

Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 11 May 2016

at Birlingham Village Hall

Councillors:

Councillor Allen
Councillor Conder
Councillor Hill
Councillor Morris
Councillor New
Councillor Yates

Present:

District Councillor Ron Davies and resident

Welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting. He thanked all the Councillors for their attendance and their hard work over the last year. The Chairman was pleased to welcome Councillor Davies and thanked him for his continued support.

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Fitch was abroad and his apologies were accepted.
Apologies were given by the Footpath Warden, Lengthsman, Tree Warden and two residents.

1. Election of Chairman and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office

Steve Morris was nominated again as he had done an excellent job and was unanimously voted as Chairman. He was happy to accept. He duly signed his Declaration of Office.

2. Election of Vice-Chairman

John Hill was elected as Vice-Chairman. The Chairman thanked John for his work over the last year. Councillor Hill said he was happy to continue in his role.

3. Declarations of Interest

- 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.
- d) Written requests for the Council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) are to be with the Clerk at least four clear days prior to a meeting.

There were no declarations of interest for this meeting.

Note: 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. Failure to register or declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest may be a criminal offence.

4. To appoint members and consider the Parish Council's scheme of delegation

- a) Appointment of Financial Support Officer. Councillor Hill was happy to carry on in the role and was duly appointed.

- b) Appointment of Footpath Warden under the authority of Worcestershire County Council. Bruce Hayward has confirmed he is happy to continue in his role as the Footpath Warden and this was agreed. All Councillors said that Bruce does a fabulous job and the footpaths are a credit to the village.
- c) Appointment of a Lengthsman. Carl Brassington has agreed to continue as the Lengthsman on a contractual basis. A copy of his current business insurance policy, showing his indemnity, is held on record.
- d) Appointment of Tree Warden. Karl Grimston has confirmed that he is willing to continue in his role as Tree Warden and this was agreed.
- e) Planning Group. The group has previously acted under the scheme of delegation however all Councillors are now actively taking part in the consultation. The Group would still need to have a 'head' to lead the comment exchanges, collate an overall view, finalise a comment and then pass to the Clerk for submission. Councillor Fitch has said he is willing to do this but wanted some procedures/guidance to assist him. The delegation was dissolved. It was agreed that all Councillors would give their views and that Councillor Fitch be appointed to head the members as the Planning Co-ordinator.

5. Confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover

The Parish Council is required by law to assess, at least annually, the risk of its various activities and to update its insurance and asset register. This was agreed with a public liability of up to £5 million any one event, with an example being the litter pick.

The understanding for the Insurers (Zurich) is that: the precept is under £25,000, the wages are under £20,000, All Risk's total is under £10,000 (bench, kiosk and mower) and there are no major events or public services undertaken during the year on behalf of the Parish Council.

The insurance cost for this year is the first increase for 3 years and is attributable purely to the increase in IPT from 6% to 9.5%. Therefore, the underlying insurance cost has not increased.

The Clerk will get quotations from other insurance companies for review next year. This can be limited for Parish Councils with public liability.

6. Review of the Parish Council's subscription to other bodies

The Parish Council subscribe to CALC (Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils). CALC is a member organisation offering support, training, advice and guidance. They are a very useful 'backup' for advice.

7. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings and the next annual meeting.

A discussion took place on the Parish Council's annual review of the time and place of ordinary bi-monthly meetings. It is proposed that the meetings should commence at 7pm instead of 7.30pm, if acceptable to the BVH. All Councillors are in agreement with the change.

Further discussion took place on the next annual meeting which may need a change of time if it is to commence prior to the annual parish council meeting on 17 May 2017. It usually takes place in May. The date and time were deferred and would be agreed later in the year.

There were no alternatives for public meetings of the Parish Council so they would continue at the village hall. The Clerk would notify the Chairman of BVH of the changes to the times of the bi-monthly meetings and seek confirmation of the dates already booked with the bookings secretary.

8. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held 16 March 2016, a copy of which had been circulated to all Councillors, were agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

9. Democratic Opening

The meeting is adjourned for public question time and the Chairman reminded Councillors that this is their opportunity to mention anything during this point.

There were no comments.

