

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Ordinary Parish Council** meeting held on
Monday 25th September 2023 at 7.00pm at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green, B45 8NF

Members present: Cllrs R Cholmondeley, C Hotham, P Perry, S Whitehand, L Williams, O Pardo Roques, M Roberts.

In attendance: Executive Officer, Eleanor Choudry.
11 members of the public .

23/165 Apologies

Cllr Baldwin, WCC Cllr Kriss.

23/166 Declarations of Interest: Councillors are reminded that to ensure transparency and retain public confidence in the council's decisions they are required to -

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

Cllr Hotham cannot comment on any planning applications due to his role as D Cllr at BDC and the possibility that he could be on the Planning Committee. Cllr Hotham is on the BDC Licensing Committee, agenda item 23/173 f).

23/167 To consider any dispensations

No dispensations had been received.

23/168 Open Session – Participation to hear from:

a) Members of the public – Alison Davenport lives adjacent to Bittell Road playing fields and attended the meeting to discuss the Social Eats Music and Street Food Festival that was held on Saturday 16th September. She said that whilst she is supportive of similar events being held in the playing fields she wished that residents had been informed prior to the event. She stressed the importance of engaging with residents. Thumping loud music was played for 9 hours with no break. There was no signage for alternative parking and cars were blocking the pavements causing problems for wheelchair/pushchair users etc. A dog bag dispenser had been attached to her fence without her knowledge and this was knocked off causing a hole in the fence through which her cat could have escaped. Cllr Cholmondeley explained that the council provided the field for the organisers, Social Eats. The PC had been assured that Social Eats were a reputable organisation used by Bromsgrove District Council. The organisers had told the PC that they would visit every neighbouring property to advise them of the event and offer residents free tickets. It appears that this did not happen and the PC will arrange a meeting with the organisers to discuss the complaints received. Cllr Perry and Cllr Williams had attended the event and said the speakers were aimed towards the trees at the bottom of the field and they recognised that parking was an issue. Another resident said the event was 'brilliant' but asked why local businesses were not involved and reported that trade was down on the

day of the event. They hoped that local traders could be involved in future events. The PC had asked if local traders could be involved but were told it would not be feasible for the organiser.

Craig Nicholls from Total Football explained that he had been hiring the playing field for over 20 years and was not informed of the event in good time. He had to cancel his football session at short notice causing him considerable financial loss. Cllr Cholmondeley apologised unreservedly for the oversight. The date for the event had been moved several times.

Cllrs confirmed that the main concern with holding the event was the impact on residents and reiterated that the PC had been assured that neighbouring properties would be contacted and offered free tickets and the parking managed.

Anna Horton from Tonys Handyman attended the meeting to discuss the problem of shop lifting in Barnt Green. Shop lifting is occurring daily. Thieves are coming in on the train, blatantly stealing from Tesco and then stealing from the independent shops. The thefts are reported and logged with the police. The thieves are older people in their 40's with dishevelled appearance. The Manager of Acorns said that some items are displayed outside their shops and a child's bike was stolen within minutes. Expensive items cannot be put in the window as they will be taken. The thieves tend to come in pairs and use distraction techniques. Its soul destroying and can make shop staff feel vulnerable. Staff at Tonys Handyman has created a WhatsApp group to list crimes and tip off other shop owners. Cllr Cholmondeley advised that the police do ask for the parishes police priorities and the PC has listed shoplifting as the number one priority in Barnt Green. Cllr Hotham said Bromsgrove District Council Chief Executive stated that shoplifting had increased by 64% in this quarter compared to the same quarter last year. A new system is being set up which will link the BDC web page to the parishes eg Barnt Green, Alvechurch, Wythall, Hagley etc. and reports will be able to be logged on the system and will then spread to the other parish pages.

b) Supporting organisations, e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Team, Footpath Warden – No reports.

c) Worcestershire County Councillor – Adrian Kriss (Beacon division) – Apologies received.

d) Bromsgrove District Councillor - Charles Hotham (Barnt Green & Hopwood) – Cala Homes have agreed to open 1 gate into Butterwick Close compound, as per their agreement, within the next 6 weeks. The financial position of Birmingham City Council may impact on Lickey Woods as it has been confirmed that the upkeep of parks is not a statutory duty. The parish council may have to take on the responsibility of maintaining the walkway to Cherry Hill Road. Bittell Road playing fields are owned by Birmingham City Council. BDC may look to sell this land. WCC Cllr Kriss has seen the draft review of boundaries consultation and informed Cllr Hotham that the aim is to split Barnt Green in half via the railway line so that above the railway line would remain the same, in Beacon, and below the railway would become Alvechurch. The District may follow suit and split Barnt Green in the same way meaning that there could be two wards. There will be more information about the idea in January when the parish councils opinion will be considered.

