

BARNT GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

80 Hewell Road, Birmingham, B45 8NF

0121 447 9893

exec@barntgreenparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.barntgreenparishcouncil.gov.uk



Minutes of the **Ordinary Parish Council** meeting held on
Monday 17th February 2025 at 7.00pm at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green, B45 8NF

Members present: Cllrs R Cholmondeley, M Roberts, C Hotham.

In attendance: Executive Officer, Eleanor Choudry
WCC Cllr A Kriss (left at 7.35pm)
Richard Peach, The Village Magazine
Julie Garvey, SNT PCSO (left at 7.18pm)

0 member of the public

24/366 Apologies Cllrs S Whitehand, P Perry, L Williams, S Tucker, O Pardo Roques.

24/367 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.

24/368 To consider any dispensations None declared.

24/369 Open Session – Participation to hear from:

- Members of the public. None present.
- Supporting organisations, e.g. Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), Footpath Warden. Julie Garvey, PCSO, updated the council on the spate of recent burglaries in Barnt Green. In the past 30 days there has been 4 residential and 2 business burglaries. A public meeting will take place at Barnt Green Cricket Club on Sunday 2nd March between 2-4pm and PC Dunton and PC Unitt will be attending to offer crime prevention advice, smart water packs etc. A drop-in session is to be held outside Tesco on Hewell Road on 22nd February. WCC Cllr Kriss said he could fund smart water kits for any new Barnt Green residents that have not already received them. Police patrols have been increased in the area. There have been no further reports of spikes left in the community car park on Fiery Hill Road that had reportedly punctured a couple of car tyres. Cars have been parked irresponsibly at the junction on Twatling Road, Julie Garvey will check when on patrol.
- Worcestershire County Councillor – Adrian Kriss (Beacon division) A new Truecam has been purchased that is able to catch speeding car/motorbikes and send direct fines. The camera also records if the driver is using a mobile phone or not wearing a seat belt. WCC Cllr Kriss will be using the camera on Bittell Road, Fiery Hill Road and Blackwell Road. The elections in Worcestershire are going ahead. 21 councils will need to change to unitary councils into 2 tiers. Therefore councillors voted in will have 2 years' service. Barnt Green is now in the same boundary as Alvechurch and Wythall is on its own. District council boundaries

remain unchanged. For each county division there will be at least 2 councillors with a unitary Worcestershire council having 100+ councillors. WCC Cllr Kriss confirmed that there will be quite a change to town and parish councils following devolution. As Barnt Green is a small parish it will have power to do more things for residents and have an increased precept. Currently council tax can only be increased by 2.99%. The drain cover will be replaced at the bottom of Station Approach. The Lickey Hills car parking charges will push parking onto the roads and also prevent people accessing the park which will impact people's health and well-being. Birmingham City Council has asked WCC to carry out the site parking but that is the responsibility of the district. Cllr Kriss is looking into it.

d) Bromsgrove District Councillor - Charles Hotham (Barnt Green & Hopwood). A report is being prepared with the option of a Worcestershire wide unitary authority or a north/south divide. The report will be sent by 21st March, and a decision will be made by November 2025. There will then be an 18-month period to get the chosen option in place. John Lynch has been appointed as the new Chief Executive and Robert Watson as Deputy Chief and Section 151 Officer. There is not a firm timetable for the strategic plan, but it will be published soon. BDC budget balanced with an overspend of £150k which is acceptable as the budget is £30 million. There is £2 million for the food waste collection but due to an ERP tax on manufacturers BDC will get £1million back. Tax will be charged on the weight of plastic but the cost to run the scheme is £950k p.a. Extending the collection of the brown bins is being considered. Funds from the austerity fund were being used for only BDC playgrounds but money has been set aside for upgrades to equipment that is owned by the parish/town councils.

RESOLVED: The EO will contact WCC Cllr Kriss to ask about a footway edge clearance machine to trim back the edges of the tarmac path in Bittell Road playing fields as the grass has grown over the edge by about 6 inches either side reducing the width of the path.

24/370 To adopt previous minutes

- a) To approve adoption of the minutes of the Ordinary parish council meeting held on 20th January 2025, previously circulated but also attached.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 20/01/2025 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

24/371 Meetings / Training Attended – The EO attended a Clerks Briefing on 4/2/25. The EO completed SLCC Principles of Internal Auditing Local Councils (PIALC) gaining 8 CPD points to start working towards the Local Council Award Scheme.

