

## BIRLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 16 January 2013  
Birlingham Village Hall

### Welcome

- 1) Present: Councillors Hall, Morris, Aston, Butler, Comins, and Hill  
In attendance: County Councillor Hardman and District Councillor Davis
- 2) Apologies: Councillor New and Footpath Warden
- 3) Declarations
  - a) Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
  - b) To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
  - c) To declare any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda and their nature.

(Councillors who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of paragraph 12(4) of the code of conduct, must leave the room for the relevant items)

Councillor New has been reminded to return her application form of acceptance (indicating Councillors' eligibility to set the Council's budget if they pay council tax in the Council's area. To consider granting a dispensation up until the next ordinary election 2015 to all parish councilors' who live within the parish to enable them to participate in any discussion or vote on any matter concerning the setting of the council's budget and annual precept).

- 4) Minutes of previous meeting. The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2012, a copy of which had been circulated to all Councillors, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.
- 5) Democratic Opening – none
- 6) Progress Reports
  - a) Footpath
    - i) The trees across the track on Footpath 516 (Swans Neck) have been assessed and will be pruned back in the spring.
    - ii) The Footpath Warden raised the question of the access on the footpath from Berwick Brook to Nafford weir with the County Council Area Organiser (Fiona Argyle). She has suggested replacing the existing kissing gate with a RADAR gate, a 'large mobility' kissing gate with space within the hoops to allow pushchairs etc through. This option will be examined in the spring.  
The Warden would look to action the above when the weather was more clement.
  - b) District Councillor
    - i) Happy New Year

- ii) WDC published Protocol for New Homes Bonus (NHB). Birlingham are the only parish in year 3 to have a 'nil' for their allocation. Wychavon in future may not disperse the NHB to parishes.
  - iii) The WDC budget for 2013/14 has a shortfall of £600,000
  - iv) Council tax funding. Councillors aware that precept will be met although new formula.
  - v) Capital of £38.2m at the moment but if no funding from government could end up with a 1.3m gap. WDC seem to be penalised for their forecast/forward planning unlike Malvern Hills and Worcester City.
  - vi) Council tax will be divided by 12 months. The 10 month cycle has been abandoned. Birlingham has 10 properties in Band H which is the highest in the Eckington Ward.
  - vii) Community Grant still available.
  - viii) Health and wellbeing. No definite formula yet.
  - ix) Policy Commissioner – vote of no confidence.
  - x) Icelandic funds. 25% or almost 1/3 back but being paid in stages as and when assets are sold. Interest guaranteed as well.
- c) County Councillor
- i) Police and Crime Commissioner with a no confidence vote now but he was elected. Do the County Council petition the Home Secretary? He is 76, in a high profile position and takes no advice. He has the power to set the precept.
  - ii) County Council budget gap of £9m so proposing to trawl for savings. Council tax to rise? Need £20m of savings over next four years to allow for pressures i.e. social care for the elderly and children. Parishioners want more for roads and not the arts.
  - iii) Flooding at Upper End. Suspect the problem lies around the cricket pitch and Old Dairy? Land drains have failed. Was there an alteration of pipes around the Old Dairy? Does a land drainage order need to be forced? What about the balancing pond? Ongoing problem with the "tank field" and below. Residents want it fixed. Councillor Hardman will liaise with Harry Porter and Chairman. Councillor Hardman will organise and get David Lavendar from Highways involved as well. Negotiation is better before any legal measures are taken on the landowner.
  - iv) BT upgrade at Pershore exchange. Commercial issues and speed of Broadband.
- d) Clerk – see Appendix Clerks report

## 7) Planning

a) Report on current outstanding planning applications – none

b) Applications approved/refused

i) W/12//02266/CU Swan Inn, Church Street, Birlingham WR10 3AQ

Retrospective change of use for part of the garage building to be used for holiday lettings  
Approved 7 December

Conditions and reasons:

1. The building the subject of this planning consent shall only be used as a holiday let and shall not be used as permanent residential accommodation or occupied as a person's sole, or main place of residence. Reason – To preserve the amenities of neighbouring properties and the building the subject of this planning consent.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: 1:1250 scale Location Plan; 1:500 scale Block Plan; Proposed Ground/ First Floor Plans. Reason – To define the permission.

Parish Council comments: Permission to build a new garage and workshop was granted in 2007. Permission to use the building for residential accommodation was specifically refused due to a concern that parking space used for the inn could be reduced.

It should be noted that part of the present car park for the Inn is leased and if the lease was not renewed parking would be severely restricted.

If permission for use as a residential accommodation is granted we would suggest that the building should remain an integral part of the inn premises and not disposed of separately.

c) Appeal notification - PLANNING INSPECTORATE REF:- APP/H1840/A/12/2186366

Appellant(s) Name: Mr C Brassington

Proposal: Residential conversion of domestic stables and barn.

