

BIRLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 23 November 2011
Birlingham Village Hall

Welcome

- 1) Present: Councillors Hall, Morris, Comins, Aston, Hill and Butler.
In attendance: County Councillor Hardman, District Councillor Davis and Footpath Warden.
- 2) Apologies: None
- 3) Declarations
 - a) Personal - none
 - b) Prejudicial - none
 - c) Register of Interests – none
- 4) The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2011, a copy of which had been circulated to all councillors, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
The Clerk apologised for the cancellation of the September meeting due to a family bereavement.
- 5) Democratic Opening – none
- 6) Progress Reports
 - a) Footpath
September 2011
 - i) Footpath 506 (Grants) - strimmed
 - ii) Footpath 522 (between lock and weir) – strimmed
 - iii) Footpath 520 (other side of Nafford Lock) - strimmed
November 2011
 - iv) Footpath 511 (Withy Walk) – sprayed. Assisted by Tree Warden.
 - v) Footpath 513 (dead-end at Manor Cottage) - finger post has been removed.
 - vi) Footpath 504 (just off Church Street) - stile repaired.
 - vii) Footpath 522 (by Berwick Brook) - gate installed. The works are believed to have been carried out by the Angling Association. It is noted that the kissing gate does not give disabled access.

Exercise of Classification of footpaths completed. Following extensive consultation with parish councils, local parish paths warden volunteers, user groups and land management groups, each path in the county has been allocated a classification (A,B,C or D), not dissimilar to the classification of roads. Allocated classifications reflect the level and type of use and hence the needs of communities and other users. Path classifications can be seen on the public rights of way map.
<http://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk/website/Countryside>

b) District Councillor

- i) The High Court has won the case with the Icelandic Banks and Wychavon District Council should have their investments returned with interest on the bonds.
- ii) The District are proactive over the next two years with their budget. They have identified further savings.
- iii) The Government is looking at changing the business rates so they could be controlled at a local level.
- iv) Reported that the footway above the Brook Bridge on the Upton Road needs tidying. Informed Councillor that this is not the responsibility of the Lengthsman as he is not contracted to work on the main road.
- v) Swdp has on-going consultation
- vi) The Localism Bill has gone through.
- vii) Concern over the Three Springs Road condition.
- viii) Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

c) County Councillor

- i) Should council tax be frozen or not? £5.5m grant in lieu of inflation. There are road shows.
- ii) £30m savings are on track.
- iii) Some controversial cut i.e. libraries
- iv) Pershore library; Town Council want to purchase and refurbish.
- v) Youth consultation.
- vi) What is the situation with the roads? Birlingham feels aggrieved. Patching is only a short term fix. Realise A and B roads are priority but nothing is done in the village. Are the village roads unsafe? Suggest some roads are unsafe and should be reported as so. Continue to report potholes.
- vii) Signage. Waiting to be resolved. Adrian to action.

d) Clerk

- i) CALC – Information sent regarding the **External Audit**, Quote, “I have heard today from Simon Atkins, the partner at Clement Keys responsible for the external audit of Worcestershire parish and town councils. He says that Worcestershire councils are way ahead of those in the other counties he is responsible for, and that only three councils have yet to submit their return”.
- ii) CALC – Information sent regarding the **Lengthsman Scheme**. Quote, “The Lengthsman Scheme continues to be a great success, with nearly all the councils in the county being members. David Hunter is always looking for ways to develop it, so if you have any ideas for kinds of work which could be added, email him at DHunter@worcestershire.gov.uk” Copy sent to Carl Brassington.
- iii) **Snow Clearing and Grit Bins**. Quote, “You may remember in a recent newsletter that Worcestershire County Council (WCC) was asking for your help with regard to enlisting more contractors to clear snow in case of severe weather. We'll also need to know how much rock salt, in 1tonne bags, is required for these contractors and details of possible storage areas. The letters and tender documents relating to this are due to be sent out within the next few days so I would ask you to please look out for these. These letters will also be asking you to let us know the number of extra grit bins you require in your parish. These would be additional to highway authority ones

and would need to be paid for by parishes who ask for them. However, Worcestershire County Council intends to use its buying power to negotiate a favourable rate as well as arranging for delivery of bins and filling them with grit initially. It would only be done on this one occasion as WCC does not have the capacity to maintain these extra bins so parishes would need to take on the responsibility to refill them. More details will be contained in these letters for those parishes who are interested.