24/372 Governance arrangements

a) Review of council policy:

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

- i) Risk Management Policy amended.
- ii) 3 Year Forward Plan Annual Review
- iii) Action Plan for year ahead 2025

RESOLVED: That policies i) to iii) above are approved.

24/373 **Consultations-** None.

24/374 **Chairman's Report** – Cllr Cholmondeley asked all councillors to read the email from CALC regarding devolution and its impact on town and parish councillors. The draft Deed of Easement for the community car park on Fiery Hill Road had been received regarding the access to the pipe under the car park in an emergency. Cllrs agreed that Cllr Cholmondeley will sign the document. The Lengthsman will be asked to widen the footpath on path 507 by cutting back the overgrowth back by one metre. This may need to happen following the bird nesting season in September. Cllr Cholmondeley said that at the next meeting or suitable contact with the 8 Hills Country Park initiative, he will raise the possibility of an extension of the footpath from the end of Bittell Road towards the canal in a similar way to the path on Blackwell Road after the motorway. A request for volunteers to be made in the next edition of the Bulletin to check the wayleave markers with a potential community walk in 2026 to explore the hidden paths of the Lickeys. A request to be made in June to Network Rail to resurface Station Approach to WCC standards so that it can be adopted by the council.

24/375 **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.

<p>a) Station Lift Update from Network Rail</p>	<p>Following our last update at the parish council meeting in December 2024, we are pleased to confirm that work is starting on site at Barnt Green as discussed.</p> <p>Our teams have been out at Barnt Green this week installing track monitoring and gauge equipment and carrying out final checks to make sure everything is ready for first phase preparations to commence next week.</p> <p>From next week (week commencing 3 February), we will start on-site preparations in advance of major installation work in spring. The preparations will involve the creation of a site compound, bringing in materials and machinery and carrying out ground surveys across the station.</p> <p>Some sections of platforms 1 and 2 will need to be sectioned off so work can take place safely but there will be no restriction to getting on and off trains.</p> <p>Car parking facilities will need to be reduced to accommodate the site compound but temporary disabled parking spaces will be created. We're working closely with West Midlands Railway to cause the least possible disruption to passengers and the local community while work takes place.</p> <p>The EO has emailed Jennifer Slater at Network Rail to ask if Worcestershire County Council could adopt Station Approach.</p> <div data-bbox="735 2007 1410 2114" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"><p>RESOLVED: No response has been received. The EO to chase a response in June.</p></div>
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<p>b) Sale of 80 Hewell Road / Redecoration of office</p>	<p>No update has been received from the agent regarding the sale of the property. The EO emailed the agent outlining details of why the parish council will not accept responsibility for the damp. No response has been received.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>c) Outdoor Parish Caretaker (OPC)</p>	<p>The OPC has cemented the rope fence posts at the pollinator site that had been knocked over. The OPC is investigating the faulty tap in Millennium Park and the fallen tree in Bittell Rd playing fields. The EO is still dealing with Wicksteed regarding the incorrect rope bridge delivered for Millennium Park.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: The correct rope bridge has been delivered and will be fitted shortly.</p>
<p>d) Bollards</p>	<p>Paul Rimell has collected 2 bollards for replacement outside Oulshams and the school on Hewell Road.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: That the report be noted.</p>
<p>e) Christmas lights Switch On 29/11/25</p>	<p>The EO has emailed Jon Miller to ask if he is available as Santa on 29/11/25 and also if Arrow Valley Brass Band can attend.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: Arrow Vally Brass band have confirmed their attendance. Santa to be confirmed.</p>
<p>f) Complaints about parking</p>	<p>Parking on verges next to Barnt Green Dental outside 107 and 109 Hewell Road. Parking on verges on Hewell Lane.</p> <p style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">RESOLVED: WCC Cllr Kriss will look into providing bollards on the verges near the dentist. The EO to suggest to the homeowners on Hewell Lane that that they reseed the verges.</p>

24/376 Finance

- (i) To note the current financial position, income and bills for payment. See page 6 of the agenda.

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. See Monzo expenditure list page 8 of the agenda. A top up of £50.51 is requested to top up the Monzo card to £500.

RESOLVED: That the top up be approved.

- (iii) To receive the interim report from the Internal Auditor.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

- (iv) To consider replacing the Monzo card with a debit card.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed that the EO should organise the Corporate Multipay card from Unity Trust to replace the Monzo card.

