and groups equally and without discrimination.
- 5.2 All service users will be treated with respect. Actions, behaviour and attitudes should consistently demonstrate respect for the dignity and worth of an individual.
- 5.3 Barnt Green Parish Council will, wherever appropriate, work in partnership with other agencies in the area, including the county and district councils, voluntary groups and community organisations to promote equal opportunities.
- 5.4 Barnt Green Parish Council will ensure that all contractors directly supplying goods and services or executing works for, or on behalf of the Council, comply with this Council's stated policy on equal opportunities.

6. THE COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT TO EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AS A SERVICE PROVIDER

- 6.1 Barnt Green Parish Council aims to achieve fulfilment as an Equal Opportunities Service Provider by:
 - providing training for all staff in equal opportunities awareness and customer care, emphasising equality of treatment in service delivery;
 - ensuring that no member of the public is disadvantaged, or treated less favourably than others, in terms of access to Council services. Where the Council's practice, policy or procedures are found to make access impossible or unreasonably difficult, it will take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to change these practices, policies or procedures;
 - ensuring that, wherever practical, all public buildings and premises owned or managed by the Council are accessible to all.
 - recognising the importance of communication in attaining equality and quality services, which are responsive to the needs of all local people, for example through the provision of information in large print or audio on request;

- complying with all relevant legislation relating to discrimination and equality.

7. ROLE OF COUNCILLORS AND EMPLOYEES

7.1 All Councillors and employees are responsible for implementing the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. It is important that all individuals who are employed by the Council appreciate that they have a responsibility and a role to play in the provision of equal opportunities.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

8.1 This policy will be monitored and reviewed regularly. Other Personnel policies will be reviewed against the values stated in the Equal Opportunities Policy to ensure that the council strives to remain an Equal Opportunities organisation.

8.2 Complaints from staff about discrimination or unfair treatment will be dealt with as laid down in the Council's Grievance Procedures.

8.3 Complaints from members of the public about discrimination or unfair treatment will be dealt with through the Council's Complaints Procedure.

Signed

Agreed at the meeting of Barnt Green Parish Council held 17/02/2020

Review Date: February 2022

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

80 Hewell Road, Birmingham, B45 8NF

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exec@barntgreen.org.uk
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Grievance Procedure

1. The clerk's manager is the Chairman of the Council or other member specifically appointed to act in that capacity.
The Clerk is the manager of all other Council employees.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1. This procedure applies to all employees of the council.

2.2. The objectives of the procedure are: -

- To foster good relationships between the council and its employees by discouraging the harbouring of grievances;
- To settle grievances as near as possible to their point of origin;
- To ensure the council treats grievances seriously and resolves them as quickly as possible; and
- To ensure that employees are treated fairly and consistently throughout the council.

2.3. Matters excluded from this procedure are as follows: -

- Appeals against salary or gradings;
- Appeals against disciplinary actions;
- Income tax, national insurance matters, rates of pay collectively agreed at the national or local level;
- Rules of pension schemes; and
- A grievance about a matter over which the council has no control.

2. INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In the interests of maintaining good working relations the employee is encouraged to first discuss any grievance with his/her manager with a view to resolving the matter informally if appropriate. If the employee feels that this is not appropriate or he or she wishes to pursue a formal grievance they should follow the procedure detailed below.

3. FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

3.1. The employee must set out his/her grievance in writing ("Statement of Grievance") and provide a copy to his/her manager.

3.2. Once the council has had a reasonable opportunity to consider its response to the information provided in the Statement of Grievance the employee will be invited to attend a grievance meeting to discuss the matter.

- (i) The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting.

- (ii) Grievance meetings will normally be convened with 14 days of the council receiving the Statement of Grievance.
 - (iii) The employee has the right to be accompanied to a grievance meeting by a fellow employee, by a Trade Union representative or by a friend.
 - (iv) If the meeting is inconvenient for either the employee or his or her companion, the employee has the right to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- 3.3. A grievance meeting may be adjourned to allow matters raised during the course of the meeting to be investigated, or to afford his/her manager time to consider the decision.
- 3.4. After the meeting the employee will be informed of the council's decision within 5 working days. The meeting may be reconvened for this purpose. The council's decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.
- 3.5. If the employee wishes to appeal against the council's decision he or she must inform the council within 5 working days of receiving the decision.
- 3.6. If the employee notifies the council that they wish to appeal, the employee will be invited to attend a grievance appeal meeting before the Council's Personnel Committee. The employee must take all reasonable steps to attend that meeting. The employee has the right to be accompanied to a grievance appeal meeting by a fellow employee, by a Trade Union representative or by a friend.
- 3.7. A grievance appeal meeting will normally be convened within 7 working days of the council receiving notice that the employee wishes to appeal pursuant to 3.5. above. If the meeting time is inconvenient for the employee or his or her companion, the employee may ask to postpone the meeting by up to 5 working days.
- 3.8. After the grievance appeal meeting the employee will be informed of the council's final decision within 5 working days. The meeting may be reconvened for this purpose. The council's decision will be confirmed to the employee in writing.

4. MODIFIED COUNCIL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE (FOR FORMER EMPLOYEES)

- 4.1. If an ex-employee wishes to raise a grievance, he or she must set out their grievance and the basis for that grievance in writing and provide a copy to the Chairman of the Council's Personnel Committee.
- 4.2. Following receipt of a statement of grievance pursuant to 4.1. above, the council will either write to the ex-employee inviting him or her to attend a meeting to discuss the grievance, or to ask for the ex-employee's agreement to the council responding to the grievance in writing.
- 4.2.1. If the ex-employee does not agree to the matter being dealt with by correspondence within 7 working days of the council writing to them pursuant to 4.2. above steps 3.1. to 3.4. of the standard council

grievance procedure will be followed. The meeting will be conducted by the Councils Personnel Committee.

