

# Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 29 May 2019  
at Birlingham Village Hall

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## Councillors:

Councillor Aston, Griffin and Yates

## Present:

Steven Byrne, Julia Luff, Pollyanna and Nick Green and June Hiden (Clerk)

## Welcome

### 1. Election of Chair and signing of Declaration of Office

It was agreed unanimously to elect Councillor Ian Yates as Chairman and he duly signed the Declaration of Office.

### 2. Election of Vice-Chair

Councillor Paula Aston had expressed her interest again as Vice-Chairwoman. Councillors voted and Councillor Aston was elected.

### 3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were tendered by Maxine Cook who was in hospital and Michael Porter who was abroad. Both were interested and had applied for co-option. Apologies were given by Councillor Ron Davies who had attended the earlier meeting and Councillor Adrian Hardman who was at a meeting at the District Council. Also received were apologies from the Footpath Warden, Tree Warden and Lengthsman.

### 4. Co-option of Councillors

The applications submitted for co-option have been viewed by all Councillors. There had also been a further expression of interest, but a form had not been received.

Co-option of four new Councillors took place. Steven Byrne and Julian Luff were in attendance and accepted their positions and duly signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Maxine Cook and Michael Porter would be informed by the Clerk that they had been accepted as Councillors.

### 5. Declaration of Acceptance of Office

A Declaration of Acceptance of Office is to be signed by all Councillors. Those not present will sign at the next meeting.

### 6. Register of Members' Interest *Appendix 1*

Register of Members' Interest form is to be completed and returned to Wychavon District Council before the end of the month. Clerk has advised all Councillors of this instruction given by the local authority.

### 7. Declaration 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 (if not included on the 'term of office' Dispensation form).

An application for dispensation is also to be completed. Any Councillor not present must sign this at the next 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.

## **8. To consider the Council's scheme of delegation and to appoint members**

- a) Appointment of Financial Support Officer. Councillor Griffin is happy to continue with his role and is 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 an excellent job and the footpaths he maintains are a credit to the village.
- c) Appointment of a Lengthsman. Carl Brassington 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. The Annual Agreement (the Parish Lengthsman Scheme) for the undertaking of minor highway maintenance works between Worcestershire County Council and the Parish Council has been returned to County Hall (April 2019).
- d) Appointment of Tree Warden. Karl Grimston has indicated that he will carry on as Tree Warden.
- e) Planning Group. The Group is made up of all Councillors and they actively take part in the consultation process. It was agreed that the Group will continue to be headed by Councillor Byrne as the Planning Co-ordinator. He will lead on the communications exchange between Councillors and collate an overall view to finalise a comment to pass to the Clerk for submission.

## **9. 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 for 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 Clerk has previously made inquiries with Zurich to see if they can offer a better quotation for the cover. They have responded and said that they are unable to offer a 3 or 5 year long term agreement as Birlingham is classed as a 'small ticket scheme' and that the parish is already receiving the lowest possible premium.

CALC has previously said that there are limited options with insurers for parish councils. The options will be looked at again in March 2020.

All Councillors are aware of the policy document. This has been reviewed and is accepted.

## 10. Subscriptions

The Parish Council subscribes to Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils (CALC), which is a member organisation offering support, training, seminars, advice and guidance to parish councils. The charges for the current financial year have just been received and is to be agreed at Item 16.

All Councillors are aware of what CALC does and the service it provides. The subscription was reviewed and accepted.

## 11. Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings and the next annual meeting of the Parish Council

A discussion took place on the Parish Council's annual review of the time and place of ordinary bi-monthly meetings. It is proposed and agreed that the meetings will continue to commence at 7pm on Wednesdays in Birlingham Village Hall.

It was further agreed that the annual meeting of the Parish Council will take place in May 2020. The date and time was deferred and will be agreed later in the year. The Chairman will review the meeting arrangements and decide on the possibilities of speakers.

## 12. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2019, a copy of which has been circulated to all Councillors, was agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

### Democratic Opening

The meeting was adjourned for public question time. There was nothing to report.

