

BIRLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 18 May 2011
Birlingham Village Hall

Welcome

- 1) Present: Councillors Hall, Morris, Hill and Butler
In attendance: District Councillor Davis, Footpath Warden, Tree Warden, Lengthsman, Mr and Mrs Stanton, Mrs Brassington, Mr Devenish and Mr and Mrs Hermon
- 2) Apologies: Councillor Comins and Astons apologies were accepted.
- 3) Declarations
 - a) Personal - none
 - b) Prejudicial - Councillor Hill declared an interest in the 2010 / 2011 financial year as internal auditor Item 10(e).
 - c) Register of Interests - none
- 4) An amendment of 1 penny was made to page 34 of the Minutes of the meeting held on July 2010. The correct amount is £74.02. Following the amendment, the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2011, a copy of which had been circulated to all councillors, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- 5) Democratic Opening – see below.
- 6) Co-option of Seventh Councillor
Following the Parish Council election there was a vacancy for a seventh councillor.
- 7) Progress Reports
 - a) District Councillor
 - i) Congratulated the Chairman on his re-appointment.
 - ii) Thanked everyone for their vote for his re-election as the Eckington Ward Councillor...
 - iii) First Council meeting held with 15 new Councillors. The new chairman is Councillor Tony Miller with Councillor Morris as Vice-chair.
 - iv) Councillor Davis now stands on the Executive Board representing health, arts, police and leisure.
 - v) Still pushing for retention of the 382 bus. Disappointed that still considering reducing the weekend service, especially for the younger residents.
 - vi) On course with budget for further 2 years and then will have to wait and see what the Government announce. Localism Bill in 2012.
 - vii) Still no news from Worcestershire County Council on the library. Pressure to retain in town centre despite 60% of residents coming from the surrounding rural area. Concern over carparking finances if moved to the Civic Centre.
 - b) County Councillor - none

- c) Footpath
 - i) Footpath 511 (Withy Walk) - sprayed.
 - ii) Footpath 501 (opposite Maryworth Barn) – finger post replaced.
 - iii) Footpath 520 (other side of Nafford Lock) – strimmed.

- d) Clerk
 - i) **Wychavon Sport – 2011 Wychavon Parish Games.** Copy of correspondence circulated to Mark Yeomans (Cricket Club) and John Freeth (Shukokai Karate club) “The attached information has been forwarded to me from Wychavon Sport and I wondered if it would be of any use to you with your connections to the village clubs. I thought it courtesy just to let you have sight of the details. I shall place a copy at The Swan also as information to local residents”.
 - ii) Circulated **Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy Development Plan Document:** publication document (Regulation 27 consultation) This document is to be submitted to the Secretary of State. There are six weeks to comment on the Publication Document to all councillors. Response form and guidance notes are available at libraries or online
 - iii) **Parish Plans** – letter received from Wychavon District Council dated 19 April 2011. Quotes “We may have spoken to you previously about creating a Parish Plan or Village Design Statement for your local community, either by approaching you directly or through your attendance at our Community Planning Workshop held in June 2010. As a result of our earlier contact, we have had an excellent response from Parish Councils and now have a total of 25 Parish Plans and a number of Village Design Statements that have been adopted within the District. Communities of any size can produce a Parish Plan, which will cover local issues relating to social, economic and environmental aspects of a community and provide an action plan for their proposed remedies. Communities are constantly growing and changing and most people have strong views on whether this change is for the better or the worse. Through the involvement in creating a Parish Plan, everyone in a community can have the opportunity to influence the development of their surroundings. A Village Design Statement can also help to manage change within a community, whether that involves new large-scale development or just cumulative, small-scale additions and alterations. A Village Design Statement will describe the qualities and characteristics of a village and its surroundings, setting out clear and simple guidance for the design of development in the village so that it is in harmony with its setting and contributes to the local environment. Both documents are produced by the village community, not by the local planning authority but we are available to assist you and offer advice during the process and hopefully proceed to the adoption of the document so that it becomes a material consideration when considering future development within your area. We are therefore interested in hearing from you if you would consider preparing a Parish Plan or a Village Design Statement for your community. Encouraging local communities to produce these documents and have their say with regards to how their communities are developed is in accordance with the new coalition Government’s Localism Agenda and the South Worcestershire Development Plan which has a strong community focus. Please do not hesitate to contact me using any of the contact details at the bottom of the letter should you wish to find out more or register your interest in producing either of these documents”.

