Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 21 September 2022

In Birlingham Village Hall

Councillors:

Councillors Aston, Byrne, Cook, Porter and Yates.

In attendance:

Clerk, June Hiden.

Welcome – The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were tendered by District Councillor Ron Davies. Apologies from given by Councillors Terry Griffin and Julia Luff who were away on holiday and these were accepted. Apologies from Footpath Warden Bruce Hayward, Lengthsman Carl Brassington and Tree Warden Rupert Keys.

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.

Interests were declared by Councillors Aston and Yates regarding item 12 with reference to St James' church.

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 July 2022, a copy of which has been circulated to all Councillors, was agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chairman.

4. Queen Elizabeth II

The Chairman gave a statement on behalf of the members of the Parish Council regarding the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II:-

"The Parish Council are deeply saddened by the death of Her Majesty the Queen. Our thoughts and condolences are with the Royal Family as we mourn the loss of our longest serving British monarch. We are indebted to her dedicated service to this country."

Democratic Opening

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

5. Progress Reports

a) Footpath Warden:

i. Footpath 506 (field beyond the Old Rectory) – obstruction to path investigated and reported to Worcestershire County Council.

b) Tree Warden:

i. No apparent issues with trees.

II. Are Highways removing the dead trees adjacent to Tregenna House?

The Warden gave this statement:

"*I have not been able to commit much towards the role over the last year due to work commitments. I therefore wish to step down as I cannot give the attention it requires. I am happy to continue until the end of the year unless a replacement is found sooner. Thank you for the opportunity*."

Councillors suggested that the role should be advertised in Birlingham News giving an idea of the volunteer role and what is expected. Councillor Aston will action.

c) Lengthsman – see ***Appendix 1***

d) District Councillor:

i. To advise that the Boundary Commission are now submitting their final report for confirmation and the Eckington Ward remains intact. So, no change in the forthcoming elections next year.

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England published the arrangements for Wychavon 16 September 2022. The proposals are for 43 councillors representing two three-councillor wards, 12 two-councillor wards and 13 single-councillor wards across the district. The boundaries of most wards should change, eight will stay the same. The electoral review is now complete.

e) County Councillor – no report.

f) Clerk - See ***Appendix 2***

6. Planning

a) Planning applications pending: -

i. W/22/00841/HP - Nafford Parva, Nafford Road, Eckington WR10 3DJ

Demolition and replacement of existing garage and proposed new boat shed

Applicant - Mr & Mrs Anderson

Parish Council comments:

"*The Parish Council do not have any specific objections to the application. However, the Parish Council do have one observation which, if possible, we would like the planning officer to consider placing as a condition of the approval and it relates to the garage/office element. The Parish Council note that the new garage/office includes a shower room, and we would ask you to consider stipulating that the accommodation cannot be used as a residential dwelling, whether used in tandem with the main property or as a separate residential dwelling*".

b) Applications granted: -

i. W/22/01002/HP - 5 Brook Cottage Eckington Road Birlingham WR10 3DA

Change front garden to driveway

APPROVED – 28 July 2022

Parish Council comments:

"*Birlingham Parish Council have no objection to the proposals; however, they wish to ensure the planning officer, in recording his decision, specifies that the drain system implemented is of sufficient capacity to ensure surface water from the new hard standing can be safely addressed to ensure it does not flow onto the public highway.*"

c) Enforcement: - none

7. Financial Matters

a) The Accounts for 2021/2022

i) Annual Return Certificate of Exemption 2021/2022 (Page 3 of the AGAR) has been sent to PKF Littlejohn LLP. This has been acknowledged with an automated response dated 25 July 2022 (see Clerk's report).

Ii) Village Website - Display of the completed Certificate of Exemption, Annual Return (pages 4, 5 and 6), variances, bank reconciliation has been actioned.

iii) Reply from PKF Littlejohn LLP, Chartered Accountants regarding AGAR Certificate of Exemption WO0018: Receipt of documents – notification of exempt status, 2022 received 2 September 2022.

