

# Barnt Green Parish Council

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## Notice of Meeting

Members of Barnt Green Parish Council are hereby summoned to attend the parish council meeting to be held on **Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2017 at 7.00pm**  
**at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green, B45 8NF**

The meeting is open to the press and members of the public. Residents of Barnt Green parish may take part during the adjournment of the meeting (agenda item 17/55a below) to put questions or raise concerns regarding matters on this agenda or for future consideration.

## Agenda

### 17/52 Apologies

To receive apologies and to approve the reason for absence.

### 17/53 Declarations of Interest: Councillors are reminded-

- a) Of the need to keep their Register of Interests form up to date.
- b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) in agenda items and their nature.
- c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests (ODI) in items on the agenda and their nature.
- d) Written requests for the council to grant a dispensation (as required via Localism Act 2011, s33) are to be handed to the Executive Officer in advance of the start of the meeting.

Councillors who have declared a DPI, or an ODI which falls within the terms of paragraph 12(4) (b) of the Code of Conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items unless granted a dispensation.

### 17/54 To consider any dispensations received in writing from parish council members.

### 17/55 Adjournment of meeting to hear from:

- a) **Members of the Public**
- b) **Worcestershire County Councillor – Peter McDonald (Beacon division)**
- c) **Bromsgrove District Councillor - Charles Hotham (Barnt Green & Hopwood ward)**

### 17/56 Adoption of previous minutes

To approve adoption of the minutes of the parish council meeting held 01/03/2017

### 17/57 Chairman's Report

The Chairman will provide a report.

### 17/58 Executive Officer's Report

To be advised of any decisions taken under delegated powers since the last meeting and receive updates to ongoing matters; report attached.

### 17/59 Finance

- (i) To note
  - A) the current financial position and bills for payment
  - B) Executive Officer's decisions
- (ii) To agree update to 31/03/2017 of the parish council's Asset Register
- (iii) To re-consider the funding application for St Michael's churchyard maintenance
- (iv) To agree to purchase accounting software for book-keeping effectiveness
- (v) To agree to hold copies of the new Lickey Hills Society book for sale

### 17/60 Committee, Working Party and Members' reports on meetings attended

- a) Fun Run: Cllr EG and EO update
- b) Motor festival Working Party: Cllrs EG, RC, CH to report.  
- Parish Council to agree to proceed with the event on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017
- c) Update from the Centres Manager, Cheryl Welsh, report re 22/02/17
- d) Update on meeting with BARN regarding local transport scheme
- e) Update to consultation regarding Barnt Green playing field improvements
- f) Risk Management and Finance working party – RC, CH, EG yet to meet
- g) Bromsgrove Area CALC Committee meeting held 08/03/2017 – EO to report
- h) Staffing working party recommendations to be considered at agenda item 17/66

- i) Any other reports

**17/61 Events**

- a) Various to be covered via item 17/60
- b) To consider holding future Shindig events
- c) Other future events include: Busking Festival (date tba); Community Walk 23/09; Christmas Lights 02/12; Post-Christmas walk 27/12.

**17/62 Environment & Community Wellbeing**

- a) Fiery Hill Road / Kendal End Road / Bittell Road junction closure update; to consider maintenance of new verge in Fiery Hill Road and other related matters
- b) To agree the new rates for the bin emptying service at Barnt Green playing field
- c) To receive Lengthsman update
- d) To consider becoming part of the London Midland Adopt-A-Station scheme
- e) To agree use of Millennium Park on 20/05/2017 by St Andrews Church for Christian Aid
- f) To agree purchase of 'statement' planters for siting in Hewell Road
- g) To agree better parking signs at Station Approach
- h) To agree to meet with representative of Worcestershire Carers
- i) To agree to become a Charter Branch (NALC-supported tree project)

**17/63 Communications**

- a) To agree appointment for website re-vamp
- b) To agree communications strategy to include variety of media.
- c) To note items for inclusion in next issue of The Bulletin or alternative

**17/64 Planning**

- a) To note Planning Committee scheduled for 22/03/17 was inquorate
- b) To comment on consultations received since previous parish council meeting:

Log no. 64	17/0184	4 Fiery Hill Road B45 8LF	Single storey extension and minor alterations...
Log no. 65	17/0224	37 Orchard Croft B45 8NJ	Demolition of semi-detached dwelling and erection of 1 no. new dwelling

- c) Neighbourhood Plan update: to note meeting to discuss progress
- d) To consider actions that could be taken regarding vacant properties in the parish

**17/65 Governance**

- a) To agree the Dignity at Work Policy and Member/Officer protocol

**17/66 Staffing issues**

As this discussion may refer to confidential matters the Parish Council may resolve to close the meeting to members of the public via the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. If such a resolution is passed then members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting.

- Papers restricted to parish councillors relating to staffing terms and conditions

**17/67 Future Meetings and Items for future agendas**

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

Annual Parish Meeting – 26/04/2017, 7pm at Cofton Lounge, Parish Centre to include presentation from Steve Hinton, Head Warden Lickey Hills Country Park

**17/68 Date and Venue of Next Meeting**

Annual Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2017 at 80 Hewell Road

Council Members: R Cholmondeley (Chairman), C Hotham (vice-Chairman), R Briggs, E Gumbley, J Jagger, J Jellie, P Perry, S Whitehand

Gill Lungley  
Executive Officer  
30/03/2017

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## Supporting notes to agenda for meeting 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017 From Gill Lungley, Executive Officer, BGPC

Agenda items 17/52 – 17/56 are standard items.

**Item 17/56: Previous minutes** – as per following pages 4 - 8...

To approve the minutes of the parish council meeting held 01/03/2017.

It would be helpful if there is a query about any aspect of the draft minutes to let the EO know in advance to help clarify the issue in the meeting.

**Item 17/57: Chairman's report**

Cllr R Cholmondeley will report.

# Barnt Green Parish Council

## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held at 80 Hewell Road, Barnt Green on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2017 at 7.00pm

**Members present:** Cllrs R Cholmondeley (Chairman), C Hotham (vice-Chairman), R Briggs, E Gumbley, J Jagger, J Jellie, P Perry,

**In attendance:** One member of the press (The Village)  
Peter McDonald, County Councillor for Beacon division  
Gill Lungley, Executive Officer

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

### 17/035 Apologies

Cllr S Whitehand: apologies accepted.

### 17/036 Declarations of Interest

- Cllr C Hotham has a standing declaration relating to his role as a member of the District Council's planning committee such that any comment he may make during discussion on planning applications will be preliminary views taking into account the information presently available to the Parish Council. His final views on the applications are reserved until in full possession of all the relevant arguments for and against.
- Cllr R Cholmondeley declared an Other Disclosable Interest in planning application log no. 061, which, as a 'planning matter', would require him to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed [Members' Code of Conduct, s12 (4b)].

### 17/037 Consideration of dispensation requests

No dispensation requests had been submitted in advance of this meeting.