10. Progress Reports

- a) Footpaths
 - i. Worcestershire County Council Footpath Warden form completed.
 - ii. Footpath 500 (back of nursery) – fingerpost repaired.
 - iii. Footpath 504 (Church Street) – fingerpost replaced.
 - iv. Footpath 506 (Eckington Road towards Birlingham) – fingerpost replaced.
 - v. Footpath 506 (near village green) – strimmed and fingerpost cleared.
 - vi. Footpath 507 (Eckington Road towards Defford) – fingerpost replaced.
 - vii. Footpath 509 (Church Street towards Hall Farm) – fingerpost repaired.
 - viii. Footpath 510 (The Avenue) – fingerpost repaired.
 - ix. Footpath 511 (Withy Walk) – sprayed.
 - x. Footpath 519 (Withy Walk towards The Avenue) – fingerpost installed.

- b) Tree Warden
 - i. The Tree Warden has asked that the matter of planting of trees in memory of somebody be raised again. The Warden is suggesting that this could easily be done in Jubilee Wood and it would also be a good way of introducing more mature trees to the area.

This matter will be passed to the Jubilee Committee for consideration.

- c) District Councillor – had given his report at the Parish meeting.
- d) County Councillor – none.
- e) Clerk – useful background information - *See addendum*

11. Planning

- a) Current applications pending
 - i. W/16/01045/CU (change of use) - Lower End Farm, Berwick Lane, Birlingham WR10 3AD
Extend and convert existing garage into a 2-bedroom holiday and short course let
Decision due: 16 June 2016
The Chairman would collate the comments in the absence of the Co-ordinator.

- b) Current applications approved/refused - none.
- c) Draw up Procedures/guidelines.

To be actioned by the Chairman.

12. Financial Matters

- a) Bank Balance £6,782.42 as at 29 April 2016.
- b) Accounts for 2015/2016 were resolved (as per the audited financial year end).
- c) The Accounts for 2016/2017 were resolved as per the spreadsheet, summary and provisions.

(The Audit Return states that there must to a continuous period of review which is what members do at this point in the acceptance of the accounting receipts and payments so far in the current financial year).

Included discussion on the budget figures and the % increase; the precept at £5,354.00. £500.00 VDS – printing, meetings cost, tea and coffee giving a limit of liability for the group leading the VDS. Councillor Hill to report back to each meeting.

Clerks pay and expenses – deferred from last meeting. The meeting went into a confidential session.

The Chairman updated the Members in respect of his meeting with CALC at which the rate of pay and payments for expenses to the Clerk were reviewed.

It was agreed that for a Parish Council the size of Birlingham that the Clerk should be paid based upon SCP 20. Such rate would take account of the additional duties such as managing the Lengthsman. This resulted in an hourly rate and it was agreed to pay on the basis of five hours per week for the time being. The Chairman was requested to obtain written confirmation from CALC for the agreement of the SCP position and to issue the appropriate Contract of Appointment to the Clerk.

CALC suggested that a fixed monthly amount be paid to cover the costs of home office, broadband, telephone (both landline and mobile), use of computer and printer. Additionally, repayment should be made against receipts of any other costs incurred upon the Council's behalf. Quarterly these expenses should be shown on an expenses form and after agreement by the Chairman payment should be made and then reported to the next Council meeting.

For budget purposes it was agreed that a provisional amount should be assumed for both pay and expenses until there are more accurate ways of assessing the costs, this could result in an over/under spends.

Included the acceptance of the provisions – Councillor Hill gave an explanation and clarification. The provisions represent amounts set aside to meet the costs of exceptional expenditure thus allowing the Parish Council to meet its legal, statutory and proper duties and/or responsibilities.

The public meeting resumed.

A Community Provision procedure is still to be agreed and is deferred again until the next meeting. Councillor Hill and Councillor Allen will finalise the drafting of the proposal and form. The Councillors will have the draft circulated for comments and then Councillor Hill to finalise the draft for agreement, along with the form, at the July meeting.

Thanks were given to Councillor Hill and Councillor Allen for their work to date on the draft which was acceptable in principle.

