

# BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the **Ordinary Parish Council** meeting held on  
**Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.00pm at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green, B45 8NF**

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

**In attendance:** Executive Officer, Eleanor Choudry.  
Richard Peach, The Village magazine.

**23/230 Apologies** – WCC Cllr Kriss, Cllr Williams.

**23/231 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.

**23/232 To consider any dispensations**  
No dispensations had been received.

**23/233 Open Session – Participation to hear from:**

- Members of the public – None present
- Supporting organisations, e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), Footpath Warden – None present.
- Worcestershire County Councillor – Adrian Kriss (Beacon division). Apologies received.
- Bromsgrove District Councillor - Charles Hotham (Barnt Green & Hopwood) – The council have not met since the last parish council meeting. Worcestershire Regulatory Services are to take over responsibility for planning enforcement and fly tipping.

**23/234 To adopt previous minutes**

- To approve adoption of the minutes of the Ordinary parish council meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024, previously circulated but also attached.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 19/02/2024 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

**23/235 Meetings / Training Attended** – EO Clerks Gathering 28/2/24. The Lengthsman Scheme processing of timesheets is to be digitalised. The Clerk to attend a training Workshop on the 25<sup>th</sup> March.

**23/236 Annual Business**

**i. Governance arrangements:**

**a) Review of council policies**

The following policies have been circulated prior to the meeting for review:

- a) Data Protection Policy
- b) Child, Young Adult and Vulnerable Person Protection Policy
- c) Equal Opportunities Policy
- d) Sickness Absence Policy
- e) Financial Regulations – Amendment - Monzo debit card limit increased to £500.

RESOLVED: That the policies referred to above a), c), d) and e) are approved. Policy b) is to be amended to include Cllr Hothams mobile phone number. Also on page 4 line 1 change ‘as’ for ‘has’. This policy is then approved.

Policy e) states that the councillors who authorise payments should have their details minuted. Subsequent minutes to include names of councillors.

**23/237 Consultations**

Consultation	Details/Comments	Dates
Local Government Boundary Commission England Recommendations for Worcestershire Electoral Boundaries	Alvechurch and Wythall division will have 2 councillors and include Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Beoley and Wythall. Documents available at <a href="http://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/worcestershire">www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/worcestershire</a>  Comments can be made by emailing <a href="mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk">reviews@lgbce.org.uk</a>	From 9/1 to 18/3/24. The final recommendations will be publicised on 2/7/24.
<b>Comment</b> Barnt Green Parish Council is opposed to the proposals on a point of principle, that being where 2 councillors are proposed to represent one county council ward. We note that this is proposed in a number of other wards within Worcestershire. The existence of two county councillors will double the communication on county level issues which will be more bureaucratic, generate a greater workload, increase costs and may ultimately involve passing additional costs to council taxpayers who are represented by a parish council. Within a bigger ward with two councillors, the voice of a small parish council will carry less weight, so the views of the residents in that parish may be marginalised which we feel goes against the better principles of democratic representation. Barnt Green Parish Council has a practical concern where it may be represented by 2 county councillors with opposing views. If one county councillor is in favour and the other against a proposal, the parish council's		

position is neutralised. The effect is that the role of the Parish Council is diminished and, again, the democratic process fails the residents of such a parish council.		
WCC Revised Planning Validation Document	Documents available at <a href="http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/planning-applications">www.worcestershire.gov.uk/planning-applications</a> Comments sent to <a href="mailto:validdoc@worcestershire.gov.uk">validdoc@worcestershire.gov.uk</a>	Until 11/3/24.
<b>No Comment</b>		
Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy Issues & Options	Documents available at <a href="http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lnrs">www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lnrs</a> Questionnaire is online.	From 15/1 to 23/2/24.
<b>Comment</b> No comment. Cllr Roberts added habitat areas to the map.		
Consultation on parking charges on the Lickey Hills	Awaiting full details.	BGPC to respond when consultation opens.
<b>Comment</b>		

**23/238 Chairman's Report** – The 8 Hills Regional Park proposed by the National Trust have released a Spatial Framework which includes Cofton Park and also a conservation area which covers Bittell Road, Bittell Lane, Sandhills Road and Cherry Hill Road. It will increase community group access near the reservoir and work on biodiversity, walking and cycling etc.  
The request for Parish Priorities from West Mercia Police had been received.

RESOLVED: Cllr Cholmondeley to circulate the Spatial Framework to all Cllrs. Cllrs agreed that the first parish priority was parking on pavements. The second priority was theft from shops, especially Tesco. The EO to complete the priorities form. The EO to write to the CEO of Tesco about the prevalence of shop lifting and the knock-on effect to other local businesses.