### 17/038 Adjournment of meeting to hear from:

- a) **Members of the Public:** not required.
- b) **Worcs County Councillor: Peter McDonald** commented with regard to:
  - Nearing the end of his 4-year term of office during which the county council's spending had halved, meaning less efficiency, a stretched workforce and lower standards.
  - The Ofsted report of 'inadequate' regarding the county's Looked-After Children had highlighted major concerns yet youth provision services are also losing funding.
  - Library services are likely to be cut.
  - Locally:
    - The flashing 30mph sign is to be installed in Blackwell Road soon;
    - Signs to warn of pedestrians crossing Cherry Hill Road between Cherry Hill Drive walkway and Pinfields Wood are to be installed;
    - Oakdene Drive double yellow lines are soon to be installed;
    - Resurfacing is planned for Sandhills Lane (will need to check on Bittell Lane);
    - Most of Cherry Hill Road will be resurfaced;
    - Most of Barnt Green Road is now 30mph.
- c) **Bromsgrove District Councillor: Charles Hotham, Barnt Green & Hopwood ward,** commented:
  - The district council's planning function will be a shared service with Redditch Borough Council;
  - The now disused council house at Burcot Lane is costing £150,000 pa.
  - The Council's operational plan was approved by BDC 28/02/2017; it details plans for improvement across the district.
  - Council tax set by Bromsgrove DC will rise by £5.00 per band D house; this represents an increase of 2.44% and was allowed by Central Government.
  - BDC are consulting with the MP regarding the requirement to save enough in funding in order to repay £740,000 to Central Government in 3 years' time.

# Barnt Green Parish Council

- Coun Karen May, BDC's portfolio holder for business improvement and development, has agreed to support assistance measures for Barnt Green traders, amid concerns of loss of business due to the 3-month Bittell Road / Fiery Hill Road junction closure.

## 17/039 Minutes of the previous council meeting

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 were agreed a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 17/040 Chairman's Report: Cllr R Cholmondeley

Standing Orders allow for meetings to continue for 2½ hours, but the Chairman would like to aim to finish around 9pm and will provide a reminder of the time every half-hour.

## 17/041 Updates and Decisions taken by the Executive Officer (EO) since last meeting

Public toilets	Cllr CH reported at the latest PC meeting that Bromsgrove DC Cabinet meeting had approved funding availability for public toilets in Barnt Green. Cllrs RB and CH had met with a contractor to discuss this project. Village residents have voiced concerns about the use of s106 funding on this scheme and have proposed alternative uses for the funding such as a pedestrian crossing on Bittell Road. The EO will contact BDC planning department to see what progress is being made with the pedestrian crossing which was referred to in the S106 agreement arising from the development at corner Fiery Hill Road / Kendal End Road.	
Footpath alongside scout hut	Awaiting notification of improvement scheme from North Worcestershire Water Management (NWWW); the suggestion is for costs to be shared between NWWW, WCC (Footpaths) and BGPC.	
Playing field	Delivery date of new equipment (picnic tables, notice board) put back due to bespoke notice board header; dog waste bag dispenser has been installed.	
Hewell Rd shops	EO is writing to owner/agent re improvements requested for flat roof over shop entrances 28 – 32a Hewell Road	
Safety checks	RoSPA will carry out the annual safety check on play equipment in March 2017.	
Station lifts	BARN reports Bromsgrove DC's Equality Officer confirmed that the Equalities Group chair had received a reply to her letter to Network Rail confirming that a lift will be installed at Barnt Green Railway Station by September 2017.	
Social Club walks	The Social Club preference is to keep these 'in-house'.	
From previous meeting	The final item of the meeting held 01/02/2017 was for issues to be considered at the next meeting, including to a) write to the Baron Davenport trust to thank them for the new dog bin installed on the walkway to the Lickey Hills between Fiery Hill Road and Cherry Hill Road and b) to put a notice on the litter bins on Barnt Green station. The EO has dealt with both, ie a) (letter of thanks has been sent) and b) item referred to London Midland.	
Defibrillator	The pads had reached their use-by-date and have been replaced; £30	
Rail squeal / grinding	It would appear the action taken to reduce the squeal nuisance has not had the desired effect.	
Visit to EnviroSort	This visit for all members has been arranged for 06/04/2017	
Visits / calls / emails	Plus general correspondence received and circulated to members: List circulated to members.	
Matters carried forward	SmartWater campaign Barnt Green station lifts Playing Field trees (tree officer check) Local Council Award Scheme (foundation) On-street car parking. Railway station, rail-users group	Risk management matrix CALA/Fiery Hill Rd development, car park Condition of drains Footpath to Cofton Social media training Community Speed Watch scheme Village entry planters (next meeting)

# Barnt Green Parish Council

## 17/042 Finance

- i. **Receipts and payments** for February are as listed on page 109. The bank reconciliation for 31/01/2017 had not yet been prepared but would be circulated to members following this meeting.
- ii. **Quarterly book-keeping review**  
It was agreed that Cllr R Briggs would review the year's third quarter.
- iii. **Renewal of grounds maintenance contracts for Parker's Piece and Millennium Park**  
It was agreed to continue for 2017/18 with the current contractors on the existing contract terms.
- iv. **Review of Asset Register**  
It was agreed to include the new path in Parker's Piece (£4,568) and dispose of the laser printer; additions relating to new Christmas lighting and office tables were noted. Thus a net increase (including the path) to the Asset Register of £7,590 to date.

## 17/043 Committee and Working Party reports

- a) **Fun Run:** the start time of 12:30hrs has been confirmed and the parish council is working with the Chuggers to a plan for the event.
- b) **Motor Festival:** the working party has arranged for 500 flyers incorporating an application form to be printed; the decision to proceed with the event will be made by 31/03/2017.
- c) **Village Improvements, Meeting with Centres Manager 22/02/2017:** despite only three representatives of traders in attendance, the events for 2017 were discussed. CH had asked Cala Homes to fund a banner for the corner of Hewell Road / Bittell Road. Two suggestions for a Barnt Green marketing slogan were put forward.
- d) **Public toilets meeting with contractor:** Cllrs RB and CH had met to progress possibilities for siting a toilet 'pod' in the village. The contractor will provide an outline of costs and options.  
Discussion ensued including an opposing point of view in that the village has two 'eat-in' refreshment outlets and two public houses; each could be paid an annual amount to ensure they will make their facilities available and Barnt Green could become known as a 'toilet friendly' village. A counter argument was that people can find it difficult to ask for and use the facilities in a shop where they are not spending money.
- e) **Public transport BARN initiative:** Cllrs CH, EG and SW are to meet on 14/03/2017 to find out more.
- f) **Risk Management and Finance working party:** Cllrs RC, CH and EG are to meet.
- g) **Staffing working party:** Cllrs RC, JeJe and PP are to meet.