Site at: The Paddocks, Broadway Road, Birlingham, Pershore, WR10 3AF

A planning appeal has been lodged with The Planning Inspectorate. A copy of the decision, Appellant's Grounds of Appeal and all correspondence can be looked at on the Wychavon web site at [www.wychavon.gov.uk](http://www.wychavon.gov.uk), under planning. Any further written comments should be submitted to The Planning Inspectorate within six weeks of the start date of this appeal by 21/01/2013.

Correspondence should be addressed to: The Planning Inspectorate, Room 3/18, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN.

d) ENFORCEMENT updates

COURT LODGE – Deviation from approved plans; creation of access.

Email from Enforcement Officer dated 8 January 2013 quotes, “I have tried to discuss the situation of the access gates with Mr Olden but he is adamant that he is not going to provide any information as to when the gates and wall were erected other than more than four years ago.

The Councils aerial photography from 1999 shows a wide track from the top of the garden down to the roadside which would suggest that there has been an access in place for at least 13 years. However this does not give a clear indication as to whether the wall and the gates were in place then.

Can the parish council provide any information as to when the gates and wall were constructed?

Question from Clerk to Councillors

It would appear from a 1999 aerial photograph that the track was in existence and so no action would be taken on something more than 10 years ago.

The gate / access / wall were erected in the last few years. Basically, if it's more than 4 years ago enforcement would not be taken. If it is less than that then the planning department could insist on an application. Do you want to go down the enforcement route and insist on an application?

Notes from Parish Councillors

- “I don't see any point in insisting on an application unless we think that the access is dangerous or in some other way detrimental, which it doesn't appear to be. I can't see that it's a problem, particularly as we weren't even sure if it had been there before. If

- we were going to do anything, we should have taken action when they started to put it in".
- "I agree".

#### MANOR HOUSE – removal of hedgerow

Email to Mr Byrne quotes, "I write in connection with the above and further to my discussion with yourself on site earlier this year. At the time you advised that no hedgerow had been removed from the south west corner of the paddock, only brambles but that it was your intention to replant a hedge along the highway boundary. I agreed with yourself that it appeared no hedge had been removed and I closed the case accordingly. I mentioned at the time that the openness of the visibility splay across the south western corner of the paddock would be kept clear however you stated that the Council's landscape officer had said that she would like to see the corner replanted. I understand that the highway boundary along the south western corner of the paddock has now been planted with hedging.

As an advisory note I would advise that the landscape officer stated:-

"Where the section of hedging has presumably at some time been removed to allow forward visibility across the south western corner of the paddock, the approved building will be clearly visible from the road. As hedge planting is not a realistic option here, I would suggest the planting of 3 specimen trees (with protection against grazing if necessary) positioned towards the south-western corner but outside any visibility line, to soften the building visually. These could either be native trees e.g. field maple, ash, or fruit trees." I understand that you will be planting trees as advised by the landscape officer but I would ask that you take into account for highway safety the necessity of the visibility splay across the south west corner".

Councillors still have concerns, particularly as the hedge is on highways property. The visibility will be affected when the saplings grow. The new fence isn't as good as the metal railings. Clerk to go back to Wychavon.

#### 8) Financial Matters

- a) Bank balance - £3,755.52 as at 28 December 2012
- b) The Accounts for 2012/13 were resolved. The reserves are getting back to where they should be as they are gradually being rebuilt by approximately £400.00.
- c) Receipts:
  - £410.00 – Worcestershire County Council Lengthsman (November)

##### Payments:

- £115.40 – HM Revenue & Customs (October, November, December) (cheque number 261)
- £462.10 – Clerks pay (October, November, December) (cheque number 262)
- £25.00 – Clerks expenses (cheque number 263)

##### Future payments

- £410.00 - Carl Brassington - Lengthsman (extra due to flooding November)
- £180.00 – Carl Brassington - Lengthsman (October /November)

£26.98 – website renewal  
£240.00 – Carl Brassington - Lengthsman (December)  
Clerks pay and PAYE

- 9) Parish Litter Pick  
The date for the annual litter pick was agreed as Saturday 23 March 2013. An alternative date if the weather inclement was Saturday 6 April 2013. Clerk to notify Wychavon District Council. Reminder to be put on next agenda.
- 10) Website/email group  
The advertising on the website would be addressed again in view of the next financial year. To be discussed at the next meeting. Councillor Morris to action. The website had just had its 2000<sup>th</sup> visitor.  
The email news is now in touch with 75 residents which represents just under half of the dwellings (154).
- 11) Parish Plan  
Councillor Comins is withdrawing from village commitments and therefore will not be available to carry forward the Plan. The Plan will be a long and drawn out process possibly over 5 to 6 years. David Maxwell had been a starter at the time of initial discussion. It is proposed that it will still be useful to do a plan but the time should not be under-estimated. Will the volunteers who came forward be interested in carrying on? What strategy should be followed particularly as the swdp is nearly in place. Will there be a belief in the Council's decisions.  
The Councillors agreed to wait the outcome of the Development Plan and then progress further at a later stage. Clerk to acknowledge residents letter asking for an update.
- 12) Councillors' reports and items for future agenda  
Clerk reported that a Tree Preservation Order was a possibility on the Jubilee Wood. What about a plaque?  
Reminder of the Annual Parish meeting time. Clerk to notify BVH again.
- 13) Closure – with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.00pm.  
**The next Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 20 March 2013 at 7.45pm.**

Signed: .....Councillor Anthony J Hall, Chairman

Date: .....