No money will be available in the fund until the end of the financial year.

d) Savings account

There could be a savings account to run alongside the current account which would enable simple transfers to be made between the two accounts. This would allow Provisions to be transferred and therefore this being shown apart from the current account. The Chairman will contact the bank.

e) Receipts:

£150.00 – Worcestershire County Council (Lengthsman - February 2016)

£90.00 – Worcestershire County Council (Lengthsman – March)

£2,678.00 Wychavon District Council (budget requirement - Precept £2,588 and Grant £90)

Payments:

£156.00 – Lengthsman (January 2016) (cheque number 430 dated 2/3)

f) Agreement on cheque signatories. The current signatories are Councillors Morris, Yates and Allen. It is agreed that they will continue and will notify the Clerk if they are absent for any signing.

g) Future Payments:

£251.85 – Zurich Insurance (434)

£150.00 – Lengthsman February (435)

£90.00 – Lengthsman March (436)

£180.25 – Worcestershire CALC (service charge per elector 0.4739 – 26.92 + NALC affiliation fee) (437)

£18.00 – Wychavon Parish Games (due in July)

BVH – hire of hall for Parish Council meetings and VDS meetings (public 16 May 2016 agree)

Projector purchase – no longer required as a projector has been installed in the hall

- h) Internal Audit - completed on 23 April 2016 (Annual internal audit report 2015/16 of the Annual Return signed).

The following items were not included in the report at the respective Council meetings and so the comments of the Internal Auditor were:

Minutes of meeting November 2015 page 196 - receipt on bank statement 30/10/15
£156.00

Minutes of meeting March 2016 page 209 – receipt on bank statement 31/12/15 £96.00

Copy of auditor's certificate of qualification available on file.

Note: The Council must have an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council's accounting records and control systems, as well as carrying out a review of its effectiveness. This should be undertaken on a regular basis and not just at the end of financial year. It was agreed this is and would be undertaken at every future meeting.

Agreement on the Internal Audit for the year end was agreed.

The Auditor had requested £50.00 for the audit. A payment of £50.00 was resolved. (ref: cheque number 438)

- i) Audit - Grant Thornton Accountants *see appendix 3 on agenda*
Notice of the Exercise of Public Rights – the date for the external audit has been received. The public notice will be placed on the notice-board dated 1 June 2016 which is at least six weeks before the date of the external audit. Statement to be agreed as below (11 May) and for public inspection from 6 June 2016.

Copies of the Annual Return (one variance greater than 15% this financial year due to contested election) have been sent to all Councillors.

Approval of the Annual Return:

- Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement 2015-2016
- Section 2: The Accounting Statements (*must be approved before statutory deadline of 30 June 2016*)
- Section 4: completed by the internal auditor.
- Clerk to return the agreed and completed 2016 Annual Return, together with a year- end bank reconciliation and supporting documents; copy of the Notice, details of reserves. (Submission date of 17 June 2016 as the appointed audit date)

Note: Section 1 of the Annual Return must be approved before Section 2.
Section 2 of the Annual Return must be approved by the Parish Council before 30 June

All Councillors are in agreement with the Annual Return for the auditor.

Clerk to display the completed Annual Return, the Declaration and the Notice after this meeting both on the noticeboard and the village website with a declaration of the "unaudited status of the statement of account".

- j) Transparency Requirements/obligations publishing *see appendix 4 on agenda*
Some of the following have been agreed previously so this will reiterate to provide further clarity and agreements accepted as required:-

- All items of expenditure above £100.00 (excluding VAT) – confirm the date the expenditure was incurred, a summary of the purpose of the expenditure, the amount, and the VAT that cannot be recovered;
- End of year accounts.

The above will be summarised and put on the website as they were last financial year.

- Annual governance statement – to be published on the website and noticeboard and to be attached to the May meetings once returned from the auditor;
- Internal audit report – agreed that this is included within the annual governance statement.
- List of Councillor or Member responsibilities. To be edited on the website.

A copy of the spreadsheet, a summary of the accounts and the Audit Return (once back from Grant Thornton) will be published on the website and attached to the May Annual minutes.

- k) Pension
The Clerk has sent a formal letter to all Councillors notifying them that there is no requirement to be put into a pension scheme at this time.
- l) Auto Enrolment
Awaiting the staging date. The Compliance Statement is due in August.

13. Standing Orders – to be reviewed

Future Standing Orders will include layout of agenda and how summons is written. No further progress at present.

14. Complaints Procedure

The Complaints Procedure has been drafted. All Councillors need to read through the draft after the meeting and make comments. Clerk to circulate the draft and Councillor Allen to amend with any further comments for next meeting.

15. Handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998

No further progress at this time.

16. Review of the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media

The policy was agreed in January 2016. There were no further updates. Clerk to circulate again for reference. Policies folder to be set up on the website under Parish Council. Chairman to action.

17. Village Design Statement (VDS)

An update was given by Councillor Yates and Councillor Hill. A discussion took place on the parish meeting to be held on Monday 16 May 2016 following a review of the power point presentation that is to be shown at the public meeting. The agenda would cover a recap, what a VDS is, the contents of a VDS, process for development, volunteers and working groups and the next steps and actions.

