BIRLINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 20 January 2011
Birlingham Village Hall

Welcome

1) Present: Councillors Reynard (Acting as Chairman), Comins, Aston, and Morris.
   In attendance: District Councillor Davis and Tree Warden.

2) Apologies: Councillors Hall and McVittee who were away due to business meetings and Footpath Warden. All apologies were accepted.

3) Declarations
   a) Personal - none
   b) Prejudicial - none
   c) Register of Interests – Councillor Reynard is a British Legion organiser. Councillor Comins has submitted a planning application.

4) The Minutes. The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2010, a copy of which had been circulated to all councillors, were agreed as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chairman.

5) Democratic Opening – none.

6) Progress Reports
   a) Footpath
      Nothing to report.

   b) Clerk
      i) Congratulations to Adrian Hardman on his election as Leader to the County Council.
      ii) Tree Tops nursery has been asked for a retrospective planning application for the signage.
      iii) Training courses organised by Worcestershire County Council; flyer displayed on noticeboard for any interested residents or groups. Community Greenspace Officer from Worcester Wood Country Park also gave thanks for displaying previous notices resulting in several people booking onto the courses**.**
      iv) Roy Fullee to have The Avenue below Birlingham House inspected for potholes and to request the grit bin be replenished.
      v) Information circulated regarding recycling and refuse Christmas collection dates. Also informed that the collection calendar will be delivered out between 6 and 17 December.
      vi) Winter Service Review 2010 2011 Season. All requests for gritting route reviews and grit bins have now been assessed in accordance with the County Council's Policy for Winter Service. The Policy is available on their website.

The grit bin requests submitted for this Parish are: Lower End near post box existing, bank at the Manor House was existing and Church Street to have one. Note: None of the snow clearance or rock salt contracts are in our immediate area.

Clerk was asked if there were any results from the traffic survey strips which were placed in the village in the autumn.

vii) Neighbourhood Plans – link for DCLG press release. Circulated to all Councillors http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/newsroom/1788714

viii) Feedback from Parish & Town Council Workshops - South Worcestershire Development Plan. Circulated to all Councillors.

ix) SSSI Natural England – Avon Valley site of scientific interest; proposed deregistaction. A map showing the sites (Asham track, Nafford and The Court) had been circulated to all councillors. Councillor Comins informed that the Court House had been of interest because of Marsh Warblers and that Asham tracks significance had disappeared probably 20 years ago.

x) Birlingham roads. An email had been sent to Roy Fullee from the Chairman stating "We were delighted to see work starting on our village roads after such a long time waiting. We were however somewhat surprised where the renovations were taking place. The work was carried out on the 15/11/10 followed by the painting of white lines some four weeks later. Is this the finished job or is another team going to seal the joints in the road so as to stop water getting in between where the two edges meet? If this is not done soon, considering the weather we have had lately, all that will happen is that we have numerous potholes and we are back to where we started. When you, Councillor Hardman, Chris Reynard and myself drove around the village, I cannot recollect any discussion taking place concerning the repairs that have taken place. If you remember our main concern is the road off the main Pershore road and the road leading off The Avenue down towards Red Star".

The response was, "The area where the resurfacing works were undertaken, Rectory Lane, did require doing following inspections and detailed surveys, although we are aware that some other roads in Birlingham (which we noted when we last met) also need treatment, although as yet I don't have further information which will identify which roads in the County will be on our resurfacing list for 2011/2012 (or beyond) and whether any of these locations will be in Birlingham However, regarding the sealing of joints between the new and existing road surfaces I will arrange to have this inspected as joint sealing should have happened when the road was resurfaced. Regarding the HGV issues, and more specifically access to Red Star growers, we're still looking into this, although I appreciate this long-standing matter is taking longer to resolve than what is considered ideal". Senior Highways Liaison Engineer".

xi) Game On Sport e-News January/February 2011 received.

xii) Final CRC rural housing recession report (Commission for Rural Communities) circulated to all councillors on the current state of the rural housing market and the impact of the recession.

xiii) Precept – reply sent to Senior Accountancy Assistant at Wychavon District Council requesting £3,550.

xiv) Example of advertising in local magazine for Parish Plan volunteers. Copy on file.

xv) Candidates Seminars – district and parish elections May 2011, Poster put on noticeboard for information.

xvi) Vacancy on Independent Remuneration Panel – leaflet displayed on noticeboard.

xvii) Copy Councillor Hardman re overgrown hedge. Clerk states "Here is a copy of my report: Incident Report number 3431973 from 16 September 2010 – overgrown hedge. Already previously reported but no action taken. Request that this be looked at again. The Highway Inspection Team have said that there would be no intervention with this section of the road at this time. They would inspect on a monthly basis. Councillors suggest that the road is too narrow on the bend (adjacent to Dairy Cottage) and that the hedge should be cut back. Have you managed to speak with Highways regarding this so that you can report back to our next meeting on Wednesday 19 January"?

xviii) War memorial update from Carl Brassington. Email states, "I have given the base of the monument 3 coats of the water based solution and brushed off the loose moss. The effects are not startling but I believe that it has done some good and will help in keeping further growth at bay. I will give it another freshen up in the Spring just to keep on top of it. There will be no charge for this work as I am happy to do it as a contribution".
Councillor Reynard had provided the cleaning solution. Thanks given for that. Clerk to also thank Carl Brassington (Tidyman) for this work on the memorial.

xix) Birlingham Lengthsman had reported potholes to Roy Fullee.who had responded and said they would be inspected and any defects attended to.

xx) Choose Cycling – Bromsgrove based company working with Worcestershire County Council. Flyer put on noticeboard.

xxi) Birlingham Village Hall – agenda and meetings of November 2010 meeting received from secretary. Circulated to all Councillors.

xxii) CALC – issue 2 for 2011 – information on the future of the Code of Conduct.

xxiii) Clerk informed BVH secretary, as follows "The financial budget for 2011 / 2012 was discussed at the November meeting as you will have seen from the copy of the Parish Council minutes, as below: "Precept was accepted at £3,550.00 which is an increase of 18% on last year but had not increased for previous few years. However, it was agreed that this should be increased at a minimum of at least 10% annually in future to cover the budget and more e.g. to cover village hall contribution. Need to rebuild a year's expenditure". Therefore, as information to your Committee I write to inform you that the BVH contribution, which will be agreed at the March meeting, will be £250.00. The Parish Council will try to reinstate a further increase in future years to give a more generous donation. The Parish Council are not a profit making organisation like yourselves and are always aware that the Precept is taken from residents in their council tax".

xxiv) Public Rights of Way – priortising maintenance received from Worcestershire County Council. Proforma completed and returned in December which were filled in by Footpath Warden to Kevin Oliver, Countryside Access Manager.

xxv) Purchase of battery operated speed sign. Email received from Clerk at Eckington Parish Council contacting neighbouring villages in relation to the joint purchase of a sign costing between £2,500 - £3,000. Councillors noted that Defford had one but it was not necessarily a deterrent. Birlingham had already set its precept. Clerk had acknowledged the email and would respond.

xxvi) Waiting an update from Councillor Hardman on the railings at Berwick Brook bridge and the signage at Upper End (by war memorial).

xxvii) Wychavon Citizens Advice Bureau and Macmillan were asking for financial assistance.

c) County Councillor – not present

d) District Councillor

i) Happy New Year.

ii) Comprehensive spending review budget. £1.8million over 2 years. 15million spending power i.e. 2011/12 6.1million and 2012/13 5.3million. Council tax has been frozen at 2.5%
Efficiencies found on joint working, increased income from assets i.e. hospital, Waitrose, reducing management staff savings, resident charges i.e. garden waste
There is no further comment on from the forecasted 2 years.

iii) No increase in car parking charges at the moment but could be bought in at the change of machines. Looking at payment cards.

iv) Thought the comments by the Parish Council on the bin store application were good.

7) Planning

a) Report on current outstanding planning applications
None

b) Applications approved/refused
None

Note: Enforcement Officer update regarding The Manor House, Lower End, Birlingham. States "I confirm that following the withdrawal of the planning application to retain the bin store reference W/10/02175/PN, the Council do not consider it expedient to pursue formal enforcement action. However, the Highway Authority may seek removal of the bin store as it has been sited within the limits of the public highway. I confirm that no further action will be taken in this matter and I have closed the file accordingly".

Councillor Comins will pass planning group comments onto Councillor Aston regarding his own application. Councillor Mann to act as designate on this occasion.

8) Financial Matters

a) Bank balance - £3,125.41 at 31 December 2010.

b) The Accounts for 2010/11 were accepted.

c) Receipts made:
£70.00 – Worcestershire County Council Lengthsman September/October

d) Payments made:
£70.00 - Lengthsman Carl Brassington September/October 2010
£1,000.00 - Clerks pay – July/December
£50.00 - Clerks expenses – July/December
£300.00 - Clerks pay (shortfall January 2010 – December 2010) as agreed September 2010
£20.00 – Royal British Legion poppy wreath for Eckington war memorial

e) Future payments and budget forecast:
£20.00 - Royal British Legion – Additional poppy wreath for Birlingham war memorial
Note: this was originally paid for by a resident
Budget 2011/12 – to increase the budgeted figures by 5%
£90.00 - Lengthsman November/December 2010 – Carl Brassington

Note: There had been notification from Worcestershire County Council that the Lengthsman Scheme budget would still be available for another financial year.

9) Standing Orders

It was agreed that the Standing Orders should be changed so that the order of Progress Reports should be Footpath Warden, District Councillor, County Councillor and Clerk. Clerk to change standing orders to reflect this.

10) 382 Bus Route

Proposed discontinuation of the 382 bus service due to Worcestershire County Council cutbacks. There were no further comments from Councillors at this time until formal notification has been received.

11) Parish Council Noticeboard

A discussion took place on the need for a noticeboard for the Parish Council. The idea had been shelved because of the proposed use of the telephone kiosk. The item was still on hold as far as BVH had been informed awaiting the Council's further decision (letter October 2009 to BVH secretary). Notices need to be kept separate from the advertising on the village hall noticeboard. Some notices are being taken down. It was agreed to get quotes updated and to ask Karl Grimston.

12) Councillors' reports and items for future agenda
Clerk would be absent from office until mid February.

13) Closure – with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.25pm.
The next Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 16 March 2011

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

Date: . . . . ……. . . . . .