- 4.2.2. If the ex-employee does agree to the matter being dealt with by correspondence, the Councils Personnel Committee will consider his or her grievance and will respond to the ex-employee in writing within 14 days of the receipt of such confirmation setting out the basis for the council's decision.**

5. GENERAL PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

- 5.1. Grievances raised under the standard council grievance procedure will normally be investigated, and any meetings to discuss the grievance conducted by his/her manager.**
- 5.2. If an employee's grievance is about his/her manager the matter should be raised with the Chairman of the Council's Personnel Committee. All investigations and any grievance meeting will be conducted by the said Personnel Committee and any grievance appeal meeting will be conducted by 3 members of the council who do not sit on the Personnel Committee.**
- 5.3. A grievance raised by the clerk to the council and all employee relations matters are dealt with by the Council's Personnel Committee, all investigations and any grievance meeting will be conducted by the said Committee. Any grievance appeal meeting will be conducted by 3 members of the council who do not sit on the Personnel Committee.**
- 5.4. A copy of the Statement of Grievance, a note of the decision taken at the first stage of the procedure, any notice of appeal and appeal decision will be placed on the employee's/ex-employees personnel file, together with any notes or evidence taken or compiled during the course of the procedure.**

Approved at Barnt Green Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 17 February 2020

**Signed _____
Chairman**

Date _____

Review Date: February 2022

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

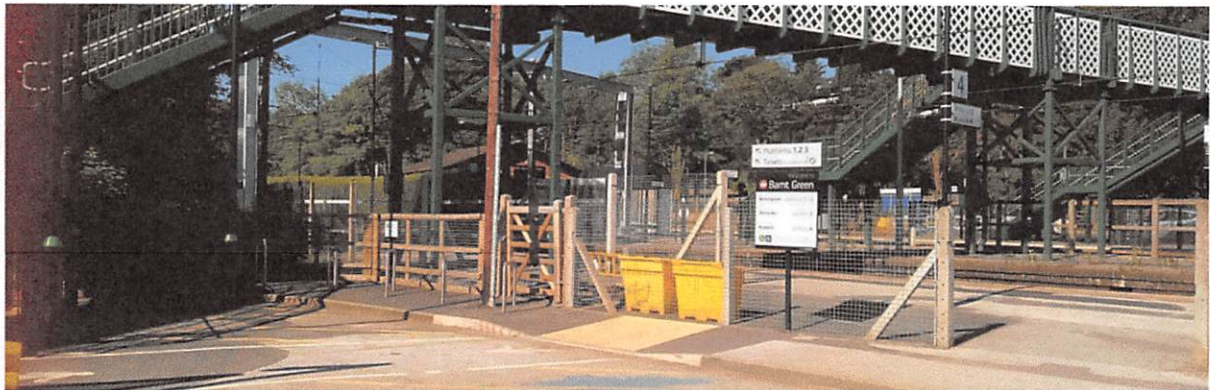
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THREE YEAR FORWARD PLAN



Created by Tracy Bodley
Executive Officer
January 2020

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1.BACKGROUND

All local authorities are established by legislation and work within a statutory framework.

1.1 A Parish Council

A Parish Council is a civil local authority found in England and is the first tier of local government. They are elected corporate bodies, have variable tax raising powers and are responsible for areas known as civil parishes.

1.2 Barnt Green

The Parish is bound on its north-west side by the wooded Lickey Hills and to the east by the Bittell Reservoirs. The main Birmingham to Bristol and Wales railway line, and the Cross-City line from Lichfield to Redditch, runs through the centre of the village. Junction 2 of the M42 motorway is 3 miles to the east and Junction 4 of the M5 motorway is 4 miles to the west. To the south of the village is mixed-farm land.

The railway station which is in the heart of the village provides the residents of the Parish with a frequent train service to Birmingham (12 miles) and Redditch (8 miles) and to Worcester (20 miles). There is an hourly day-time bus service to Birmingham and Bromsgrove, and a less frequent service to Alvechurch and Redditch.

1.3 The Council

Barnt Green Parish Council has eight councillors, seven councillors are elected, and one appointed by co-option. The next elections are due in May 2023.

Barnt Green Parish Council serves the Parish of Barnt Green which has a population of around 1,800 people living in 849 residential households.

Council meetings are held at the parish council office, Hewell Road, Barnt Green on the third Monday of each month at 7.00pm except for the months of August and December. There is also an Annual Parish Meeting held between March and May each year. The Council hold committee meetings to discuss matters as and when they arise.

Residents are encouraged to attend Council meetings and are invited to address the Council at the beginning of the meeting on any item on the agenda. Notices of meetings are placed on the Council's website and noticeboards within the village.

Barnt Green Parish Council will continue to maintain the properties and open spaces it owns or has responsibility for.

Mission Statement

'To enhance the quality of life for the community of Barnt Green, maintain the village identity and encourage a community spirit'.