## Appendix

### **Clerks report**

- i) News e-mail - Birlingham News - 18 Friday 14 December 2012

Christmas is nearly with us, so here are some details of what's happening in the village over the festive period.

In this issue:

1. Christmas Services at St James's Church

2. Christmas and New Year at the Swan
3. Christmas Bin Collections
4. Parish Council Precept
5. Communicate Newsletter
6. Broadband Survey
7. Planning Applications

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#### **4. Parish Council Precept**

At its meeting on 21 November, the Parish Council provisionally set its Council Tax precept for 2012/13 to £5000.00. The approximate annual amount per household will be:

Band A: £18, Band B: £21, Band C: £24, Band D: £27, Band E: £33, Band F: £40, Band G: £45, Band H: £55.

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#### **5. Communicate Newsletter**

The December edition of Wychavon Strategic Partnership's Communicate newsletter can be viewed at [www.birlingham.org/pc\\_info/communicate\\_2012\\_dec.pdf](http://www.birlingham.org/pc_info/communicate_2012_dec.pdf).

(The Wychavon Strategic Partnership is a collaboration between Wychavon District Council and other public, private, voluntary and community organisations, working together to meet local needs and improve social, environmental and economic well-being in the area.)

In future, the bi-monthly Communicate newsletter will be available on the Birlingham village website at [www.birlingham.org/parishcouncil.htm](http://www.birlingham.org/parishcouncil.htm).

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#### **6. Broadband Survey**

Extract from the Communicate newsletter:

“We had a presentation on Worcestershire's Broadband Plan. The Plan aims to get 90% of the county receiving speeds of at least 24Mbps by 2015. The remaining areas will have speeds of at least 2Mbps. Details about the plan can be obtained from Pauline Harris at Worcestershire County Council. To show support for faster Broadband please encourage everyone you know to complete the survey by clicking on [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/superfast-broadband.aspx](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/superfast-broadband.aspx).”

- Birlingham News 19 - Thursday 3 January 2013

Happy New Year! No doubt you're all busy tidying up so here's a bit of recycling information . . .

In this issue:

1. Christmas Bin Collections
2. Christmas Tree Recycling

- Birlingham News 20 - Sunday 13 January 2013

The next Parish Council meeting is this Wednesday. All are welcome.

In this issue:

1. Parish Council, 16th January
2. Birlingham IW 6th Anniversary, 17th January
3. Burn's Night at the Swan, 25th January
4. Refuse collections

ii) **Lengthsman / flooding / ditches**

[Redstar Growers to Clerk](#) - 22 November Quotes, "They have asked me to tell you that George said he knew about the flooding which was why they had cleared the ditches around that area about 2 weeks ago (I think we spoke about the fact they were working their way down the lanes back in September) but in George's own words, it hadn't made any difference. He thinks the problem may be further under the ground i.e. a broken pipe or perhaps a blockage somewhere which is why it isn't draining away. Sorry we can't help anymore but I suppose the next stage is to involve the council and ask them to investigate whether there is a blockage".

[Clerk to Redstar](#) - copied: James Revill 22 November - "Thank you for the update. However, short term this doesn't help the residents at the Lower End who can't exit where the river has flooded the lower road (near the Manor) and now are struggling to exit on the only other road where the ditch has flooded. I had to walk to work this morning because there is no way I was taking my car through the ditch water. I don't know what has been done by James or George this morning or our lengthsman as I am at work. So landowner blames County Council and County Council will probably blame landowner!"

[Clerk to Lengthsman](#) - 22 November - "I have since spoken to the Engineers (Wychavon) but obviously they are swamped with calls some of which are coming from Highways (County)! They are going to try to get their surveyor out sometime so that he can try to ascertain who is responsible for any action? Either Revills or Highways. Just to keep you updated".

[Lengthsman to Clerk](#) - 22 November - "The culvert runs under the road so is Highways responsibility. Revill's blokes managed to partially clear the culvert but it needs pressure jetting and clearing to increase the flow. They have also done a good job clearing down the track ditches but James? said the hedge cutter was still awaiting repair which is hampering further ditch clearance at the moment.

I have been back and forth around the village last night and today. There was flooding in the usual places but most of it was caused by debris being swept down the verges and lodging in the gully gratings. Once this was cleared even the flood outside Barncroft soon cleared.

Whitehall Lane was badly flooded again due to the grids blocking. Peter Collier cleared the grid several times and I cleared it twice. The flooding has now drained away from this area.