Quote "*This is an automated message to notify you that we have received and logged the notification of exempt status for the year ended 31 March 2022 submitted to us for Birlingham Parish Council. By notifying us that Birlingham Parish Council has claimed exemption there is no review to be performed and consequently no auditor certificate and report, or any other closure documentation, will be issued by us for this reporting year.*

Unless we receive any correspondence from local electors, you will not hear from us again this year, except to chase any outstanding fees".

b) The Accounts for 2022/2023

i) Bank balances - current is £10,849.82 as at 30 August 2022 and Business saving balance is £8,291.39 as at 9 August 2022.

ii) Receipts

i. £120.00 – Worcestershire County Council – Lengthsman July
ii. £300.00 – Wychavon District Council – New Homes Bonus

iii) Payments agreed: –

i. £135.00 - Lengthsman May 2022 (BACS received) (659)
ii. £210.00 – Lengthsman June 2022 (662)
iii. £55.00 - Internal Audit
iv. £100.00 - Wychavon District Council Jubilee Funding to Jubilee Committee
v. £240.00 – G Clifford Stone mason (661)

c) Future payments for consideration

i. £210.00 – Lengthsman June 2022
ii. £120.00 – Lengthsman July 2022
iii. £97.50 – Lengthsman August 2022
iv. £155.00 - Clerks PAYE April, May, June
v. £620.00 - Clerks pay April, May, June
vi. £104.28 - Clerks expenses April, May, Jun
vii. £155.00 - PAYE July, August, September
viii. £20.00 – Birlingham Village Hall – July 2022
ix. £20.00 – Birlingham Village Hall – September 2022
x. £25.00 – Birlingham Village Hall – October 2022 / Airband meeting
xi. £125.00 – additional charge for kiosk refurbishment (item 10 below)

d) Projects – deferred to the next meeting.

e) Insurance premium – increase for assets (telephone kiosk and Millennium bench). Clarification required on the value of replacement of the assets. Is the value of purchase of a new 'replacement'? The Insurers are saying that the assets are under insured. Councillor Cook will make enquiries with the workshop regarding the bench value.

f) The Pensions Regulator – Re-enrolment and re-declaration of compliance. Clerk has completed the pension declaration.

8. Code of Conduct

The Amendment to the Code of Conduct has been actioned. Confirmation has been sent to the legal department at Wychavon District Council (6 August 2022) that the Code was adopted as a whole at the July 2022 meeting.

9. Millennium Bench

Councillor Cook gave an update. The bench is ready to be waxed for completion. The ground on the village green needs to be actioned further so the bench can be sited. The workshop has visited the village to see the site and will consult with Rupert Keys who has volunteered to prepare the ground by the end of October.

Some lower branches of the plane tree are obstructing visibility. There may also be a concern on the tree safety. Should a tree surgeon be asked to inspect the tree which to note has a preservation order on it? Suggestions on tree surgeons were given.

10. Full Fibre Broadband (Fibre to the Premise – FTTP)

The members discussed the current situation with Airband.

As previously reported, the Government is committed to rolling out Full Fibre across the UK as it provides fast, reliable broadband that will be essential in the future. Rollout in rural areas is expected to take at least 3-5 years but the Parish Council has been working with Airband to bring it to Birlingham in early 2023. Airband has already completed many successful Full Fibre projects in Worcestershire and is committed to installing Full Fibre in Birlingham (and Defford/Besford) provided there is sufficient interest from residents. The fibre optic cables will be installed alongside the existing copper telephone infrastructure. Members are aware of the need for a small number of additional poles, which have been marked by notices around the parish. Airband is paying for the installation so there is no cost to residents. 70 Birlingham residents have already registered their interest in being connected to Full Fibre via Airband's website. Registration does not commit residents to use their service. However, should they decide to sign up for Full Fibre once the service is available, the monthly cost will be similar to or possibly less than the cost they are currently paying for slower and less reliable broadband.

A meeting has been scheduled for 26 October 2022.

11. Telephone Kiosk

Councillor Cook gave an update. The telephone box has now been fully restored by a specialist company and will be returned to its original position opposite the Village Hall as soon as a new concrete base has been built for it. The original base was broken and cracked and fell apart when the box was removed. The Parish Council is looking for a contractor or volunteers to build the base.