Please look out for these letters, possibly by email, as they contain a lot of information as well as documents for the snow clearing tenders”. From Angela Kingscote, Contracts Project Officer, Procurement & Programme, Highways Contracts & Programme Unit

iv) **Bus Timetable Changes.** Bus Bulletin leaflet quotes, “Because of budget cuts of around £2.5m, and following extensive consultation concerning bus service changes, new contracts have been negotiated, as have new commercial services. Timetables have been rewritten and the website updated. This has now been completed and the website will be available from Monday 8th August. The service changes will occur in September and bus stops will have the new timetables in place for the changeover day. Refer to :

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/pdf/Sept%202011%20changes%20V3%20-%20WEBSITE%20version.pdf> for further details. Nicky Fletcher

Transport, H1 Pavilion, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester, WR5 2NP Leaflet put on noticeboard.

Defford Parish Council – information circulated to all Councillor. Quotes, “As I am sure you are aware, the timetable for the cut down 382 bus service was issued a few days ago. With this in mind, I am contacting you again with regard to creating a working party to discuss the revised service, and the potential for a community scheme to fill in any gaps which you feel are important. If your councillors would be interested in being part of the working party, please contact me or Councillor Patricia Steel on patricia.steel@btopenworld.com . The meeting is likely to take place in early September at Pershore. Clerk to Defford and Besford Parish Council”.

v) **The Cotswolds Conservation Board’s Annual Review.** The publication showcases the breadth and variety of the work carried out by the Board last year to help conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds AONB and increase the understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities. This work ranges from the National Grid Gas Pipeline Project and Dry-stone Walling Fund, to the Cotswold Farmland Bird Project and the opening of the *Escape to the Cotswolds* discovery centre. Nicola Greaves, Information & Interpretation Officer.

vi) **Cotswolds AONB Management Plan Review SEA Scoping Report Consultation.** The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Review of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan is current. A formal consultation regarding the SEA is being undertaken with the statutory consultee bodies - English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency- as required by the SEA Regulations “The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004”. The Scoping report and associated documents can be viewed at

<http://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/ccb/management-plan-review>

The Scoping Report presents information perceived to be of relevance to the emerging Management Plan for the Cotswolds AONB, together with the proposed methodology for assessing policies. Responses by Monday 26 September 2011.

vii) **Village Plans.** Councillor Comins redraft of a suggested letter to go to all residents during September. Quotes: Dear Resident of Birlingham

You may have seen comment in the press recently about the Government's draft **National Planning Framework**. The central theme of the framework is that Councils will have to apply a "presumption in favour of sustainable development" to all planning applications unless they are clearly in violation of certain other policies such as protection of heritage assets, bio diversity and National Parks.

This fundamental change in national planning policy is the result of intense lobbying by developers and commercial interests who have found the present system too restrictive.

It is easy to see that the new formula could lead to a serious breakdown in the measures which currently protect our villages and countryside.

One way in which the amenities and character of the village could be preserved is by the creation of a Village Plan. Provided this is constructed with the full participation and approval of the residents, such a plan would meet the conditions of the Government's Localism Bill and Councils would be obliged to treat the Plan as a significant factor in all planning applications.

The Plans would enable residents to specify the particular features and characteristics of their community which they would like to preserve or expand and would be drawn up by a representative committee. Assistance in the drafting would be given by Wychavon Council. The Plans can be extremely wide ranging and could include matters such as housing, development, the natural environment, sporting and leisure interests and so forth.

The Plans require much research and investigation and frequent consultation with residents. It normally takes some years of volunteer work before they can be finished.

We need residents to come forward to take up the opportunity of making a plan and would ask anyone who would like to contribute to the process to let June Hiden, the Parish Clerk know at Lamorna, Broadway Road, Birlingham, Pershore. WR10 3AF

viii) **Damaged manhole cover.** Roy Fullee quotes, "Looking at our records we served notice on Severn Trent Water back in May to repair the damaged manhole cover. No idea why this hasn't been done but we will chase STW".

vix) **Planning Policy.** Quote, "At the beginning of the month you received a letter from us requesting an up to date survey of the facilities and services in your village. I would appreciate it if you could let me know of any amendments by 30 September to allow us to review the Study. Please let me know if you are unable to meet this deadline. If we do not receive a response we will assume that no changes are necessary. As you are aware the Village Facilities and Rural Transport Survey is an informed part of the evidence gathering work for the South Worcestershire Development Plan.