23/169 To adopt previous minutes

a) To approve adoption of the minutes of the Ordinary parish council meeting held 17th July 2023, previously circulated but also attached.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 17/07/2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

23/170 Annual Business

- i. Review of Policies:**
 - a) Complaints Procedure

RESOLVED: That the Complaints Policy be approved.

23/171 Meetings / Training Attended – Cllr Whitehand and Cllr Williams attended BDC Planning training on 25th July 2023. Cllr Williams said the training was very good and helpful.

23/172 Chairman’s Report – Nothing more to add.

23/173 Executive Officer’s Report

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

a) Registerable Interest Forms	All councillors confirmed that they have submitted their completed forms.
b) Station Lift Update	<p>The following update was received from Network Rail. We are currently working closely with our contractors and the Department for Transport to agree the next phases of the project. Design work on the lifts is progressing with extra efforts taking place to make sure the upgrades meet updated fire regulations. We are planning to contact stakeholders and residents as soon as the work programme is ready to be communicated in more detail, ensuring plenty of notice is given to passengers and residents of any construction work starting.</p> <div data-bbox="708 1384 1412 1682" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>RESOLVED: That the EO contact Network Rail pushing for an installation date as it is now autumn when works should have begun. Parish Cllrs need to be made aware of the start date within the next 2-3 weeks or the PC will have to contact their local MP for Bromsgrove, Sajid Javid, and ask him to raise the issue with Network Rail directly.</p> </div>
c) Citizens Advice Bureau Grant Application	<p>CAB have requested a grant of £500. The application form and covering letter was circulated prior to the meeting. Despite rising costs the CAB requested the same amount as in previous years.</p> <div data-bbox="703 1877 1412 1930" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>RESOLVED: That the donation is agreed.</p> </div>

d) Hedge Orchard Croft / Hewell Road	<p>Following a complaint regarding the overgrown hedge in Orchard Croft the EO wrote to the property owner. The hedge has now been cut.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
e) Bittell Road canal bridge	<p>The canal bridge has a section of broken bricks/stones on the top. The EO has reported this to the Canal & River Trust who have confirmed they are monitoring the bridge.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
f) Bromsgrove District Council Consultation on Draft Revised Statement of Licensing Policy (2024-2029)	<p>BDC would like respondents to use the following survey to provide feedback on the draft revised Statement of Licensing Policy: https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/BDCSOLP/ This consultation will run until Friday 20th October 2023 and all comments received will be considered by the Council before it publishes a revised Statement of Licensing Policy with effect from 1st April 2024.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
g) 80 th D-Day Anniversary 6 th June 2024	<p>D-Day Anniversary celebrations will be held nationally on this date.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: That as Barnt Green does not have any military links the council would not hold a specific celebration. The flag may be raised in Millennium Park.</p>
h) Defibrillator	<p>The defibrillator ,semi-automatic G5, was purchased in 2014 and the 8-year warranty has expired. A repair is costly and not advised by Zoll the supplier. New defibrillator prices start at £1035 + VAT. Funding may be available and opens in October.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: That the EO investigates funding options when they open in October.</p>
i) Basketball Hoop	<p>The basketball hoop on Bittell Rd playing fields has been broken off. The EO received a quote for a replacement backboard of £706.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: That the EO seek further quotes.</p>

<p>j) Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP)</p>	<p>Questionnaire seeking opinions on issues that may affect communities to help the Fire & Rescue Service prepare future plans. The questionnaire link is https://forms.office.com/e/ywVbRWVK78 Closing date 1st October 2023.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p> </div>
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23/174 Finance

- (i) To note the current financial position, income and bills for payment. See page 5 of the agenda.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the current financial position be approved.
- ii) That the list of payments be approved

The EO advised that the invoice from the external auditor had been received after the agenda was distributed and was due on receipt. Cllrs agreed to pay the invoice of £378 to PKF Littlejohn for the external audit 2022/23.

- (ii) To be advised of any expenditure decisions taken by Executive Officer. No purchases have been made.