## 13. Progress Reports

- a) Footpaths. The Footpath Warden has carried out the following duties:
- i. Footpath 500 (behind Rough Hill Farm House and nursery) – strimmed.
  - ii. Footpath 501 (opposite Orchard Hill) – finger-post repaired.
  - iii. Footpath 506 (near village green) – strimmed.
  - iv. Footpath 509 (by Hall Farm Barns) – stile made safe (as note).
  - v. Footpath 509 (by Hall Farm drive) – finger post re-erected.
  - vi. Footpath 511 (Withy Walk) – strimmed and tree removed.
  - vii. Footpath 518 (Asham Lane) – checked for debris in preparation for cutting.
  - viii. Footpath 518 (Asham Lane) – cut by Parish Councillor. The Chairman was thanked for his assistance in this matter.
  - ix. Footpath 522 (path between lock and weir) – mown by third party.

Note: The Senior Area Public Rights of Way Officer has inspected a stile (Footpath 509 – Hall Farm) and asked the landowner to remove the cross steps to reduce any risk to users falling off/becoming injured through the structure. The landowner has agreed to action any necessary works.

- b) Tree Warden. A message had been received stating that there is nothing new to report at this time.
- c) District Councillor: nothing further.
- d) County Councillor – not present.

There was nothing further to report from Councillor Hardman who has given his apologies due to the Council meeting at Wychavon District Council.

- e) Clerk - *Appendix 2*  
Notes from Lengthsman included.

#### 14. Planning

- a) Current applications pending
  - i. 19/01007/HP – Bay Tree Cottage, Church Street WR10 3AQ  
Two storey extension to side of property  
Mr and Mrs Brown  
  
Decision due 4 July 2019  
  
Councillors discussed the proposals and feel that it is substantive and close to the boundary. There are no neighbour comments at this time. A comment will be drafted.
- b) Current planning applications approved/refused - none
- c) Acceptance of Procedures/Guidelines (adopted 2017)  
The Policy needs to be reviewed due to legislation changes and the Village Design Statement. Deferred.
- d) A question has been raised regarding static homes and the length of time they can be sited. At which point does a residential criterion commence?

#### 15. Financial Matters

- a) Bank balance at year end 31 March 2019 is £4738.17 and as shown on the spreadsheet and as per the audited financial year end.

The resolution of the Audit is below.

- b) The Accounts for 2019/2020 (*current financial year*) have been reviewed by Councillor Griffin and the Clerk.

- i. The current bank balance is £6,732.77 as at 15 May 2019.

- ii. Receipts –

£96.00 - Worcestershire County Council

£3,226.00 – Wychavon District Council (Precept) (Grant £90 and precept £3,136)

- iii. Payments agreed:-

£192.00 – Lengthsman January 2019

£96.00 – Lengthsman February 2019

£135.40 – January, February, March

£532.40 - Clerks salary (January, February, March)

£104.28 - Clerks standard expenses (January, February, March)

£6.50 - Clerks specific expenses (postage)

£40.00 – ICO\* has been paid by the Clerk

- c) Future payments for consideration

- i. £219.02 – Worcestershire CALC (Service charge per elector £199.87 includes VAT £33.31 and NALC affiliation fee £19.15)

- ii. £120.00 – Birlingham Village Hall / hire of hall for 2019/2020

- iii. £257.60 Zurich Insurance

(The cost of this policy is £257.60 (including taxes - this is made up of £230.00 for the policy and £27.60 Insurance Premium Tax (at the prevailing rate, which is levied on insurance policies)). Councillors agreed this was a minimum and the company would remain as it stands.

- iv. £132.00 - Lengthsman – March
- v. £108.00 - Lengthsman – April
- vi. £50.00 - Internal Audit – Sadie Yeomans
- vii. NALC Good Councillors Guides via CALC £4.25 plus postage.

It was agreed that 2 copies would be obtained for 'training' purposes.

The Provisions for 'Plane Tree', 'Election' and 'Community' were accepted. The Lengthsman provision is the Scheme and agreement run by Worcestershire County Council. The Clerk has signed the contract, confirmed at £1,780 again and returned it along with the Lengthsman details as requested. The Lengthsman has asked that his rate be increased from £12.50 to £15.00 from June 2019. Councillors discussed; was this the going rate and the financial year begins in April so negotiations mid way through weren't appropriate? Councillor Aston to source hourly rates. Any increase in hourly rate would mean that the Lengthsman does less hours overall. Clerk to speak to Carl Brassington.