Councillor Cook will progress further and report to the next meeting.

12. St James' Church – floodlighting

The Parish Council received a note from the Friends of St James' Church regarding the updating of the floodlights. In it they said that residents regularly ask what has happened to the floodlighting of the church tower. It has been advised that that the system needs to be replaced as the current arrangements do not meet modern energy efficiency, environmental or safety standards. The Parochial Church Council (PCC), together with the Friends of St James', have taken recommendations on the options and applied to the Worcester Diocese for permission to make the improvements and were looking for the Parish Council's views before proceeding. Recognising the need to respect the character of the village, the floodlighting would be restricted to just the south side of the tower using either one or two LED lamps, meaning there should be no impact on any residential property. There would also be a limit to the hours of use: Saturday and Sunday evenings, on special local or national occasions and when events are being held in the church, from twilight until about 10.00pm. The PCC have been advised that there are no special ecological or environmental requirements, given that the new LED lights use a colour temperature range that will not impact bat activity.

Having considered the request on the plans and taken into account that the replacement of the two existing floodlights with one or two LEDs would be much more energy efficient, the Parish Council fully support the proposal.

13. 20 is Plenty

Councillor Aston took part in an online seminar held by the group called '20 is Plenty'. Councillor Aston advised that this is not an official government campaign. The group is looking for interest and wants to rally support. Councillor Aston will attend again and report back.

14. Birlingham CrimeWatch – WhatsApp Group

The members discussed the request to have a WhatsApp group in the village. Guidance had been sourced through West Mercia Police and after considering the administration of a group of this nature, it was agreed that this was not a Parish Council matter.

15. Dog Bins

There has been no communication from Wychavon District Council on the update of the siting of the dog bins. The clerk will chase again for a progress report.

16. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

- The Plane Tree

17. Closure and date of next ordinary meeting - with nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.30pm and the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 16 November 2022 at 7.00pm.

The meeting will be held in Birlingham Village Hall. Clerk to book hall.

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

Date: ……..……..……..……

Appendix 1 – Lengthsman's Report

UPPER END
Reference Number 1319040 dated 2 August 2022
Verge marker damaged
Reply "Thank you for informing us of a Highways. All enquiries are prioritised based upon the information provided. We will investigate all reported issues within 28 working days."

Reference Number 1320533 dated 4 August 2022
30mph roundel faded
Reply "Thank you for informing us of a Highways. All enquiries are prioritised based upon the information provided. We will investigate all reported issues within 28 working days.
Update – 15 September 2022. "Thank you for your enquiry we have inspected the site and have raised a four-week order"

CHURCH AREA
Reference Number 859 dated 19 August 2022
Gully full outside church
Reply "Thank you for your Drainage Report. Your 4-digit tracker pin is 1034. All reports are prioritised based upon the information provided. We will investigate all reported issues within 28 working days."

Update - 8 September 2022. "Thank you for your enquiry regarding a blocked gully. We have raised an order to jet the gully. We will continue to monitor the drainage system as part of our routine inspection regime."

Appendix 2 – Clerk's Report

Annual Return of Certificate of Exemption

Annual Return Certificate of Exemption 2021/2022 (page 3 of the AGAR) has been sent to PKF Littlejohn LLP. This has been acknowledged with an automated response (see Clerks report).

Clerk to display the completed Certificate of Exemption, Annual Return (pages 4, 5 and 6), variances, bank reconciliation Rights after this meeting both on the noticeboard and to be published on the village website.