The Parish Council duties and main responsibilities are:

Assets

- 4 public noticeboards at the following sites:
 - Lockable noticeboard on Hewell Road to the right-hand side of the bus shelter
 - Inside the bus shelter on Hewell Road
 - Corner of Station Approach/Hewell Road
 - Lockable noticeboard on Bittell Road Playing Field Car Park
- A number of public benches around the village
- A number of litter bins – emptied by Bromsgrove District Council
- A number of dog foul bins – emptied by Bromsgrove District Council
- The ownership and maintenance of open spaces in the village:
 - Millennium Park, Hewell Road – a grassed area surrounded by trees with half of the park having a children’s play area including a set of swings, a slide, roundabout, infant activity climbing frame, junior swing bridge/climbing frame.
 - Bittell Road Playing Field – to the north of the parish consisting of 9 acres of mainly open fields with woodland and stream and areas marked out for four football pitches. There is an older children’s activity play area with climbing wall, balance pole and rope bridge; a basket-ball hoop, three picnic tables and several bench seats.
 - A small area of land at the end of Hewell Road outlined as the new village pollinator site.
- The ownership of the Village pathway lighting other than that in Fiery Hill Road

1.4 Services

Parish Council Office

- The Parish Council office is located on the ground floor at 80 Hewell Road and is occupied by the Executive Officer three days a week. Monday – Wednesday. The office is the first point of contact by residents and has the following supplies/information:
 - Dog foul bags
 - Copies of the Lickey Hills Walks for purchase
 - Information on local clubs and organisations
 - Copies of the Barnt Green footpath map
- The Executive Officer of the council calls meetings of the councillors when necessary (by means of a summons) and publishes notices on the public noticeboards and the Parish Council website
- The Executive Officer of the council processes emails, letters, complaints and reports of any problems in the village and carries out work and monitoring to resolve these
- The Executive Officer of the council receives consultation requests from outside bodies and responds accordingly following consideration by the council
- The Parish Council publishes the Parish Council Newsletter – The Bulletin on a bi-annual basis which is hand delivered to all residents and traders.
- The Parish Council maintains the Council’s website which has access to Parish Council documents

Open Spaces

The Parish Council maintains several open spaces and much of the work is carried out by contractors or with the use of volunteers who carry out work within the village. The Parish Council assists the group with contributions to the maintenance and supply of tools and other equipment.

Annual Parish Meeting

It is a legal requirement of the Parish Council to provide an Annual Parish Meeting for the electorate of the village. This is usually held between March and May each year at the Friends Meeting House, Sandhills Road. Briefings are provided by the Chairman of the Council along with occasional displays/exhibitions from local groups/associations.

1.5 Other work of the Parish Council

Monitoring and Reporting

- Road and utility works (Worcestershire County Council and Utility companies)
- Public Rights of Way (Worcestershire County Council)
- Footpaths and Verges (Worcestershire County Council)
- Fly tipping on public land (Bromsgrove District Council)
- Potholes and pavement maintenance (Worcestershire County Council)

1.6 Overall Aims and Objectives

To serve the residents of Barnt Green, providing, maintaining and improving facilities through the provision of appropriate services to improve health, fitness, well-being and support inclusivity.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Purpose of the Forward Plan

The Forward Plan for the period 2020 – 2022 is a statement of the vision for the parish and sets out the Council's purpose, objectives and key priorities for development. This is a key tool for communicating the Council's plans for the next three years to residents of Barnt Green and provides a clear understanding of how the Council works and the aims the Council wishes to achieve during the three-year period.

2.2 Monitoring and Review

The Plan is a statement of the Parish Council's intentions over the next three years and will be subject to at least an annual review in January each year. Elements of the plan will be controlled through the monthly council agenda. This will ensure that the plan is carefully monitored and that it aligns with the aspirations of the Council.

2.3 Resources

The Plan is resourced by the Parish Council staff and external contractors which is financed by the Parish Council from the Precept and Council Reserves. Further resources may be sourced from grants from outside bodies where these are forthcoming.

It is the responsibility of the Parish Council to ensure that the Plan is properly resourced and financed.

It is specifically the responsibility of the Staffing Committee to ensure that the plan and the required human resources within the Parish Council are matched.

It is specifically the responsibility of the Finance and General Purposes Committee to ensure that the funds required by the agreed plan are matched by the funding sources that are available.

2.4 Communication

The Plan will be widely published via the Council's website, the Bulletin newsletter and other community channels. The Council will promote its availability and seek feedback on the contents from within the community.

2.5 Governance

The Parish Council is responsible for complying with the governance and accountability requirements placed on local councils. Barnt Green Parish Council works within an effective control environment which includes Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and a Code of Conduct along with an appropriate Internal Audit.

Barnt Green Parish Council aims to be a professional and competent council which ensures sound financial management and is open and accountable in all that it does. The annual governance statements show that the Council has met and continues to meet these aims and objectives.

2.6 Working with Bromsgrove District Council

The Parish Council recognises that Bromsgrove District Council has adopted its district plan on 25 January 2017 for 2011 to 2030.

It is recognised that there is limited capacity for development within Barnt Green due to its green belt status and conservation area. The Parish Council remains undecided whether it is appropriate and cost prohibitive to pursue a Neighbourhood Plan and is seeking further advice prior to making a commitment however it will still offer guidance about the character of the village and its surroundings when approached by the planning authority.

Bromsgrove District Council has a statutory requirement to consult the Parish Council on planning matters.

The Parish Council, as a statutory consultee, reviews all planning applications and provides recommendations to Bromsgrove District Council representing local views.

3. COMMITTEES

3.1 Overview

Parish Council meetings are held once a month. In addition, separate committees have been established to deal with specific areas of the Council in more detail. The Committees are:

- Finance and General Purposes
- Environment
- Personnel
- Planning

3.2 Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Finance and General Purposes Committee oversees the Council's finances and is also responsible for:

- Reviewing the Councils' assets
- Managing the Council's grants scheme
- Reviewing and drafting the annual budget
- Recommendation on setting the precept

3.3 Environment Committee

The Environment Committee is concerned with looking after the recreation areas, the Lengthsman scheme, floral displays, footpaths and general appearance of the parish.

3.4 Staffing Committee

The Staffing Committee oversees the employees of the Council along with consideration for training and management of all councillors.