The flooding at Lower End outside the Kirkland's is the only remaining area at the moment but I will keep an eye out tomorrow. Let me know if there is an issue that needs attention or if urgent call me"

[Lengthsman to Clerk](#) - 26 November - "I was on duty most of Saturday and part of Sunday clearing grids and digging out gullies. The flooding is worst at Lower End obviously but there were incidents at Upper End and Whitehall Lane. I will be back out today and will let you know what the situation is. I am hoping to investigate the drains in Whitehall Lane and see what can be done here".

[Lengthsman to Highways](#) – 27 November - "We have a number of blocked gullies in the village which are causing us problems.

Grange Road - Outside The Grange and Lower End Farm the run of three gullies is not carrying away the water and causing flooding to properties.

Whitehall Lane - The top gullies are not carrying away and the bottom of the road has flooded entering the properties at Whitehall Farm

Upper End - Outside Maryworth Barn the pipework may be blocked causing flooding to the adjacent properties.

I realise that everyone is pressing for action but if you can get us on the list I would be grateful. I have already dug out several of the gullies but the connecting pipework is probably in need of jetting. A thorough jetting of the village system would be nice at some future point”.

[Roy Fullee to Lengthsman](#) - 28 November - “We'll get these locations inspected. Thanks for your efforts in clearing out the gullies”.

iii) **Lengthsman's drains saga**

[Lengthsman to Clerk](#) - 23 November

“I am making some progress with the drainage system in the village. I have uncovered a few forgotten headwalls and culverts and am slowly getting to grips with where the system runs and how the water gets away. It's getting easier now the vegetation is dying back and the farm has started ditching.

I will keep you posted but let me know if there is anything that requires attention in the meantime”.

[Lengthsman to Clerk](#) - 26 November

“On Saturday I was told by Mark Yeomans that after the floods of 2007 Harry Porter gave the Parish Council a map of the old water courses. I'm not sure whether this information is accurate or whether you still have a copy but it would be most useful in ensuring that they are clear and attended to.

With regard to land drainage can you find out who is responsible for water courses that connect to highways or Severn Trent systems? I am thinking of where a culverted pipe emerges into an open ditch and may even return to a culvert under the highway.

The present understanding is that open ditches are the adjacent landowners's responsibility whilst under highway culverts are Highways responsibility. The maps I have seem to be basically Severn Trent based showing the line of the new sewage system and limited Highways drainage info. I am updating them as far as possible to include ditches and culverts but any added info would be useful.

It may be time to ask the long term residents what they can remember. I had a long chat with Mr Phelps from The Cottage who gave me info on the old open drain that ran from Whitehall Lane via The Row and on to the river. It is likely that this was culverted as shown on the map when the mains sewage was installed to the village. What is not clear is what effect filling in the ditches has had on the land drainage to areas like Whitehall Lane.

There was also flooding at Upper End outside the White's Barn. A quick chat with Richard and Vicky Rodriguez from next door revealed that when the last owner of the barn was in residence he had work done to renew a culvert outside their houses. I have asked if Richard has supporting paperwork for this (Vicky was not given any) as it seems odd that work should be carried out on behalf of a householder in the highway.

In the meantime I will check the road gullies again in this area but it may be that the culverts are blocked between the grid gullies and that highways will need to jet these and those in Whitehall lane”.

iv) **Lengthman's gully** - [David Hunter, Senior Highways Liaison Engineer to Lengthsman](#)  
14 December - Thanks for the offer of further assistance. I think we'll look to get the drains jetted and should be able to add them onto a schedule soon.

[Lengthsman to David Hunter](#) - 18 December - "I have been up to Whitehall lane today and cleared 4 blocked gullies.

As I suspected the connecting pipework is full of silt and it's impossible to get the drain rods in because the manholes are too small.

I would be happy to hire a jetter and have a go if the Highways are still snowed under. We still have several gullies and culverts that need attention".

[David Hunter to Lengthsman](#) - 18 December - "Thank you for your comments and for your efforts in keeping these drains working. We will see about having them jetted".

[Lengthsman to David Hunter](#) - 18 December - "I am the Birlingham Lengthsman and have received your email via June regarding Whitehall Lane in the village.

I will take a look today and clear the gullies but I have reported to Roy Fullee that much of the system in the village seems partially blocked with sand debris washed from the fields.

I will be happy to do whatever it takes but I think eventually it needs the jetter to travel around the village flushing the pipe runs.

On the positive side I feel convinced that the work we have done over the last couple of years has kept the flooding to a minimum so we are doing something right".

v) **Communicate - December edition** The latest edition of Communicate, the news bulletin for and from Wychavon's Strategic Partnership and the LSPs was circulated to all Councillors. Councillor Morris put a link to the October edition of this in the village email. He is suggesting that he doesn't want to have to do that every time because it could get a bit boring. However, he thought it worthwhile if it was loaded onto the website as they come in and tell people in the next email where they will be able to find them in the future if they're interested. At least then the Parish Council email is letting people know what information is coming from the next chain of authority and the Council have done their bit to "advertise" the communication.

vi) **Parish Council website** [Clerk to Councillor Morris](#) quotes, "THANK YOU" to you for continuing updates on the website. I have provided the minutes for historical reasons for 2011 (Jan, March, May x 2, July and Nov) before the website commenced.