It was intended that another meeting for the working groups would follow in four/six weeks' time.

The Chairman thanked both Councillors for their good efforts.

18. 'Things to do' List

Councillor Hill produced the list taken from the Village Survey. He would circulate the list to all the Councillors. There were two sections, one of general things and one of Parish Council

specifically, that will need addressing. Councillor Hill and Councillor Yates will look at the list before the VDS meeting.

19. Litter Pick

The community litter pick took place on Saturday 19 March 2016. It had been very successful and everyone taking part are thanked for their participation. A note would be included in the 'birlingham news' email.

20. Notice of Resignation

The formal resignation of Councillor Steve Conder was accepted. The Chairman stated it was sad that Councillor Conder has offered his resignation and the Parish Council was sorry to lose him.

A notification was to be given to Wychavon District Council of the casual vacancy.

21. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

- Berwick Lane
- Historic audit and accounts

22. Closure - with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

The next Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 20 July 2015 at 7.00pm.

Signed: **Councillor Steve Morris, Chairman**

Date:

Clerk's Report

Litter Pick – Clean for the Queen

Thank you's were given to: -

Saturday 5 March
Carl Brassington
Steve Conder
Steve Diston
Maryanne Dyer
Ken Fitch
Terry and Jacqueline Griffin
Gemma Hiden
June Hiden
Tara Kirkham-Evans with Alex and Olivia
Neil Lightbody
John Moore

Saturday 18 March
Sue Dennett
Steve Diston
Ken Fitch
Bruce Hayward
Gemma Hiden
June Hiden
John Hill
Steve Morris
Ian Yates
Kevin (the cider) and (Redneck) Ben for use of their vehicles and trailers

It was a good effort by everyone taking part and we were fortunate with the weather considering the conditions we have been experiencing. Note to be placed with pictures on the village website.

[Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan – Consultation Response Document](#)

Email from Worcestershire County Council, quotes as follows:

Worcestershire County Council undertook a "Call for Sites" in 2014, and consulted on a suite of background documents alongside a second "Call for Sites, Resources and Infrastructure" in 2015. We have considered all of the comments we received in response these and have published a Call for Sites Response Document which sets out the comments we received and details of how we intend to take them into account as we develop the Minerals Local Plan.

We are currently assessing all the sites which have been put forward by landowners, mineral operators and agents in response to the Second Stage Consultation, the 1st Call for Sites and the 2nd Call for Sites, and developing a full draft of the plan for a third stage consultation later in 2016.

For more information, please see our webpages at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/minerals

Minerals and Waste Planning Policy
Strategic Planning and Environmental Policy
Directorate of Economy and Infrastructure
Worcestershire County Council
email: minerals@worcestershire.gov.uk

[Whitehall Lane Road Closure](#)

A copy of a Public Notice regarding Whitehall Lane was received from Legal Services at Worcestershire County Council for a temporary order. The Notice would be published in the appropriate local newspaper.

Further clarification was asked for from the Road Closures Team (Streetworks), Economy and Infrastructure

Response quotes, *"The road closure is on behalf of Western Power Distribution for Low Voltage cable laying to accommodate wayleave termination of Overhead lines in Whitehall Lane. We understand that access to frontages will be maintained"*.

[Various road closures](#)

Another email notification of various road closures was received from Mirella De Angelis at Legal and Democratic Services, County Hall notifying of the WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - TEMPORARY ORDER 2016. A Public Notice was to be published shortly in the appropriate local newspaper.

Clerk has also informed Councillor Adrian Hardman because of the proposed re-surfacing in Church Street.

[VDS - Proposed Kick-off date](#)

VDS kick off meeting to invite volunteers and any other interested villagers. Various suggested dates then finalised as Monday 16 May commencing at 7pm.

Suggested objective of this first meeting is:

- Explain objectives of a VDS
- Explain the process for developing a VDS
- Explain the contents of a VDS
- Update list of volunteers who are prepared to put in the time

14 April – Councillor Yates sent out an email to the parishioners who had shown an interest in the VDS giving the date of the meeting on Monday 16 May encouraging them to attend the meeting. This meeting will be the start of the working process to produce the statement and this can only be achieved through the efforts of those willing to give up their time.