Policy Planning Officer at Wychavon District Council. Circulated to all Councillors for information.

iv) **Election** - Notice of Poll for the District Election held in the Parish on 5 May and a notice of poll for the Referendum also on same day. Information given on situation of polling stations and the Notice of an Uncontested Election for Parish Councillors. Councillors elected are Paula Aston, Charlotte Butler, John Comins, Tony Hall, John Hill and Stephen Morris.

v) **Code of Conduct/Standards Regime** - Training Event due to the current standards regime being dismantled and provisions in the Localism Bill which will bring this about. The training event will give some indication of future options.

vi) **Flashing Speed Sign** (approximately cost of £2,000 which is battery operated) – previously discussed and Clerk responded to Eckington Parish Council saying there was no interest at the moment to share a sign with Eckington and Defford due to the precept already having been set and the cost of the signage being so great. At the PACT meeting Councillor Reynard had stated this but PACT was not aware of the Parish Council's reply.

The Parish Council's response would be confirmed again at the next PACT meeting.

vii) **Wychavon Community Grant 2011** – leaflet and poster put on board for interested local groups if they want to apply for a grant.

viii) **Parish Council Noticeboard** - Acknowledgement from BVH secretary regarding the Parish Council Noticeboard. The Committee has noted the PC's decision to put up a notice board as previously agreed. Could they see the design before it is installed? Also noted in the BVH draft minutes received from the Secretary. Email sent to Karl Grimston asking for a quotation and design.

ix) **Parish Lengthsman Scheme 2011/12** – Letter from Worcestershire County Council extending their thanks to the PC and the Lengthsman for the work that is put into the Scheme. With support the Scheme continues to make a real difference to local communities and the highway environment. Confirms that funding for this Scheme has been maintained at its current level with an individual budget of £1,724.00 based on £1,500 plus £20 per km of highway within the parish boundary. The new contract for 1 April 2011 to 31 March 2012 has been returned.

x) **Parish Matters** circulated to all Councillors including note on Localism Bill, Code of Conduct, South Worcestershire's Development Plan update and digital switchover.

xi) Worcestershire County Council further consultation of the **Bus Service Review**. Consultation until 18 May. For note: 166 is retained (Worcester-Pershore-Evesham-Stratford) **382 (Worcester-Pershore via Wadborough, Eckington)** is withdrawn as far as late evening and Sunday journeys. Daytime timetable will be revised. Possible integration of one school service to Pershore High 551 (Worcester – via Elmley Castle, Pershore, Drakes Broughton) withdraw Monday to Thursday evening journeys 152 Pershore-Redditch via Feckenham withdraw service to be replaced by Wychavon Hopper 166 (Worcester – Pershore – Evesham – Stratford) retained.

xii) **Bus Service Review** – Additional Consultation circulated by email and Brown Envelope. An additional short consultation until 18 May to understand and verify the position following the consultation. Parish Council's response was sent 22 March on the Review Questionnaire saying that the 382 was an important service bringing people

in and out of the village especially for work. That it was a rural area; too much emphasis on car ownership and the village would be severely affected.

xiii) **Charity** request from Wychavon Citizens Advice Bureau - £500 of support for your community referring to 6 December 2011 letter reduction in grants and donations due to climate.

xiv) Lloyds TSB – cheque guarantee card scheme. Scheme is closing on 30 June. Parish Council do not have a card.

xv) **Local Authorities (Members' Allowances)** (England) Regulations 2003: District Councillors – Members' Allowance Scheme – revised rates for subsistence and travelling allowances. Effective from 1 April 2011. At local level this means that travelling allowances for cars are set at 40 pence per mile

