

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Ordinary Parish Council** meeting held on
Monday 16th October 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, J Baldwin.

In attendance: Executive Officer, Eleanor Choudry.
Worcestershire County Councillor, Adrian Kriss
Richard Peach, The Village magazine.
PC Dunton and PCSO Garvey, Rubery and Hagley Safer Neighbourhood Team, West Mercia Police (arrived 7.15pm and left at 7.47pm).
0 members of the public .

23/178 Apologies – None.

23/179 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.

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.

No other declarations were received.

23/180 To consider any dispensations
No dispensations had been received.

23/181 Open Session – Participation to hear from:

- Members of the public – None present.
- Supporting organisations, e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), Footpath Warden - PC Dunton and PCSO Garvey from Rubery and Hagley Safer Neighbourhood Team attended the meeting. PC Dunton said that retailers believe they are not getting a police reaction to crime but crime is not always being reported. Ideally the victim of the crime needs to report it. Background investigation happens using facial recognition with photographs. The police need detailed reports so they know when is the best time to carry out foot patrols. PCSO Garvey said she appreciated that police patrols and increased visibility helps to reduce crime. The perpetrators are generally targeting the shops between 3-5pm and thefts are timed so that they are able to return using the trains. The SNT have spoken with the shopkeepers in Barnt Green and most of them have signed up to Neighbourhood Matters, a West Mercia Police messaging service. Cllr Cholmondeley explained that it could be very time-consuming for shopkeepers having to search through CCTV footage for images and was advised that crimes can be reported online at <https://www.police.uk/pu/contact-the-police/report-a-crime-incident/>.
A Design Out Crime Officer (DOCO) can visit shops and help by providing specialist security advice and guidance about the layout of shops etc. Barnt

Green shopkeepers have a WhatsApp group that they are using to share information. Cllr Hotham said that the CCTV cameras in Barnt Green are very powerful and that they could be used to make the connection between the crime number and image. The police have a risk rating system and if a thief has left the scene the details will be investigated by the Police Head Quarters. It was acknowledged that theft has increased dramatically. Cllr Hotham said that Lyndsey Berry, Bromsgrove Centres Manager, is in contact with West Mercia Police Inspector Field regarding the issue. DISC is an online information-sharing system that can be used to reduce crime. PCSO Garvey said she would contact Lyndsey Berry concerning GDPR issues about uploading photographs to the system. The police are to arrange a meeting to discuss the shoplifting problem and will inform the parish council of the date so that a councillor can attend. Cllr Williams asked about parking issues that had been experienced in Poplar Drive. Vehicles have been parking with all four wheels on the pavement and this is usually happening at school drop off and pick up times. PC Dunton said that he will try and visit tomorrow, Tuesday 17th October, to issue any B20 warnings required. A West Mercia Police letter will also be sent to Cllr Pardo Roques to send to St Andrews School notifying parents/carers of complaints regarding parking and asking them to park considerately. The BDC Wychavon Traffic Enforcement contract is due for renewal. BDC want to increase the number of Traffic Enforcement Officers.

c) Worcestershire County Councillor – Adrian Kriss (Beacon division) – Cllr Kriss said that he had been busy supporting the Jewish community, so it was best to contact him by phone. Due to the increase in housing development in Cofton the Boundary Commission wishes to change the boundary to balance out the numbers in Beacon. Therefore if the whole of Barnt Green is to be kept together Cllr Kriss will no longer be Barnt Greens WCC Councillor. Cllr Kriss is using his budget to pay for the white speed gates that will be installed on Blackwell Road to reduce traffic speed. The missing bollards along Hewell Road are finally being replaced. The replacements will be collected from the parish council office this week. Divisional funds that were needed to support the pelican crossing in Groveley Lane have not all been spent and therefore these funds will be used to go ahead with the pedestrian crossing at The Longlands. Nationally shoplifting has increased and whilst large businesses such as Tesco and the Co-Op can sustain losses it can seriously impact the future of small businesses. A system called Shop Watch is to be implemented. This is similar to Pub Watch. BDC will fund this system across the whole district including, Wythall, Rubery, Hagley etc. Charity shops are also reporting thefts. Cllr Cholmondeley spoke to Barnt Greens Tesco Store Manager who confirmed that their centralised policy did not allow staff to tackle thieves.