2019 saw one new Councillor introduced to the Council with training provided to give overall knowledge enabling them to undertake their duties and responsibilities.

In 2019 a new Executive Officer was appointed.

3.5 Planning Committee

The Planning Committee meets when required, depending on the frequency of applications notified to the Parish Council by the Local Planning Authority (Bromsgrove District Council).

3.6 Outside Bodies

Parish Councillors are nominated each year to sit on several Outside Bodies which include the following:

- Worcestershire CALC
- Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE)
- St Andrews C of E First School

3.7 Local Council Award Scheme

The Parish Council has been awarded the Foundation Level in the Local Council Award Scheme.

4. FINANCE

4.1 Overview

The Parish Council meet in January of every year to review and set the budget and precept for the next financial year.

4.2 Current Budget

The Parish Council set the 2019/20 budget at the parish council meeting held on 19 January 2019 – full details can be found using the following link: <https://www.barntgreen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/19.20-Approved-Budget-1.pdf>

The 2020/2021 budget has also been set at the parish council meeting held on 20 January 2020 – full details can be found using the following link: <https://www.barntgreen.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Approved-20.21-Budget.pdf>

4.3 Revenue Streams

The main income for the Parish Council is through the Precept, which is a tax paid by households of Barnt Green to contribute to the running of council facilities. Parish Councils are expected to build up a level of reserves equivalent to between 3 and 12 months precept, in accordance with good practice.

In addition to the Precept the Parish Council receive a small amount of income from the block hire of football pitches at Bittell Road Playing Field and a wayleave payment.

5. OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES AND OUTCOMES

5.1 Road Safety

Barnt Green Parish Council's objective is to improve road safety for residents on the roads and footpaths.

Road safety is a principal concern of residents and a key objective of the Council.

The main solution to many of these problems is only achievable with the cooperation of Worcestershire County Council, however, in times of severe financial constraint some of the objectives of the Parish Council will be difficult or even impossible to implement.

Working with residents, associations, groups and stakeholders to strive for resolutions to road safety issues, including parking and speeding will continue, with identification and monitoring of areas causing most concern prioritised accordingly.

5.1.1 OBJECTIVE

Improve road safety including speeding and parking.

5.1.2 STRATEGY

Engage with residents, District and County Councillors and West Mercia Police to create and provide a safer environment within the village.

5.1.3 OUTCOME

- Reduction in the number of accidents
- Ensuring easier access to the roads for vehicles and pedestrians.
- Elimination of antisocial behaviour by road users parking inconsiderately blocking resident access to drives.
- Safer pedestrian crossing on main trading area – Hewell Road.

5.2 Public Transport

5.2.1 OBJECTIVE

Barnt Green Parish Council will encourage the increased use of public transport.

5.2.2 STRATEGY

- Engage with residents.
- Council Chairman appointed to Bromsgrove Rail User Group.
- Lobby Network Rail and Department for Transport for the installation of elevators to the raised multi-platform station.
- Monitor effectiveness of public transport in Barnt Green.

5.2.3 OUTCOME

- Disability access to station.
- Improved public transport network serving Barnt Green providing improved links to other destinations.

5.3 Environmental Issues

5.3.1 OBJECTIVE

Barnt Green Parish Council will seek to improve the environment of the village.

5.3.2 STRATEGY

- Litter/street cleansing – 1 Outdoor Parish Caretaker employed to service the village. Engage with other agencies, including Bromsgrove District Council and encourage participation in initiatives i.e. Parish Cleansing Days
- Graffiti – monitored by the Outdoor Parish Caretaker and residents.
- Fly tipping – monitored by the Outdoor Parish Caretaker and residents.

- Dog Fouling – monitored by the Outdoor Parish Caretaker and problem areas are reported to Bromsgrove District Council. Dog foul bags are provided at the entrance to Bittell Road Playing Field in addition to the Parish Council office.
- Flyposting – monitored by the Outdoor Parish Caretaker with incidents reported to Bromsgrove District Council.
- Illegal felling of trees – monitored through Councillors inspection of areas and reports from residents
- Planning – monitored through the planning process. BGPC support protection of the Green Belt.
- Noise – residents' complaints or concerns are passed onto Bromsgrove District Council Public Health department
- Pollinator Sites - In line with Worcestershire County Council's motion in October 2015 regarding making Worcestershire a pollinator friendly county, the parish council propose to deliver the same within the village by creating specifically adopted pollinator sites with a potential to rollout further pollinator sites on verges and grassed areas in Barnt Green.

5.3.3 OUTCOME

To maintain a clean, tidy and environmentally friendly village which residents will take pride in living in with an aim to protect the natural environment from future damage.

5.4 Engagement

5.4.1 OBJECTIVE

To constantly strive to improve engagement across the Parish.

5.4.2 STRATEGY

- Communication with residents – continue to communicate with residents via the Parish Council office, website, Facebook page, noticeboards, the Bulletin newsletter, Annual Parish Meeting, Three-year plan and Annual Report.
- Outside Bodies – the Council is a member of the Worcestershire Association of Local Councils (Worcs CALC). The Executive Officer is a member of the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and regularly meets with other clerks in the local area. Councillors are appointed as representatives on CPRE and St Andrews C of E First School.
- Promote Parish Council events – The council host four annual events; 2 community walks, the Christmas Lights Switch On and a summer event which changes annually. An Annual Parish Meeting (a legal requirement) is also held and the Chairman hosts an annual thank you buffet for the volunteers and contractors working within the village.

5.4.3 OUTCOME

Continuation and improvement of the current engagement will assist the Council to liaise with groups and residents.

5.5 Local Health and Well-being

5.5.1 OBJECTIVE

To improve the health and wellbeing of the residents of Barnt Green.

