NOTICE

Birlingham Parish Council

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To Members of Birlingham Parish Council

You are duly summoned to attend the next meeting of Birlingham Parish Council
to be held at
7.30pm
on
Wednesday 16 March 2016
at
Birlingham Village Hall

Agenda

Welcome

Present

1) Apologies: To receive apologies and to approve reasons for absence.

2) 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.

   Councillors who have declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or Other Disclosable Interest which falls within the terms of paragraph 12(4) (b) 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.

3) Minutes of the previous meeting
   To consider the approval of the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2016. (Attached)

4) Democratic Opening
   The meeting is adjourned for Public Question Time.

   The time allocated is at the discretion of the chairman. Residents are invited to give their views and question the parish council on issues on this agenda, or raise issues for future consideration at the discretion of the chairman. Members of the public may not take part in the parish council meeting itself. This period is not part of the formal meeting; brief notes will be appended to the minutes as an aide memoire.

5) Progress Reports: for information
   a. Footpath Warden
   b. Tree Warden
   c. District Councillor (if not present request written report)
   d. County Councillor (if not present request written report)
   e. Clerk

6) Planning
   a. Report on outstanding planning applications
   b. Applications granted/refused

7) Financial Matters

a. The Accounts for 2015/2016

i) Bank balance.

ii) Receipts:-
£120.00 – Worcestershire County Council
£156.00 – Worcestershire County Council

iii) Payments agreed:–

£120.00 – Lengthsman (November 2015) cheque number 428
£156.00 – Lengthsman (December 2015) cheque number 429

b. Future payments for consideration

£156.00 – Lengthsman (January 2016)

c. Budget

Finalise and agree the detailed budget, including
Clerks pay and expenses
Poppy wreath – amount for each wreath

d. Provisions – transfer of each provision agreement

e. Community Provision – agree in principle in January. Final agreement.

f. Printer/scanner for Clerk

8) Review of the Council's procedures

- Standing Orders
- Handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998
- Complaints

To consider each of the above procedures progression and agree the acceptance of them if in final draft.

9) Action on future of External Audit

CALC update 16/4 circulated to all Councillors. ***See appendix 1***

10) Village Design Statement (VDS)

Update from Councillor Yates and Councillor Hill. ***See appendix 2***

11) Litter Pick

Update on the litter picks. 5 March with reference to "Clean for The Queen". 19 March agreed in principle; finalise details.

12) 2016 Wychavon Parish Games

Discussion and agreement. ***See appendix 3***

13) HGV's – Councillor Hardman

Update.

14) Berwick Lane

Update.

15) PC Representative to BVH Committee

Request for representative

16) The Annual Parish Meeting

Discussion and agreement of the formal/event for 11 May 2016 (not as online minutes as 18 May) at 7pm.

17) Councillors' reports and items for future agenda

Any reports or future agenda items?

18) Date of next meeting - To confirm the date of the next meeting which is the Annual Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 11 May 2016 at 7.30pm.

Signed

June Hiden
Clerk to Birlingham Parish Council

Date:

Appendix

Appendix 1. Future of audit procurement

CALC Issue 7 18 February
External Audit NALC put on a briefing session on the new external audit arrangements in Birmingham last Friday, and from this it appears that there will be no identifiable benefit in opting out of the arrangements they are making for the external audit of parish and town councils from 2017. Councils have until 31st March to opt out. If they decide to do so, they have to notify NALC. **To opt in, they need do nothing. Opted in councils with an annual turnover of less that £25,000 will not have an auditor appointed to them, as they will be exempt from audit, and will pay no fee.** An auditor will only be appointed if there are electors' queries about the council's annual accounts. Opted in councils with an annual turnover of £25,000 or more will have an auditor appointed to them, and the scale of fees for audit will be the same as now. If councils opt out, they will have to appoint their own external auditor by 31st December this year, even if their annual turnover is less than £25,000. To do that, they will have to set up an auditor panel, and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy has issued a Guide to Auditor Panels. It is expected that contracts for external audit will be let on a competitive basis. The auditor appointed will have to be eligible for appointment in accordance with the Audit and Accountability Act 2014. ISSUE 7 18th February 2016 2 Update 16-7 18 February 2016 The government is currently looking at licensing eligibility to conduct the audit of smaller bodies. External audit work must be carried out in compliance with the National Audit Office's Code of Audit Practice, and councils' auditor panels will be expected to monitor compliance. Councils which opt out will incur a considerable additional administrative burden, and so far there seems to be no support available to help them.