If you have any queries about the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please note: The categorisation of your village does not set the level of development. Other planning considerations will need to be taken in to account for deciding locations for development, for example: the amount of previous development, size of the village, AONB and flooding. Many thanks for your assistance in helping to produce a key evidence base document which will inform the South Worcestershire Development Plan".

x) Boundary Commission for England



21 September 2011

Dear Parish/Town Council Clerk

The 2013 Review of Parliamentary constituencies in England

The Boundary Commission for England published on 13 September its initial proposals for new Parliamentary constituencies in England. We are consulting on the proposals until **5 December 2011**.

Anyone can find out about our proposals from our website (details below) or at one of the 'places of deposit' in each constituency, details of which can also be found on our website. In each place of deposit, in addition to copies of the initial proposals report, we have provided an A0 size map of all the new constituencies in the region and individual maps of all the constituencies in an A3 size book.

We will be looking to stimulate public interest and welcome written feedback, as well as oral contributions at each of the 36 public hearings we are conducting. We have undertaken an advertising campaign across England and we are distributing a media release both nationally and regionally. I would therefore like to ask your assistance in helping us to communicate the publication of our proposals at any meetings you may hold or on public notice boards, so that as many people as possible use this opportunity to have their say on the design of the new constituencies.

If there is any local coverage that you are able to bring to our attention – especially prior to the holding of a public hearing, I would be grateful if you could send a brief synopsis to us at: press@bccommengland.x.gsi.gov.uk.

Our website also provides information about the statutory 12-week consultation exercise and details about where and when public hearings are being held in each region.

If you have any queries, please contact us at our address below.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Glenn Reed".

Glenn Reed
Review Co-ordinator

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W: www.independent.gov.uk/boundarycommissionforengland

xi) **Swdp** South Worcestershire Development Plan Preferred Options was available for viewing and comment between the following dates: Start date: 28/09/11 11:00
End date: 18/11/11 17:00

xii) **BVH** - Unconfirmed Minutes of July Meeting and the Agenda for next Meeting on 28 September 2011 were received. It was noted in AOB quote "The Parish Council has informed KH that it will sympathetically view requests for specific funding of work etc required for the Village Hall". It then goes on to say ".....we will need to provide invoices for work already done and written contract quotations for work pending. When we have written documentation for any or all of these, we can approach the PC".

The Parish Council when challenged at the Parish Meeting in May 2010, regarding funding were quoted as saying "The Parish Council were open to requests in emergency".

xiii) **Adrian Hardman**. Information received says "I have no idea if you are aware of this funding; it comes as news to me! And I doubt we have anything ready, but..... Subject: Village SOS Active - WHAT DOES YOUR VILLAGE NEED TO SURVIVE? SLICE OF £5M COULD ANSWER YOUR SOS CALL. Villages in the West Midlands have one month left to apply for a share of £5 million Lottery cash to create exciting community enterprises that will help to revitalise their area and meet

the needs of local people. Projects have until 5pm on Thursday October 20 2011 to apply for up to £30,000 from the Big Lottery Fund's Village SOS Active competition, which follows hot on the heels of the primetime BBC One series, Village SOS.

xiv) **Birlingham Bystander** - Autumn Edition 2011 . Wednesday dates for Diary were sent as 23 November, 18 January, 21 March and 16 May. The dates are still to be confirmed at the Parish Council meeting and also as a reminder with the village hall bookings secretary but it is usual for the meetings to be held on the third Wednesday.

xv) **Verge/hedge**. At Peacock Farm – entrance to adjacent field. This has cropped up before and the Highways reported that it had already been trimmed (lengthsman) so they didn't do anything more. Several residents have complained again.

xvi) **Conservation Walk** – permission access. Natural England and land owner Wimpey Bennett. Wimpey sent information regarding entering into an HLS agreement with Natural England on part of her land (map provided) in order to carry out conservation management. Creation of a public access to provide a way to the bird hide on the Nafford wetland.

xvii) **Worcestershire Waste Core Strategy Development Plan Document** – consultation on the Addendum to the Submission Document – 3 October to 15 November. Circulated to all Councillors.

xviii) **Pershore Area Forum and Councillor Surgery** – Pershore Town Hall on 26 October. Information put on noticeboard.

xvix) **Invitation from Pershore High School** for the Re-dedication of the Roll of Honour on Thursday 10 November. Circulated to all Councillors.

xx) Overview and Scrutiny meeting of the Standards Committee on 19 October at the Civic Centre. Circulated to all Councillors.

xxi) **Wychavon Youth Bus**. Poster put on noticeboard for information.

xxii) **Parish Magazines** - Circulated to Councillor Morris with regard to website information. Information from a parishioner in Kent building his own website. Can be contacted at www.villageandparishmagazines.org.uk

7) Planning

a) Report on current outstanding planning applications

i) W/11/02161/PP – Detached garage/garden store and single storey extension to house
Leyfield, Church Street, Birlingham WR10 3AQ

b) Applications approved/refused

i) W/11/00873/PN – Hall Farm House, Whitehall Lane, Birlingham WR10 3AB
Subdivision of existing dwelling: front and rear single storey extensions, first floor extension, and internal alterations
APPROVED 26 August

Parish Council comments: The Parish Council opposes the application.