- d) Savings Account (Business Bank Instant) – balance at year end 31 March 2019 is £4,785.47. A transfer of £1,000.00 (£500 Plane Tree, £250 Elections and £250 Community) has been actioned by the Clerk.

The Accounts for 2019/2020. They were resolved as per the spreadsheet and provisions.

- e) Internal Audit was completed on 10 May 2019 for the Annual Internal Audit report of the Annual Return. This has been signed. There were no findings, but the Clerk was advised to print off the PAYE transactions for record.
- f) Notice of the Exercise of Public Rights – the date for the external audit from PKF Littlejohn has been received. Clerk to action.

Copies of the Annual Return (plus variances greater than 15% this financial year and bank reconciliation) sent to all Councillors.

- g) Approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) Part 2:

Section 1: The Annual Governance Statement (page 5) 2018-2019

All Councillors agreed with Section 1.

- h) Approval of the Annual Return (AGAR):

Section 2: The Accounting Statements (page 6)

All Councillor agreed with Section 2.

All Councillors agreed with the Annual Return for the external auditor and it was therefore resolved that the Exemption was complete.

Clerk to display the completed Annual Return (pages 4, 5 and 6), the Certificate of Exemption Notice and the Notice after this meeting both on the noticeboard and the village website.

**16. New Homes Bonus**

The Clerk has submitted the New Homes Bonus applications for the Millennium bench refurbishment and re-siting (including works to the green), the War Memorial for an addition for a missing inscription and the WW2 75<sup>th</sup> commemorative booklet printing. The proposals have been acknowledged (30 April 2019).

**17. HGV's in Birlingham**

A discussion took place regarding: unsocial hours, the HGV's entering the village and damage larger vehicles can cause. Several complaints have been received regarding times and locations. Clerk has spoken to James Revill and been advised that movements are limited, and hauliers have instructions on entering the village.

Councillor Aston will collect 'evidence' and co-ordinate. Any Councillors are to get hauliers names and/or registrations and give to Councillor Aston to collate.

**18. Community Provision request**

The Jubilee Committee has approached the Parish Council for a Community Provision. The application has only just been received by the Chairman and needs to be circulated so that it is properly documented. The request is for funding to assist with a Memories Project proposed to assist with the production of the Second World War booklet. Deferred to July.

**18. Wychavon Parish Games 2019**

The Councillors agree to support the Wychavon Parish Games. It is already included in the budget for this financial year.

**19. Councillors' reports and items for future agenda**

- o Correspondence received from Wychavon District Council regarding an event at the Civic Centre. This includes an update from the Leader, Councillor Bradley and a series of short bite-sized briefings covering the South Worcestershire Development Plan, Wychavon Community Legacy Grants, homelessness and adopt a street scheme. Councillor Byrne has volunteered to attend the workshop on how to apply for a Community Legacy Grant. Are there any other Councillors available for other workshops, for example for the Plan? Ideas that link with the Village Design Statement.
- o Gates to the parish entrance. Eckington Bridge and Bakers Hill as these are the parish boundaries. In connection with the Crime Commissioners funding.
- o Berwick Lane. Clerk to follow up the issue of water affecting the highway.
- o New Councillors. Being proactive. An article for the Bystander as an introduction.

**25. Closure and date of next ordinary meeting** - with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.55pm and the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Parish Council Meeting is 17 July 2019 at 7.00pm.

**Signed:** ..... **Councillor Ian Yates, Chairman**

**Date:** .....

## Appendix 1 - Register of Members' Interest

This form will need to be completed and returned to Wychavon (Kim.paul@wychavon.gov.uk) by all Councillors taking office after the May 2019 elections. All completed forms should be returned no later than 31 May 2019.

Please note this applies to all members regardless of if they have a previous form on record or have already completed a form for County. Councillors need to complete every section, even if it is to state 'none' as detailed in the form.

If anybody has a specific reason that they feel makes them exempt from having their details published please be aware, Wychavon still needs to hold this information for their statutory records and any such requests must be made to and agreed by myself as Monitoring Officer (Meesha Patel) in the first instance. Failure to complete the form, failure to complete it correctly and or failure to update it within 28 days if circumstances change is a criminal offence.