5.5.2 STRATEGY

- Urge residents to contact their appropriate health forums with any problems, or their views on proposed changes.
- Encourage visitors to the Lickey Hills by way of sale of promotional merchandise to support the Lickey Hills Society.
- Encourage residents and visitors to attend guided community walk events organised by the parish council.
- Footpaths map.

5.5.3 OUTCOME

Local participation to improve health and well-being.

6. Achievements

Barnt Green Parish Council continue to organise and facilitate various services throughout the year for the benefit of the residents. In the last 12 months the following achievements were made:

- Provision of SmartWater security kits available to all village residents and traders, fully funded by BGPC.
- Financial support by way of grant funding to Bromsgrove Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Financial support by way of grant funding to community group organising an open garden event.
- Provision of a summer hanging basket provided to each village trader.
- Provision of summer and winter bedding to village troughs and tiered planters, supporting the local charity 'Where Next' who provide work for adults with learning difficulties.
- Publication of the Bulletin newsletter.
- Installation of speed warning signs on Bittell Road and Blackwell Road.
- Maintenance of a defibrillator located centrally within the village.
- Financial and personnel support of The Environment Group who oversee the new pollinator site.
- Grass maintenance contract provided for Bittell Road Playing Field, Millennium Park and village grass verges.
- Replacement LED lighting to all village streetlamps – installation in January 2020.
- Provision of the Chairman's Annual Thank you Buffet.

7. Ambitions for the Next Three Years

The Council has developed this three-year strategic plan which both maintains existing services and plans for new ones. It will use the Risk Management Scheme in conjunction with the plan to deliver the aims and objectives as detailed within this document with both being constantly reviewed and

developed in order to meet legal compliance and ensure that the council is protected in all aspects of risk to serve and benefit the community accordingly.

8. Planned Projects

The Parish Council sets a budget to provide funds for projects which can be implemented through a combination of reserves, grants and the annual Precept. These will be scheduled into the plans over the three-year period and will be agreed on an annual basis.

9. ACTION PLAN

See Appendix 1

Adopted at the Parish Council meeting held on 17 February 2020

Chairman

Date

Interim Review Date: January 2021
Full three-year review: January 2023

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ACTION PLAN 2020 / 21

Plan Ref: 5.1 ROAD SAFETY				
Objective: Parking & Parking restrictions - make improvements by providing safer roads and footpaths in selected areas identified within the village				
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Greenbank/Hewell Road - problems with pavement parking and blocked driveways from parents dropping off/collecting children from school, creating damage on verges and area of pollinator site.	a) Reduce cars parked / blocked driveways.	a) Plant large pollinator shrubs on the verge to stop cars parking.	£150.00	Awaiting outcome of previous work carried out by Lengthsman.
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Hewell Lane – problems with long stay parked cars from rail user commuters.	Extend double yellow lines from the bottom to the top of the Lane.	Maintain pressure Worcestershire Highways to carry out necessary application.	No cost to BGPC	During 2020
Make improvements to road and footpath conditions	To provide safer roads and footpaths	Maintain pressure to improve surfaces, areas of concern are monitored and reported to the appropriate agencies.	No cost to BGPC	Ongoing
Plan Ref: 5.2 PUBLIC TRANSPORT				
Objective: To improve access at Barnt Green Station				
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Installation of elevator at the station	To improve access to each platform for wheelchair users, those with disability or mobility issues, those with prams or pushchairs.	To maintain pressure on Network Rail, Local MP and Department for Transport.	No cost to BGPC	Ongoing

Plan Ref: 5.3	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES			
Objective: To improve the street scene and take a proactive approach to global environmental issues that may impact the village.				
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Improve issues with litter	To keep the village looking clean and tidy.	Litter pick duties on Outdoor Parish Caretaker's schedule.	No additional cost as included in contract.	Ongoing
Trees/shrubs - improve the street scene by planting additional trees and shrubs	Phased project over 3 years, in various village locations, mainly park and playing field to enhance the village and improve the street scene.	3 x Black Pear Trees to be purchased and planted in Bittell Road playing field.	£40 per tree	Ongoing
Improve Street scene	Street nameplate cleaning Bus shelters cleaning Maintenance of grassed areas keep the village looking clean and tidy	Lengthsman Outdoor Parish Caretaker Contractor Outdoor Parish Caretaker	Budget areas: Lengthsman OPC Contractor	Ongoing
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Dog fouling	Monitor excessive fouling hot spot areas and report to Bromsgrove District Council. Replenish dog waste bags regularly at playing field.	Outdoor Parish Caretaker	Budget area for OPC. Annual bags cost: £300	No end date
Plan Ref: 5.4	ENGAGEMENT			
Objective: Promotion of Council activities and past activities / Raising awareness of Barnt Green Parish Council				
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Annual Report	Provide information on the Council's past activities for the year, raising awareness of how council money is spent.	Report provided at the Annual Parish Meeting and published in Bulletin newsletter and website	Contained within current staff hours	Annually
Council Website	To provide information about the Council and other agencies	Inclusion of statutory and relevant documents e.g. Parish Council Agenda, minutes, policies, AGAR, approved budget etc. Regular posts of newsworthy village information, events etc.	Website annual budget £150, Content contained within staff hours.	Ongoing