Lengthsman Scheme 2016/17

A message was received from David Hunter-Miller, Lengthsman Scheme Manager, as follows: - I wish to reassure you that the Lengthsman Scheme will continue into 2016/17 but regrettably we have suffered some delays in getting the paperwork to you. I hope to be able to send this out very shortly along with confirmation of your individual budget allocations.

In the interim please do renew your contract with your Lengthsman and continue with the excellent work that you do under the scheme. We will continue to reimburse your invoices in the usual manner.

A letter dated 18 April 2016 has been received advising that the Scheme will continue despite increasing financial pressures and is to be maintained at the same funding as the previous year at £1,780.00. A contract was also enclosed.

The contract has been signed and returned to David Hunter-Miller, Senior Highways Liaison Engineer along with the first Lengthsman invoice for this financial year.

Notification of SWDP related Consultations

An email was received Fred Davies, Acting SWDP Project Manager at Wychavon District Council with the following information: -

Notification of SWDP related Consultations

- Community Infrastructure Levy - Draft Charging Schedule (2016)
- Revised Draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2016)

Two new six-week consultations on planning documents supporting the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) will commence on 1 April 2016. The funding of new infrastructure, from roads and schools to village facilities and green spaces will all come under the spotlight, as well as the mechanisms relating to how their funding will be obtained.

Residents, developers, town and parish councils, and other interested parties can make their views known at www.swdevelopmentplan.org. The consultations both conclude at 5.00pm on 16 May 2016.

The documents will complement work on the SWDP, which was recently adopted by the South Worcestershire Councils (Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon) on 25 February 2016.

Details of the two consultation documents are:

Community Infrastructure Levy - Draft Charging Schedule (2016)

The South Worcestershire Councils are proposing to apply a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on developments which gain planning permission for new housing and other types of large scale development. This will help fund essential strategic infrastructure, such as new or safer transport schemes; flood defenses; education, community, health and social care facilities; park improvements; green spaces and leisure centres. Each council is required to produce its own charging schedule and, because of the different land values across the area, the rates across South Worcestershire will vary. Views are now being sought on whether the level of those charges is appropriate.

Following an initial six-week consultation on the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS) in February and March 2015, representations received for this Draft Charging Schedule (DCS) consultation will be considered in preparation of the submission of the CIL and supporting information for Examination in Public by an independent Planning Inspector later in 2016.

Revised Draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (2016)

Further guidance is being proposed on how and when developers will need to make contributions towards local infrastructure in order to ensure their proposals are acceptable in planning terms, in line with SWDP policies. Comments are being sought on this guidance, which is set out in a revised draft

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), following consultation on the original draft version in February and March 2015.

The consultations are part of a programme of work in the Local Development Scheme that was approved by the three councils on 22 September 2015 (Malvern Hills District Council) and 30 September 2015 (Worcester City and Wychavon District Councils) before coming into force on 1 October 2015.

CIL / Developer Contributions SPD Seminars

In relation to the consultations, you may be interested to know that the South Worcestershire Councils are organising a seminar for developers and the town and parish councils throughout South Worcestershire. These will be held on the afternoon (developers and agents) and evening (district, parish and town councils) of Monday 25 April 2016 at County Hall, Worcester. Further details and invitations for these events will follow shortly.

How to Comment

Copies of the documents, including response forms, can be viewed online and downloaded via the web addresses.

Email contact@swdevelopmentplan.org

Post South Worcestershire Development Plan, c/o Wychavon Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, Worcestershire WR10 1PT

Please note that your comments cannot be treated as confidential and will be available as public documents, although your personal details (other than your name) will not be published.

[Notification SWDP Briefing](#)

Email received from Wychavon District Council and copied to all Councillors, as follows: -

South Worcestershire Development Plan Briefing

You will be aware that the South Worcestershire Development Plan was adopted by the South Worcestershire Councils (SWC), ie Malvern Hills District, Worcester City and Wychavon District on 25 February 2016. You are invited to attend a presentation on what the publication of the SWDP means for the consideration of planning applications. Following that there will be an opportunity to ask questions relating to the SWDP and other emerging planning policy documents.

The briefing will take place on Tuesday 12 April 2016 at Worcestershire County Hall starting at 7.00pm and finishing at 8.30pm.

[Cotswolds AONB update – Spring 2016](#)

An email was circulated from info@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk to all Councillors giving the information of the eNewsletter. It informs residents of the latest edition of the Cotswolds AONB eNewsletter, a quarterly update designed to keep people up-to-date on the Cotswolds Conservation Board's latest activity, news and insights from across the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

[Notification of resignation of Councillor Conder](#)

A written notification had been sent to the Chairman from Councillor Conder giving formal notice of stepping down as a Parish Councillor after 11 May 2016 meeting.