Automatic reply: WO0018 Birlingham Parish Council – 2021/22 AGAR external auditor instructions

25 July 2022

THIS IS AN AUTOMATED RESPONSE - "*Thank you for your email. If you have emailed us with a specific query, we aim to respond within 3 working days. If you have submitted your exemption certificate or AGAR plus supporting documents, please take this response as confirmation of receipt. You will also receive an acknowledgement email once the documents have been processed - all acknowledgement emails for documents submitted before the deadline of 1 July will be issued by mid-July at the latest. Our instructions for the 2021/22 financial year have been issued and smaller authorities have been emailed with a link to the instructions and documents to be completed. Our website has been updated with all the available 2021/22 information: https://www.pkf-l.com/services/limited-assurance-regime*

If you are contacting us on behalf of a smaller authority, please provide your Clerk/RFO name, address, email address and telephone number to update the contact details for your smaller authority if there have been changes to the main contact person since we last communicated with you".
SBA Team
For and on behalf of PKF Littlejohn LLP

SAAA 2022 Opt-out Communication 22 August 2022

Sent to all Councillors

Option to opt out of the SAAA central external auditor appointment arrangements

Dear Clerk/RFO/Chairman, Birlingham Parish Council,
Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all applicable opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is ***less than £6.5 million****.*
The next 5-year appointing period runs from 2022-23 until 2026-27 and SAAA has undertaken a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each County area from 1 April 2022. Now that the submission deadline for the 2021-22 Annual Governance and Accountability Returns has passed, this is to advise you of the option to opt-out of the next round of 5-year audit appointments.
All authorities require an appointed external auditor even if the authority meets the criteria to qualify for exemption, as a Certificate of Exemption is required to be submitted to the external auditor and the auditor must be in place in case of objections from local electors
During the previous 5-year period all smaller authorities were 'opted-in' to the central procurement regime managed by SAAA - no authority decided to 'opt-out' and follow the various complex procedures required under statute to appoint their own external auditor. If you wish to continue as part of the SAAA sector led auditor appointment regime then no action is required, you will remain part of central scheme.
However, all authorities must be given the option to opt-out of the central procurement and appointment scheme and appoint their own external auditor for the next 5-year period, although the process is onerous for smaller authorities.
This is communication is to advise that whilst all smaller authorities are opted into the central procurement of external auditors by default, any authorities who do not wish to be part of the SAAA arrangements must formally notify SAAA that they wish to opt out within ***8 weeks*** *of this communication but no later than* ***28 October 2022;*** *this decision must be communicated to SAAA via e mail to admin@saaa.co.uk.*

If notification of your decision to opt out is not received within this 8-week period, then your authority will be regarded as opted-in for the next five-year period beginning on 1 April 2022 and ending on 31 March 2027.

Opting-out

Opting out is a significant decision which requires careful consideration; to assist authorities considering opting out further guidance has been developed to clarify what opting out means in practice. This detailed information can be found at www.saaa.co.uk

An authority that wishes to opt out must formally reach and record that decision in a way that meets the requirements of its own governance framework, by convening a full council meeting or an extraordinary council meeting.

Key implications are:

- *an opted-out authority regardless of size (including exempt authorities) **MUST** appoint an appropriate external auditor;*
- *the appointed auditor **must** be a registered auditor as defined by the Companies Act and a member of Institute of Chartered Accountants (England and Wales).*
- *an opted-out authority **must** convene an appropriate independent auditor panel which meets the requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 (LAAA). Detailed guidance on auditor panels is available in Schedule 4 of the LAAA Act and from CIPFA;*
- *an opted-out authority will need to develop its own specification for its external audit contract, will need to negotiate the price for this work on an individual basis and will need to manage the contract, including any disputes, and any independence issues that may arise;*
- *an opted-out authority must ensure full compliance with the relevant requirements of the Local Audit and Accountability Act and supporting Regulations;*
- *any opted-out authority that does not successfully appoint an appropriate external auditor in the correct manner and notify SAAA who their external auditor is by **30 November 2022** will have an external auditor appointed for it by the Secretary of State through SAAA. **This will result in additional costs of £300 which will have to be met by the authority.***

Regards,

admin@saaa.co.uk

Queen Elizabeth II

Accession Proclamation Ceremony – Wychavon District Council

Sunday 11th September at 3pm at the Civic Centre, Pershore. Ceremony is standing only.