## Appendix 2 – Clerk's Report

### Lengthsman report

#### **BROADWAY ROAD**

Update from Highways regarding the pothole on the junction of Church Street and Shorthill.

*"We attended on the 6/4/2019 and raised an order for repairs to be made."*

Reference Number 680047 – update regarding the pothole outside Broadway House

*"We attended on the 06/04/2019 and all actionable defects have had orders raised for repairs to be made."*

Reference Number 680046 – update regarding the pothole outside October House

*"We attended on the 06/04/2019 and raised an order for repairs to be made".*

Reference Number 640373 – update on pothole

*"We attended on the 21/03/2019 and raised an order for repairs to be made on the 22/03/2019."*

Reference Number 682795 – update on pothole that was missed outside Southmede House  
And pothole Reference Number 680479

*11/4/2019 - Recently inspected and a works order has been placed to make-safe / repair defect*

#### **NEW BARN ROAD**

Reference Number 641349 – update on large pothole

*"We attended on the 21/03/2019 and raised an order for repairs to be made on the 22/03/2019".*

Reference Number 651608 – very deep pothole

Lengthsman says, *"Has been reported before do not be fooled by the depth as I have back filled with the dislodged infill".*

Update from Highways, *"Thank you for your enquiry. We attended on the 21/03/2019 and raised an order for repairs to be made on the 22/03/2019"*.

## UPPER END

Reference Number 680480 – update on flooding

*23/04/2019 Thank you for your enquiry regarding a blocked gully. We inspected the site on 20/04/19 and have raised an order, number CEN/46546, to jet the gully. We will continue to monitor the drainage system as part of our routine inspection regime”.*

Reference Number 691276 - flooding.

Reference numbers 6911273, 691275 and 695099 (dislodged access cover in the verge opposite Maryworth Barn).

## WHITEHALL LANE

Reference Number 642620 – update on large pothole.

*“We attended on the 21/03/2019 and raised a one-week order for repairs to be made”.*

*Update: 29/3/19. “Our Contractor has now advised that these works have been completed”.*

## Election Notices

Election notices for uncontested and contested elections have been displayed as instructed by Wychavon District Council. All notices of elections have now been removed.

## Berwick Lane

**The reported issue is water that is flowing in the lane and pooling at Gardeners Cottage and below. This is a hazard and safety issue when icy.**

*Update 8/4/2019: “Thank you for your enquiry this has been referred to Severn Trent. Slippery road boards have been placed at location”.*

Reference Number 663469 – Clerk reported

Reference Number 680035 – Lengthsman reported

*Update: 23/04/19 “Thank you for your enquiry regarding a blocked gully. We inspected the site on 20/04/19 and have raised an order, number CEN/46546, to jet the gully. We will continue to monitor the drainage system as part of our routine inspection regime”.*

*Again 21 April - Reference Number 688156*

*23/04/19 update: “The site was inspected on 20/04/19 and an order has been raised to clear a blocked gully. Whilst on site there wasn't any sign of leaking water at this location”.*

## Footpaths

Footpath sign at Hall Farm - 31 March

Footpath Warden

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*“I have re-installed the finger-post referred to below - it's looking a bit battered but it will suffice for now.*

- *For reference, replacing finger-posts that are by roads can no longer be undertaken by Parish Wardens; they have to be done by County Council contractors. This is why some - like the one near Orchard Hill - are waiting for repairs”.*
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## Highways Liaison Officer for Wychavon

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Gerry Brienza, Senior Highways Liaison Engineer, Directorate of Economy and Infrastructure  
Senior Highways Liaison Engineer

*"I will be leaving WCC at the end of March. The new Highways Liaison Engineer for Wychavon is Barry Barnes. Barry was our Motorcycle Liaison Officer and has been with us for many years now and so has a good knowledge of the area and the issues our residents have. I will be passing over my work to Barry over this coming month and he will take any outstanding issues forward".*

Clerk reply: *"Thank you for your email and for passing on the new contact details. On behalf of Birlingham Parish Council I would like to thank you for your assistance with village matters and for your advice with getting issues actioned.*

*We wish you every success in your future endeavours".*

## Road Sweeper

17 May – The road sweeper was in the village.

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## Birlingham News (extracts of relevance)