d) Bromsgrove District Councillor - Charles Hotham (Barnt Green & Hopwood) – There is no progress regarding the installation of the gate at Cala Homes that was due on the 15th August. The recruitment of the new Chief Executive of Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council has been suspended until after June 2024. Sue Hanley will continue as the Interim Chief Executive until a new appointment is made.

23/182 To adopt previous minutes

a) To approve adoption of the minutes of the Ordinary parish council meeting held 25th September 2023, previously circulated but also attached.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 25/09/2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

23/183 Annual Business

i. Review of Policies:

a) Publication Scheme

RESOLVED: That the Publication Scheme be approved.

b) Risk Assessment and Management Policy

RESOLVED: That an amendment was made to Banking Procedures Line 2 Box 9 which states that all council members should have a copy of the banking procedure. This is to be amended to state that of the 3 signatories on the account, 2 are required to sign to authorise.

An amendment to Finance Inadequate Financial Controls and Records Line 7 Box 9 which states that Members are trained in financial administration. This is to be amended to Training in financial administration for Members of the Finance Working Party.

The Risk Assessment and Management Policy is then approved.

c) Communications Risk Assessment

RESOLVED: That the Communications Risk Assessment be approved.

d) Balances and Reserves Policy

RESOLVED: That the Balances and Reserves Policy be approved.

23/184 Meetings / Training Attended – EO attended CALCS Clerks Gathering on 26th September.

23/185 Chairman's Report – An email from WCC about resurrecting the Tree Warden Scheme had been received. Cllrs did not think that they had ever been part of the scheme as they always used Senior Tree Officer, Gavin Boyes, Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils..

23/186 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) Station Lift Update

Apologies we haven't been able to pull together the briefing note ahead of your meeting tonight. We were awaiting detailed information from our contractor on some upcoming works planned at the station. I can assure you we now have this and therefore a note will be issued in due course.

As I'm sure you can appreciate, we need to provide any update to the DFT for their review ahead of formal circulation to yourselves.

I appreciate this is not as informative as you hope at this stage, however we have been working to the deadline you have previously set, so I hope you can allow us this time to provide a meaningful update before escalating anything further.

	<p>RESOLVED: Concern was raised by Cllrs about funding periods. If a commencement date was not forthcoming within the next week Cllr Cholmondeley will write to the Chief Executive of Network Rail. Cllr Roberts said that he could also write to MP for Bromsgrove Sajid Javed.</p>
b) Defibrillator	<p>The EO has applied to the Department of Health and Social Care for 100 % funding of the cost of a replacement defibrillator. An application has also been made to Londonhearts where a grant is available to reduce the cost to £745.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the EO waits to hear the outcome of the application for full funding which is due mid-October. If the application is unsuccessful the EO to order the part funded defibrillator.</p>
c) Basketball Hoop	<p>The EO received a quote of £700 for a replacement backboard. The OPC is to measure the required backboard and the EO to seek a more cost-effective alternative.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
d) External Audit 2022/23	<p>The external audit carried out by PKF Littlejohn was received and circulated in September. The Notice of Conclusion of Audit was published on the notice board and website.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
e) Grant Application	<p>Barnt Green Friends Meeting Group are seeking £500 to enable them to continue running the group. The organiser, Rosalind Tyler, confirmed the group had been running at a loss. The group has applied for £1000 to £1500 from Barnt Green Medical Trust.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That £250 be donated to support the group. The EO to advise Rosalind Tyler that if she wishes to make another application for funding she could do so in March 2024 if there were funds still available in the budget. The programme of events to be included in the Bulletin.</p>
f) Review of Bromsgrove Polling Districts and Polling Places	<p>Details are available at http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/pollingreview2023 Comments to be submitted by Monday 13th November 2023.</p>

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

23/187 Finance

- (i) To note the current financial position, income and bills for payment. See page 4 of the agenda. The 4 Seasons Grounds and Landscaping invoice of £4078.54 for Bittell Road drainage works was due on receipt. Cllrs Cholmondeley, Hotham and Perry agreed payment on satisfactory completion of works.