Invitation apologies given by Chair and Vice-chair

National Moment of Reflection - Information from CALC

13 September:-

"The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has invited local Councils to organise and encourage others to organise local ceremonies marking the National Moment of Reflection which will take place at 20.00 on Sunday evening, the eve of Her late Majesty's funeral. I should stress that organising these gatherings is entirely optional and everyone is free to devise their own form of wording to suit their own local needs. However, the attached document will be going out to NACO members later today and it gives just one possible format. If your member-Councils do want to stage events and are thinking about the form those events might take, the attached document might just help. All Councils should feel free to publish it as widely as they wish; not as the definitive order of ceremonial, but as a suggested approach for people who wish to organise their own gatherings, whether in their own street, outside their block of flats, in a park, or on their village green."

Extracts of interest

Birlingham **News 282 – 27 July**

It is time to let us know your views on Birlingham News and its Online edition in our latest survey.

The online edition of this email is available at www.birlingham.org/village/bn/bn282.pdf.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham News Online – Survey
2. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 3rd August
3. St James' Church Services – August
4. Birlingham Flower & Produce Show, Saturday 3rd September
5. Parish Council Report
6. Report from County Councillor
7. Rural Beat Newsletter

5. Parish Council Report

Ian Yates writes:

Birlingham Parish Council held its meeting at 7.00pm on Wednesday 20th July in the Village Hall. The following topics were discussed:

Full Fibre Broadband (Fibre to the Premise – FTTP) We have been in contact with Airband and the rollout of full fibre (FTTP) for Birlingham will be combined with Defford. Airband are conducting a high-level survey at the present time. Once all the details are finalised they will hold a meeting in the Village Hall, which will be an opportunity for residents to ask questions and understand the benefits of full fibre.

Dog/Litter Bins As previously reported, the Parish Council has included funding for three additional bins in its 2022/23 precept. The bins have been ordered and we are waiting for Wychavon District Council to supply and install them.

Millennium Bench The restoration work on the bench is now complete. Rupert Keys has kindly volunteered to carry out the groundworks so it can be installed around the time capsule.

Telephone Box As previously reported, the telephone box was taken away at the end of April for restoration by a company in Lincolnshire. This is now well in hand. The frame has been stripped back to bare metal in preparation for repainting and re-glazing.

War Memorial The missing inscription for Frederick Quarrell has now been added to the war memorial by the stonemason. (The online edition contains a photograph of the stonemason at work.)

Platinum Jubilee Celebrations The Parish Council thanked Steve Morris, the Jubilee Committee and all the volunteers that made the village celebrations such a great success.

Report from County Councillor Adrian Hardman See separate item below.

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

6. Report from County Councillor

Councillor Adrian Hardman writes:

The County Council budget out-turn was satisfactory from my point of view but we did fail to deliver some £5.3 million worth of savings target, which we are rolling into this year, because I think it is reasonable that due to COVID-19 some of these projects never got going.

I continue to be concerned by COVID-19 and the new variants and as I write this, we have over 100 people with the virus in our hospital but mercifully only two in intensive care. I do not think that this problem has gone away.

Highways maintenance continues to be affected by the high cost of oil since oil is about 40% of the cost of tarmac; in effect this means that our budget has been reduced considerably as we experience above 100 dollars a barrel of oil prices but I suspect we are seeing at this price level some demand destruction and we will see some price reduction to a lower level by the end of the summer.

We are in the process of introducing the new social care reforms and this is turning out to be a big challenge because I think that the government will need to put considerably more money into the system in due course and I hope that the new team down in Whitehall is aware of this.

There seems to be some confusion over 20mph speed limits. Just to be clear, the position of the County Council is unchanged. We are willing to consider 20mph in areas of high accident rates, outside schools and in areas where we do not have to undertake considerable road engineering to get compliance.

I continue to try and work with the Department of Education over moving the Pershore pyramid from three to two tiers. I am trying to get the Department to inject some £4M in Pershore. I am not expecting to get a decision on the capital funding from the department until late September now, which is very unhelpful since it means that the implementation will be delayed another year. This of course influences Defford school.

7. Rural Beat Newsletter

The Summer edition of the 'Rural Beat' newsletter published by West Mercia Police's Rural and Business Team is now available. The issue includes items on thefts of trailers, catalytic converters and tools from commercial vehicles, and articles on oil theft prevention and crime prevention recommendations for the home.