**23/239 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	Further information has been added to the Network Rail website. The Project Team from Network Rail are to attend the Annual Parish Meeting to give a presentation to residents about the station lifts with the opportunity to ask questions. The meeting will be held at the Friends Meeting House, Sandhills Rd on the 22 <sup>nd</sup> April at 7pm. Cllrs raised concerns regarding the funding periods and the potential for the project to be pushed back again.  RESOLVED: The EO to contact Network Rail prior to the Annual Parish meeting to request details of an installation start date/completion date etc.
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<p>b) Network Rail dilapidated fence near Pollinator site.</p>	<p>The EO contacted Network Rail on 20.12.23 and sent requested photos on 8.1.24. Network Rail responded on 22.1.24 to state that they can remove the fence if we wish. They will only take responsibility for the maintenance of the vegetation if it encroaches on the footpath. NR confirmed the PC could erect a post and rail fence and trim the vegetation. On 27.2.24 NR had removed the fence and trimmed the vegetation.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted. Consideration may be given in the future to the PC erecting a new fence.</p>
<p>c) Vandalised seating</p>	<p>The vandalised seating at the station has been replaced.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>d) West Mercia Police Crime Commissioner Safer Roads Fund</p>	<p>The EO has made an application for a solar powered VAS to be installed at Fiery Hill Road following 4 accidents happening in the space of 4 weeks. The application was supported by WCC Cllr Kriss and West Mercia Police Safer Neighbourhood Team. We are waiting to hear if the application was successful.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>e) Office Smart Meter</p>	<p>Pozitive Energy fitted a gas smart meter on the 4<sup>th</sup> March with the landlords agreement.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>f) Equan EVC Declaration regarding registration of lease</p>	<p>The declaration has been mislaid by the solicitors and therefore the lease needs to be signed again. The lease is to be exactly the same except for BMM Energy Solutions Limited (the contractor) will no longer need to be a party to the lease as the works have been completed.</p> <p>The EO has contacted Cala for the new certificate giving permission for the new lease and is awaiting a response. The EO had since received an email from the BDC solicitor advising that Cala have sold the land to Foxhills Management Company. Cllrs queried the need for a certificate as the PC owns the freehold.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The EO to check the certificate requirement and if required contact Foxhills.</p>
<p>g)Lengthsman Work/Services</p>	<p>The hourly rate will increase by 7% for 2024.25 so will change from £17.32 to £18.50 per hour. Cllrs agreed they</p>

	<p>were happy with the service.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>		
h)Outdoor Parish Caretaker Tender	The current contract expires on 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024. Only one tender was received, this was from the existing contractor. Agreement is sought for the contract from 1.4.2024 to 31.3.2027		
<b>Andlin Cleaning &amp; Maintenance Ltd</b>			
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Cost per month</b>	<b>Cost per annum</b>	<b>Percentage increase on previous year</b>
Apr 24 - Mar 25	£612	£7,344	NIL
Apr 25 - Mar 26	£689	£8,268	12.58 %
Apr 26 - Mar 27	£775	£9,300	12.48 %
<p>The budget for 2024.25 is set at £8,000 which includes any additional work. Non recurring tasks will be charged at £20 per hour.</p> <p>RESOLVED: The EO to feedback the comments to the contractor made regarding the high percentage increases. Cllrs are very happy with the helpfulness and quality of work and agreed to renew the contract for a further 3 years.</p>			

**23/240 Finance**

- (i) To note the current financial position, income and bills for payment. See page 6 of the agenda.
- (ii) To be advised of any expenditure decisions taken by Executive Officer. See Monzo expenditure list page 8 of the agenda. A top up of £249.99 is requested to top up the Monzo card to £500.

<p>RESOLVED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) That the current financial position be approved.</li> <li>ii) That the list of payments be approved. Cllr Cholmondeley and Cllr Hotham authorised the online payments.</li> </ul>
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**23/241 Environment & Community Wellbeing**

- a) Bittell Road Playing Field drainage works. Cllrs Cholmondeley and Hotham met with Richard Clewer, NWWM, on the 13<sup>th</sup> March to carry out an inspection. The field was very soggy, even at the top. The play equipment was ankle deep in water but halfway across the field it was dry with no mud. Richard Clewer advised that there is likely to be rubble/clay beneath and so there is nowhere for the water to run and therefore further works would not improve the drainage. He suggested moving the play equipment nearer to the gym equipment.

RESOLVED: The EO to seek quotes to move and refurbish the existing equipment. Quotes also to be sought for new equipment in a similar style. Cllr Cholmondeley to investigate the possibility of funding towards the project from the Barnt Green Medical Trust. Other avenues of funding to be investigated including Alvechurch Educational Trust and BDC.

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

RESOLVED: Details above 23/241 a).

- c) Millennium Park flagpole cleaner.

RESOLVED: Cllr Perry to send potential meeting dates to Cllr Cholmondeley and Cllr Hotham.

- d) Lack of departure screens and PA on Platform 1 at Barnt Green train station.

RESOLVED: Network Rail to be asked about prospective screens at the Annual Meeting.

- e) Millennium Park wetpour resurfacing. The parts of the wetpour that reacted to the weather will be replaced with a green pattern. A provisional install date of the 20<sup>th</sup> March has been booked dependent on the weather.

RESOLVED: Due to the current wet weather it has been decided to push back the install date until April/May.

- f) Pollinator Site. The volunteer group have collected the weed puller.