## 17/044 Events

Event	Date
Fun Run (co-organised with Chuggers)	7/5/17
Motor Festival	2/7/17
Busking Festival [details yet to be confirmed]	August?
Community Walk	23/09/17
Christmas Lights & switch-on	2/12/17
Post-Christmas Walk	27/12/17

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## 17/045 Environment and Community well-being

- a) **Road closure junction Fiery Hill Road / Kendal End Road / Bittell Road.** The traffic disruption is due to subsidence during March, however the roads that have been used for the detour route have suffered damage and WCC will be asked to ensure restitution measures are carried out.
- b) **Condition of roads in Barnt Green parish.** In addition to the roads used as part of the detour, the condition of many of the roads in the parish is causing concern. Members agreed to forward photographs provided by a resident to the Head of Environment Services, Worcestershire County Council along with the concerns raised. No response has been received yet regarding the request for the starting date for resurfacing of Sandhills Lane.
- c) **Public consultation for proposed playing field improvements.** Members agreed to carry out consultations on two Saturday mornings during March at two sites (① village centre, ② playing field) regarding the proposed installation of outdoor gym equipment on playing field.
- d) **Playing Field litter bins.** Bromsgrove DC had substantially increased the cost for emptying the litter bins at the playing field. The EO and Cllr C Hotham had met with the relevant DC officer to discuss the situation which is attempting to streamline services and bring costs up to a more competitive level; the officer has undertaken to discuss with other parish councils and will return to BGPC with a proposal for moving forward. It was believed other parish councils using alternative providers incur similar costs.

## 17/046 Communications

- a) **Website:** An outline of costs for renewing the site was provided and members would look at the various sites before making a decision.
- b) **Review of Communications Strategy:** concern had been raised that as the Bulletin is only delivered to parish residents, then people from outside the parish but who use the village miss out on parish-related news. It was suggested that a page in The Village magazine would reach a wider audience and the EO was asked to obtain costings. Additionally, it was understood that a communications strategy would need to be established in to cater for the website upgrade and the possible use of social media.
- c) **Newsletter:** the Bulletin, issue no 49 had been printed and was ready for delivery.

## 17/047 Planning

- a) **Planning Committee meeting held 22/02/2017:** draft minutes were available.  
In keeping with declarations of interest, Cllr R Cholmondeley left the meeting. Members agreed to Cllr E Gumbley taking on the Chairman's role for consideration of the first application, log no. 061
- b) **Current applications notified for consultation, comments as follows.**

Log no. 61	17/0107	17 Orchard Croft	2-storey side extension
The parish council is concerned that the proposed increased volume of this extension is excessive and its impact locally would be to provide a terracing effect in relation to neighbouring properties.			

Cllr R Cholmondeley returned to the meeting and resumed the Chair...

Log no. 62	17/0119	17 Bittell Lane	Proposed extensions to rear of building
BGPC Comment: The parish council has no objection to this proposal.			

Log no. 63	17/0106	2 Fiery Hill Road	Car port on east side of house located behind existing gate with glazed roof & timber posts / rafters
BGPC Comment: The parish council would suggest this application is refused in order to comply with your SPG 1 Residential design Guide which states that: 4.2d) It is important that semi-detached or detached houses should not appear to become terraced. For this reason, two-storey or first extensions should be set at least one metre off the common boundary. Greater distances will be required for large plot sizes.			

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This car port seeks to extend the property to the boundary with the neighbouring property and will therefore provide no respite from the built-up appearance, contrary to the ambient street appearance locally.

- c) **Neighbourhood Plan update:** Cllr S Whitehand has asked to for the group working on the Neighbourhood Plan to meet; it was suggested this meeting take place in April.

## 17/048 Governance

No report at this meeting.

## 17/049 Consultations

Bromsgrove DC / Worcestershire Regulatory Services were consulting on a Penalty Points Scheme for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licence Holders in Bromsgrove. Members had no comments to forward to the consultation.

## 17/050 Future Meetings and Items for future agendas

Councillors were reminded of meetings to be attended including:

- 08/03/2017 Bromsgrove Area CALC at Parkside
- Annual Parish Meeting is to be held on 26/04/2017
- Annual Parish Council Meeting is to be held on 03/05/2017

### For next meeting:

- Provision of grant towards the maintenance of St Michaels churchyard (Cllr CH)
- Inclusion in next newsletter of follow-up item regarding road closure issues (Cllr JJe)
- Inclusion in next newsletter of postcard showing unknown site in Barnt Green (Cllr JJa)
- Update to investigation of recent death on railway track at Barnt Green station (Cllr PP).

## 17/051 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 80 Hewell Road

This meeting ended at 9.25pm.

Chairman 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017

Minute ref. 17/042 (i)

Payments for February		Description	Receipts	Payments Gross	Payments VAT	Payments Net
BACS	v194	Petty Cash debit card		200.00	-	200.00
d/d	v195	data protection registration		35.00	-	35.00
BACS	v196	dog waste bags and dispenser		196.50	32.75	163.75
s/o	v197	playing field maintenance, monthly retainer		227.86	45.57	182.29
BACS	v198	Playing field maintenance, extra works		278.40	46.40	232.00
	v199/R25	Gross interest on savings account to 31/12/16	361.40	-	-	-
BACS	v200	Carriage and storage of Xmas lights		558.00	93.00	465.00
d/d	v201a	footpath lighting dusk to dawn energy		202.66	33.77	168.89
d/d	v201b	footpath lighting on continuous energy		11.51	0.54	10.97
BACS	v202	Supply and installation of Xmas tree		140.00	-	140.00
BACS	v203a	Hedge cut in Millennium Park		60.00	-	60.00
BACS	v203b	Hedge cut in Orchard Croft		15.00	-	15.00
BACS	v204	Stationery		31.22	5.20	26.02
d/d	v205	Staff pension scheme		150.73	-	150.73
s/o	v206	Web design and hosting, Feb		58.00	-	58.00
BACS	v207	Replacement defibrillator pads		40.74	6.79	33.95
BACS	v208	Staff salary, February		1,027.32	-	1,027.32
s/o	v209	Monthly maintenance, February		264.00	44.00	220.00
BACS	v210a	quarterly litter pick/equipment check MP		60.00	-	60.00
BACS	v210b	quarterly litter pick/equipment check PP		60.00	-	60.00
d/d	v211	Office phone and broadband, Feb		9.50	1.58	7.92
sub total for month			361.40	3,626.44	309.60	3,316.84
total for year to date			65,324.23	66,499.54	6,366.29	60,133.25

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**Item 17/58 Executive Officer's report –**