### Birlingham **News 181 – 27 March**

April looks like being a busy month, with plenty of opportunities to get involved in village activities.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham Photography Club, Tuesday 2nd April
2. St James' Church Annual Meeting, Tuesday 2nd April
3. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 3rd April
4. Vacancy at The Almshouses, closing date Friday 5th April
5. St James' Church Services – April
6. Posture Alignment Workshop, Wednesday 10th April
7. Elections for Parish and District Councillors, Thursday 2nd May
8. Village Bookshop
9. Parish Council Report
10. Village Litter Pick Thank You
11. New Homes Bonus and Memories Project – Survey Results

7. Elections for Parish and District Councillors, Thursday 2nd May

Elections for Parish and District Councillors take place on Thursday 2nd May. Nomination papers must be hand delivered to the Civic Centre by 4.00pm on Wednesday 3rd April. The Notice of Election for Birlingham Parish Council can be viewed at [www.birlingham.org/pc\\_info/notice\\_district\\_elections\\_2019.pdf](http://www.birlingham.org/pc_info/notice_district_elections_2019.pdf) and the Notice of Election for the Eckington ward is at [www.birlingham.org/pc\\_info/notice\\_parish\\_elections\\_2019.pdf](http://www.birlingham.org/pc_info/notice_parish_elections_2019.pdf).

9. Parish Council Report

*Ian Yates writes:*

At the Parish Council Meeting on 20th March various matters were discussed:

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- **New Homes Bonus (NHB).** As previously reported in the Parish Council Minutes and in Birlingham News, the Parish Council is planning to put forward to Wychavon District Council three proposals for the remaining £1372 of NHB. These proposals are for the refurbishment and repositioning of the Millennium Bench, the addition of a missing inscription on the war memorial and printing of a WW2 booklet. As part of the application process, villagers' views were sought through a short survey. The results of the survey were discussed. It showed that more than 91% of villagers who responded were in favour of each of the proposals.
- **Flooding at Berwick Lane.** A resident attended the meeting to obtain an update on the previously reported problem of water leaking from the bank at the side of Berwick Lane, which is pooling in his driveway. Attempts to resolve the issue with the Highways Authority and Severn Trent had not been successful and the Parish Council agreed to make enquiries. Severn Trent has tested the water and concluded that it is not from the mains. Highways Authority has not responded to our enquiries and so it was agreed that we would try and escalate the problem with Worcestershire County Council.
- **Birlingham Memories Project.** The Jubilee Committee is launching the Birlingham Memories Project. The intention is to capture the memories of our older residents (and people who used to live in the village), either in sound or on video, so that these memories are available for future generations. The Jubilee Committee hope to purchase recording equipment for capturing the memories, and playback and display equipment for use at an exhibition. The Parish Council discussed the project in general terms ahead of a formal application by the Jubilee Committee, who are seeking funding through Wychavon's Community Grant supported by the Parish Council's Community Fund.
- **Elections.** Local council elections will be held in May and anyone interested in serving on the Parish Council is invited to apply. Nominations must be submitted by Wednesday 3rd April.
- **General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).** Much work has gone into ensuring that the Parish Council is compliant with the latest GDPR legislation. The 'Councillors and Staff Privacy Notice' and 'Data Breach Policy' were reviewed at the meeting.
- **Wychavon Parish Games.** The Parish Council confirmed it would provide financial support for entry fees for any team wishing to participate in the Wychavon Parish Games this year.
- **Annual Parish Meeting.** The Annual Parish Meeting will be held at 8.00pm on Wednesday 15th May in Birlingham Village Hall. It will be preceded by the Parish Council Meeting at 7.00pm.

## 10. Village Litter Pick Thank You

*Ian Yates writes:*

The Birlingham Litter Pick was held on Saturday 23rd March. The date coincided with the Great British Spring Clean which runs from 22nd March to 23rd April.

We had a great turnout including many new faces and so a very big thank you to everyone who gave their time to keep the village looking tidy and litter free. A very special thank you must go to June Hiden again for organising this activity, including the provision of pick-up tools, rubbish bags, tabards and gloves and to Carl Brassington for collecting the bags when full.