RESOLVED:

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

- (ii) To be advised of any expenditure decisions taken by Executive Officer. No purchases have been made.
- (iii) The Finance Working Party carried out quarterly accounting checks on 5th October and compared the actual expenditure and income to budget. Minutes previously circulated but also attached. The Balances and Reserves Policy had been discussed by the Finance Working Party and amendments were made including the cost of resurfacing Bittell Road car park. Cllr Cholmondeley added that the replacement of the Christmas lights will need to be considered in future.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance Working Party meeting held on 05/10/2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

23/188 Environment & Community Wellbeing

- a) Bittell Road Playing Field drainage works. Works completed.

RESOLVED: The area will be monitored in the wettest months to check that the drainage works have been successful.

- b) Bittell Road Playing Field children's play equipment.

RESOLVED: Once it has been confirmed that the drainage problems have been rectified around the play equipment further quotes will be sought. A quote for a refurb and a quote for replacement a roll log have been received. The EO to ask the OPC if he wants to provide a quote.

- c) Millennium Park flagpole maintenance. Awaiting response.
- d) Lack of departure screens and PA on Platform 1 at Barnt Green train station. WM Trains chased for an update.
- e) Millennium Park Multi Play equipment. Awaiting OPC to carry out repair once the wetpour installation has been completed.
- f) Millennium Park wetpour resurfacing. Works commenced on the 16th October.
- g) Pruning of the lime trees in Millennium Park that overhang the Friends Meeting House. Works were completed on the 10th October.

RESOLVED: Following complaints received regarding the quality and tidiness of the job completed the EO and Cllr Cholmondeley are to meet with Dragan Obrenovic, Operations Manager of the Friends Meeting House.

- h) Event organiser Social Eats to meet with councillors to discuss feedback from the Music and Street Food Festival held on the 16th September. Due to other commitments it has not yet been possible to meet with the organiser of Social Eats. It is hoped that a meeting will take place within the next month.

RESOLVED: Once a meeting date is confirmed with Social Eats, Cllr Cholmondeley and the EO, Cllrs Williams and Perry to be invited as they attended the event.

- i) Future Community Events:
- i) Christmas Lights switch on Saturday 2nd December. The Arrow Valley Brass Band and Theatre Workshop have confirmed that they will attend. The Theatre Workshop will need use of a PA system. Discussion took place about changing the venue from outside Tesco on Hewell Road to Millennium Park. Cllr Baldwin is confident that he can book Santa to attend!

RESOLVED: Cllrs Baldwin, Pardo Roques and Hotham to meet and decide details regarding the event within the next 10 days. The EO to ask the Church Wardens to help with managing public safety near the roads and request that they dress in shepherds costumes as in previous years.

- ii) Wassail Walk on Thursday 28th December. Details have been agreed. The walk will take place on Thursday 28th December. There will be a 4/5 mile walk and a 2/3 mile walk to Greg Hunts Orchard. There will be refreshments and a bonfire at the Orchard with poems and wassailing before Simon Richards leads the group back to Millennium park.

RESOLVED: Cllr Pardo Roques agreed to ask Greg Hunt for advice regarding pruning of the fruit trees at the Pollinator Site and Bittell Road playing fields.

- j) Pollinator Site. Green Bank residents Volunteer Group Policy updates. Previously circulated but also attached. Cllr Cholmondeley and Perry have planted the Yellow Rattle on the site. The seeds were mixed with sand as they do not require fertile soil. Cllrs also removed the long weeds surrounding the pear trees.