[Councillor Morris to Clerk](#) - quotes, "I'm currently working on a programme to make updating the website easier, so that pages like Events are updated automatically each morning. But first I have several hundred photos from the Jubilee and other events to sort out, select and upload. My programme should speed that process up."

vii) **Abandoned vehicle** [From Chairman to Clerk](#) - Just to let you know that I contacted the police about a green LDV van on Berwick car park. Incident no: 389 S 412. Tel: 0300 333 3000

viii) **Christmas collection changes** - Quote "This time of year we normally have a few additions and small changes to our services.

I have attached a poster for the Christmas Collection changes and the Christmas tree recycling sites, would you please print and place these on your notice boards and with any village schools

or shops. Please get back to me if you wish me to send you a hard copy of these posters. Also in the next couple of weeks please look out for your 2013 calendar which will be delivered out by your recycling and refuse collection crew. Please contact us if there are any problems in any of these areas". Denise Ditchburn Promotion & Monitoring Assistant Client Services"

ix) **Jubilee Wood.** Clerk has spoken to the Tree Officer at Wychavon and she has suggested that a Tree Preservation Order "could" be placed on the wood. Bring up under future items.

**Clerk to Councillor Morris** - "You have obviously been speaking to Wimpy about the wood etc. but I noticed in some previous minutes the PC were supposed to be updating her on the date for the planting. Do you think we should say anything to her (after the event I realise) or wait until the next discussion about how we intend to have the upkeep of the area? Can we assume you are the representative of the Parish Council as well as the Jubilee Committee?"

**Councillor Morris to Clerk** "I have kept Wimpy up to date on it and I think I've been representing both organisations! I take the point about not wanting to commit future parish councils to massive expenditure. However, someone needs to take responsibility for it, whether it's the PC or a continuing Jubilee committee. Have you heard how other places are dealing with it? I wonder if it's worth contacting the Woodland Trust to see if they have any ideas? I'll speak to Dave about it tonight. Hopefully Michael is happy. Tony was pleased we'd left enough space for the hedge trimmer". I also need to update Michael Porter and say that the trees have not been planted too close to the boundary hedge as he requested. What do you think?"

x) **Retiring Land drainage inspector.** **Notification from the inspector,** quotes " I am writing to inform you that I am retiring from the post of Land Drainage Inspector for Wychavon District Council on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2012 and would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the invaluable help and support that you have given to me over the past 4 years; it has been a pleasure to work with you all and the assistance given to me has been invaluable. For your information my replacement is Gary Beatson, who comes with a wealth of knowledge and experience in civil engineering matters, and I have no doubt that you will give him similar support to that provided to me. Gary can be contacted on 01386 565608, or email [gary.beatson@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:gary.beatson@wychavon.gov.uk) Ray Grundy Land Drainage Inspector"

xi) **BVH.** The unconfirmed Minutes of the November Meeting and the Agenda for the next Meeting were circulated to all Councillors.

xii) **New Homes Bonus.** Email from Wychavon District Council circulated to all Councillors, quotes "We have recently published details of the latest (year 3) New Homes Bonus allocations on our [website](#). These are for new or empty homes occupied between October 2011 and October 2012.

Once again we have allocated 40% of our New Homes Bonus for reinvestment in local communities where the development that generated it has taken place. We invite parish and town councils to submit proposals for spending any New Homes Bonus allocations for their areas on projects or activities that deliver added value to the local community, and where possible, benefit communities close to any development that the Bonus is associated with.

To find out whether your area has generated any year 3 New Homes Bonus go to <http://www.wychavon.gov.uk/cms/housing/new-homes-bonus/parishes.aspx> and click on the name of your parish/town. The amounts we have allocated for reinvestment in your parish are shown in bold red text towards the top of the page, alongside any year 2 allocations that you should already be aware of.

We have recently reviewed our New Homes Bonus protocol. As a result, we have made a number of changes to it and our procedures for dealing with New Homes Bonus proposals. We will publish the revised protocol on our website within the next week. In the meantime, can I draw your attention to the following key points, which apply to all proposals received from parish and town councils since the beginning of December 2012:

We require parish and town councils to:

Discuss their proposals with the local district councillor(s) before submitting them to us.

Consult the community on proposals for spend of over £1,000.

Provide evidence that the community has been consulted and there is community support for any proposals over £1,000.

We will not normally approve use of the NHB to fund the following:

Projects which have already been completed or largely completed before we assess the proposal.

Any expenditure incurred or committed before we approve the proposal.

Generally day to day running costs.

Fundraising activities for organisations.

Items that mainly benefit individuals, for example equipment that is not shared.

Political or religious activities.