This is a regular activity and is becoming a bit of a social event as well. I'd encourage others that couldn't make it this time to get involved next time.

## 11. New Homes Bonus and Memories Project – Survey Results

Thank you to all those who took part in the surveys in the last Birlingham News.

The Parish Council is considering three projects for New Homes Bonus (NHB) applications and the Jubilee Committee is applying for a Wychavon Community Grant for the proposed Birlingham Memories Project. For these applications to be successful, it is essential to be able to demonstrate positive public support for the projects.

To date, the NHB survey has been completed by 32% of those who receive Birlingham News and support for the projects is as follows:

Millennium Bench 93%

War Memorial 96%

Second World War Booklet 92%

The Memories Project survey has been completed by 24% of recipients and has received 91% support.

## Birlingham **News 182 – 10 April**

Would you like to contribute your thoughts to how the village is run? If so, there is an opportunity to become a Parish Councillor – details below.

In this issue:

1. Parish Council Vacancies
2. Elections for Parish and District Councillors
3. Church News
4. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

### 1. Parish Council Vacancies

*Ian Yates writes:*

There are seven members on Birlingham Parish Council. The recent members have been Stuart Allen, Ken Fitch, Marion New, Paula Aston, Steven Byrne, Terry Griffin and Ian Yates. Members are required to stand for re-election every four-year term and it is common that after having served one or more terms, some members decide to stand down rather than nominate themselves for re-election.

As previously reported we are going through a re-election process and the closing date for nominations to the Parish Council was Wednesday 3rd April at 4:00pm. The list of candidates was published by Wychavon District Council on Thursday 4th April and this showed the election will be uncontested due to an insufficient number of candidates. This is actually good news as it saves your Parish Council the considerable cost of running an election. As a result those who were nominated, Paula Aston, Terry Griffin and Ian Yates, have been returned unopposed. I would personally like to thank the existing members who have decided to stand down this time for their hard work and dedication on behalf of the village and its residents over the last few years.

The Parish Council will therefore be looking to co-opt members to fill the four vacancies that now exist. Serving on the Parish Council is not always easy and can be frustrating at times due to small budgets and large bureaucracy! However, it is an important activity which deals with issues of concern to residents and it is an opportunity for those involved to give something back to their community. I would therefore like to encourage anyone who is interested in becoming involved to contact either the Parish Council Clerk, June Hiden, or myself (contact details on the Birlingham website) and we'd be happy to tell you more about the role. Please contact us well before the next Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 29th May 2019.

### 2. Elections for Parish and District Councillors

There will be no elections for Parish and District Councillors in Birlingham this year. The Parish Council still has vacancies, as mentioned above, and Ron Davis has been re-elected unopposed as our

District Councillor for the Eckington ward. Our congratulations to Ron, who always works extremely hard on behalf of Birlingham at Wychavon District Council.

The Notice of Uncontested Election for Birlingham Parish Council can be viewed at [www.birlingham.org/pc\\_info/parish\\_elections\\_2019.pdf](http://www.birlingham.org/pc_info/parish_elections_2019.pdf) and the notice for the Eckington ward is at [www.birlingham.org/pc\\_info/district\\_elections\\_2019.pdf](http://www.birlingham.org/pc_info/district_elections_2019.pdf).

### Birlingham **News 183 – 24 April**

Here is the roundup of next month's events.

In this issue:

1. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 1st May
2. St James' Church Services – May
3. Birlingham Photography Club, Tuesday 7th May
4. Asparagus Lunch, Saturday 18th May
5. European Elections, Thursday 23rd May
6. Annual Parish Meeting & Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 29th May

#### 5. European Elections, Thursday 23rd May

The European Elections are due to take place on Thursday 23rd May, at which seven MEPs will be elected for the West Midlands region. Voting is by party list – your vote will be for a party, rather than an individual, and the number of seats given to each party will be proportional to the number of votes they receive.

More information about the election will be available nearer the time.

#### 6. Annual Parish Meeting & Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 29th May

The Annual Parish Meeting takes place on Wednesday 29th May in Birlingham Village Hall at 7.00pm. Village organisations will be invited to submit reports about their activities over the past year. During the meeting there is an opportunity to express your views on local issues.

The Annual Parish Meeting will be followed by the regular bi-monthly Parish Council meeting. Among other items on the agenda, the Council will be co-opting four new councillors.