RESOLVED: The volunteers have cleared 7 bags of debris and will be trialling the weed puller tomorrow! Cllr Perry advised that members of the volunteer group have been watering the pear trees when required.

- g) The Longlands, new pedestrian crossing update. The electrical contractor has sent their quote for the works to WCC.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

- h) Flooding risk from village stream which runs through Sandhills Road. Jodie Hawkins, North Worcestershire Water Management, had replied to the EO asking if the PC wanted residents on the outskirts of Barnt Green to receive the letter regarding their riparian responsibilities.

RESOLVED: The EO to ask for the list of addresses that fall along the watercourse from Barnt Green Social Club to Lower Bittell reservoir.

- i) Biodiversity Policy Requirement. LNRS Local Nature Recovery Strategy

survey and Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

RESOLVED: Cllr Roberts had submitted the three areas of land (Millennium Park, playing fields, pollinator site) within the parish to the Local Habitat Map. Cllr Roberts to send a Biodiversity article for the Bulletin.

- j) Hedge on Hewell Road and trees covering streetlamp in Green Bank and other areas. Along the railway side of Hewell Road after Station Approach to the corner of Green Bank there are various hedges/trees that are blocking the streetlamps. The Environment Committee and EO to meet onsite to discuss work required. Meeting date to be agreed.

RESOLVED: The EO to email Cllrs Cholmondeley, Roberts, Pardo-Roques and Whitehand with potential meeting dates on Mondays or Tuesdays.

- k) Wicksteed Park Inspection reports. The EO has asked the OPC to carry out the 'moderate risk' repair to the multi play equipment highlighted on the report.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

**23/242 Planning**

a) Responses to consultations received including:

BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
<b>24/00036/FUL</b>	Westmead, Aqueduct Lane, Alvechurch, Worcestershire	Construction of a two storey extension to the side and a two storey extension to the front of the dwelling
BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council recommend NO OBJECTION subject to compliance with the recommendations of the surveys and consideration of installing bat boxes.19/3/24.		

**23/243 Date and Venue of Next Meetings**

Next Parish Council Meeting, Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 7pm at 80 Hewell Road.

The meeting ended at 20:29hrs

Signed:..... Date.....  
Chairman, Barnt Green Parish Council 15/04/2024

Agenda Item 23/240 (i) To approve the current financial position and bills paid.

### February Income Report

34	29.02.2024	£181.25	£0.00	£181.25	Office Hire	Conexus Tuition
33	29.02.2024	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,000.00	Electric Charging Point Rent	Equans

### February Payments Report

220	29.02.2024	£354.95	£0.00	£354.95	Petty cash top up	Eleanor Choudry (Eleanor Choudry)
221	29.02.2024	£52.34	£2.62	£54.96	Office Energy	Positive Energy

### March Payments Report

231	31.03.2024	£171.60	£8.58	£180.18	Street Light Energy	YU Energy
230	31.03.2024	£24.42	£1.22	£25.64	Street Light Energy	YU Energy
229	31.03.2024	£228.41	£45.68	£274.09	Grounds maintenance at playing field	Neil Hosking (Hosking Ground Maintenance)
228	31.03.2024	£544.50	£0.00	£544.50	Outdoor Parish Caretaker	Andlin Cleaning
227	31.03.2024	£28.76	£5.75	£34.51	Office landline, broadband & calls	BT
226	31.03.2024	£1,625.00	£0.00	£1,625.00	Office Rent	John Truslove
225	31.03.2024				PAYE	HMRC
224	31.03.2024				Salaries	Salaries
223	31.03.2024				PAYE	HMRC
222	31.03.2024				Pension contributions	NEST

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Agenda Item 23/240 (i) To approve the February Bank Reconciliation 2024

4 March 2024 (2023-2024)

**Barnet Green Parish Council**

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

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

	<b>Bank Reconciliation at 29/02/2024</b>		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2023		110,008.54
	<b>ADD</b> Receipts 01/04/2023 - 29/02/2024		88,888.65
			198,895.19
	<b>SUBTRACT</b> Payments 01/04/2023 - 29/02/2024		89,161.09
<b>A</b>	Cash in Hand 29/02/2024 (per Cash Book)		109,734.10
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash 29/02/2024	0.00	
	Unity Bank Current Account 29/02/2024	1,052.23	
	Unity Bank Deposit Account 29/02/2024	35,180.52	
	Cambridge Building Society 29/02/2024	73,501.35	
			109,734.10
	Less unrepresented payments		
			109,734.10
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
<b>B</b>	<b>Adjusted Bank Balance</b>		109,734.10
	<b>A = B Checks out OK</b>		

Agenda Item 23/240 (ii) To be advised of any expenditure decisions taken by Executive Officer

Monzo Reconciliation up to 5th March 2024					
Voucher	Date	Description	Supplier	Expenditure	Deposit
		Opening Balance			500.00
39	20.02.24	Weed Puller	Amazon	34.99	
40	26.02.24	2 x rechargeable batteries for VAS ON Fiery Hill Road	Amazon	215.00	
					249.99
			Balance		250.01
			Topup Request		249.99

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