Public toilets	Current position is that district councillor has reported to PC that funds have been allocated for public toilets by BDC through petition by district councillor; PC to be clear on terms having not yet asked for anything and have received no direct funding allocation. PC has a working party to progress scheme; not yet requested funds or consulted on need, siting, and ongoing costs.	
Footpath alongside scout hut	NWWM have obtained one quotation; WCC is to obtain a second. Cllr EG suggests we ask local contractor to provide a quote: is this the wish of the council?	
Playing field	Picnic tables and notice board now installed.	
Hewell Rd shops	EO is writing to owner/agent re improvements requested for flat roof over shop entrances 28 – 32a Hewell Road	
Safety checks	Awaiting results of annual RoSPA check to play equipment.	
Community Speed Watch scheme	Now that Bittell Road is operating as normal again following the 3-month road closure CSW scheme have advised data gathering will be undertaken in April.	
Visit to EnviroSort	This visit for all members has been arranged for 06/04/2017	
CALA/Fiery Hill Rd development, car park	A meeting has been requested with Cala reps to make contact and progress the need for protection strategies at this site.	
Railway station, rail-users group	There are 2 possibles: 1) Rail Users Group which is for local commuters using the wider rail network and 2) Station Adoption Group which seeks to enhance the station's environment via working with the local community; see agenda item 17/62d. It is felt that option 1 is beyond the scope of the parish council. With regard to the station, it has been noted there is improved directional signage to the ticket machine. No details have been released regarding the recent death of a traveller crossing the track from platform 4 to catch a train at platform 2.	
Blackwell Road flasher	A new VAS (vehicle activated sign) has been installed in Blackwell Road to alert drivers if they are travelling at more than 30mph; the original site was obscured by tree branches and it has been re-sited further south.	
Quarterly inspection of accounts/bookkeeping	Cllr R Briggs carried out the periodic inspection of the book-keeping for the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter, Oct – Dec 2017, and found all to be in order.	
Visits / calls / emails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Email advising intention to set up a parish council in Rubery</li> <li>• Alvechurch PC policy on Social Media use</li> <li>• Information about the Birmingham VELO event 24/09/2017</li> <li>• Invitation to Shindig promoter meeting</li> <li>• Train as a Dementia Friends Champion, 11/05/2017</li> <li>• Easter Arts trail in Barnt Green, organised by St Andrews re Easter story</li> <li>• Concerns about traffic speed measuring cables at Sandhills Green</li> <li>• Concern about neighbour's extension via permitted development rights</li> <li>• Various related to date of Bittell Road / Kendal End Road re-opening</li> <li>• Various related to request for Motor Festival application forms</li> <li>• Visitor urging action to improve the appearance of the parish</li> <li>• <i>More detailed list to follow.</i></li> </ul>	
General correspondence received and circulated to members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community First e-bulletin</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Planning news</li> <li>• MP March newsletter</li> <li>• Lickey Hills Society newsletter</li> <li>• SNT (policing) updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WorcsCALC update newsletters</li> <li>• BDC Weekly planning lists</li> <li>• Police &amp; Crime Commissioner</li> <li>• WCC Highways updates</li> <li>• Community Health &amp; Well-being updates</li> </ul>
Matters carried forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SmartWater campaign</li> <li>Barnt Green station lifts</li> <li>Playing Field trees (tree officer check)</li> <li>Local Council Award Scheme (foundation) On-street car parking.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management matrix</li> <li>Condition of drains</li> <li>Footpath to Cofon</li> <li>Social media training</li> <li>Rail Squeal</li> </ul>

## Agenda item 17/59: Finance

- i) A) *Current financial position – interim information below.* The spreadsheet showing all receipts and payments for March and consequent end of year bank reconciliation will be distributed at the meeting. The Annual Return, which includes the Annual Governance Statement and the Accounting Statements 2016/17, will be presented to the parish council meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> May for approval. The audit will take place from 5<sup>th</sup> June for 30 working days to 14<sup>th</sup> July; the Annual Return must be sent to the External Auditor by 24/05/2017.
- B) *Executive Officer actions:*
- the office telephone and broadband line rental has been renewed for the next 12 months at a cost of £154.90;
  - Parish Online (mapping facility) annual fee has been renewed, £28
  - Grounds maintenance for both Millennium Park and the playing field have been renewed for this year, with tendering process to be undertaken for new contracts in 2018/19.
  - Office software has been renewed for the year, £66.66
  - Expression of interest registered with Where Next for 30 x hanging baskets and replanting of planters; c£900.

### A) *Excerpt from spreadsheet to show March 2017 payments and receipts to date.*

v211	Office phone and broadband, Feb		9.50	1.58	7.92
			-	-	-
	sub total for month	361.40	3,672.01	309.60	3,362.41
	total for year to date	65,324.23	66,545.11	6,366.29	60,178.82
forMarch :	<b>Description</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Payments Gross</b>	<b>Payments VAT</b>	<b>Payments Net</b>
v212	Lengthsman's quarterly invoice for Oct - Dec 2016		500.00	-	500.00
v213	grounds maintenance, playing field		273.43	45.57	227.86
v214	removal Xmas tree; install dog bag dispenser		54.00	9.00	45.00
v215	Online mapping service		33.60	5.60	28.00
v216a	dusk to dawn energy, footpath lighting		195.91	32.65	163.26
v216b	continuous energy, footpath lighting		11.40	0.54	10.86
v217	Clerk's CPD, attendance at conference		204.00	34.00	170.00
v218	Printing - Spring newsletter		245.00	-	245.00
v219	Printing - Motor Festival leaflet		66.00	-	66.00
v220	footpath lighting maintenance and repair		310.44	-	310.44
v221	Annual business rates for office premises		-	-	-
v222	renew Plusnet office phone, broadband line rental		185.88	30.98	154.90
v223	Staff pension scheme, Feb 2017		150.73	-	150.73
v224	website maintenance & hosting, March 2017		58.00	-	58.00
v225	mobile phone contract Feb/March		5.00	0.83	4.17
v226	office rent, quarterly payment to 24/06/17		1,237.50	-	1,237.50
v227	staff salary, March 2017		1,027.32	-	1,027.32
v228	quarterly PAYE and NI, final quarter		521.10	-	521.10
v229	sponsorship of Christmas lights, 2016	2,418.69	-	-	-
v230	monthly retainer, footpath lighting maintenance		264.00	44.00	220.00
v231	picnic tables and notice board for playing field		2,330.40	388.40	1,942.00
v232	office landline and broadband, Mar/Apr		9.50	1.58	7.92
v233a	renewal of m/s office 365		79.99	13.33	66.66
v233b	batteries for keyboard		4.50	0.75	3.75
v234	petty cash, contra entry		- 200.00	-	200.00
v235	litter bin emptying service for 2016/17		625.37	104.23	521.14
	subtotal for March 2017, month only	2,418.69	8,193.07	711.46	7,481.61
	subtotal for year 2016/17 to date	67,742.92	74,738.18	7,077.75	67,660.43