Previously:
National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and the Association of Drainage Authorities circular quotes as follows:-
"We are pleased to announce that we have set up a company to procure audit services on your behalf. This letter officially invites you to become an opted in authority to this scheme. When the previous Government abolished the audit commission, NALC and SLCC expressed concerns about the impact this would have on the workload of local councils. We successfully persuaded Government to enable us to nominate NALC and partners to form a Sector Led Body to procure your audit services simplifying arrangements and reducing the burden on you.
We also successfully persuaded Government to fund the start-up costs of £540,000 which otherwise the sector would have had to raise itself.
At this stage you do not need to do anything unless you wish to opt out of the audit procurement arrangements, set up your own independent audit panel and procure relevant services. If you do not wish to participate you need to tell us by 31 January 2016 that you do not wish to participate and will be making your own arrangements. If you do not opt out, you will automatically be included in the arrangement for the next five years as stated in the regulations passed at the start of the year.
If you wish to opt out of the Sector Led Body Audit procurement you must let us know by 31 January 2016 by emailing slboptout@nalc.gov.uk or writing to:
Audit Opt Out
Sector Led Body
National Association of Local Councils
109 Great Russell Street
London
WC1B 3LD"

Worcestershire County Association of Local Councils (Worcs CALC)
Executive Officer's Report to Area Meetings December 2015 quotes as follows:-
"External Audit

1. Last week I circulated information from NALC about the future provision of external audit for parish and town councils, and this report repeats that information, as there is a tight deadline by which councils must, if they do not wish to be part of the arrangements which NALC is making with the Department for Communities and Local Government, decide to opt out of them.
2. NALC and others are setting up a sector led body, with the DCLG, to provide external audit to parish and town councils when the current contract for external audit ends in 2017.
3. Councils can opt out of this arrangement by formal resolution of the council, which they have to notify to the Sector Led Body by 31 January 2016.
4. It is expected that the vast majority of councils will not opt out, and if so, they need do nothing as they will automatically be opted in to the new arrangement. They will next have the opportunity to opt out in five years' time.
5. Councils which have an annual turnover below £25,000 must publish the transparency code information, but will not have to have external audit from 2017. However, they will still need to have an auditor appointed for the, in case there are electors' questions to answer.
6. A fee for external audit will be charged, as now, and also a small fee to cover the coast of setting up the sector led body. The contracts for external audit are to let by the end of October next year, so the charges to be made to councils should be known shortly afterwards.

   It would be prudent to expect that the cost of external audit will increase from the fees currently charged.
   Richard Levett
   26.11.2015

   CALC Update Issue 42 17 December
   Quotes, as follows:-
   External Audit, 2017 onwards
   "I understand from our chairman, Cllr Mrs Sue Baxter, who phoned on her way back from Tuesdays NALC National Council meeting, that the deadline for councils to decide to opt out of the sector led body arrangement is to be extended to 31 March. For those who have not read the information previously circulated about this, or my last report to area meetings, NALC has set up an organisation, the sector led body, to let the contracts for external audit of parish and town council which will succeed the present contracts which end in 2017. Council will be deemed to have opted in to the SLB contract if they do not decide to opt out by 31 March, and notify the SLB that they have done so. The SL B has decided that the cost of external audit to councils with an annual turnover greater than £25,000 will be no more than for 2014-15. It is working on proposals for the fees for councils with a turnover of less than £25,000."