[The Pensions Regulator](#)

26 April - The Pensions Regulator has notified that the Parish Council's 'automatic enrolment' duties have now started. Any employee (the Clerk) that's need to be put into a pension scheme must now be actioned.

[2016 Wychavon Parish Games](#)

The organiser, Susan Collins has confirmed that Birlingham would take part in the 2016 Parish Games and that any further information would be sent to the Birlingham event's organiser, Denise McGowen.

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Relaunch of the Wychavon Group of the CPRE Worcestershire.

The Secretary for CPRE Worcestershire sent an email regarding the relaunch of the Wychavon Group, as quoted below:

"CPRE Worcestershire would like to invite you to a meeting to relaunch a local Wychavon Group to represent the interests of CPRE within the Wychavon area. If you are interested in helping to protect the countryside of Wychavon then it would be great to see you at the Peopleton Village Hall on Tuesday 19th April.

This meeting will also serve as an AGM for the Wychavon Group and we will be looking to appoint a secretary and other officers that can coordinate local meetings moving forward. We are also looking for volunteers, who can (occasionally, when asked) go to look at and comment on the sites of planning applications in their vicinity. We do not intend this to be an onerous role, but you may help to prevent some of the least welcome new developments.

Berwick Lane

Enquiries have been made regarding the ownership of Berwick Lane. There was no registered owner. The flooding had caused a large amount of debris (mainly straw) into the lane which is already in a poor condition. Smiths Angling Club have the fishing rights in the meadows and their landlord is Mrs Derbyshire. They are finding it difficult to access by vehicle. They would like to make repairs. The Parish Council would not take responsibility for the track but may get various interested parties involved in its maintenance.

The aim would be to contact all the interested parties to see if we can get some sort of combined effort to improve the track. Then look at long-term maintenance and see what can be done to ensure that it does not deteriorate again.

7 April - The fishing club committee met and has agreed that the club does not have sufficient funds to proceed with their proposed work. An email to the Chairman says, *"We are currently considering a compromise solution that would involve clearing the debris, digging and levelling the track but not putting down any new crushed stone. The crushed stone is the biggest cost: it is estimated that it would require 306 tons of crushed stone if laid to a depth of 15cm along the 398m of the track! Not putting down new stone will save a considerable amount but the repairs would not last as long. Please could you let me know if you were able to get a response from any other interested parties as we are keen to know what other options or help might be available. We are obviously keen to get something done by June 16th as we have a commitment to ensure that our members can access the fishery when the new season starts"*.

The Clerk has made enquiries and some clearance work / scraping was done by Revills with their digger. The Chairman was informed and would make enquiries of different parties again.

Funding for development of green spaces

An email had been received from Clare Charlton, Health Improvement Co-ordinator (Wychavon), DASH (Public Health), Worcestershire County Council. Message as follows:

"Please see below details of grant funding to support the physical development of open green spaces. Green spaces could be community vegetable gardens, community gardens, woodlands, wetlands, space for formal and informal sport and physical activity, green corridors, churchyards, school grounds. Further information can be found in the link below.

Please be aware the Tesco Bags of Help grant opens for application on 18th April.

The programme aims to make improvements to open spaces through grants of 8k, 10k and 12k, raised via the plastic bag 5p levy charge.

This could be a really exciting opportunity to improve a green space that will really benefit your community. For example, a park, nature area, sports area etc. If you are not interested, please feel free to tell other groups which could benefit from the fund.

Applications are only accepted from constituted groups or organisations. This is an organisation or group with a governing document (e.g. a constitution or Memorandum of Articles).

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Ninety percent of the funding must be used for direct project costs which are for the physical improvement of the site.

The application is straightforward and information can be found at the following address

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/tescocommunityscheme/Pages/large-grants-tes>

If you require and support with your application, please do not hesitate to contact me".

Mobile Homes Act 2013 – Consultation on Draft Fees Policy

An email was received, as follows:-

The Mobile Homes Act 2013 introduced changes to the licensing of residential caravan sites, which are also known as 'mobile home sites.' It gave the Council greater powers to monitor mobile home site licences to ensure licence conditions are met and to carry out effective enforcement action where appropriate. The Council is also able to charge a fee for all site licensing functions.