**Bamt Green Parish Council**  
Fixed asset register as at 31 March 2017

	Acquired	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	
<b>Lighting</b>					
13 x heritage style columns	2003/2009	20,000	20,000	20,000	
55 x Steel columns	Various	56,000	56,000	56,000	
Christmas lighting	2008/2009	5,470	5,470	4,970	
Christmas lighting	2010/2011	3,300	84,770	3,300	84,770
Christmas lighting	2016			3,982	88,252
<b>Millennium Park</b>					
Freehold land comprising the park fronting Hewell Rd & Sandhills Rd	1957	0	0	0	
Brick bus shelter		10,000	10,000	10,000	
Bus shelter light	2015		350	350	
Fencing/railings	2006/2008	4,000	4,000	4,000	
Notice board	2004	1,500	1,500	1,500	
Millennium Arch	1999	3,000	3,000	3,000	
Lighting column	2008	1,600	1,600	1,600	
Park gate	2008	1,000	1,000	1,000	
Entrance pillars	2008	1,600	1,600	1,600	
Benches	2008	2,700	2,700	2,700	
Litter/dogwaste bins	2009	4,000	4,000	4,000	
Slide and firemans pole and safety surface	2004/2011	10,000	10,000	10,000	
Stilt slide and safety surface	2004	6,500	6,500	6,500	
Roundabout and safety surface	2006	2,500	2,500	2,500	
Set of 4 swings and safety surface	2008	10,600	10,600	10,600	
Climbing frame	2012	8,850	67,860	8,850	68,200
Planters (relocated from Hewell Road)	2006?			1,500	69,700
<b>Bittell Road Playing Field (Parker's Piece)</b>					
Leasehold land comprising playing field to the north east of Bittell Road	1994	0	0	0	
Vehicle gate		1,000	1,000	1,000	
Pedestrian gate		250	250	250	
Fencing	2006	6,000	6,000	6,000	
Goalposts and sockets	2006	1,000	1,000	1,000	
Basketball goal and surface	2006	1,000	1,000	1,000	
Litter/dogwaste bins	2007	3,000	3,000	3,000	
Wooden benches	2007	2,750	2,750	2,750	
Adventure trail equipment	2009	4,000	4,000	4,000	
Adventure trail equipment	2010	6,000	6,000	6,000	
Benches	2011	350	25,350	350	25,350
Footpath, cotswold stone to north-west side	2016			4,568	
Dog waste bag dispenser	2017			79	
Picnic Tables x 3	2017			1,230	
Notice board	2017			555	31,782
<b>Highways</b>					
Gateway signs + fingerposts	2008/09	3,600	3,600	3,600	
Bench Bittell Rd/Bittell Farm Rd junction	2008	800	4,400	800	4,400
<b>Highway Sundries</b>					
Signage	2009	100	100	100	
Hanging baskets		0	0	0	
Bench (Hewell Rd)	2008	800	800	800	
Noticeboard (Station Approach)	2009	2,000	2,000	2,000	
Benches (Hewell Rd)	2010	1,300	1,300	1,300	
Bench (Hewell Rd)	2012	710	710	710	
Bench (x2) Blackwell Rd, Bittell Rd	2013	1,280	1,280	1,280	
Planters, Hewell Road	2015		4,490	4,490	
Defibrillator, cabinet and pads	2015		6,190	767	11,447
Cycle stands	2016			454	11,901
<b>Office Equipment</b>					
Filing cabinets	2005	195	195	195	
Laser printer	2005	250	250	0	
4 Laptops for EO and Councillors	2007	0	0	0	
Chairs, tables, benches, + workstation	2010	500	500	450	
Laptop	2012	410	410	410	
Laminator	2012	155	155	155	
Scanner	2013	320	1,830	320	1,830
Folding tables and benches	2016			575	2,105
<b>Total as per Annual Return</b>			<b>190,390</b>	<b>195,997</b>	<b>208,140</b>

ii) Revision of Asset Register for financial year ending 31/03/2017.

New Xmas lighting has been included and old lights have been removed.

The planters in Millennium Park have also now been included (previously omitted, no details of purchase yet found so figure shown is 'best guess')

Bittell Road pf. The footpath and new playing field equipment has been added.

Highways. The cycle stands have now been included

Office Equipment, Scanner removed from register and furniture restated.

- ii) *Updated asset register, as above.*
- iii) *Application for funding support: St Michael's Churchyard maintenance*  
 Cllr Hotham has requested this item for consideration. Members will recall the request for £250 was considered at the parish council's meeting on 07/09/2016 when the request was refused due to the Chairman's casting vote following an equality of votes. A copy of the application form is shown on the next 2 pages, pp 13-14  
 Barnt Green Parish Council has adopted the General Power of Competence via Localism Act 2011; this allows the parish council to do "anything that individuals generally may do" as long as it's legal.  
 Notwithstanding the General Power of Competence, Parish Councils are burial authorities and, via Local Government Act 1972, s214 (6) have the power to contribute towards any expenses incurred by any other person in providing or maintaining a cemetery in which the inhabitants of the authority's area may be buried. Additionally, should it become a 'closed churchyard' the parish council could be asked to become responsible for all maintenance.  
 There is no churchyard within the Barnt Green PC boundary but as St Andrews and St Michaels are joint churches, burials of Barnt Green residents would take place at St Michaels, hence this request.
- iv) *Purchase of accounting software*  
 The current accounting system uses an excel spreadsheet operated by the EO / RFO which functions well when used by an experienced operator, but could be difficult if passed on to someone un-used to the system and, because it is a self-built system, is open to misuse (fraud). It is being suggested therefore on the grounds of both saving time and to reduce the risk of fraud, that the parish council purchases software that is aimed specifically at parish councils. See attached, page 15 (Rialtas). The cost of this will be £520 (includes initial set up and training; travel expenses extra @ 45p per mile) + annual ongoing cost £116 and £116 annually thereafter.
- v) *Lickey Hills Society*  
 The LHS has recently issued a new book about the park 'Exploring the Lickeys'; members are asked to decide whether to allow sale of copies from the parish council office.

**Agenda item 17/60: Committee, Working party and representatives' reports**

Members will provide verbal reports on current plans including:

- j) Fun Run: Cllr EG and EO update
- k) Motor festival Working Party: Cllrs EG, RC, CH to report.  
 - Parish Council to agree to proceed with event on 02/07/2017: **Decision required**
- l) Update from the Centres Manager, Cheryl Welsh, report re 22/02/17, see page pp 16, 17
- m) Update on meeting with BARN regarding local transport scheme report (to follow)
- n) Update to consultation regarding Barnt Green playing field improvements (to follow)
- o) Risk Management and Finance working party – RC, CH, EG yet to meet
- p) Bromsgrove Area CALC Committee meeting held 08/03/2017 – EO to report
- q) Staffing working party recommendations to be considered at agenda item 17/66
- r) Any other reports

**Agenda item 17/61: Events**

- a) Detail on events will be covered in the above agenda item: list and date of events is as follows

Event	Date
Fun Run (co-organised with Chuggers)	7/5/17
Motor Festival	2/7/17
Busking Festival	August?
Community Walk	23/09/17
Christmas Lights & switch-on	2/12/17
Post-Christmas Walk	27/12/17



**Barnt Green Parish Council**  
**Grant awarding policy and**  
**Application Form (May 2013)**



## Application Form

Please read the guidelines above before completing this form.  
 Please complete using WORD or if in writing please complete legibly using black ink.

1.1	Name of organisation	St. Michaels & St. Andrew's Church Parish of Cofton Hackett and Barnt Green
1.2	What does the organisation do?	Serve the people of Cofton Hackett and Barnt Green by providing opportunities to worship, learn about the Christian faith and support the local community.
1.3	How long has the organisation existed?	Since 13 <sup>th</sup> Century in Cofton Hackett Since 1910 in Barnt Green
1.4	Where does the organisation meet?	St. Michael's Cofton Hackett St. Andrew's Barnt Green.
1.5	How many members belong to the organisation?	203 on Electoral Roll and hundreds of others (young and old) who worship from time to time or participate in church activities and groups.
1.6	How many members live within the parish?	A large majority of members live within the church parish, which includes both Cofton Hackett and Barnt Green Civil parishes.

2.1	Describe the activity or project requiring grant support (Refer to qualifying activities)	The Maintenance of St. Michael's Churchyard.
2.2	What will be the total cost of the activity or project?	£5,962 per year approx.
2.3	How much will you provide out of your own funds?	all members of the church's congregation HINDS £500 from Cofton Hackett Parish Council contribution
2.4	How much are you seeking from the Council?	£250
2.5	How will the activity or project benefit the residents of Barnt Green?	Ensure that the graveyard is maintained for those who have loved ones buried there, who visit the churchyard, or have family weddings there.