For proposals related to schools, unless the matter is outside any other funding mechanism, and there is a demonstrable wider community benefit, and there is evidence that the community supports use of NHB monies for this purpose.

I'm attaching our updated New Homes Bonus proposal form (dated December 2012) and guidance notes, these are also available on our website. Do get in touch with me if you have any questions or want to discuss your ideas before preparing a proposal.

Finally, we've organised an event on Wednesday 27 February 2013 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, further details will be sent later but please make a note of this in your diaries and let me know if you would like to attend".

[Clerk to WDC](#) Clerk to WDC quotes "Are we able to spend the New Homes Bonus to improve the village environment as it would be good to replace some rubbish bins around the centre of our village?" [WDC to Clerk](#) quotes, "Improving the village environment would be a good project, don't forget though you would need to prove that the community want it.

xiii) **Precept** - The precept requirement for 2013-2014 has been returned to Wychavon at the agreed amount of £5,000.00.

This follows the information from Wychavon which was emailed to all Councillors ..... "in an email dated 26 November 2012 the Government advised that their original proposals for a single council tax base, including the impact of treating council tax support as a discount, would be implemented and that their preferred approach is address the shortfall in funding faced by town and parish councils as a consequence of this was that billing authorities such as Wychavon

District Council would, through a voluntary arrangement, agree an amount of funding that would be passed to councils.

You will be pleased to know that we have decided that we will not only be passing on the 90% grant we are due to receive from the Government in respect of the impact of including council tax support within the council tax base on parish councils but that we are committing to fully protect our parish council from all of the changes, in 2013-14 at least. This means that we will pay over the amount you have originally set as a "precept requirement" by topping up a precept calculated by reference to the new tax base with the grant plus whatever further subsidy is required to give the band D council tax that would have been arrived at without any changes to the tax base as a result of council tax benefit changes.

To help you understand this we have set out below the council tax base for your Parish that has been calculated for 2013-14, which is due to be agreed by our Executive Board on 8 January 2013 and also the council tax base for 2013-14 excluding the discount for council tax support:

Council Tax Base 2013-14 including council tax support £161.78

Council Tax Base 2013-14 excluding council tax support £168.73

Once you have set your "precept requirement" in the normal way we can then calculate the level of grant/subsidy required....."

xiv) **Community Grants.** Information circulated to all Councillors and leaflet put on noticeboard.

xv) **South Worcestershire Development Plan.** Information circulated to all Councillors. South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) Draft Submission Document Statement of Representations Procedure states:

Available to view and comment between the following dates:

Start date: 11/01/13 09:00

End date: 22/02/13 17:00

on the following link:

[http://swdp-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/swdp\\_proposed\\_submission/proposed\\_sub\\_consult](http://swdp-consult.limehouse.co.uk/portal/swdp_proposed_submission/proposed_sub_consult)

If the link appears to be broken, try copying the entire link into the address bar on your web browser.

We are writing to you in response to your request for your contact details to be kept on our database so that you could be kept informed of any consultation events concerning the future development plan for South Worcestershire.

You are probably aware that the three Councils of Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon are working together on the joint SWDP. The Plan will allocate land and provide planning guidance on development in the area up to the year 2030. The Plan sets out strategic and detailed policies, allocates housing and employment sites and the necessary infrastructure to accommodate it.

In December 2012, all three Councils approved the document for the submission process, the first stage of which is a further period of consultation focused on legal compliance and soundness of the SWDP. It is a statutory requirement to consult at this stage. The consultation will consist of:

- a) The draft SWDP Submission document and accompanying response form.
- b) The Test of Soundness and Legal Compliance as set out in the guidance notes which accompany the response form on the website.
- c) Supporting information, including the Proposals Map that is available on the website.

All of the documents and supporting information are available electronically from the SWDP website. Hard copies of the draft Plan are available for inspection at local libraries and Customer Contact Centres across the three local authorities where small supplies of the response form will also be available. Hard copies of these documents can be obtained on request.

Although you may have made previous representations to the process to date, should you wish to have the chance to appear at the Examination in Public (EIP) in the summer of 2013 it is essential that you make a response (based on the Tests of Legal Compliance and/or Soundness) at this stage. Please note however,

that participation at the EIP is at the discretion of the Inspector.

If you have any queries on this, please see the website: [www.swdevelopmentplan.org](http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org) <http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org>, or e-mail [contact@swdevelopmentplan.org](mailto:contact@swdevelopmentplan.org), or telephone the SWDP team on 01905 722233. You can also write to The South Worcestershire Development Team, Orchard House, Farrier Street, Worcester, WR1 3BB.

Further contact regarding the SWDP is likely to be by e-mail so that best use of limited resources can be achieved.