STANDING ORDERS Agenda item 11

xvi) Response to Rebecca Gore at Planning regarding the **withdrawal of hard copies of drawings** at consultee stage. Response quote “Birlingham Parish Council have considered your request for removing the paper copy of drawings at planning application consultation. The Councillors felt that the Local Authority had the statutory duty to consult with Parish Council’s and a hard copy should be supplied. Although there was your suggestion for the Grant available "Awards for All" this was not suitable for a small parish council. The Planning Group and other Councillors present said that in miniature it was difficult to see a scale and that drawings are easier. Paper plans should therefore be retained. I trust you do not underestimate the role of the parish council in planning matters. It is noted in planning policy and guidance, as well as within the Barker Review that the statutory consultee should be important in their role. Birlingham Parish Council wish to retain a paper copy for their consultation”.

Ongoing responses from other Parish and Town Councils which Councillors have been copied in on.

xvii) **Litter Pick** carried out on 2 April. Notice of thanks to David and Ann Maxwell, Tony Hall, Steve Morris, John Comins, Chris Reynard, Steve Diston and June Hiden. For the dog walkers also that pick up for us at other times:

Mark and Caroline Smith and Peter Collier. Also a note of thanks to volunteers who help to keep the village tidy throughout the year and for caring for their environment. A special note of thanks to David Maxwell and David Glover for helping with the grass cutting around the church and village green.

xviii) **Councillor Hardman** ongoing issues a) Overgrown hedge on the Eckington Road, Birlingham. Councillor Hardman asked if Roy Fullee had responded. Clerk informed Councillor that there had been no response and asked the Councillor to action further. b) Railings over Berwick Brook bridge. From previous clerk reports.

xix) Parish Paths Partnership Scheme 2010 – 2011. Further request to Amanda Hill, Countryside Access Volunteers Officer for a copy of the Agreement. She replied saying “I’ll dig through the records and send you a copy along with this year’s paperwork. The Countryside Access Volunteer group scheme will start this year to replace previous schemes and looks to support our volunteer groups”. Footpath Warden has informed that he had a form to fill in from her in April detailing the time spent doing footpath work over the previous 6 months (not much as it was winter). This must be the way the new Countryside Access Volunteer group scheme works.

xx) Article in The Bystander by Chairman – no residents have asked to be put on an email **distribution list** for parish matters at this time.

- xxi) Thank you to Steve McVittee re minutes of last meeting.
- xxii) Email to Roy Fullee to thank him for the replacement **30mph sign in Upper End**. Asked the question again regarding the strips. Assumed they would be speed in the first instance and then weight if possible. Seems only the weight was done. Chased for response as no report and could a further survey be done? Asked if we could have the strips again and he has agreed. Clerk to identify location and then Highways will try their best to service that.
- xxiii) Notification of the **closure of Eckington Bridge** between the hours of 9.30hrs and 15.00hrs commencing on 20 June for approximately 11 weeks.
- xxiv) **Signatories** for the cheque book need amending. To remove Councillor Reynard and add a new signatory. Charlotte Butler has consented. For future agenda to be resolved
- xxv) **Minutes of BVH** received.

8) Planning

a) Report on current outstanding planning applications

- i) W/11/00879/PN – Lower End Farm, Defford Road, Pershore Birlingham WR10 3BX

Installation of photo voltaic panels on roof of agricultural building to supply domestic property

Parish Council comments: No objections

- ii) W/11/00824/PP – The Old Dairy, Upper End, Birlingham WR10 3AA
Conservatory to rear of property

Parish Council comments: To discuss further

b) Applications approved/refused

- i) W/11/00443/CU - The Manor House, Lower End, Birlingham WR10 3AD
Change of use of land to equestrian to include construction of stabling block and access

APPROVED 5 May

Parish Council comments:

Although the erection of wooden stabling does not appear in principle to impact adversely on the Conservation Area there are a number of concerns that we would ask the Planning Officer to address.