**Barnt Green Parish Council**  
**Grant awarding policy and**  
**Application Form** (May 2013)



2.6 Please provide any further supporting information relevant to this application

*St. Michael's Church is open to the public every Sunday afternoon through the summer months, and is much visited by walkers from the local area and beyond.*

3.1	Secretary's name	<i>Cabnette Sedgwick</i>
3.2	Secretary's address	<i>Parish office Sandhills Rd Barnt Green Birmingham B45 8NR.</i>
3.3	Secretary's telephone no.	<i>0121 447 7097</i>
3.4	Secretary's email address	<i>office@chandbgparish.org.uk.</i>

**Declaration to be made by the Secretary**

- (a) I am authorised by the organisation named at 1.1 above to make this application for grant support;
- (b) The organisation agrees to abide by paragraph 4(b) in connection with any award given by the Council;
- (c) I enclose a copy of the statement of income and expenditure approved at the last AGM together with copies of bank statements covering the past six months;
- (d) The information I have provided in the application form and in supporting documentation is true and accurate.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*25.8.2016*



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e-mailed to all BG businesses 23/3/17

Cheryl Welsh  
Bromsgrove Centres Manager  
Tel: 07580730162  
E: [Cheryl.welsh@nwedr.org.uk](mailto:Cheryl.welsh@nwedr.org.uk)

**Team Barnt Green Meeting**

**Wednesday 22 February 2017, 5.30pm, Barnt Green Parish Council Offices**

**Notes from the workshop**

The aim of the workshop was to explore the strengths and opportunities of Barnt Green Village and how the Village businesses can work more collaboratively to effectively market Barnt Green, increase footfall and ensure the future economic viability of the Village centre.

**Strengths**

- Barnt Green as a "Village"
- Predominantly independent businesses offering a unique offer
- Large village with lots of shops
- Linear
- Is a "centre"
- High end, quality offer, boutique outlets
- Family businesses
- Low vacancy rates = confidence, investment
- Good quality public realm – colour, planters
- Surrounded by residential
- Community spirit amongst businesses
- An appetite to introduce new ways of working; new events and marketing approaches

**Opportunity**

- Co-ordinated and planned marketing campaigns; Barnt Green as a "destination"; sense you've arrived
- Social media, website, Twitter – what's trending? Specialist press
- Barnt Green train station
- Improved signage; Wayfinding
- Welcome to Barnt Green sign
- Events; bring a new vibrancy, energy, atmosphere, change of dynamic, visitors stay in the Village centre
- Barnt Green "blooms"; herb planters
- Be more village focussed on outcomes of events; the opportunities and return they bring to businesses
- Strengthen communication between businesses and the Parish Council
- Business consultation and participation
- Barnt Green Festival; neighbouring events the Village can capitalise on



- Challenge perceptions; make the village attractive to a new audience
- Themed markets; farmers market; craft market
- Improved communication between Barnt Green Parish Council and Barnt Green businesses

All businesses acknowledged and gave evidence of how the road works in the Village had impacted negatively on their trade and that communication of when the works would start had not happened. There was still confusion around when the works would be completed and the road opened.

Costa Coffee outlet in Tesco; businesses had been advised that Tesco will be opening a take-away Costa Coffee within their store and businesses present felt that this could have an adverse effect on other cafe/drinks sellers in the Village.

### **New Events 2017**

02 July 2017 – Motor Festival – to be confirmed		Barnt Green P.C.
12 August 2017 – Buskers/Acoustic Festival	All	

### **Christmas Light Switch On 2017**

Saturday 02 December 2017	All
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### **Actions**

- Barnt Green Parish Council to provide businesses with leaflets enabling local people to enter their cars into the Classic Car Show; soft marketing to establish response and interest
- Cheryl Welsh to arrange first-step social media training for businesses to strengthen their on-line presence
- Cheryl Welsh to arrange a meeting with the communications and marketing team (Bromsgrove and Redditch Council) and businesses, Barnt Green Parish Council to explore marketing techniques; branding; #betterbromsgrove campaign; marketing plan and press releases
- The next meeting to be held in April 2017 to work up the events and gain business ideas and involvement

Thank you to everyone who attended the first meeting and I look forward to seeing you all in April.

Regards Cheryl  
Bromsgrove Centres Manager

P17

b) **To consider** holding future Shindig events

Last year the parish council supported 2 Shindig events in Barnt Green, as proposed by members who are no longer on the parish council. The events were reasonably well supported and provided an opportunity for residents to enjoy arts entertainment on their doorstep. However, the parish council does not have its own premises in which to host such events and the sale of sufficient tickets to ensure costs were covered, was not an easy task. Members are asked to consider whether they wish to continue to be involved in the scheme. More information is available here:

<http://www.liveandlocal.org.uk/MenuSupport.htm>

**Agenda item 17/62: Environmental & Community Wellbeing**

a) Fiery Hill Road / Kendal End Road / Bittell Road junction closure update; to consider maintenance of new verge in Fiery Hill Road and other related matters

Due to the modifications around the junction area of Kendal End Road / Fiery Hill Road / Bittell Road there is new verge area in FHRoad, currently mud but expected to be a grass verge. It has been suggested that a meeting is arranged with WCC Environmental Services Manager and WCC Highways officers to discuss ongoing maintenance of the site, eg is the verge to be turfed or seeded and who will be expected to cut the grass when it grows. The adjacent hedge belongs to Network Rail and it is suggested they should be approached to cut back and undertake a maintenance programme. At the proposed meeting, to raise concerns about the new road surface, whether it is the finished product and whether there are plans to resurface the stretch between Kendal End Road junction and the railway station. Additionally to raise concerns about the state of the FHR pavement which needs to be resurfaced.

AS part of this it would be advisable to also arrange a meeting with Cala to discuss the car park and car park security. It has been agreed that there will be soft planting between the car park and the road, but there needs to be a barrier to prevent unauthorised use such as travellers setting up camp on the site. The district traveller liaison officer has been asked for advice. *note: fencing installed 30/3/17.*

b) To agree the new rates for the bin emptying service at Barnt Green playing field  
Members will recall the costs for 2016/17 and proposed costs for 2017/18 were queried. Following a meeting with the EO, Cllr Hotham and BDC environmental services officer, this email sets out BDC's offer:

You'll be glad to know that I'm able to adjust the invoice for this financial year to match the payment for last year (£521.14).

I'm also able to adjust the cost of this service next year to reduce the significant increase we were looking at to a more manageable level. Given that the correct cost last year (2015/16) should have been £699.84, and would have seen a further increase of 20% this year (which we're reducing to match last year's payment), I am proposing that we balance this out with a 5% increase instead for 2017/18 – which would come in at £734.83.