Paul Bayliss SWDP Project Manager

xvi) **Lengthsman payment for October/November.** [WCC to Clerk](#) quotes, " Please accept my apology I do have the worksheet but the £180.00 was not included on the invoice for £410.00. If you could let me have an invoice for the £180 to put with the worksheet I will pass for payment. I have enclosed attachment invoice and worksheets that can be sent to the lengthsman email box. If I can be of any further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me"

xvii) **Pershore High School.** Notification of the carol service 2012

xviii) **Harriett Baldwin MP.** Leaflet regarding surgeries and contact details placed on noticeboard.

xix) **LENGTHSMAN floodmaps - [Lengthsman to Clerk with responses](#)** in italics. Quotes, "On Saturday I was told by Mark Yeomans that after the floods of 2007 Harry Porter gave the Parish Council a map of the old water courses. I'm not sure whether this information is accurate or whether you still have a copy but it would be most useful in ensuring that they are clear and attended to.

*The Parish Council were not given a map by Harry Porter. I recall a basic drawing of a pond/drainage he was suggesting on his land adjacent to The Old Dairy to prevent the flooding at Upper End. I will look for that? I chased for ages to get any drainage map at all and that eventually came from Highways and this is the one that I gave you a copy of.*

With regard to land drainage can you find out who is responsible for water courses that connect to highways or Severn Trent systems? I am thinking of where a culverted pipe emerges into an open ditch and may even return to a culvert under the highway.

*I will look into this.*

The present understanding is that open ditches are the adjacent landowners's responsibility whilst under highway culverts are Highways responsibility. The maps I have, seem to be basically Severn Trent based showing the line of the new sewage system and limited Highways drainage info. I am updating them as far as possible to include ditches and culverts but any added info would be useful.

It may be time to ask the long term residents what they can remember. I had a long chat with Mr Phelps from The Cottage who gave me info on the old open drain that ran from Whitehall Lane via The Row and on to the river. It is likely that this was culverted as shown on the map when the

mains sewage was installed to the village. What is not clear is what effect filling in the ditches has had on the land drainage to areas like Whitehall Lane.

*Mr Webb may have some knowledge as well?*

There was also flooding at Upper End outside the White's Barn. A quick chat with Richard and Vicky Rodriguez from next door revealed that when the last owner of the barn was in residence he had work done to renew a culvert outside their houses. I have asked if Richard has supporting paperwork for this (Vicky was not given any) as it seems odd that work should be carried out on behalf of a householder in the highway.

*I believe that Mr and Mrs Searle had complained. Work was carried out by Highways but they would not have gone onto domestic residential ownership. I believe the original drain was constantly blocked.*

In the meantime I will check the road gullies again in this area but it may be that the culverts are blocked between the grid gullies and that highways will need to jet these and those in Whitehall lane.

*THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR ASSISTANCE particularly over the flooded period.*

*I have submitted your timesheet and will try to get this agreed at the January meeting. It takes a while to come back from County and I do have to get it on an agenda for resolution.*

[Lengthsman to Clerk](#) quotes, "Richard White is having look to see what paperwork he has regarding the culvert work. I'd forgotten that it was Harry Searle so I'll ask him if I see him. It looks as though the courtyard of the barn was block paved and a drainage channel and grid was inserted. I suspect that this was connected to the new highway drain which is then culverted across the road to the main system. the maps are not very helpful here but it looks from what I can see that this may be the start of the road system at the top of the village.

If Harry Porter was talking about a pond to help drain around The Old Dairy this may be worth chasing up to see if he would still be amenable.

All the pipework needs jetting and checking as vast amounts of sand and mud have swept down from the top fields and is in the pipework. I cleared tonnes from outside the Court Cottages and one manhole/channel does not have a cement flaunching to one side just earth so is just dragging in the mud. I will attend to this asap.

The other area is around the Manor and Peacock Barn. There is a constant flow of water from the Stanton's side of the road and the gully is blocked.

The drainage in Grange Road and Berwick Lane appears to go along and down a culvert past the gardener's Cottage emerging behind Lower End Farm in to a ditch. This ditch flows past the rear of The Farm, Avonside Cottage and The Grange and on to the Manor Land. If this ditch is not kept clear this will obviously aggravate the flooding in this area. The ditch outside the Jeavons' property require clearing.

The drawing you gave me clearly shows a large open drain in the Manor field which runs eventually down to the river. I am not sure whether this has been culverted or filled in or is, in fact, still there. I will see what I can find out.

[Lengthsman to Roy Fullee](#) copied to David Hunter 9 January quotes, " I happened across the Highways teams in the village on two occasions recently. They were responding to reports of flooding gullies at Whitehall Lane and Grange Road reported to the hub. I introduced myself and checked on progress and this is what I was told.

#### Whitehall Lane

A camera wagon was on site and the two engineers told me that they had traced the pipework across the road to a dead end half way down. There is a couple of manholes in the vicinity and what seems to be the end of the new STWA foul sewer line. There is evidence of some alteration

to the road gullies but also a culverted pipe entering the system from the direction of the centre of the village across the field.

The highways drainage should continue down the road towards Whitehall farm where there is another road gully but we could not get through. They did say that they had cleared the bottom gully and checked the pipework to the open ditch which was in need of clearing and they put the flooding down to this.

