Birlingham Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting followed by an Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 19 July 2023

In Birlingham Village Hall

Annual Parish Council Meeting

This is the first meeting of newly elected Parish Councillors and therefore an Annual Council meeting forming a new Parish Council, where appointments for the following take place: Chair, Vice-Chair and Committee Members and Representatives to other bodies.

Councillors:

The Clerk has hereby received notice that the persons listed below are duly elected unopposed and may form the Parish Council.

Councillors Paula Aston, Steven Byrne, Katie Parsons and Ian Yates.

In attendance:

District Councillor Paul Middlebrough, David Glover and Clerk, June Hiden.

1. Election of Chair for 2023 – 2024

Councillor Ian Yates was willing to continue as Chairman. It was agreed unanimously to elect Councillor Yates as Chairman and he duly accepted the role. He will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Welcome – The Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

2. Election of Vice-Chair

It was agreed to appoint a Vice-Chair. Councillor Paula Aston wished to continue as Vice-Chairwoman. Councillors voted and Councillor Aston was elected.

3. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were tendered by Michael Porter who was away on holiday. Apologies given by the Footpath Warden Bruce Hayward who was away on holiday, Lengthsman Carl Brassington and Tree Warden Rupert Day who was not available due to train strikes. It was noted that County Councillor Adrian Hardman was attending the Wychavon District Council meeting.

4. Co-option of Councillors

Introductions were given by all present.

The Clerk has received notice that as part of the process for the 4 May 2023 elections the Parish Council may co-opt additional councillors to fill the remaining 3 vacancies. A Notice of Co-option had been advertised and applications for consideration had been received from Michael Porter and David Glover. The applications for co-option had been viewed by all Councillors.

It was agreed to Co-opt both candidates Michael Porter and David Glover as Parish Councillors.

The Parish Council agreed to publicise the remaining vacancy on the Council with a view to co-opting a new Councillor as soon as possible. Councillor Aston would write an article for the Bystander and Councillor Yates would give an update in his report to the Birlingham News. The Clerk will inform Wychavon District Council of the Co-options and the remaining vacancy.

Parish elections are scheduled for May 2027 and terms of office will come to an end whether persons have been elected (uncontested polls) or co-opted.

Term of office: The term of office of all Councillors ends on Monday 10 May 2027.

5. Declarations of Interest *Appendix 1*

a) Register of Interests: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests.
After the recent May elections every Councillor on the Council must complete a new Register of Interest form; copies of which had been circulated to all Councillors. Councillors were reminded that it is their personal duty to ensure the form was completed truthfully and correct and once lodged with the District Council it would be a public document available via its website. All elected councillors have confirmed to the Clerk that their forms have been submitted.
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 Parish 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 to be completed by all Councillors for the term of office ended May 2027.

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.

Councillor Aston declared an interest in Hills Cottage planning application.

6. To consider the Council's Scheme of Delegation for Officers and Representatives

a) Appointment of Lengthsman;
The Annual Agreement (the Parish Lengthsman Scheme) for the undertaking of minor highway maintenance works between Worcestershire County Council and the Parish Council had been returned to County Hall in April 2023.
Carl Brassington was happy to continue as the Lengthsman on the current contractual basis and a copy of his current business insurance policy is held on record. Carl was re-appointed as Lengthsman.

b) Appointment of Tree Warden; Rupert Day will continue in his role as the Warden for 12 months.

c) Planning Group – All members are in the Planning Group. They actively take part in the consultation process which has a Head of the Group to lead consultation, collate the Group remarks and finalise a comment before sending to the Proper Officer (Clerk) for submission to the local authority. Councillor Steven Byrne will continue as the Lead. Councillor Katie Parsons will support when further assistance is needed.

d) Appointment of Footpath Warden under the authority of Worcestershire County Council; Bruce Hayward has confirmed that he will continue in his role as Warden. The Parish Councillors thanked Bruce for his work and support in the village and to give thanks to Mark Smith who assists Bruce when needed.

e) Appointment of Financial Support Officer. Councillor Paula Aston is willing to give any advice and support in this role.

The Chairman thanked all volunteers for their assistance to the community.

7. Confirmation of arrangements for Insurance Cover (Item 13)

The Parish Council is required by law to assess, at least annually, the risk of its various activities (litter pick – public liability) and to update its insurance and asset register. The understanding for the Insurers (Zurich) is that: the precept is under £25,000 (Certificate of Exemption confirms this), the wages are under £20,000, All Risk's total is under £10,000 and there are no major events or public services undertaken during the year on behalf of the Parish Council.

The Clerk will check the cover for the two assets, the kiosk and bench due to their refurbishment. The mower has already been written off and the strimmer has no value. See note by Internal Auditor 13e.

8. Review of the Council's subscriptions to other bodies (Item 13)

The Parish Council reviewed and approved its subscription 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 been received and are to be agreed at agenda item 12.

All Councillors are aware of what CALC does and the service it provides which is an important backup and useful membership to the Parish Council. They have just provided a draft guidance for the revised GDPR and Code of Conduct which will be reconsidered at the next meeting.