I will be proposing a reduction on our formal fees and charges for 2018/19 in order to encourage more parishes to make use of our services in future, and would hope that if this is passed successfully, we can then have you on the correct pricing structure alongside our other parishes from 2018/19 assuming you are happy to continue with us. I would hope that from then on, any increases would solely be linked to inflation in which case this would be closer to the 2-3% mark depending on what happens as Brexit progresses.

c) To receive Lengthsman update

The EO met with the Lengthsman 30/03/2017 to discuss works carried out and to be undertaken. Clearing out of drains is an ongoing task; Bittell Road towards canal has been sided back; signs are to be straightened and secured; Hewell Lane has been and will be checked following use as detour whilst Bittell Road was closed. To undertake road and pavement sweeping and siding back; lobby WCC to improve/repair the step outside It's a Gift and Oulsnam's Lettings (or arrange to do it themselves). Reported only one report to BDC of dog-fouling in the parish over last 3 years.

- d) To consider becoming part of the London Midland Adopt-A-Station scheme  
This has been received from Faye Lambert, Community Engagement Lead (Head of Community Rail), London Midland:

Regarding rail user groups, these are groups set up by community representatives in order to actively campaign about their rail service. The link below gives details of groups within the West Midlands – I mentioned the Cannock Chase RUG to you – they don't actually have a website, but I am sure their Chairman Keith Fitch would be happy to give members some advice on how to go about setting up a group for Barnt Green if this is what they would like to do – you can contact Keith

LONDON MIDLAND ADOPT A STATION scheme

Come and be part of your local railway and show your pride for your community

Adopt a Station is there to welcome and support local people, groups and businesses who would like to help enhance their local station and become a key part of the local railway

- We welcome people aged 16 years + who are able to give a bit of their free time on a regular basis to their station
- There are no set hours and times we expect you to work at your station: adoption is flexible and for fitting around your other commitments
- The majority of station adoption is to support gardening projects to make stations more welcoming and environmentally-friendly, so if you have an interest in gardening that is a great start
- Station adoption is a social activity, a great way to meet new friends, and also a good way to keep fit
- Importantly, it is a way of using and sharing your skills and ideas to support and show your pride for your community
- All adopters are provided with a health and safety briefing and as a member of the scheme are covered by London Midland's insurance
- All we need to enrol you is a passport-size photo of yourself for a special adopter pass card and your name, address and contact details
- After a year of service, you can request up to 4 tickets for travel on London Midland services each and every year you are part of the scheme
- All adopted stations have a presentation of a unique station adoption plaque for display at the station, which names the relevant bodies that are supporting that adoption
- Station adoption is your opportunity to help create a truly welcoming and potentially award-winning station for you, passengers and your community
- For more information and to apply, drop a line to [community.rail@londonmidland.com](mailto:community.rail@londonmidland.com)

- e) To agree use of Millennium Park on 20/05/2017 by St Andrews Church for Christian Aid  
As part of Christian Aid week the church hopes to raise awareness by hosting an event in Millennium Park and therefore asks for parish council permission to do this. The organisers are aware they will be responsible for applying for an entertainments licence and PRS licence etc.

- f) To agree purchase of 'statement' planters for siting in Hewell Road  
One of the improvements to the village centre, to support the shops by encouraging greater footfall, is to herald in some way the existence of the village centre. One such way is to install 'statement' planters.  
Members have been invited to view a sample of a 'beehive' planter, to be located on the corner of Hewell Road / Sandhills Lane and at a site near to the junction of Hewell Road with Bittell Road. WCC have been asked to approve the issue of a licence to the parish council to install the planters on the highway.

- g) To agree better parking signs at Station Approach  
The current signage at the junction of Station Approach with Hewell Road is confusing; one sign states 'Barnt Green Station: Pay and Display Car Park', the other states 'Maximum Stay 2hrs'. Members are asked to approve representation to WCC / London Midland for better clarity of intent.

- h) To agree to meet with representative of Worcestershire Carers  
The parish council has received the following communication from *Jane Taylor*  
*Communities and Partnerships lead for Worcestershire Association of Carers:*

My colleague Angie Roberts, from the Aging Well Partnership, passed on your details as I work for a charity called Worcestershire Association of Carers - we work in Worcestershire to support unpaid carers (so those caring for a friend or loved one). We know from local and national statistics that there are over 63,000 people in a caring role in the county and that 3 out of 5 of us will find ourselves in a caring role. Given the huge numbers we are aiming to spread the word to ensure that carers know about the free support and services on offer to them.

Clearly Parish Councils are a key partner and I would be really keen to explore how we might be able to work with you to help us reach those hidden carers who may not be getting the right support to help them in their caring role.

Would this be something we could discuss? We can also offer free "Carer Awareness" training to your staff, volunteers or Councillors if you thought this would be of value.

Do let me know if this would be of interest to you?

i) To agree to become a Charter Branch (NALC-supported tree project)

The parish council has received the following communication from **Joseph Palasz**  
**Tree Charter Communications Officer, NALC**

You recently took part in our Tree Charter survey. For the next stage of the Tree Charter project, we are encouraging local parish, town and community councils to register as Charter Branches.

To register your local council as a Charter Branch for free, simply add your council's name and details to the boxes on the right hand side of the following webpage: <https://treecharter.uk/charter-branches/>

As a Charter Branch your council will be joining a growing network of people passionate about trees, helping to develop and promote the new Tree Charter. Becoming a Charter Branch will in no way affect the autonomy of your council or local conservation groups. Your level of involvement may range from simply signing up to receive free copies of our newspaper "Leaf!" to gathering signatures of support, to more imaginative projects and activities around trees, for which funding of up to £1500 is available.

For more information as to what a Charter Branch is and how your local parish, town or community council can participate visit: <https://treecharter.uk/2017/03/13/local-councils-becoming-charter-branch/>  
General information about the Tree Charter can be found here: <https://treecharter.uk/tree-charter-faqs/>

### **Agenda item 17/63: Communications**

- a) Website upgrade: three quotations will be forwarded to members. Members are asked to agree on the preferred option and having done so, whether to adopt a new website (and email) address to reflect the parish council nature of the site. The current site name of 'barntgreen.org.uk' does not indicate it is anything to do with the parish council; whereas [www.barntgreen-pc.gov.uk](http://www.barntgreen-pc.gov.uk) would show the website is a bone fide local council related site as the .gov.uk suffix is only allowed for such use. Rules for use of .gov.uk now prohibit the use of just [www.barntgreen.gov.uk](http://www.barntgreen.gov.uk) – parish councils must show they are parish councils by either adding '-pc' or the full 'parishcouncil' after the name. So, an alternative could be [www.barntgreenparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.barntgreenparishcouncil.gov.uk) or if not wanting to pay the .gov.uk premium (c.£85 for 2 years) then an alternative such as barntgreenpc.org.uk or barntgreenpc.com etc.
- b) To agree Communications Strategy to cover a variety of media:  
At the moment parish council 'news' is disseminated via notice boards, quarterly 'Bulletin' and the website. Concerns were raised about the limited distribution area covered by the Bulletin, which does not include outlying areas outside the parish even though those residents make use of Barnt Green facilities. Thus the suggestion was put forward to make use of The Village, which has a much wider distribution area. It is therefore proposed to take the following action: issue the Bulletin twice each year – March and September; provide copy to The Village (1 page) for May and November issues. The comparative costs are £245 for the Bulletin (8 x A5 pages), £150 for The Village (1 page, similar to that for Alvechurch Parish Council).