Village Design Statement meeting with Andrew Ford, Planning, WDC 29 January 2016 – attending Councillors John Hill and Ian Yates

<u>What is a VDS</u>

- A VDS has minimal planning weight. It:
  - Is not just about housing design
  - Also identifies what's important in the village (i.e. open spaces, lanes, features, views etc)

  - Shouldn't say anything about where development should or shouldn't go
- Andrew will send a description of the objectives and role of a VDS
- Good examples of VDS are Broadway, Harvington, Flyford Flavell and Lenches. Andrew will send us copies.

VDS Process

- Parish council should initiate the VDS process, define clear process and timescales
- Then appoint a steering group which should include a couple of PC members plus people with relevant skills (e.g: historian, archaeologist, drawing/sketch etc)
- To begin the VDS process there should be a kick-off meeting in the village hall attended by steering group members and interested villagers. Format:
  - Introduction to explain objectives, role of steering group, timescales etc
  - Split attendees into groups and ask each to have a brain storming session to identify what is important in the village. Use Post It notes on white boards to capture the information and group/order it. Encourage individuals in the groups to go out and photograph items they think are important around the village and bring copies of photos to the meeting.
  - Use structure of VDS document as a guide to the brainstorming
  - Capture the results of the photos and brainstorm to guide what is important and use this to define the section on the character of the village.
- Create a draft of the character of the village for feedback and comment.
- Also suggested we look at the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment on the Worcestershire CC website which include Birlingham.
- Then analyse this data and discuss how it could be improved
- From this analysis, define the planning guidance that should be considered in future.
- When all of the above is complete, make the draft available to villagers for further feedback and comment (this could either be by circulating the VDS document or by putting on a display/presentation in the village hall)
- Once finalised the PC then formally adopt the VDS
- A VDS or Parish Plan can then be adopted by Wychavon DC to sit under the design policies of SWDP as a supplementary residential housing policy
- have "allocated" sites that meet government targets for housing through 2030. An "allocated" site is one which Wychavon agree could be suitable for housing development and on which planning would be granted if an application was made.
- However, there is no guarantee that a planning application would be made on an allocated site because potential developers might be unable to agree a purchase price with the owner or economic conditions might make development unattractive (eg: shortage of bricks and skilled labour or mortgage rates unattractive to purchasers). Wychavon have no control over this.
- Wychavon have to show that they have sufficient allocated sites in development to meet at least the next 5 years of housing development in the SWDP. This means they must have sufficient allocated sites where a developer has applied for planning and is therefore likely to start development (although just because developer has applied for planning doesn't guarantee the development will go ahead)
- Wychavon currently have 7 years of sites.
- Once the SWDP is adopted and provided Wychavon continue to have >5yrs of sites then the only development permitted will be on allocated sites or within existing development boundaries.
- If Wychavon dip below the 5yr allocation, or if there is a mid-term increase in the requirement, then it becomes "open season" again.

Appendix 3. Wychavon Parish Games
Email received 22 February 2016

We are writing to invite Birlingham to take part in this year's Parish Games. We assume that you will be taking part this year. It would be good to see Birlingham in some more events.

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This year, we have decided to start the knock out events earlier. Rules, entry form, etc., will still be going out to your Parish Organiser around Easter, but this year the closing date for entries will be 15th June.

We will be issuing invoices in the middle of July, so we would ask you, please to get your Parish Council's approval for this before then. You can contact me any time after 15th June for information on how many events your Parish has entered.

Details of all the events are available on our website – www.wychavongames.org. This is not completely up to date, as we are still fixing dates for this year, and we have made some changes to the rules. This will be updated as soon as we have all sponsors confirmed for this year.
You are welcome to contact me at any time either by email or on 01905 841269 for further information.

With best wishes for another enjoyable Parish Games.