Fees can be charged for the following areas of work:

- Licence applications
- Annual licence fees
- Licence amendments, when requested by the site owner
- Transfer of a licence
- Depositing of site rules.

The fees will not apply to sites that are classed as non-residential, for example, those used exclusively for recreational or holiday use or those that do not require a licence.

Before the Council implements its fees and charges, it is first consulting on the fees and charges policy, setting out all of the relevant charges and how they have been calculated. This policy document is designed to fulfil the requirements of the legislation and will enable Wychavon District Council to charge for undertaking licensing functions in relation to mobile home parks.

The consultation is aimed primarily at residents of mobile home parks in the district and those who own or manage the sites. But comments are welcomed from any other person with an interest in the licensing of mobile home parks.

A copy of the draft policy is attached to this message. Hard copies of the draft policy and consultation document can be obtained from the Civic Centre in Pershore and the contact centres in Evesham and Droitwich. People can also request a hard copy of the draft policy by emailing wrsenquiries@worsregservices.gov.uk

If you have any comments that you would like to make on the draft policy, please email them to wrsenquiries@worsregservices.gov.uk or write to:

Wychavon District Council Mobile Homes Act Consultation

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Wyre Forest House

Finepoint Way

Kidderminster

Worcestershire. DY11 7WF

The consultation will be open for comments until Friday 3 June 2016.

Consultation of Amending Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policies

An email was received, as follows:

"Following recent discussions with holders of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire licences that it issues, Wychavon District Council is currently giving consideration to amending aspects of its policies on the licensing of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles.

Before making any final decisions however, the Council would like to seek the views of licence holders, relevant organisations and the general public on the amendments that are under consideration and therefore have produced a consultation document that I have attached to this email.

If you would like to take part in the consultation, please complete the consultation document and return it to:

Wychavon Vehicle Policy Consultation
Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Wyre Forest House
Finepoint Way
Kidderminster
Worcestershire
DY11 7WF

Alternatively, you can return your response by email to wrsenquiries@worcsregservices.gov.uk.

The consultation will be open for responses until 24 June 2016.

Community Tree Packs from The Woodland Trust

Information was received from The Woodland Trust in Grantham (e: plant@woodlandtrust.org.uk) as follows:

I just wanted to pass on some information RE our Community Tree Pack Scheme. If you or the Parish and Town Councils you support have any questions about this my colleague Emma Holman, who manages the scheme, would be happy to help: communitytrees@woodlandtrust.org.uk.

Community Tree Packs are designed to support and engage community groups who wish to plant trees on publicly accessible land. Ideally, group members would be involved in the planning, planting and on-going care and maintenance of the trees, before subsequently enjoy the benefits of the hedge, copse, shelter belt or other feature to which they had contributed. The trees are fully funded and are therefore provided free of charge. If the land is not accessible to the wider public there is some leeway, we just need to confirm that the planting will be of genuine benefit to the participants.

The spectrum of groups to whom we provide trees is enormous and includes the following and many more:

- Charities & Trusts
- Stroke Recovery groups, residential care homes, hospices, groups mitigating effects of retirement and unemployment
- Schools, Scouts, Guides and other youth groups
- 'Friends of' parks and open spaces
- RSPB, National Trust, Rivers and Canal Trusts, numerous regional Wildlife Trusts
- Women's Institutes
- Faith groups from many denominations
- Rotary & Lions Clubs
- The Prison and Probation Service
- Local Councils and Community Support Groups
- Residents Associations
- Beekeepers, angling clubs
- Football, rugby and cricket clubs
- Community gardens, allotments and 'In Bloom' groups

The scheme is outlined on our website and applications are taken online at: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/communitytrees.

Many tree pack recipients are new to the subject so we provide plenty of advice and information on how to plant the trees and look after them, both in the weeks leading up to delivery and in the years afterwards. We also have Woodland Creation Champions in many parts of the UK who can visit or offer telephone advice; they also make monitoring visits to previous planters to help us assess success rates and tailor our resources.

We offer 2 small packs and 6 types of medium and large packs which meet the needs of most groups. I have attached a breakdown of species to help illustrate this and you can download a leaflet about the scheme from the web page above. We can offer a maximum of 420 trees to a group each delivery, but welcome repeat applications. Deliveries are made each November and March, so groups can benefit by 840 trees each growing season. All applications are checked individually against our eligibility criteria and we frequently ask for additional information to ensure we are acting responsibly in distributing the trees.