- (v) The two councillors that authorise the online monthly payments are to be named in the minutes.

RESOLVED: Cllr Cholmondeley and Perry authorised the January payments.

- (vi) Confirmation that Cllr Williams has bank access. Apologies received.

24/377 Environment & Community Wellbeing

- a) Grounds maintenance contract 1.4.25 to 31.3.28 to be agreed. Tender documents are attached. To be discussed and agreed.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to renew contracts with the existing suppliers from 1.4.25 to 31.3.28.

- b) Structural testing on streetlamp columns in Barnt Green. A quote is to be received and discussed.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed to arrange the survey with KIWA. The EO to organise.

- c) Bittell Road Playing Field children's play equipment. Skip removal.

RESOLVED: The skip has been removed.

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

RESOLVED: The EO to contact West Midland Rail and let them know that Network Rail will supply the electricity for them to work together on the infrastructure.

- e) Pollinator Site update.

RESOLVED: Cllrs agreed that the Volunteer Group can source matching paint for the replaced rope fence posts. Thanks were given to Cllr Perry for pruning the pear trees.

- f) The Longlands, new dropped kerb update. The work was due to be completed by 13th December but has been postponed.

RESOLVED: Awaiting an update.

- g) Biodiversity.

RESOLVED: Cllr Perry had pruned the fruit trees. A plan to water the trees in the warmer weather to be agreed.

- h) Barnt Green Parish Council Community Car Park. On social media it was reported that spikes have been left in the car park causing car tyre punctures.

RESOLVED: No further spikes had been reported. The EO to enquire about a sign which states that cars can only be parked in the community car park for 24 hours.

- i) Path 507 off Blackwell Road. The EO contacted the scout club and has the code for gate access. BDC Leon Hill has been asked about a scag cutter to cut back overgrowth along the footpath.

RESOLVED: The lengthsman to cut back the overgrowth by one metre in September following the bird nesting season.

- j) Barnt Green flag flying. The EO contacted St Andrews First School who would be delighted to be involved and suggested a whole school event on Thursday 8th May, VE Day.

RESOLVED: Cllrs Roberts and Williams are to be trained on 28/3 at 12 noon on how to raise the flag etc. The EO to ask Cllr Perry about VE Day on 8/5/25 and the school involvement. The EO to ask if the school have a flag and whether they would like to have an event for the 100th anniversary of the school and/or on St Andrews Day.

Barnt Green Community Events. Cllrs Cholmondeley, Williams and Tucker met with resident Danny Bromage to discuss the Christmas lights switch on and future events in Barnt Green. A road closure was discussed between Sandhills Road and Hewell Road. WCC Cllr Kriss had confirmed that he could fund a road closure. The bus still runs on a Saturday which could be problematic. Danny Bromage is investigating other ideas for the Xmas lights switch on and maybe an event in June. Due to lack of interest the community walk will not happen in 2025 but it is hoped the Wassail Walk will go ahead at the end of the year.

RESOLVED: Danny Bromage to investigate and feedback ideas to parish councillors. The quote for National Grid to increase the electricity was discussed and it was agreed not to go ahead due to the high cost. The EO to seek quotes for the purchase / hire of generators.

24/378 Planning

- a) Bromsgrove District Plan Update. Not yet available.
- b) Barnt Green parish councillor planning meeting. Parish councillors had met on 12/2/25 to discuss future development in Barnt Green and agree a unified councillor view. Cllr Cholmondeley stressed the importance of keeping Barnt Green a distinct village. It was agreed that the parish council should engage with BDC to have a say with what could be proposed. A map of the parish and surrounding parishes was used to label areas and discuss potential considerations. Some areas discussed were outside Barnt Green parish. More houses will impact on the village centre and it was thought that any development should not be more than a 10/15 minute walk away from the village centre due to traffic. Previously a site behind houses on Bittell Road had been proposed with one property being demolished to allow access to the site behind. This could happen in other areas. There was concern that a pro rata number of new houses could be issued rather than looking at the geographical area of the parish. The shops are very popular in Barnt Green and so it wouldn't be good to split the centre into two areas. Ideally 2/3-bedroom houses which are affordable would be built.

RESOLVED: Notes from the planning meeting to be circulated to all councillors for comments prior to a request to meet Mike Dunphy, Strategic Planning Manager at Bromsgrove District Council.