The application follows an earlier application for the division of Hall Farmhouse into two residential dwellings. This application was permitted.

We would argue that had this first application proposed the sub division into three dwellings a different verdict might have been reached.

1. The unaltered Hall Farm House prior to its division into two dwellings was one of the very few buildings in Birlingham which retained a substantially unaltered

appearance from its sixteenth century origins. Had not its appearance been severely damaged by alterations which followed on the division, English Heritage would have considered it worthy of inclusion in the lists of buildings deserving of special protection.

2. We are concerned that a second sub division of the building plus a large extension would further prejudice its aesthetic, historical and cultural value and significantly reduce the contribution which it makes to the village scene. The extension will unbalance the symmetry of the existing structure further detracting from the historic design and the further division of the garden area will in no way enhance the curtilage of the house.

We would point out that the Wychavon Local Plan states under:

ENV1” Proposals for development must demonstrate that they are appropriate to and integrate with the landscape character of the area andsafeguard restore or enhance the natural or built environment in which they are proposed”

And

SUR 7 Annexe Accommodation

‘In all cases the proposal will ...have no adverse impact on the amenity of the main building or adjoining properties

Where annex accommodation requires planning permission it should be provided through an extension to the main dwelling without having an adverse affect on the character of the dwelling, the site or the locality”

In our opinion the proposals in the application do not meet with the above requirements

3. At the time of the application to split Hall Farm House into 2 residences Highways commented that the road leading to the Farmhouse was too narrow to accommodate any increase in traffic without the provision of parking places. An increase in traffic consequent to further division of the building would exacerbate this problem.

Continued with AMENDMENTS

Parish Council comments:

The Parish Council would like to comment:

1. It notes that the application is significantly reduced from the previous application.
2. It also notes that a very substantial amount of building work will be required to effect the internal alterations. This will cause additional damage to the original structure of the house noted in the English Heritage report as being of historical interest.
3. It is proposed to incorporate the existing conservatory into the main structure of the house by the addition of a tiled roof and brick frontage. We would recommend that a condition should be applied that would prevent another conservatory being added to this frontage at some future date
4. The applicant has on previous occasions ignored conditions imposed by the Planning Authorities.

We would strongly advise that the two passing places on the narrow approach road recommended by the Highways Department of Worcestershire County Council should be completed before any part of the application is undertaken

ii) W/11/01250/LB – Ivy Cottage, Lower End, Birlingham WR10 3AD

Internal alterations to barn conversion to provide additional living accommodation
APPROVED Listed Building Consent 24 August

Parish council comments - No objections to the internal alterations to the barn
iii) W/11/1653/PP – Conservatory to rear elevation and new French doors to access
Lamorna Annex, Broadway Road, Birlingham WR10 3AF

APPROVED 15 September at Committee

Parish Council comments: No objections to this proposal

iv) W/11/002233/PP – Retrospective application for proposed vehicular access and parking and
turning area

Peacock Barn, Lower End, Birlingham WR10 3AD

Retrospective APPROVAL 11 November

v) W/11/01387/PP – Remove existing side extension and connected double garage; build
new two-storey extension to comprise of entrance hall, utility, WC and kitchen on ground floor
and one bedroom on first floor

Bredon View, Eckington Road, Birlingham WR10 3DA

APPROVED 15 November

Parish Council comments: No objections to the proposal

8) Financial Matters

- a) Bank balance - £2,872.00 as at 9 November 2011.
- b) The Accounts for 2010/11 were accepted.
- c) Receipts:
£1,775.00 - precept
Payments:
£7.50 – Clerk training CALC PAYE (cheque number 224 July)
£316.08 – WPD Midlands Networks Services Limited / kiosk disconnection (cheque
number 225 July)
£25.00 – Wychavon District Council administration fee for uncontested election on 5
May 2011(Cheque number 226 July)
£460.00 – Clerks pay April, May June (Cheque number 227 September)
£115.00 – HM Revenues & Customs PAYE period April, May, June (Cheque number
228 September)
£115.00 – HM Revenues & Customs PAYE period July, August, September (Cheque
number 229 September)
£60.00 – Clement Keys Audit 2010/2011 (Cheque number 230 September)
- d) Changes to the signatories for the cheque book and Standing orders to be amended.
Agreed.
- e) PAYE – Parish Council Employer. Nil return sent to HM Revenues and Customs on
behalf of employee, The Clerk, for first tax period. Clerk can no longer be self-
employed.
- f) The Accounts for 2011/2012:
 - i) Acceptance
 - ii) Budget figures – Increased by 5% as resolved in January 2011. Increase in the
Precept for 2012/2013 to £4,500.00 in view of inflation and additional items which
could not be taken from reserves; charities resolved at £100.00, clerks pay to increase