There is also a reminder that you should report suspicious emails to report@phishing.gov.uk. Simply forward any suspicious emails to this address.

The police newsletter can be downloaded at www.birlingham.org/docs/ ruralbeat_ summer_ 2022. pdf.

Birlingham **News 283 – 10 August**

This issue contains news on the final Tiddesley Wood Log and Woodchip Sales.

The online edition of this email is available at www.birlingham.org/village/bn/bn283.pdf.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham IW, Thursday 18th August
2. Tiddesley Wood Log and Woodchip Sales
3. Birlingham News Online – Survey
4. Bystander Archives on the Village Website
5. Planning Applications

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The following planning application has been determined by Wychavon District Council:

5 Brook Cottages, Eckington Road: Change front garden to driveway (Case No. 22/01002/HP). Approved. Full details and conditions can be viewed on the Wychavon DC website.

Birlingham **News 284 – 24 August**

September is a busy month, with the Flower & Produce Show on the first weekend and 'Toast the Harvest' and the Harvest Festival two weeks later.

The online edition of this email is available at www.birlingham.org/village/bn/bn284.pdf, which includes a couple of extra items, including details of French lessons for adults in Pershore.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham Flower & Produce Show, Saturday 3rd September
2. St James' Church Services – September
3. Church Cleaning, Tuesday 6th September
4. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 7th September
5. Churchyard Tidy-up, Thursday 8th September
6. Toast the Harvest, Friday 16th September
7. Birlingham News Online – Survey Results
8. *Personal Ads*

Birlingham **News 285 – 9 September**

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

It is with great sadness that we report the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II yesterday afternoon, peacefully at Balmoral Castle.

A bell is being tolled, half-muffled, at St James' Church today from 12.00 noon until 1.00pm. The bells will possibly be rung unmuffled for the accession on Sunday, then muffled again.

The Union Flag at the church has been flown at half-mast since 7.00am this morning and will remain lowered for a period of mourning. It will be raised for the proclamation of King Charles III on Sunday and then lowered to half-mast again.

The church will be open from 10.30am to 4.30pm daily for people to pay their respects. There is a table where you can light a tealight in memory of Her Majesty.

Any floral tributes can be left at the Preaching Cross in the churchyard – to the right of the main gate as you enter.

It has yet to be decided whether a book of condolence will be made available in Birlingham but there will be one at the Abbey in Pershore and Buckingham Palace has set up an online Book of Condolence for people to leave their tributes.

Birlingham **News 286 – 15 September**

This has been a very sad few days for the nation, with a period of mourning that will culminate in a National Moment of Reflection on the village green on Sunday evening and the state funeral next Monday morning.

The online edition of this email contains winners' lists from the Flower & Produce Show and the full results of the Birlingham News Online survey. The online edition is available at www.birlingham.org/village/bn/bn286.pdf.

In this issue:

National Moment of Reflection, Sunday 18th September
Funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II, Monday 19th September
Toast the Harvest – Cancelled
Harvest Festival, Sunday 18th September
Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 21st September
Skittles League
Bystander Archives on the Village Website

NATIONAL MOMENT OF REFLECTIONS Sunday 18th September

Ian Yates writes:

You will have seen that the Government has announced that there will be a National Moment of Reflection, which will take place at 8.00pm on Sunday evening, the eve of Her late Majesty's funeral.

For those of you who would like to mark this event with others from Birlingham, we will be gathering on the village green at 7.50pm so that we can observe the one minute's silence together. We hope you can join us.

FUNERAL OF HM QUEEN ELIZABETH II Monday 19th September

The funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II will take place on Monday 19th September at 11.00am. The day has been declared a bank holiday.

The bells of St James' Church will be rung half-muffled from 10.00am until 11.00am on Monday.

The Union Flag will remain at half-mast until Tuesday morning.

PARISH COUNCIL MEETING Wednesday 21st September

The next meeting of Birlingham Parish Council takes place on Wednesday 21st September at 7.00pm in Birlingham Village Hall. During the meeting there is an opportunity to express your views on local issues, so please go along.