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions about the scheme; I hope we can help your project.

This was passed to the Tree Warden and to Birlingham news.

[Birlingham email news](#)

[Birlingham News 104 30 March](#)

The first of the celebrations to mark the Queen's 90th birthday takes place on 24th April and the Vintage & Classic Car Rally has been confirmed for 22nd July.

In this issue:

1. St James's Church Services – April
2. Cuppa & Chat, 6th April
3. Annual Church Meeting, 18th April
4. Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration, 24th April
5. Vintage & Classic Car Rally, 22nd July
6. Parish Council (16th March)
7. Road Closure – Whitehall Lane
8. Village Hall Bookings
9. Litter Pick Thanks

[6. Parish Council \(16th March\)](#)

At its meeting on 16th March, Birlingham Parish Council discussed a number of issues, including the following:

- County Councillor Adrian Hardman agreed to investigate the possibility of a 'No HGVs' sign for New Barn Lane and to look at ways of restricting heavy vehicles along Church Lane (behind the church).
- Councillor Hardman also stated that Church Street is included in this year's plans for resurfacing. The current plan is to resurface the road as far as the Swan Inn but he hopes to get that extended as far as the junction with Shorthill.
- The Parish Council are setting up a Community Fund, which will be available for applications from all village organisations.
- The first meeting to discuss the Village Design Statement will take place in early May.

7. Road Closure – Whitehall Lane

Whitehall Lane will be closed, except for limited access to properties, from Thursday 31st March for up to one month. The road closure is on behalf of Western Power Distribution for low voltage cable laying to accommodate wayleave termination of overhead lines in Whitehall Lane.

We understand that access to frontages will be maintained.

9. Litter Pick Thanks

Thank you to all those who took part in the village litter picks on 5th and 19th March.

[Birlingham News 105](#) 13 April

In less than two weeks we will be starting the celebrations for the Queen's 90th birthday – full details of how you can get involved are given below.

In this issue:

1. April Closure at The Swan
2. Ready to Respond Day, Saturday 16th April
3. Queen's 90th Birthday Celebration, Sunday 24th April
4. Village Design Statement – Initial Meeting, Monday 16th May

2. Ready to Respond Day, Saturday 16th April

Worcestershire County Council is responsible for emergency planning to deal with a range of potential problems: flooding, severe snowfalls, epidemics and other, less widespread issues. They are holding a Ready to Respond Day on Saturday 16th April between 10.00am and 4.00pm at Worcester City Guildhall at which you can learn more about the potential problems and how to deal with them.

Details of the day can be found on the event poster at www.birlingham.org/docs/ready_to_respond_2016.pdf. Meanwhile more information on how to be prepared for all types of emergency, both in the home and on a wider scale, is available at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/WorcsPrepared.

4. Village Design Statement – Initial Meeting, Monday 16th May

The first meeting to discuss Birlingham's new Village Design Statement takes place on Monday 16th May at 7.00pm in Birlingham Village Hall. This meeting will discuss the scope of the statement and begin the task of researching the many topics that may be included in it. If you would like to get involved in any way, large or small, or have a suitable skill you can offer, please come along.

More information about the meeting will be given nearer the time but please put the date in your diaries now.

[Birlingham News 106](#) 27 April

After a successful evening last Sunday to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday, a further event is being planned for Sunday 12th June.

In this issue:

1. St James's Church Services – May
2. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 4th May
3. Election of Police and Crime Commissioner, Thursday 5th May
4. Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 11th May
5. Road Closures in Birlingham
6. Queen's Birthday Celebrations

3. Election of Police and Crime Commissioner, Thursday 5th May

Elections for Police and Crime Commissioners will be held on Thursday 5th May. There are six candidates for West Mercia and their details can be downloaded from the website.

4. Annual Parish Meeting, Wednesday 11th May

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Wednesday 11th May in Birlingham Village Hall at 7.00pm. This meeting will be followed by the regular bi-monthly Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm. The Parish Council is your link to the District and County Councils and is there to protect the interests of the village. So do come along and have your say on village matters.

5. Road Closures in Birlingham

Western Power has informed us that work to install underground power cables will begin on Tuesday 3rd May. The whole operation is expected to last two months. They will begin work in Whitehall Lane and then continue from the middle of Church Lane, down to Church Street and along as far as the Swan. Access to houses should still be available, particularly at night. As they will only be working on one area at a time, diversions should be minimal.

APPENDICES - as per agenda