The subscription was reviewed and accepted.

9. 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. There appears to be a clash with meetings on a Wednesday with Wychavon District Council and the Parish. Councillor Middlebrough will email the Clerk to give the calendar for the next year of the meetings.

It was proposed and agreed that the meetings will continue to commence at 7pm on the third Wednesday of the month unless there is a conflict with Wychavon District Council and a different week will be reconsidered. Birlingham Village Hall is the usual venue and is being booked in advance. Meetings will be face to face.

It was agreed that the annual meeting of the Parish Council will take place in May 2024. The date and will be agreed later in the year.

Ordinary Parish Council Meeting

10. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Ordinary Parish meeting held on 15 March 2023, a draft copy of which has been circulated to all Councillors, was agreed as a true record and duly signed by the Chair.

Democratic Opening - The meeting was adjourned for public question time. There being no member of the public in attendance there was nothing further to report.

11. Progress Reports

a) Footpath Warden:

i. Footpath 511 (Withy Walk) – strimmed and hedge trimmed.
ii. Footpath 522 (between weir and lock) - strimmed.
ii. Footpath 522 (Nafford Lock) – pedestrian bridge repaired by the Avon Navigation Trust.

b) Tree Warden:

Rupert Day had given a fuller report for the Annual Parish meeting in May.

Since then, the Warden has said:

"*My travels around the village would suggest that there is nothing to report this time. Apologies I had meant to sit with Steve Morris to give some recommendations on the Jubilee Wood but have not had the time - hopefully for the next meeting.*"

The yellow markings on the trees near the church was noted. Clerk to ask Worcestershire County Council what the update on the removal of these is.

c) Lengthsman – see ***Appendix 3*** Clerk to circulate the full report to Councillors

The Lengthsman has been asked to identify the reported sights. Carl Brassington already marks the location with yellow paint and Highways mark them red. However, he will see if he can use 'what3words' also.

d) District Councillor

The Parish Council was pleased to welcome Wychavon District Councillor Paul Middlebrough to the meeting. He has taken over the Eckington Ward from Ron Davis, who retired at the election.

Report, as below:-

As I *get into my role as a Wychavon District Councillor the role, I am now getting requests from residents on matters which unsurprisingly are mainly planning issues. Amongst them have been*

- *Complaints that enforcement not being undertaken.*
- *Why is enforcement being undertaken?*
- *What is the purpose of a Planning Inspectorate hearing and how can you submit material about an appeal?*
- *Utility contractors not reinstating damage to private property.*
- *Request to take a planning application to committee.*

I attended *the Planning Committee 22nd June on which dealt with two small residential barn and one infilling house. This Thursday the Planning Committee, amongst other items has applications for thirty and sixty-two houses in Crowle.*

On June 26th *I chaired the Member Conduct Committee which brought us up to speed on several cases*

The *Executive Board approved spending £290,000 to deliver a new water play area at Abbey Park, Pershore*

On the *19th of this month the Communities and Funding Advisory Panel are briefing new councillors on community funding opportunities, and I will report back on any hints etc. on applying for support.*

Following on *from the Community Conversation event in Pershore in May, Police & Crime Commissioner, John Campion has launched a webpage which covers the work being done to address concerns raised by residents.*

You can find read the full West Mercia Police report on local policing in Pershore as well as being able to watch a conversation between the Police & Crime Commissioner and Superintendent Rebecca Love, area commander, on your top priorities.

Please visit the webpage for more information https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/pershore/

The next Community Conversation event will take place on Wednesday 15 November at Pershore Town Hall from 6pm to 8pm.

Support for military veterans

The Worcestershire Armed Forces Covenant Strategic partnership has produced a leaflet with important contact details which may be helpful for veterans and their families.
I have included this in my report as the Eckington Wychavon ward has over 5% of the population with links to the forces as discovered from the 2021 Census. This the highest percentage in Wychavon.

IF YOU WANT TO CONTACT ME DON'T HESITATE

Paul Middlebrough, The Forge, Church Lane, Norton WR5 2PS
paul.middlebrough@wychavon.net
01905 821 732

The District Councillor said he would act in a generic way at this time and will then become more specific as he gets to know the Ward. He is willing to help at community events. He is challenging planning issues so that all bodies can work together.

Paul is one of John Campion's Assistant Police and Crime Commissioners for West Mercia. He was previously in Herefordshire. His role is to represent John Campion in communities across West Mercia, specifically Worcestershire and Herefordshire. In addition, he has also taken on the role as Vice-Chair of the Planning Committee at Wychavon DC. He advised that the Director of Planning who had recently commenced in the role was leaving. Councillor Middlebrough was made aware of the Broadgrove planning application and the need to take this to Committee. Planning and crime are both important issues for Birlingham residents, so the Parish Council look forward to working closely with the District Councillor in future. Councillor Middlebrough said he intends to come to every Parish Council meeting.

e) County Councillor: none.

f) Clerk - See ***Appendix 4***

12. Planning

a) Planning applications pending: -

i. W/23/00042/FUL – Broad grove Nursery Farm Shop, Eckington Road WR10 3DA

Commercial redevelopment of nursery site with 7 no. units

Applicant – Mr T Mence

Parish Council comments:

20 March 2023 –

"Regarding the current application, we have several fundamental concerns, which we feel would need to be comprehensively addressed and satisfied prior to this application gaining support from the Parish Council or indeed local community. As a Parish Council we have been approached by the majority of people living in proximity to the site, and no doubt they will be making direct representations to the planning authority as well.