The agendas for the meetings and minutes of previous meetings will be available shortly.

### Birlingham **News 184 – 8 May**

There is still a vacancy at the Almshouses – details below.

In this issue:

1. Asparagus Lunch, Saturday 18th May
  2. Vacancy at The Almshouses
  3. Bystander Archives on the Village Website
  4. Posture Alignment Classes – Change of Start Time
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### 3. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

The fifth edition of the Birlingham Bystander, published in Autumn 1983, is now available on the website. History items in this issue include the massacre on Bredon Hill in the first century AD and Birlingham in the 18th Century. There is a piece on the controversial practice of burning stubble and the equally controversial proposal to install traffic lights on Eckington Bridge. There is a Pyrenees travelogue and a memory of being a participant in the first-ever international ladies' hockey match at Wembley in 1951 by an unnamed Birlingham lady. Any ideas who this might be?

The letters section covered several items, including the temporary closure of the Nafford swing bridge and, of course, potholes in the roads. The new Under 21s section – a forerunner of our current Kids Zone – included a mention of Georgina Bennett's trip to the USA. Among those welcomed were Basil and June Barke to the Clock House and David and Jane Williams-Thomas to the Manor House. Reports included the third Birlingham Flower Show and the Cricket Club.

A year after it started, the Bystander bade farewell due to lack of printing facilities. No spoilers – but it will be back!

### Birlingham **News 185 – 22 May**

Voting for the European Elections takes place in the Village Hall tomorrow.

In this issue:

1. European Elections, Thursday 23rd May
2. Annual Parish Meeting & Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 29th May
3. Mowing of road verges
4. Planning Applications

#### 1. European Elections, Thursday 23rd May

The European Elections take place tomorrow (Thursday 23rd May), at which seven MEPs will be elected for the West Midlands region. Voting is by party list; your vote will be for a party, rather than an individual, and the number of seats given to each party will be proportional to the number of votes they receive. At this election, you can choose between the following parties:

Change UK – The Independent Group, Conservative and Unionist Party, Green Party, Labour Party, Liberal Democrats, The Brexit Party, UK Independence Party (UKIP)

The polling station at Birlingham Village Hall is open from 7.00am until 10.00pm. The results will be announced on Sunday.

#### 2. Annual Parish Meeting & Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 29th May

The Annual Parish Meeting takes place on Wednesday 29th May in Birlingham Village Hall at 7.00pm. This meeting will receive reports from various village organisations about their activities during the year. During the meeting there is an opportunity to express your views on local issues, so please come along.

The Parish Meeting will be followed by the regular bi-monthly Parish Council meeting. Among other items on the agenda, the Council will be co-opting four new councillors.

#### 3. Mowing of road verges

*Cotswolds AONB writes:*

As we head into the verge mowing season, we would like to remind you of the guidance on the Management of Roadside Verges contained with the Cotswold Conservation Board's position statement.

With the continuing loss of wild flower rich grasslands and the pollinators and other insects and wildlife they support, road verges are becoming increasingly important for biodiversity. Unfortunately, each year over-zealous or poorly timed mowing leads to the loss of wildflowers including orchids.

The Position Statement is available to download.

#### 4. Planning Applications

The following planning application has been received by the Parish Council:

- Bay Tree Cottage, Church Street: Two storey extension to side of property (Case No. 19/01007). Awaiting decision by Wychavon District Council. (Consultation period ends on 6th June.) Full details can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website.

#### Birlingham News 186 – 29 May

The new Parish Council meets for the first time tonight, following the Annual Parish Meeting.

In this issue:

1. Annual Parish Meeting & Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 29th May
2. Fred Cooper
3. St James' Church Services – June
4. Birlingham Photography Club, Tuesday 4th June
5. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 5th June
6. Missing Cat
7. Vacancies at the Almshouses
8. European Election Results

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#### 8. European Election Results

The European Parliament election for the West Midlands region last week resulted in three MEPs for the Brexit Party and one each for the Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green and Conservative parties.

Full results for our region can be viewed at [www.birlingham.org/pics/eu\\_election\\_results\\_2019.jpg](http://www.birlingham.org/pics/eu_election_results_2019.jpg)