The notice boards will continue to be used (Hewell Road next to bus shelter, Station Approach, playing field) as will the website. Additionally use of social media such as twitter and facebook, is to be considered for news items.

- c) Members to suggest items for inclusion in next issue of the Bulletin, or alternative; already noted:
- Rail user group / friends of the station group
  - Lickey Hills Society book
  - New plaque for Millennium Park
  - Mystery photograph on postcard as found by Cllr E Gumbley
  - Local transport initiative.

#### **Agenda item 17/64: Planning**

- a) Planning committee meeting held 22/03/2017 was inquorate.
- b) Consultations for comment, as per page 2 of the agenda. Plans have been forwarded by email to members; one paper copy will be available at the meeting.
- c) A meeting to discuss forward progress of the Neighbourhood Plan will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 3pm at 80 Hewell Road.
- d) To note actions that can be taken in the event of vacant properties. With regard to the property in Sandhills Lane that has been surrounded by scaffolding for a decade, Cllr J Jellie forwarded this link:

[https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/feb/21/tens-thousands-london-homes-deemed-long-term-vacant?CMP=Share\\_iOSApp\\_Other](https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/feb/21/tens-thousands-london-homes-deemed-long-term-vacant?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other)

#### **Agenda item 17/65: Governance**

To agree the Dignity at Work Policy and Member/Officer protocol, attached, pp 22, 23

#### **Agenda item 17/66 Staffing Issues**

To allow for fair process when discussing anything related to employees, members of the public will be requested to leave the meeting, as allowed via the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

Papers relating to this item will be sent to parish council members independently of this agenda.

#### **Agenda item 17/67 Future meetings and items for future agendas**

Members are invited to mention topics for discussion at future meetings. NB This is not an opportunity to re-visit a topic that should have been considered in the body of the meeting or for decisions to be taken on new topics.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017 in the Cofton Lounge, Parish Centre, Sandhills Road.

#### **Agenda item 17/68 Date and venue of next meeting**

The Annual Parish Council meeting, Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May at 80 Hewell Road B45 8NF

End of report:

Gill Lungley, 30/03/2017

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# Barnt Green Parish Council

## DIGNITY AT WORK

### MEMBER-OFFICER PROTOCOL

1. References in this document to the "Clerk" relate to the parish council's officer known as the Executive Officer.
2. A Parish or Town Council is a Statutory Local Authority which usually employs a Clerk and may employ other Officers. Every appointment to paid employment must be on merit.
3. The Clerk is the Council's Proper Officer and Chief Executive. S/he should guard against inappropriate public statements, and, in particular, should not act in a party-political capacity within the parish.
4. Officers must be politically neutral: they are employed by the Council as a corporate body, not by Committees or individual Councillors. The political neutrality of Officers should be respected. They should not be asked to play any role or undertake any task that is likely to prejudice that neutrality.
5. All Members of the Council (Councillors) have a right of access to the Clerk. Where a Member requires information, it will be provided if it is readily available; for example, in Council or Committee papers or material published on behalf of the Council. The Clerk is free to give advice on a confidential basis about procedural matters to any Member.
6. The Clerk must be free at all times to seek advice from the County Association of Local Councils and/or other appropriate bodies on matters concerning the proper exercise of his/her duties.
7. Councillors should recognise that, in order for Officers to properly carry out their duties, appropriate training and reference material are required.
8. Councillors and employees must understand that Council decisions can only be made by full Council, Committees or Clerk acting under delegated authority. The law does not allow for decisions relating to the discharge of any of the Council's functions to be taken by a Chairman or indeed by any other single Councillor. Councillors and employees must ensure that representations made to the Council on any matter during any stage of the formal decision-making process should be directed to the Council or appropriate Committee *via the Clerk*.
9. Reports to Council and Committees should be written by the Clerk or another authorised Officer.
  - 9.1 If the Chairman or another Member in exceptional circumstances is unhappy with its contents, it should not be amended by the Chairman or another Member, save with the express approval of the Clerk.
  - 9.2. In most cases, discussion between the Chairman and the Clerk will resolve any disagreement over a report; however, if the Clerk's report is not regarded as appropriate by the Chairman, then exceptionally the Chairman should write his or her own report in addition to the report submitted by the Clerk. The Chairman should, under no circumstances, use undue pressure to persuade the Clerk to withdraw the original report.
10. Mutual respect between Officers and Councillors is essential to good local government. If the Clerk is closely related to a Councillor, then they must be especially careful to ensure that their official dealings are open and transparent.
11. Where the Clerk works from home, Councillors must respect agreed practical arrangements for liaison with the Clerk.

# Barnt Green Parish Council

## DIGNITY AT WORK

### MEMBER-OFFICER PROTOCOL

12. In line with the Code of Conduct's reference to treating others with respect, it is important that any dealings between Councillors and Officers should observe reasonable standards of courtesy:
  - 12.1 Neither party should seek to take unfair advantage of their position;
  - 12.1 Employees whether individually or collectively, should not be the subject of attacks or criticism;
  - 12.2 Councillors should avoid naming individual employees, if at all possible, and neither Councillor nor employee should resort to the media to resolve a disagreement between them.
  
13. The Code of Conduct also requires the promotion of equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person:
  - 13.1 Council will regard as a serious offence actions by an employee or a Councillor which amount to work-related bullying, harassment, discrimination against or victimisation of any employee or Councillor and particularly so where such action is on the grounds of race, gender or disability.
  - 13.2 Bullying can take the form of shouting at an individual, making persistently negative attacks on an individual's personal or professional performance, criticising an individual in front of others, persistently setting objectives with impossible deadlines or unachievable tasks, excessive monitoring of an individual's performance or withholding information with the intent of deliberately affecting an individual's performance.
  
14. Confidentiality is often vitally important, and must be respected by Councillors and Officers at all times. A breach of confidentiality may have serious implications for the individual Councillor or Officer who "leaks" the information.
  
15. It is the duty of the Clerk to ensure that the work and responses of employees are conducive to and not undermining of, the foregoing general principles. They are entitled to expect Members to respect political restriction and the duties and limitations of employees.
  
16. It is also the duty of the Clerk to arrange matters so that other employees properly understand the roles of Members and employees and the Council's required approaches to the relations between them. They are also entitled to expect Members to respect the degree of seniority of employees who are answerable to the Council via the Clerk and not an individual Councillor.
  
17. Official correspondence on behalf of the Council should normally be sent out in the name of the appropriate Officer, rather than in the name of the Councillor. It may be appropriate in certain circumstances (eg. representations to a Government Minister, or on behalf of the Chairman in his/her Civic capacity) for a letter to appear in the name of the Councillor, but this should be the exception rather than the norm. Letters which for example, create obligations or give instructions on behalf of the Council, should never be sent out in the name of a Councillor.
  
18. Complaints of alleged breaches of this protocol will be dealt with under the Council's Complaints Procedure. The Councillor concerned may be censured and/or reported to the Standards Board for breach of the Code of Conduct. The employee concerned may face disciplinary action.

Signed.....

Date adopted by Parish Council ..... Date of Review .....