This application would be the third application for new structures in the Conservation Area to be submitted by the owner of the property in the last two years. If the application is approved we would urge approval should be subject to the following conditions:

1. that no further development of any kind should be permitted within that part of the Conservation Area in possession of the applicant.

2. that the vehicles, trailers etc should not be parked in the field in which the stables are to be erected.
3. that manure, straw and feed materials are not stored in the open field
4. that the stables are screened from the view by the planting of appropriate trees to maintain the rural aspect of the area.
5. that care is taken in the preparation of the ground that there is no disruption to the main drains running underneath the field.
6. that the width of the footpath at the rear of the proposed buildings should be widened as recommended by the Ramblers Association
7. that in the execution of the access arrangements required by Highways Authority the highway is not obstructed or closed.
8. that all spoil resulting from the ground works for the road and building should be removed from the site

Parish Council further comments on the amendment:

The council notes with approval that the width allowed for the public footpath has been widened

Although the erection of wooden stabling does not appear in principle to impact adversely on the Conservation Area there are a number of concerns that we would ask the Planning Officer to address.

This application would be the third application for new structures in the Conservation Area to be submitted by the owner of the property in the last two years. If the application is approved we would urge approval should be subject to the previously submitted conditions. (as above)

ii) Email received from Paul Mouzer regarding a forthcoming planning application. The Clerk has responded to this. Quote "Thank you for your email received on 19th April. My apologies for not responding sooner and I believe you have since spoken to Councillor Reynard regarding the submission of the application. Whilst the Parish Council appreciates your notification of this proposed planning application and is sympathetic to your situation, I regret to inform you that the Councillors cannot personally support or oppose an application.

As a statutory consultee the Councillors must abide by a Code of Conduct. This requires them to determine planning applications based upon statutory planning policy and guidance. Therefore, whilst they may have regard to material considerations, such as financial situation or longevity of residence, Councillors must determine their decision based upon planning policy. This means they must act without bias and in a neutral manner.

I hope this clarifies the position that the Parish Council holds."

c) Planning report 2010 – 2011 summary

9) Financial Matters

a) Bank balance - £1,821.40 as at 28 April 2011.

b) The Accounts for 2010/11 were resolved.

c) The Annual Statement of Assurance had been received.

d) Receipts:

£1,775.00 - precept

(Precept was accepted at £3,550.00 which is an increase of 18% on last year but had not increased for previous few years. However, it was agreed that this should be increased at a minimum of at least 10% annually in future to cover the budget and more e.g. to cover village hall contribution. Need to rebuild a year's expenditure)

£140.00 – Worcestershire County Council / Lengthsman January & February

Payments made:

£140.00 - Carl Brassington Lengthsman for January (£100.00) & February (£40.00) (cheque number 218)

£144.80 – Worcestershire CALC membership (previously £141.63) (cheque number 219)

£225.00 – Zurich Insurance (previous year £205) (cheque number 220)

£250.00 – Village Hall contribution (agreed March 2011) (Cheque number 221)

£66.00 - Internal Auditor – John T Hill (Cheque number 222)

e) The Accounts for 2011/12 were accepted.

f) Future payments and budget forecast:

Allowance for grass cutting of village green. Clerk to speak or write to David Maxwell for the volunteer work he does.

The budget forecast would be reviewed in November 2011.

10) Standing Orders

The Standing Orders were reviewed. There were no amendments at this time for the Adoption of Local Authorities (Members' Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003 - for car allowance at 40pence per mile. Deferred to next meeting to check amount as some suggestions of 45pence per mile.

11) Councillors' reports and items for future agenda

None

12) Closure – with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.27pm. **The next Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 20 July 2011**

Signed:Councillor Anthony J Hall, Chairman

Date:

Democratic Opening – A question was asked about who was the representative for the centre of the village for Neighbourhood Watch. John Hill represents Church Street and around the church area. Mr Hewitt is a representative for Upper End and Jayne MacKenzie is Lower End. John Hill would get a map showing the areas. It was suggested that an article would be useful in The Bystander.