- c) Responses to consultations received including:

BDC ref	Site Address	Proposal
25/00005/FUL	3 Hewell Road, Barnt Green, Worcestershire, B45 8NG	Pitched roof over existing garage/porch with render to front elevation. Alteration of front porch area to create office and relocate entrance/porch door. Raised decking to rear of property.
BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council has NO OBJECTION.		
25/00090/FUL	64 Bittell Road, Barnt Green, Worcestershire, B45 8LY,	Proposed two storey front and side extensions. Two storey and single storey rear extensions
BGPC Recommendation: Barnt Green Parish Council has NO OBJECTION.		

24/380 Closed session – Private and Confidential – EO Appraisal

The meeting ended at 20:41hrs

Signed:..... Date.....
Chairman, Barnt Green Parish Council 17/03/2025

Agenda Item 24/376 (i) To approve the current financial position and bills paid.

January Income Report

24	17.01.2025	£200.00	£0.00	£200.00	Playing Field Hire	Total Football
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January Payments Report

208	31.01.2025	£6.00	£0.00	£6.00	31.01.2025	Bank Service Charge	Unity Bank
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February Income Report

26	28.02.2025	£0.00	£5,779.65	£5,779.65	Vat Reclaim 1.8.24 to 31.12.24			HMRC
25	28.02.2025	£518.00	£0.00	£518.00	Lengthsman refund		Worcestershire County Council	

February Payments Report

225	28.02.2025	£50.51	£0.00	£50.51	Petty cash top up		Petty cash top up
224	28.02.2025	£37.10	£1.86	£38.96	Office landline, broadband & calls		BT
223	28.02.2025	£207.28	£10.36	£217.64	Street Light Energy		YU Energy
222	28.02.2025	£27.26	£1.36	£28.62	Street Light Energy		YU Energy
221	28.02.2025	£231.25	£0.00	£231.25	Lengthsman Work		Bromsgrove District Council
220	28.02.2025	£555.60	£0.00	£555.60	Outdoor Parish Caretaker		Andlin Cleaning
219	28.02.2025	£228.41	£45.68	£274.09	Grounds maintenance at playing field		Hosking Ground Maintenance
218	28.02.2025	£1,540.00	£308.00	£1,848.00	Street Lamp Repair		First Choice Electrical Solutions Ltd
217	28.02.2025	£95.00	£0.00	£95.00	Intruder alarm service		CTB Alarms Limited
216	28.02.2025	£1,500.00	£300.00	£1,800.00	Christmas Tree Lights Dismantle		First Choice Electrical Solutions Ltd
215	28.02.2025	£140.00	£28.00	£168.00	Porta loo for Xmas lights switch on 2024		Shaw Loos
214	28.02.2025	£148.95	£29.79	£178.74	Dog bags		JRB Enterprise Ltd
213	28.02.2025	£35.00	£0.00	£35.00	Data Protection Annual Fee		ICO
212	28.02.2025				Pension contributions		NEST
211	28.02.2025				Employers NI		HMRC
210	28.02.2025				PAYE		HMRC
209	28.02.2025				Salaries		Salaries

Agenda Item 24/376 (i) To approve the January Bank Reconciliation 2025

Bart 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 31/01/2025		
	Cash in Hand 01/04/2024		143,458.55
	ADD Receipts 01/04/2024 - 31/01/2025		61,683.78
			205,142.33
	SUBTRACT Payments 01/04/2024 - 31/01/2025		96,764.39
A	Cash in Hand 31/01/2025 (per Cash Book)		108,377.94
	Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
	Petty Cash 31/01/2025	0.00	
	Unity Bank Current Account 31/01/2025	1,173.98	
	Unity Bank Deposit Account 31/01/2025	12,893.03	
	Cambridge Building Society 31/01/2025	96,114.36	
			110,181.37
	Less unrepresented payments		1,803.43
			108,377.94
	Plus unrepresented receipts		
B	Adjusted Bank Balance		108,377.94
	A = B Checks out OK		

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Agenda Item 24/376 (ii) To be advised of any expenditure decisions taken by Executive Officer

February 2025 Monzo Payments

Monzo Reconciliation up to 4th February 2025					
Voucher	Date	Description	Supplier	Expenditure	Deposit
		Opening Balance			500.00
37	29.01.25	2nd class stamp	Post Office	0.85	
38	30.01.25	Milk and biscuits for events meeting	Tesco	1.55	
39	21.01.25	Printer Ink	Catridge Save	48.11	50.51
			Balance		449.49
			Topup Request		50.51