next financial year, (noted that the Clerks pay and expenses were a combined figure), Village Hall contribution to increase by £250.00 totally £500.00, grit and storage bins at £400.00 and possible contribution towards repair of Berwick Bridge railings.

g) Future payments and budget:

- Allowance for grass cutting of village green. Need to contact Mr Maxwell.
- Poppy wreaths – Eckington and Birlingham memorials - £40.00
- Annual Tree Forum – Tree Warden Budget
- Clerks pay (£1150 for six months – now paid as £575 quarterly because of the tax payments). Need to review to commence quarterly payments as per financial year not calendar year)
- All other 5% increased figures taken from existing expenditure items on accounts spreadsheet

9) Website / email group

It was suggested that an email group list could be set up. It would notify and keep residents informed of what was going on, apart from on the noticeboard. For example quickly advising of important issues; planning applications, road closures. Maybe other organisations would use it to advertise forthcoming events or issues. Clerk would do a newsletter and include this idea. Also, a website was suggested. Councillor Morris was happy to get this idea up and running to see if it was liked and used. An estimated price was £28 per annum. The County Council could be the host server? So the Parish Council could buy the domain for two years or it could be hosted. Councillor Morris would head and Councillor Hill would assist. Clerk to include on the newsletter. The email would be first and then see what the interest was with the website.

10) Worcestershire HUB

The Councillors had bad experiences of using the HUB. Councillor Hardman suggested it was a “growing pain”. The Councillors insisted that the concept of it was wrong and that Wychavon District Council was exceptional in its customer service in comparison and still being able to talk directly to departments.

11) The National Policy Planning Framework – Residents communication - Village Plan and Neighbourhood Planning

How does the Parish go forward with sustainable development and protecting its countryside? A village plan may be the suggestion. A letter has been sent to all residents entitled Village Plans and there has been a favourable reply. The Clerk needs to acknowledge any responses. The Clerk will also contact Wychavon District Council for assistance and any procedures for a Plan.

12) Queens Diamond Jubilee

Organising celebrations for next year. Will the Village Hall and Parochial Church Council also take some initiative in assisting? Some interest had been show but it was felt that the Parish Council should lead the way to remain unbiased and profit making. Should there be a village day? Need to contact the BVH committee. There should be a separate meeting as soon as possible. Councillor Morris and Councillor Butler would lead this “celebration” group.

- 13) Future Parish Council Meeting Dates - 2012
 Meetings usually take place the third Wednesday of every month and the bookings secretary was made aware of this last year and again in September this year. The dates are 18 January, 21 March, 16 May, 18 July, 19 September and 21 November.
- 14) Lengthsman – extra help
 The Lengthsman believes that in order to do the Scheme justice some extra help may be required. This would not affect the hourly rate. The Councillors agreed this request.
- 15) Standing orders – mileage allowance
 The Clerk had asked the local authority for clarification on the mileage allowance rate per mile. Under the Adoption of Local Authorities (Members’ Allowances) (England) Regulations 2003, and as approved by the Scrutiny Panel, the allowance is at rate of 40 pence per mile. This was agreed by all Councillors and the Standing Orders would be updated.
- 16) Cooperative Fuel Purchasing
 There had been a meeting at Wychavon District Council to discuss a scheme for communal oil ordering. Councillor Comins had attended. The simplified system would mean collating names interested and then a body would find the cheapest supplier. Individuals could then order from the supplier. Or there would be a paid administrator for the bulk buy. There was lesser reduction on the simple method. At the moment the market is being tested. No action by the Parish Council at this time.
- 17) Councillors’ reports and items for future agenda
 Rubbish caused by pickers in a field on New Barn. The Chairman did go to the farm to complain. A letter had been sent from a nearby resident. To be monitored.
- 18) Closure – with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.45. **The next Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 18 January 2012**

Signed:Councillor Anthony J Hall, Chairman
 Date: