# Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 15 January 2020

at Birlingham Village Hall

**Councillors:**

Councillor Aston, Byrne, Cook, Griffin, Luff, Porter and Yates

**Present:**

County Councillor, District Councillor, Footpath Warden and June Hiden (Clerk)

**Welcome**

## 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were tendered by the Lengthsman.

## 2. 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.
e) Dispensation forms have been received from all Councillors for the term of office ended May 2024.

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.

## 3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 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. Nothing to report.

## 4. Progress Reports

a) Footpath Warden gave his report:-

i. Footpath 509 (path opposite Hall Farm Barns) – gate oiled as it had dropped on hinges and required adjusting. Hopefully now okay. There is no longer a stile at this location.
ii. Footpath 517 (between Peacock Barn and Pigsty – stile unstable. Checked and alternative options considered. County Council Public Rights of Way Officer to review.
iii. Asham track – flood debris. Can this be included in the Litter Pick? The small trees need cutting / topping.

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There has been a complaint from Eckington regarding the strips on Asham and the hedgerow holding litter. This is private land. Can the owners be contacted?

b) Tree Warden: No report.

c) District Councillor:
i. Happy New Year.
ii. The CEO of Wychavon and Malvern District Councils has resigned.
iii. Budget – The Resources Committee is proposing on increase in Council tax.
iv. Community Grant leaflet promoted.
v. Bin collection calendar has been circulated.
vi. Investments are stable.
vii. Keytec – the 'railway' bridge should be finished this year.
viii. Proposed planning near Tiddesley Wood is at consultation – Phase 2 review. The wood is a concern. 450 houses. What is an alternative site?
Further questions on Throckmorton, deficit in infrastructure, overburden of Acute hospital, no primary care in the SWDP, houses being built without highway consideration, M5 south potential extension but housing already planned on the proposed route.

d) County Councillor:
i. Apologises as clash of meetings between Joint Wychavon District and Malvern District meeting on a Wednesday.
ii. Consultation on budget: 2% rise on social care. Stabilising after a number of years. £346m spend in 2020/2021. Grant from government to offset need in social care. 2019/2020 overspend is £3.4m (£8m year before).
iii. Worcester Acute hospital operated in a more efficient way.
iv. Floods – reported Defford Road issue.
v. Bus – 2. More subsidy hoping to keep rural services.
vi. SmartWater – still in budget. Police and Crime Commissioner – ask for support.
vii. Cuppa & Chat – vital social care – contact is Sue Hermon.

Councillor Hardman was thanked for his attendance.

e) Clerk - See ***Appendix 1***
Information from the Lengthsman is included.

## 5. Planning

a) Planning applications pending –

i. 19/02661/HP – the Old Laundry, Broadway Road, WR10 3AF
First floor front extension over existing footprint

Birlingham Parish Council comments –
Provided the views of the neighbours are fully taken into account and given sufficient weight, the Parish Council do not have any objections to the application. We feel the scale of the extension is modest and in keeping with the rest of the house.

b) Applications granted

i. 19/02272/CU - Merriview, Upper End, WR10 3 3AA

Change of use of piece of land from agricultural use to domestic use

APPROVED – 19 December 2019

The Parish Council note that the inclusion of this c 150sqm piece of land as domestic use will increase the plot size by about 50%. The resulting plot to property ratio however does appear to be in keeping with the adjoining properties and their plot sizes.

We note and agree with the conservation architect's observations. We believe the additional c150 sqm is unlikely to be visible from the road.

The Parish Council support the application.

c) Enforcement – My Day Nursery (Tree Tops), Willow Rise, Eckington Road. Signage.

## 6. Financial Matters

a) The Accounts for year end 31 March 2020

i) Bank balance is £7,661.12 as at 25 November 2019.

ii) Receipts –

£292.50 – Worcestershire County Council

iii) Payments: –

i. £195.00 – Lengthsman September
ii £120.00 – Lengthsman October
iii. £560.00 – Clerk's pay – July, August, September
iv. £140.00 – Clerk's PAYE – July, August, September
v. £104.28 – Clerk's expenses – July, August, September
vi. £55.00 - poppy wreath
Many thanks to Chris Reynard for his assistance. Chris has relinquished his position as the local Poppy Appeal Organiser for the Royal British Legion after 10 years in the post.
vii. £250.00 – Jubilee Committee

b) Payments for consideration –

i. £292.50 – Lengthsman November 2019
ii. £135.00 – Lengthsman December 2019
iii. £560.00 – Clerk's pay – October, November, December
iv. £140.00 – Clerk's PAYE – October, November, December
v. £104.28 – Clerk's expenses – October, November, December
vi. £120.00 – BVH charges for Ordinary meeting dates (7pm to 9pm) (Annual Parish tba)
vii. £40.00 estimate – ICO

c) Precept / Tax base –

Calculations have been received from Wychavon District Council. The budget application is to be returned by 31 January 2020. Clerk to action.

## 7. Code of Conduct – revised

***Appendix 2***

The Revised Code of Conduct was reviewed and considered for adoption. It was agreed to adopt it as a whole without amendments as per the guidelines by the local authority. Clerk to notify the Monitoring Officer at Wychavon District Council of the members' decision.

## 8. Date of meetings 2019/2020

The dates for the ordinary meetings for the year 2020 through to March 2021 were agreed as follows:

| 2020 | 2021 |
|---|---|
| May 20. July 15. September 16. November 18. | January 20. March 17. |

To continue as 7pm starts.

The Annual Parish Meeting for 2020 was discussed. Should this be a separate day in May to the bi-monthly meeting and if so when, where and what format? Should an invitation be put out to Groups for their interest? In principle it was decided that the alternative format (John Hill 2017) was a good idea. Chairman to action.

## 9. Millennium Bench

Councillor Cook gave an update. Alan (carpenter/caretaker) would attempt to remove the bench at the end of February. This was Phase 1 – removal. It would be temporarily stored in Councillor Cook's garage.

Will the tree look odd without the bench? Discussion on the levelling of the ground and gravel. What about children designing a 'look'?

Councillor Cook had the progress in hand and would keep members informed. She is aware of the New Homes Bonus stipulations.

## 10. Dog Fouling

Councillor Byrne will purchase and erect 2 signs as an 'experiment'. They are aluminium and cost £14.50 each. The signs will be an 'example' following complaints received regarding dog fouling and lack of signage. The examples will be used to monitor villager reactions.

## 11. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

Updates on:

New Homes Bonus
War memorial – project leader away.
Booklets – The Jubilee Committee has no quotation until ready to print (can't estimate the size) and this will be early April. There is a lot of research to be done.

SmartWater
Councillor Aston will look at costs again (breakdown) for the project. The Police Commissioner and the County Councillor are supporting SmartWater.

WCC Budget Briefing
29 January 2020 – Councillor Griffin to attend and report.

VE Day January meeting
Councillor Luff will attend as a representative to see what interest there is to run events on VE Day and which parishioners are prepared to volunteer to help.

There will be bellringing but not sure if that is in Birlingham or Pershore or if it's to be combined.

12. **Closure and date of next ordinary meeting** - with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.46pm and the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Parish Council Meeting is on Wednesday 18 March 2020 at 7.00pm.

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

**Date: .....**

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## *Appendix 1 – Clerk's Report*

**Lengthsman**
Reporting:

Sweeper
There was a resident enquiry regarding the sweeper coming into the village. A site visit was actioned in November 2019.

Highways reporting to Worcestershire County Council

Lower End

21/11/19 Reference Number 796111 – blocked gullies outside the Manor House
Reply: 26/11/2019 and raised a four-week order for repairs to be made.

13/12/19 Reference Number 806254 – blocked gully outside the Cottage (Phelps)

Upper End
19/12/19 Reference Number 808900 – blocked gullies above Hills Cottage

Rectory Lane
19/12/19 Reference Number 808901 – blocked gully outside the church gate

New Barn Lane

9/1/20 Reference Number 791374 - pothole

Highways update: "*We inspected the site and have raised a one-week order, number CEN 49378 to repair/make safe. The road will continue to be monitored as part of our routine inspection regime*."

Broadway Road

9/1/20 Reference 791379 - potholes

Highways update: "*We inspected the site and have raised a four-week order, number CEN 49379 to repair/make safe. The road will continue to be monitored as part of our routine inspection regime*."

Upper End - tree
14 January – falling tree near the Old Dairy
Contacted Michael Porter to action asap.
15 January – Michael says "*I've brought the tree down and cut it into major limbs and tidied it to the side. No longer a hazard. Hopefully I'll get it cleared away tomorrow*."

Upper End/Short Hill - Flooding
The Lengthsman says "*the flooding is back at the top of Short Hill and I have put out the signs. It seems that the blockage must be in the pipework as the gully was cleared recently*".

**Community Fund Application form** – Parish Council

26/11/19 Enquiry from Birlingham Village Hall – request for a form.
Clerk has replied and sent the Community Fund application form together with Guidance Notes as requested.

**First Notice of Order – Speed Restriction B4080 Eckington Road**

19/12/19
Wychavon District - 776747

Temporary traffic restrictions of 30 mph Speed Limit Commencing: 14 January 2020
140metres in a northerly direction for Severn Trent works

Birlingham News (extracts of relevance)

Birlingham **News 201 – 27 November**

Here is the first round-up of Christmas events and a look forward to next May.

In this issue:

1. St James' Church Services – December
2. Birlingham Photography Club, Tuesday 3rd December
3. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 4th December
4. Christmas Cards for Sale in Aid of the Church of St James
5. Christmas & New Year at The Swan Inn
6. Parish Council Report
7. VE Day 75th Anniversary
8. Memories Evening – Thanks

**6. Parish Council Report**

*Ian Yates writes*:

The Parish Council Meeting was held at 7.00pm on 20th November 2019.

- **SmartWater**. The Parish Council has been discussing the provision of SmartWater for households in Birlingham to deter theft. SmartWater allows items to be invisibly marked with your details so that if stolen they can be traced. It has been shown that if sufficient households in an area sign up to SmartWater it acts as a major deterrent to thieves. Councillor Aston has written an article in the Bystander that gives more details and encourages residents to contact her to express interest in joining the scheme. If we can get 75% of residents in Birlingham signed up to the scheme, then the cost is substantially reduced and with grants the provision of SmartWater may even become free of charge.

- **VE Day Celebrations**. 8th May 2020 will be the 75th anniversary of VE Day. To commemorate this, a three-day international celebration will be taking place from 8th May to 10th May. Friday 8th May has been designated by the Government as a Bank Holiday, to enable as many towns, parishes, district, community and other councils, along with individuals, voluntary organisations, pubs, clubs, restaurants and hotels etc., to join in the celebrations over the three days. More details are available at www.veday75.org. The Parish Council has spoken to Steve Morris, Chairman of the Jubilee Committee. A village meeting is planned in January to discuss the program of events suggested by the government and to establish if there are sufficient residents willing to volunteer to run them.

- **SWDP Review**. Councillor Byrne attended a review of the South Worcestershire Development Plan on 6th November and provided the Parish Council with a summary of the meeting. This was part of the Worcester, Malvern and Wychavon authorities' six-week consultation, which is a pre-requisite for getting the next five-year plan approved and adopted by 2021. He obtained a better understanding on how and where they propose to allocate 14,000 new homes in South Worcestershire by 2041 but found that the consultation process did not make it easy to comment on their proposals.

  There are three major sites for residential development in Wychavon:

  - Worcestershire parkway, 5,000 units by 2041 (further 5,000 later)
  - Throckmorton airfield, c2,000 units by 2041
  - Rushwick, 1,000 units by 2041

  Note:

  - Pershore to take 669 units. The proposal for 450 of these units at Orchard Farm near Tiddesley Wood has yet to be decided.
  - Evesham 200 units / Malvern 780 units / Upton upon Severn 0 units
  - 1260 windfall units between now and 2041

  Employment land:

  - 295ha by 2041 of which 195ha is in Wychavon

- **Speeding**. Councillor Aston attended a Speed Watch Course to investigate if there are any other ways in which vehicle speeds could be controlled. This was a follow-up to the Parish Council's previous discussions with the police, which concluded that although there are some vehicles breaking the 30mph limit, at an average speed of 36mph, the volume of traffic is too low to warrant any enforcement measures to be taken. Possible alternative measures could include painting white lines to give the impression of a narrowing road (residents are against such markings as reported in the Village Design Statement) or the provision of illuminated speed limit signs that display a vehicle's speed (unaffordable). The issue of what to do about speeding in the village has been discussed for nearly 40 years and looks likely to continue!

- **Remembrance Service**. Councillor Porter presented a wreath on behalf of the village at the service in Birlingham on Monday 11th November and Councillor Yates did the same at the service in Eckington on Sunday 10th November.

- **Dog Fouling**. The village continues to suffer from dog fouling in which either the owner has not picked up or having picked it up has left the bag on the side of the road rather than taking it home or to a bin. The Parish Council had previously looked at the provision of additional dog bins but found the cost to be prohibitive due to the need to buy approved bins and pay for them to be regularly emptied. Dog walkers should remember that it is an offence punishable by a £500 fine if dog mess is not cleared up.

- **Litter Pick**. The date of the next litter pick was agreed as 21st March 2020 at 10.00am.

Full minutes of the Parish Council meeting will be posted on the village website shortly.

**7. VE Day 75th Anniversary**

As mentioned in the Parish Council report, next year there will be a bank holiday on Friday 8th May, the 75th anniversary of VE Day. The Birlingham Memories Project are planning an event for that weekend and the Jubilee Committee are putting together a booklet to commemorate the Birlingham men and women who saw active service in the Second World War.

So that village activities can be co-ordinated, the Jubilee Committee, with the support of the Parish Council, will be holding an open meeting in January to discuss what additional events the village would like to organise and to gauge the level of support. More details to follow.

**8. Memories Evening – Thanks**

*Steve Morris writes*:

Thank you to all members of the Birlingham Memories Group who worked so hard to make the Memories Evening on 16th November such a success. Nearly 60 people enjoyed an extensive display of old photographs, the 1947 cine film of Birlingham village and ample refreshments; thank you also to everyone who made generous donations towards the costs of the evening.

The next event is planned for the weekend of the VE Day commemorations (8th-10th May 2020).

Birlingham **News 202 – 12 December**

Christmas is nearly upon us, so here is your final roundup of information for the festive season. Merry Christmas to you all from Birlingham News.

Please note that with Christmas Day falling on a Wednesday this year, the next edition of Birlingham News will be on Friday 27th December. Please let us have items for inclusion by Monday 23rd.

In this issue:


1. Christmas Services
2. Christmas & New Year at The Swan Inn
3. Christmas Bin Collections
4. Burns Night Supper, Saturday 25th January
5. Temporary Speed Limit on Eckington Road
6. Managing Ditches and Watercourses
7. High Visibility Clothing
8. Bystander Archives on the Village Website


**3. Christmas Bin Collections**

Dates for bin collections in Birlingham over the Christmas period are unchanged this year and are as follows:

- Tuesday 24th December: green bins & brown bins.
- Tuesday 31st January: black bins (plus up to two extra refuse sacks).
- You can also put out two extra clear recycling sacks on Tuesday 7th January with your green bin.

Clear recycling sacks will be available from the Birlingham phone box or from Pershore Civic Centre. Please ensure bins are out by 7.00am as collection times may be different to normal.

**5. Temporary Speed Limit on Eckington Road**

There will be a temporary 30mph speed limit on Eckington Road from 14th to 17th January while Severn Trent carry out works on the highway.

**6. Managing Ditches and Watercourses**

*The Parish Clerk writes*:

A note of thanks to Revills who have been clearing ditches since the recent flooding. It has been particularly helpful in Berwick Lane.

If you are a landowner, please do what you can to assist residents and neighbours in Birlingham. It is the landowner's responsibility to keep the watercourses clear. See the leaflet, Managing your ditches and watercourses, at www.birlingham.org/docs/managing_ditches_and_watercourses.pdf.

**7. High Visibility Clothing**

We have been asked to highlight again the dangers of walking around the village roads during the current dark nights.

In the winter months, would people who are walking their dogs, or just walking, please wear some sort of high-visibility clothing so that motorists can pick them up earlier and take the necessary action. This applies to cyclists as well. If not, it is an accident waiting to happen.