23/175 Environment & Community Wellbeing

- a) Bittell Road Playing Field drainage works. Work has commenced.
- b) Millennium Park flagpole maintenance. Awaiting response.
- c) Lack of departure screens and PA on Platform 1 at Barnt Green train station. WM Trains chased for an update.
- d) Millennium Park Multi Play equipment. Awaiting OPC to carry out repair.
- e) Millennium Park wetpour resurfacing. Install to commence week beginning 2nd October for 4 days. Signs have been displayed. The small entrance gate is to be padlocked.
- f) Pruning of the lime trees in Millennium Park that overhang the Friends Meeting House. Work to take place on 10th October.
- g) Social Eats Music and Street Food Festival Event in Bittell Road playing fields on the 16th September. Discussed in the public form agenda item 23/168 a).
 - i) Review of event.

RESOLVED: That the PC will meet with the Social eats organiser to discuss the complaints. If another similar event is held the PC will liaise with residents to ensure that the event is tolerable with improved communication and closer monitoring before, during and after the event. To consider mowing the field shortly before an event to make clearing the field after an event easier.

- ii) Total Football cancelled session.

RESOLVED: That If another similar event is held the PC will liaise with Total Football with improved communication and ensure the maximum amount of notice is given when the event date has been agreed. A reduction will be made in Total Footballs termly invoice for the hire of Bittell Rd playing fields from £200 per term to £150 for one term as gesture of goodwill.

h) Future Community Events.

RESOLVED: Cllr Cholmondeley to meet with Simon Richards and Greg Hunt regarding the details of the Wassail Walk that will be held on Thursday 28th December 2023.

i) Pollinator Site. Green Bank residents volunteer group. Appendix 1.
This item was discussed following the Public Open Session.

Jenny Jellie, resident of Green Bank attended the meeting to discuss the setting up of the Volunteer Group to manage the Pollinator Site. Cllr Cholmondeley recapped Appendix 1, agenda item 23/175i). The decisions to be made were as follows:

1. to decide whether the focus of the site should continue to be pollinator plants rather than wildflowers (the seed for the latter often include grasses);

RESOLVED: That Jenny Jellie will contact Richard Hickman for recommendations of seeds which **do not** contain grasses.

2. whether the whole site behind the rope fence should be given over to plants or whether the plants should be within a square boundary of grass or earth path (to be maintained by the Greenbank Volunteers);

RESOLVED: That either side of the rope fence is mowed but no further demarcation takes place on the site.

3. that the Greenbank Volunteers will remove the weeds and maintain the areas around the pear trees, the posts of the rope fence, the area around the rope fence to the pavement edge and trim the far end of the hedge. The PC would no longer incur the cost of strimming next to the pavement;

RESOLVED: That the group will weed around the pear trees. The PC will strim either side of the rope fence 6/7 times per year. If the area needs to be strimmed more than this the Volunteer Group will do it.

4. that the Parish Council will procure appropriate seeds, including yellow rattle;

RESOLVED: That Jennie Jelly will inform the EO of the type of seeds to order following advice from Richard Hickman, Horticultural Specialist at BDC. The EO to investigate whether seeds can be bought from Worcestershire County Council. The EO to place an order for Yellow Rattle seeds.

5. whether the Parish Council will acquire tools and, if so, to determine where they would be stored;

RESOLVED: The group currently has 7 volunteers and the group will use their own tools if required.

6. that changes will be made to the council's volunteering policy to accommodate the arrangements with the Greenbank Volunteers.

RESOLVED: That the EO will amend the Volunteer Policy to cover all aspects required for the Pollinator Site Volunteer Group. The volunteers will update the PC every 4 months with their progress. The PC will do all they can to assist.

- j) 8 Hills Regional Park. The National Trust is planning to create a regional park to include Clent Hill, Romsley Hill, Frankley Beeches, Waseley Hill, Beacon Hill, Cofton Hill, Wast Hill and Weatheroak Hill. Cllr Cholmondeley attended a session at Lickey Hills . Some of the footpaths are impassable in winter. The plans are in the early stages.
- k) Crime in Barnt Green. Discussed in the public form agenda item 23/168 a).

RESOLVED: That Cllr Hotham agreed to join the WhatsApp group discussed. Cllr Hotham will raise the issue with Bromsgrove District Council. Cllr Hotham will ask Richard Field, West Mercia Police, if it would be possible to have some police presence in the village. Cllr Cholmondeley will speak to Tesco's regarding shoplifting. The EO to contact the police about proposed action following the registered police priority as shoplifting in Barnt Green.

- l) The Longlands, new pedestrian crossing. Bradley Knight, Project Officer of Minor Infrastructure Projects at WCC had contacted the EO. Bradley said that WCC wish to construct a new pedestrian crossing across the mouth of The Longlands junction with Hewell Lane. In order to do this and to ensure the stability of the lamppost column, the lamppost needs to be lowered to the new footway level. Bradley stated that the stability of the column was of concern and asked that when our contractor corrected the stability of the column that they would at the same time be able to lower it to accommodate their works.

RESOLVED: That the EO contact the Parish Councils electrical contractor to check the stability of the streetlamp column.

23/176 Planning

- a) Responses to consultations received including:

BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
23/00725/FUL	72 Bittell Road, Barnt Green, Worcestershire, B45 8LY	Front/side and rear extensions

<p>BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council recommends approval subject to the south side development not infringing the light to the dormer window of the neighbouring property at 70 Bittell Road, which is a bedroom and therefore a habitable room.</p>		
BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
23/00748/FUL	16 Margesson Drive, Barnt Green, Worcestershire, B45 8LR,	Ground floor, single-storey extension to front and side elevations of existing dwelling
<p>BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council recommends approval.</p>		
23/00829/FUL	Land To The Rear Of 55 - 61 Fiery Hill Road, Barnt Green, Worcestershire, B45 8JX,	Erection of single storey dwellinghouse
<p>BGPC Recommendation:</p> <p>There have been a number of applications to develop this site – all of which have been refused. Objections have related to the location of the site within the Barnt Green Conservation Area and its accessibility. SPD High Quality Design 4.2.11 states that:</p> <p>‘New residential development should embody the particular characteristics of the built and natural environment in which it is located to provide a sense of place and identity.’</p> <p>This proposed development, located to the rear of 55-61 Fiery Hill Road, does nothing to ‘retain or enhance the local character of the area.’ Whilst this application is single storey, as opposed to two storey, it is still a bulky development which fills much of the available site.</p> <p>Access to the site is also problematic being via a passageway which is as little as 2.5-2.8 metres for some 30 metres in one section. The lack of proper access was cited in the refusal to grant the appeal to the previous planning application for this site. Worcestershire Highways recommends a minimum track width of approx. 3.32 metres to allow delivery and other larger vehicles, as well as pedestrians, to pass along it.</p> <p>Barnt Green Parish Council recommends that this application should be refused.</p>		
BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
23/00428/FUL	18 Bittell Road, Barnt Green, Birmingham, B45 8LT,	Front single storey extension and new dormer window to front roof slope.
<p>BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council has NO OBJECTION to this planning application</p>		
BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
23/01026/FUL	Pinfield, 26A Fiery Hill Road, Barnt Green, Worcestershire,	Removal of existing ground floor roof and insertion of new flat roof with central roof light.
<p>BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council recommends approval.</p>		

23/177 Date and Venue of Next Meetings

Next Parish Council Meeting, Monday 16th October 2023 7pm at 80 Hewell Road.

The meeting ended at 20:48hrs

Signed:..... Date.....
Chairman, Barnt Green Parish Council 16/10/2023

Agenda Item 23/174 (i) To approve the current financial position and bills paid.

July Income received

13	31.07.2023	£125.00	£0.00	£125.00	31.07.2023	Lengthsman refund
12	31.07.2023	£115.00	£0.00	£115.00	31.07.2023	Room Hire
11	31.07.2023	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00	31.07.2023	Playing Field Hire
10	05.07.2023	£171.17	£0.00	£171.17	31.07.2023	Refund of Plusnet termination charges
9	14.07.2023	£207.84	£0.00	£207.84	31.07.2023	Lengthsman refund

August Income received

14	29.08.2023	£207.84	£0.00	£207.84	Lengthsman refund
15	29.08.2023	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	Electric Charging Point Rent

July Payments Report

85	31.07.2023	£118.65	£23.73	£142.38	Petty cash top up
84	31.07.2023	£46.98	£2.35	£49.33	Office Energy
83	31.07.2023	£56.30	£2.82	£59.12	Office Energy
82	31.07.2023	£137.20	£6.86	£144.06	Street Light Energy
81	31.07.2023	£28.76	£5.75	£34.51	Office landline, broadband & calls

August Payments Report

100	31.08.2023	£28.76	£5.75	£34.51	Office landline, broadband & calls
99	31.08.2023	£141.05	£7.05	£148.10	Street Light Energy
98	31.08.2023	£24.93	£1.25	£26.18	Street Light Energy
97	31.08.2023	£120.00	£24.00	£144.00	Porta loo for Brass Beatz
96	31.08.2023	£207.84	£0.00	£207.84	Lengthsman Work
95	31.08.2023				PAYE
94	31.08.2023				Pension contributions
93	31.08.2023				PAYE
92	31.08.2023				Salary
91	31.08.2023	£235.00	£0.00	£235.00	Grass Cutting - Millennium Park
90	31.08.2023	£210.00	£0.00	£210.00	Grass Cutting - Millennium Park
89	31.08.2023	£544.50	£0.00	£544.50	Outdoor Parish Caretaker
88	31.08.2023	£180.00	£36.00	£216.00	Annual Website Hosting
87	31.08.2023	£544.50	£0.00	£544.50	Outdoor Parish Caretaker
86	31.08.2023	£207.84	£0.00	£207.84	Lengthsman Work

September Payments Report

117	30.09.2023	£24.93	£1.25	£26.18	Street Light Energy
116	30.09.2023	£136.09	£6.80	£142.89	Street Light Energy
115	30.09.2023	£33.47	£1.67	£35.14	Office Energy
114	30.09.2023	£58.35	£2.92	£61.27	Office Energy
113	30.09.2023	£179.20	£0.00	£179.20	Uncontested Election Costs
112	30.09.2023	£1,625.00	£0.00	£1,625.00	Office Rent
111	30.09.2023	£591.50	£0.00	£591.50	Outdoor Parish Caretaker
110	30.09.2023				PAYE
109	30.09.2023				Pension contributions
108	30.09.2023				PAYE
107	30.09.2023				Salary
106	30.09.2023	£175.00	£0.00	£175.00	Grass Cutting - Millennium Park
105	30.09.2023	£28.76	£5.75	£34.51	Office landline, broadband & calls
104	30.09.2023	£228.41	£45.68	£274.09	Grounds maintenance at playing field
103	30.09.2023	£148.95	£29.79	£178.74	Dog bags
102	30.09.2023	£58.35	£2.92	£61.27	Office Energy
101	30.09.2023	£43.18	£2.16	£45.34	Office Energy

September Income

16	08.09.2023	£0.00	£3,204.16	£3,204.16	Vat Reclaim
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Barnt Green Parish Council

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____
Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

	Bank Reconciliation at 31/07/2023			
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023			110,006.54
	ADD			
	Receipts 01/04/2023 - 31/07/2023			38,862.35
				148,868.89
	SUBTRACT			
	Payments 01/04/2023 - 31/07/2023			36,547.83
A	Cash in Hand 31/07/2023 (per Cash Book)			112,321.06
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements			
	Petty Cash	31/07/2023	0.00	
	Cambridge Building Society	31/07/2023	71,785.55	
	Unity Bank Deposit Account	31/07/2023	38,779.01	
	Unity Bank Current Account	31/07/2023	1,756.50	
				112,321.06
	Less unrepresented payments			
				112,321.06
	Plus unrepresented receipts			
B	Adjusted Bank Balance			112,321.06
	A = B Checks out OK			

Agenda Item 23/174 (i) To approve the August Bank Reconciliation 2023

29 August 2023 (2023-2024)

Barnt Green Parish Council

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____
Name and Role (Clerk/RFO etc)

Approved by: _____ Date: _____
Name and Role (RFO/Chair of Finance etc)

	Bank Reconciliation at 29/08/2023		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023		110,006.54
	ADD		
	Receipts 01/04/2023 - 29/08/2023		40,070.19
			150,076.73
	SUBTRACT		
	Payments 01/04/2023 - 29/08/2023		40,928.70
A	Cash in Hand 29/08/2023 (per Cash Book)		109,148.03
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash 29/08/2023	0.00	
	Cambridge Building Society 29/08/2023	71,785.55	
	Unity Bank Deposit Account 29/08/2023	36,279.01	
	Unity Bank Current Account 29/08/2023	1,083.47	
			109,148.03
	Less unrepresented payments		
			109,148.03
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		109,148.03
	A = B Checks out OK		