RESOLVED: That the Volunteer Policy and Procedures and Pollinator Site Volunteer Group Risk Assessment are approved.

- k) Crime in Barnt Green update. Discussed under agenda item 23/181 b and c.
- l) The Longlands, new pedestrian crossing update. Discussed under agenda item 23/181 c.
- m) Flooding risk from village stream which runs through Sandhills Road. The stream runs alongside the scout hut, through the Social Club then goes to the railway embankment, railway bridge, Sandhills Lane and as

an open ditch to Sandhills Road, behind Oulshams and into Orchard Croft it is part open/closed on Bittell Lane to Bittell Road where it is part open/closed before going into the reservoir. The stream could cause a severe flood risk if weather conditions were extreme. One garden has been flooded and one house has experienced some flooding. Previously North Worcester Water Management investigated the stream and wrote to homeowners with responsibility for keeping the stream running freely etc. Not all residents understand their responsibilities.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed that the PC should contact North Worcester Water Management and highlight the issue. The PC to request that they contact homeowners explaining what they need to do or to send the letters to the PC who could deliver them to the residents.

23/189 Planning

a) Responses to consultations received including:

BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
23/01034/FUL	10 Cherry Hill Drive, Barnt Green, Worcestershire, B45 8JY,	Proposed alterations, remodelling and extension to existing dwelling
BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council recommends approval.		
BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
23/00720/FUL	41 Orchard Croft, Barnt Green Worcestershire B45 8NJ	1st Floor Side extension over Existing Garage
BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council recommends approval.		

23/190 Date and Venue of Next Meetings

Next Parish Council Meeting, Monday 20th November 2023 7pm at 80 Hewell Road.

The meeting ended at 20:47hrs

Signed:..... Date.....
Chairman, Barnt Green Parish Council 20/11/2023

Minute Item 23/187 (i) To approve the current financial position and bills paid.

September Income received

17	30.09.2023	£275.76	£0.00	£275.76	30.09.2023	Credit interest
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October Income received

18	31.10.2023	£36,000.00	£0.00	£36,000.00	Precept
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September Payments Report

119	30.09.2023	£18.00	£0.00	£18.00	3 Bank Service Charge
118	30.09.2023	£315.00	£63.00	£378.00	3 External Audit 22.23

October Payments Report

131	31.10.2023	£3,398.78	£679.76	£4,078.54	Drainage works at Bittell Road playing fields
130	31.10.2023	£138.31	£6.92	£145.23	Street Light Energy
129	31.10.2023	£28.76	£5.75	£34.51	Office landline, broadband & calls
128	31.10.2023	£24.35	£1.22	£25.57	Street Light Energy
127	31.10.2023	£210.00	£0.00	£210.00	Grass Cutting - Millennium Park
126	31.10.2023	£207.84	£0.00	£207.84	Lengthsman Work
125	31.10.2023	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00	Citizens Advice Bromsgrove
124	31.10.2023	£561.60	£112.32	£673.92	Annual Accounting Software
123	31.10.2023				PAYE
122	31.10.2023				PAYE
121	31.10.2023				Pension contributions
120	31.10.2023				Salary

Minute Item 23/174 (i) To approve the September Bank Reconciliation 2023

Barnt Green Parish Council

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

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

A	Bank Reconciliation at 30/09/2023		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023		110,006.54
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2023 - 30/09/2023		43,550.11
			153,556.65
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2023 - 30/09/2023		46,617.23
	Cash in Hand 30/09/2023 (per Cash Book)		106,939.42
B	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash	30/09/2023	0.00
	Unity Bank Current Account	30/09/2023	1,599.10
	Unity Bank Deposit Account	30/09/2023	33,554.77
	Cambridge Building Society	30/09/2023	71,785.55
			106,939.42
	Less unrepresented payments		
		106,939.42	
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
	Adjusted Bank Balance		106,939.42
	A = B Checks out OK		