Birlingham **News 203 – 30 December**
A Happy New Year to you all! Here is our first roundup of events for 2020.

In this issue:

1. Cuppa & Chat on New Year's Day
2. St James' Church Services – January
3. Birlingham Photography Club, Tuesday 7th January
4. Edna Phillips
5. General Election Result
6. Planning Applications

**5. General Election Result**

In the General Election on 12th December, Harriett Baldwin was returned as the Conservative MP for West Worcestershire. The full results were:

Harriett Baldwin (Conservative) 34,909 (60.7%) -0.8%
Beverley Nielsen (Liberal Democrat) 10,401 (18.1%) +8.7%
Samantha Charles (Labour) 9,496 (16.5%) -7.2%
Martin Allen (Green Party) 2,715 (4.7%) +1.9%
The constituency turnout was 75.4% (down 0.5%).

**6. Planning Applications**

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

- The Old Laundry, Broadway Road: First floor front extension over existing footprint (Case No. 19/02661). Awaiting decision by Wychavon District Council. (Consultation period ends on 18th January.) Full details can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website.

- Merriview, Upper End: Change of use of piece of land from agricultural use to domestic use (Case No. 19/02272). **Approved**. Full details can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website.

Birlingham **News 204 – 8 January 2020**

Welcome to the first edition of Birlingham News of the new decade!

In this issue:


1. Temporary Speed Limit on Eckington Road, 14th-17th January
2. Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 15th January
3. VE Day Meeting, Monday 20th January
4. Burns Night Supper, Saturday 25th January
5. Bystander Archives on the Village Website


**1. Temporary Speed Limit on Eckington Road, 14th-17th January**

A reminder that there will be a temporary 30mph speed limit on Eckington Road from 14th to 17th January while Severn Trent carry out works on the highway. .

**2. Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 15th January**

The next meeting of Birlingham Parish Council will be held on Wednesday 15th January at 7.00pm in Birlingham Village Hall. During the meeting there is an opportunity to express your views on local issues, so please come along.

**3. VE Day Meeting, Monday 20th January**

The 75th anniversary of VE Day will be commemorated on the weekend of Friday 8th-Sunday 10th May. The Jubilee Committee, with the support of the Parish Council, are holding a short open meeting on Monday 20th January at 7.30pm in Birlingham Village Hall to help co-ordinate whatever events the village would like to organise over this weekend.

If you have an idea for how the occasion may be marked or would like to get involved in some way, please come along. The meeting will last no more than an hour and light refreshments will be available.

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## *Appendix 2 – Code of Conduct*

From the Monitoring Officer, Wychavon District Council

*You will recall in 2012, pursuant to the Localism Act 2011 the previous standards regime replaced by the requirement for all local authorities to have in place a code of conduct of their choosing which outlines the behaviour required of councillors. Wychavon worked closely with other Worcestershire districts and the county council to produce a Worcestershire wide code based on the governments model code.*

*This has worked well as it has meant less confusion among members of the public, and among councillors who represent more than one tier of local government.*

*In January 2019 the Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL) into Local Government Ethical Standards produced a report based on their review of standards in local government. The CSPL concluded that high standards of conduct in local government are needed to protect the integrity of decision-making, maintain public confidence, and safeguard local democracy. They made 26 recommendations for central government many of which will require changes to primary legislation and 15 best practice recommendations for local authorities to consider as a benchmark of good ethical practice.*

*The CSPL evidence supports the view that the vast majority of councillors maintain high standards of conduct. They did, however, find cases of bullying, harassment, disruptive behaviour and increased examples of how not to use social media.*

*In view of this report the Monitoring Officers from the Worcestershire district councils and the county council met to review the report and consider what changes/ updates were needed to our existing code to bring it in line with the best practice recommendations. A revised code was agreed by all and is now being adopted around the County.*

*It was considered by Wychavon's Member Conduct Committee and then adopted by Full Council on 11th December 2019.*

*Council also recommended that all Wychavon Parishes also adopted the amended version. Accordingly, please find attached the amended code of conduct for you to consider formally adopting at your next parish council meeting.*