#### Grange Road

This gully situated outside The Grange overflows and floods the road in heavy rainfall and is very slow to clear. The engineers told me that they didn't get much out of the gully which didn't surprise me as I had dug it out during the flooding. They didn't investigate further as they were on a general response call to various reports.

The unfortunate thing as far as I am concerned is that if I had been informed that the crews were attending I could have liaised with them and given them the benefit of my local knowledge. According to my records the drain in Whitehall Lane splits and is culverted under the nearby field so the ditch does not take away all the water and so the flooding cannot be wholly attributed to this. The pipe entering the gully used to be an open ditch in the past but where it comes from and where it now goes to is still a mystery.

The gully in Grange Road is one of three which are all slow to clear, this one being the worst. The fact that a tanker/jetter along with support vehicle and no less than five operatives were in attendance makes this a very expensive exercise for no benefit. I realise that they need the extra men to control traffic on major roads but if we could co-ordinate the jetter with the Lengthsman (or even just let him know they are coming) I think we could save a lot of time and money and get a better outcome.

We are still waiting for the jetter to attend to road culverts that are impeding the flow and irritating the farmers who have actually done some ditching so if this could be chased up I would be grateful.

If we could have the jetter for a day or even half a day I am more than happy to attend and work alongside to point out pipe runs etc. I don't want you to think I'm not grateful but I believe that we could get a better end result at a more economic cost.

[Roy Fullee to Lengthsman](#) 14 January quotes, "Thanks for the updates following our contractor's visit to the village. When the drainage guys are next in the area for a few hours, I'll see if they can notify you beforehand. They were unable to last time because they had many jobs on their schedule, while it was difficult for them to know how long they would be at each location".

#### xv) **Blocked drain on Broadway Road**

[Engineers to Clerk](#) - I passed the information on to Ray after I spoke to you and he confirmed he had some knowledge of the problem anyway but I don't know what has happened in the interim. I have since spoken to Ray this morning and he confirmed that the landowner in question has cleared the ditches down the side of Broadway Road and beyond the corner towards the river – he is happy with what he has done and showed me some accompanying photographs.

Not saying this will cure the problem particularly during periods of heavy rainfall when the ground is already saturated, but from the point of view of what action we can take under the Land Drainage Act, we are somewhat limited in precisely what we can make the landowner do.

[Clerk to Engineers](#) - I spoke to you at a very busy time during the floods when the ditch on Broadway Road had overflowed and blocked the road. You were going to see if Ray Grundy could have a look and see if it was the landowner or Highways that should take responsibility. The Parish Lengthsman has now asked if I can chase this up. Is there an update?"

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xx) **Blocked drains**

[Lengthsman to Clerk](#)

I was collared by Mr Phelps from the farm today asking if we can chase up Highways Engineers to clear the culvert at the bend in Broadway Road. As you know I have also asked for attention to Grange Road and a couple of other places so I don't know if you can chivvy them up.

I looked at the drain (in field) which is shown on the maps. It is still there but very overgrown and almost invisible, just a line of soggy reeds where they can't run the mower over it. I don't know if this is still in use or whether it was culverted when the new sewage system was installed. There is water running from the Moors across the highway as it is by-passing the gully (which is blocked anyway). I'll try and find out what's causing this.

let me know if there are any more problems

xxi) **Lengthsman Timesheets**

[Clerk to Lengthsman](#) - I had already submitted your October/November timesheet to Worcestershire County Council (18 hours). I have just received your additional timesheet for the work you did over the "flood period" which is an incredible additional 41 hours. I shall endeavour to put this claim in by the deadline of the 10th December with an explanation of it being in 2 parts. I trust County accept this. Can I ask that the months are not combined? I realise why you do this for admin purposes but County like to budget on separate months.

There are 129 hours left on the 2012/13 budget for this financial year. I only mention this because of your efforts in the last few weeks. Let's hope we don't get another "heavy" period of work this winter as you may not have enough hours left in the budget to work on them!

Thank you for your work recently. And thank you for continuing investigations with the drainage maps.

xxii) **Lengthsman latest report as at Sunday 13 January**

[to Clerk](#) - Let me know if there are any other issues (gullies on New Barn Road request to be cut into verge). A couple of things for the PC meeting:

It appears that the drain from the gully outside The Moors is still broken as water is backing up and flowing over the highway. This drain was reported as repaired by The Manor following the building work to the new stables but it does not appear to be so.

I have tried to rod out the gully but access is awkward and we await the jetter. If however the drain is broken someone needs to fix it so I will speak to Bill Jeavons and see if he can have another look. Other issues outstanding are jetting of road culverts at 1. The bottom of Broadway Road where it joins the track to the John Bennet pond 2. On the bend in Church Street where it runs under the road to Whitehall Farm barns

xxiii) **Community First.** Letter circulated to all Councillors advising that Community First have launched an oil buying scheme.

xxiv) **Broken drain** - reported to Highways