Social Media - Council Facebook page	To provide informal information about the council and other agencies	Regular posts include events, temporary road closures, residential Christmas refuse collection.	Content contained within staff hours	Ongoing
The Bulletin Newsletter	To report on past events, to promote the work of the council and future events, with the inclusion of editorials providing information of work from other organisations and groups.	Council content channelled from council meetings and resolutions. Other agencies and groups provide content via email. Volunteers hand deliver to every house and shop within the village and to some houses outside the parish boundary.	Annual printing cost £560	March and September
Communications with traders	Engaging with businesses to provide a better shopping experience for the community and visitors outside the parish.	Production of a regular traders' newsletter distributed to each shop. Continue to provide the office for trader meetings, ensuring a councillor or EO attend the meeting and feedback at an appropriate council meeting.	Contained within current staff hours	Traders newsletter quarterly. Traders meetings when required.
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Local clubs and voluntary groups	Maintain communications with clubs and groups and provide information to all residents.	Maintain a local directory of local groups and associations on the Council's website. Propose inclusion of directory in parish council newsletter, The Bulletin. Events/meeting dates posters placed in village noticeboards.	Contained within current staff hours	Ongoing
Safety and Security	Maintain awareness within the community	Regular reports received from West Mercia Police forwarded to councillors and placed on social media. West Mercia Police invited to report at every Parish Council Meeting.	No cost to BGPC	Ongoing

		West Mercia Police hold regular drop-in sessions at the parish office. SmartWater security kits available to all parish residents and traders.	Kits funded from 19/20 capital project expenditure.	
Grants scheme	To make groups aware of the scheme with encouragement to apply for grant funding providing financial support where needed.	Publicise through The Bulletin Newsletter and Website.	Annual budget agreed £1,000	Considered on a first come first served basis when applications are received.
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Events - 1 x Summer event differing each year 2 x Community Walks Christmas Lights Switch On	Continue to organise events to engage with all ages of the community. To promote health and wellbeing.	Organise through having systems in place and feedback on improvement from previous events.	Events budget agreed	Open Gardens / Flower Festival – July 20 Community Walk – 19/09/2020 Wassail Walk – 2020 between Xmas & New Yr. Switch on – 28 Nov 2020?
Chairman's Annual Thank you buffet	To thank volunteers and contributors to the parish for their commitment and work during the year.	Event held in Barnt Green Social Club	Budget agreed	2 nd Monday in December
Plan Ref: 5.5	LOCAL HEALTH & WELL BEING Objective: To improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the village			
STRATEGY	AIM	HOW	COST	SCHEDULED DATE
Bittell Road Playing Field	Encourage participation in outdoor activities.	Maintain and improve the facilities, encouragement of health activities for the young including the Saturday Football Club – Total Football.	Maintenance budget agreed for park and playing field	Football pitches hired out on a term time basis with summer school activities.

	Installation of Outdoor Gym Equipment and extend pathway to create a circular walk around playing field perimeter.	Obtain quotes – set a contract	S106 Funding and BGPC contribution.	Within 2020
Millennium Park	Encourage use of the younger children's play area	Maintain facilities	Safety checks and maintenance budget agreed	Ongoing
Guided Community Walks	To promote council run events and healthy community activities	Organise events for September and December with additional activities following the walk.	Events budget agreed	19 September / Between Xmas & new year
Lickey Hills Walks	To promote independent walkers to the Hills	Sale of Lickey Hills walk books at the Parish Council Office	No cost to BGPC	Ongoing
Foster a wider sense of inclusive community belonging	Giving residents a sense of place, common standards and purpose. Combatting loneliness and depression within the community.	Engaging through The Bulletin newsletter, website and social media benefit to all residents. Promotion of outside workshops and organisations.	Contained within current staff hours	ongoing

Signed: _____

Chairman

Date Approved: _____

Next Review: February 2021

CCTV upgrades and public consultation

Rachel Nicholls – CCTV and Telecare Services Manager



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Camera locations



Number of incidents 2018/19



Objectives of BDC CCTV Scheme

- to help reduce the fear of crime;
- to help deter crime, detect crime and prevent crime;
- to deter and detect ant-social behaviour
- to assist in the apprehension and identification of offenders;
- to enhance community safety, boost the economy and encourage greater use of the town centre / shopping centre .
- to assist the Local Authority in its enforcement and regulatory functions.
- for the maintenance of Public Order
- to provide information for traffic management
- Provide the police, other agencies and the Council with evidence to take criminal and civil action in the courts
- providing high quality evidence which may assist in the detection of crime and the apprehension and prosecution of offenders
- protecting property
- providing assistance with issues relating to public safety and health
- providing assistance and reassurance to the public in emergency situations



Infrastructure improvements

- Upgrading from analogue to digital BT links
- Wireless connectivity utilised where appropriate
- Upgraded Monitoring Centre

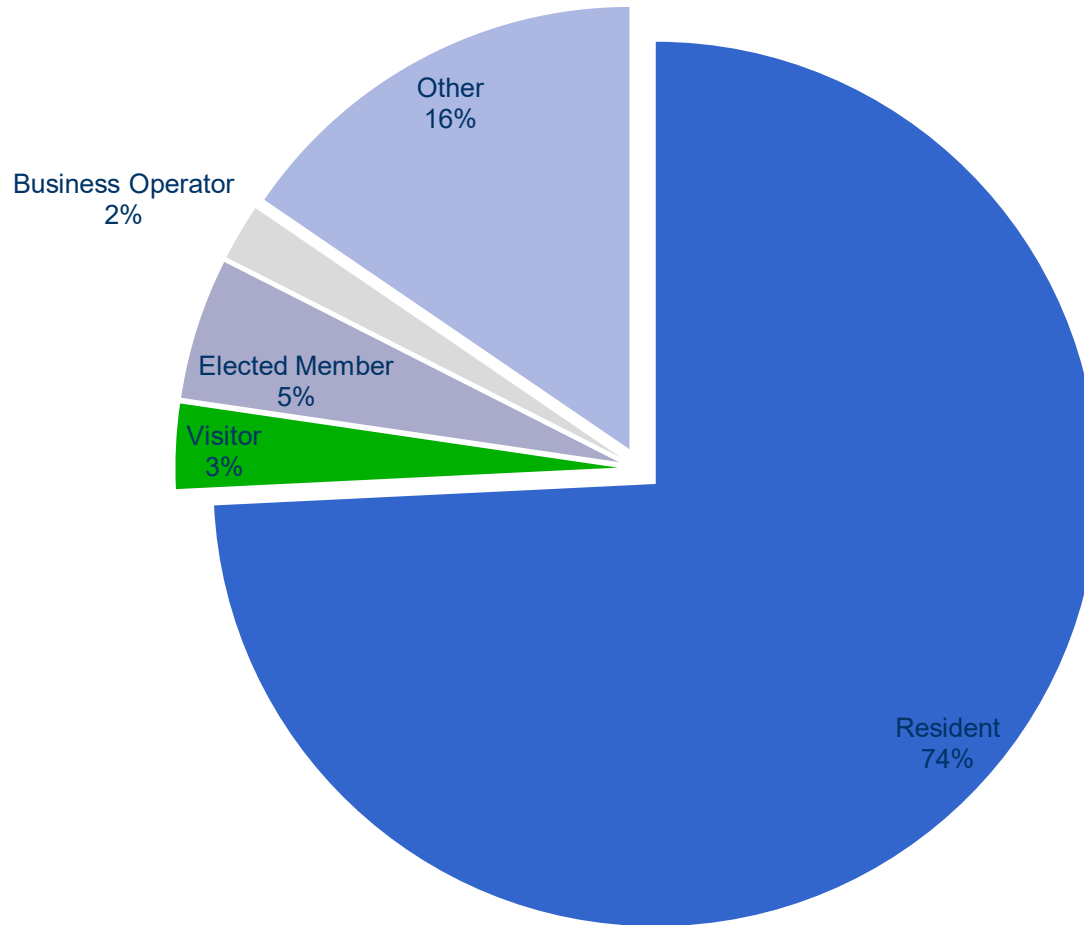


Benefits

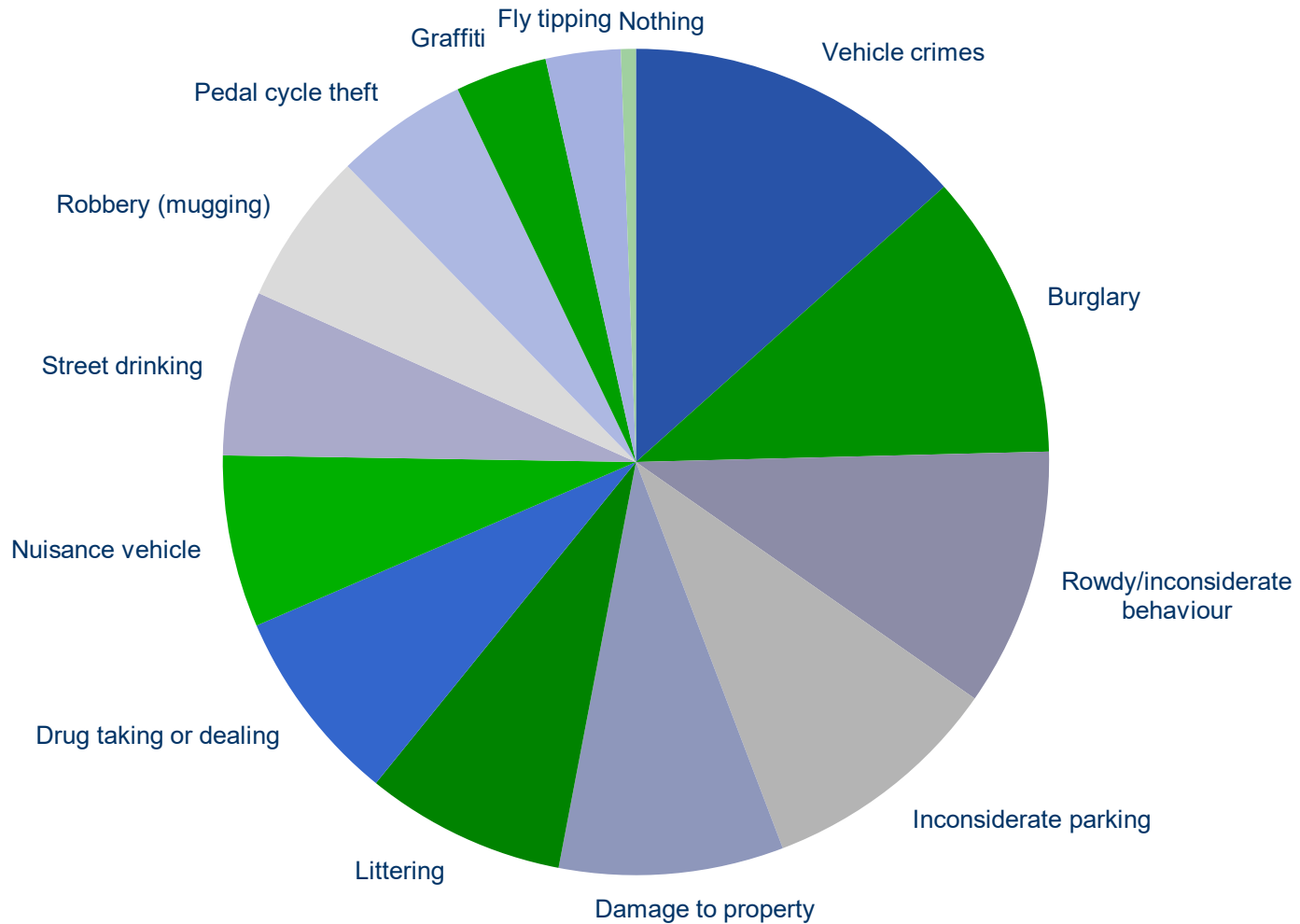
- Reduced downtime of CCTV
- Clearer images
- Greater live connectivity with Police control
- Reduction in BT costs

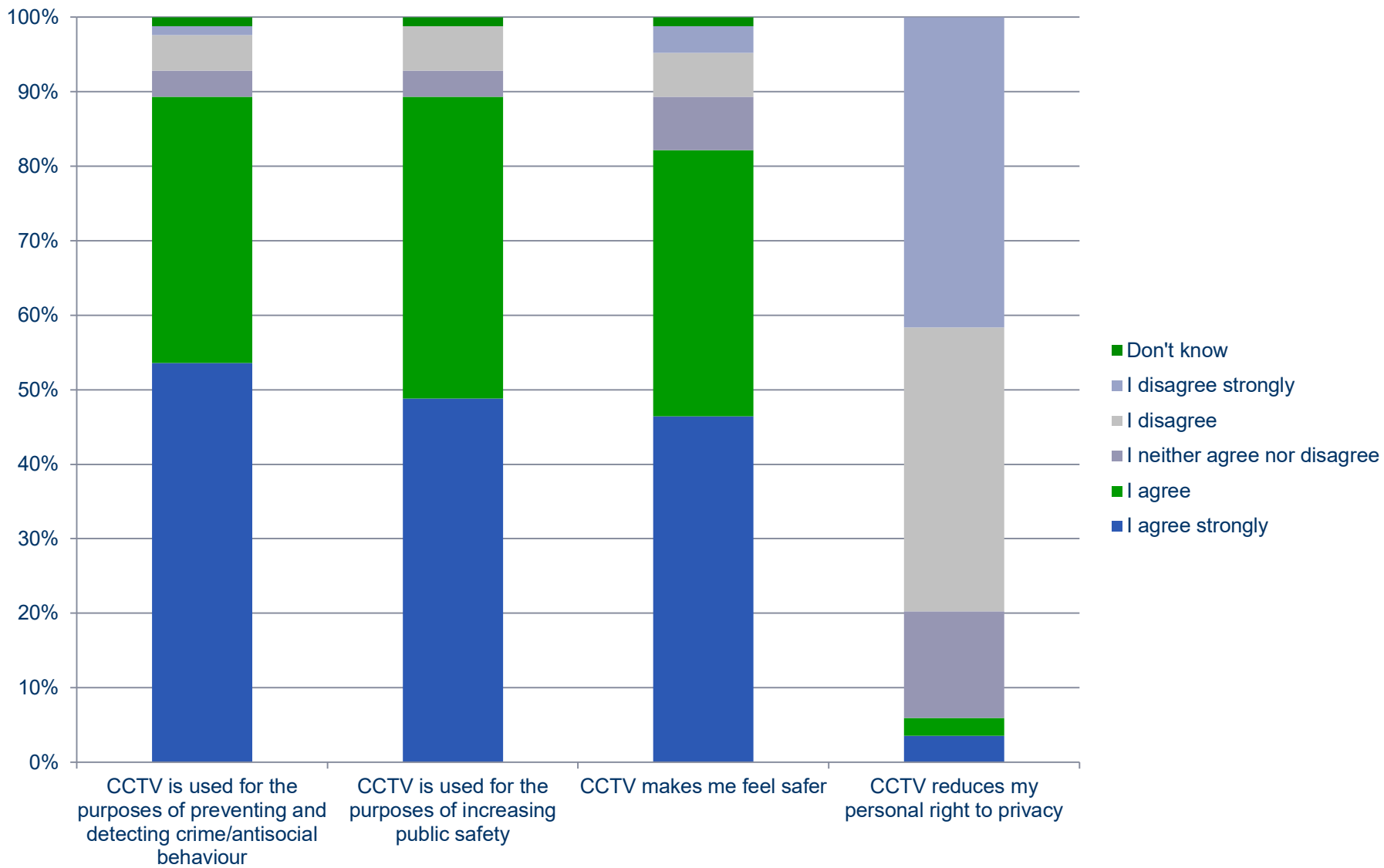


Who responded (97 Responses)



Crime and disorder concerns





- 64% of responses said they were aware that cameras were operated and monitored by BDC
- On the whole, responses indicated that people felt safe in their local area during daytime.
- Majority felt safe during the night, but some expressed concerns about night time safety



Upgraded transmission infrastructure and camera replacement programme



Anticipated improvement of night time image using upgraded camera and infrastructure

(Unlit area)



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Re-deployable Camera siting

- What is the issue/crime that has occurred at that location?
- On how many occasions have the identified activities occurred according to local sources?
- The type of location - E.G. Open space, play park, Car Park, residential, public building, shops (single or multiple), public house, public toilets, alleyway, night time economy activity, bank.
- Does Police data support that there is activity that is detectable using CCTV?
- What other Community safety and Police responses have been considered? Have these alternatives been employed?
- Have other less privacy-intrusive solutions such as improved lighting been considered?
- Why is a surveillance camera considered to be the most effective way to solve the issues?
- Can the camera be erected is there sufficient infrastructure?
- Can it be erected in time?
- How long will it need to remain in place?
- How will success be measured (i.e. evaluation: reduction in crime, reduction of fear, increased detection etc)?



New CCTV Schemes

- No funding available for additions locations at this time.
- There is capacity for additional cameras in the future.
- Surveillance Camera Commissioners Code must be applied.
- GDPR and other legislation must be adhered to.



Thank you



Rachel Nicholls

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