Issues/concerns:

The access/egress onto the site and general highways issues:
The proximity to a blind bend, which even if vehicles kept to the speed limit would present a danger, but vehicles tend to speed around that corner and arrive upon the access/egress into the subject site at speed and with little reaction time.
At peak times in the morning, we expect between 8am and 9 am, when staff arrive to work in the proposed project, cars may need to queue on the public highway to await their turn to progress into the site. Possibly having a much wider bell mouth on the site/queuing area may negate the need to queue on the Highway?
At peak times in the evening, we expect between 4.30pm and 5.30pm, it would again put considerable pressure on the sites access/egress point. In the winter this occurs in darkness and unless the Council plan street lighting, it would become even more hazardous to have a lot of vehicle movements to and from the site at those times.

The number of visits to and from the site during trading hours from this number of units, also raises concerns.
The current use for the site, when previously trading, at peak times probably had one staff and two or three customer cars. This proposal has over 30 car parking spaces which is a great intensification.
A short distance away on the other side of the road there is already a small turning on the bend leading to a handful of village properties. The combination of the potential disruption to traffic at Broadgrove and the use of the existing turn, would create an unwelcome level of risk to all road users on that bend. The turn is also a public footpath but there is no pavement on that side of the road so it can only be accessed by crossing the road close to the bend with limited visibility in both directions; even with current traffic volumes this is already a risky undertaking.

The positioning of the refuse bins:

They are in our view, too close to adjoining residential property, therefore representing health issues, but also potential noise issues if the commercial refuse is collected at unsocial hours.

Notification procedure:

From comments we as a Parish Council have received we do not believe that all parties adjoining the applicants boundary or indeed in proximity, were written to making them aware of the application.

Trading hours:

Considerable concern was expressed about long trading hours given is proximity to residential accommodation. We would expect to see limitation on trading hours to Monday to Friday, c 8.00 am, to 6pm

Design and Ecology:

We are supportive of the recommended ecological measures proposed but at the same time concerned that the overall development amounts to an overlarge injection of buildings and hard landscaping in amongst the existing green fields, trees and hedgerows characteristic of the area. At six metres tall these buildings are akin to two storey houses in height, and this would be to the detriment of the local

environment and the tenor of the neighbourhood; even with significant soft planting to obscure the site, the character of this area would be irrevocably altered.
We acknowledge the attempt to soften the visual impact of such large new buildings in a rural area with the use of vertical timber cladding, but question whether this is sufficient to counteract dark grey roofing, and large dark grey roller shutters and steel doors – the overall look is still one of light industry/commercial premises that will be out of keeping with the location and the adjoining residential accommodation.
We understand that the Use Class E development specifies that any industrial processes should not be detrimental to the area by reason of noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust or grit. We would however also highlight the fact that Eckington Road is currently an unlit country road and query whether the proposed development, especially during the dark winter months, will be generating an untoward level of light pollution which would disturb local residents or wildlife and change the nature of the locality.

Potential future applications:

We, as the Parish Council would like to draw your attention to the Birlingham Village Design Statement which recommends that residential development should be on a small scale (1-3 houses) and reflective of existing buildings in the parish by incorporating a variety of styles, orientations and materials; whilst commercial in nature, this proposed development equates to seven large identical houses in two straight rows, so is not at all in keeping with the design ethos for the parish.
However, if a future alternative application was submitted for 2/3 residential houses on the entire site (not just the red lined current application area), we as the Parish council would be supportive, as it would be in line with the Birlingham Village Plan, and important aid the current site owner to address the current semi derelict state of the site, which in itself has a detriment affect on the adjoining residential land owners."

Amendment - Date received: 21 June 2023

Description of additional information/amendment: Building heights are reduced - Hedge planting shown along boundary between Northcroft and proposed unit 3. - Planting shown at the ends of parking bays. - Note updated to incorporate new trees in hedgerow along SE boundary. - Additional tree and shrub planting indicated along SW bank adjacent development. - 2.5m acoustic fence added along the boundary of the access road and the rear garden of Northcroft. - Refuse store relocated to the end of parking bays to units 5- 6 to move away from residential garden and retain central location between all units.

Parish Council's further comments:

26 June 2023

We Object to the planning application W/23/00042/FUL:

"Birlingham PC do not feel that the objections and concerns we previously raised on behalf of residents within the Parish have been adequately address by the proposed modifications. Please refer to the previous identified objections and concerns. Indeed, we also do not feel the modifications address adequately the concerns raised by the statutory consultees.

We continue to be particularly concerned with:

The revised application states that the "building heights are reduced as much as reasonably practical. Any further reduction would not be practical or usable". However. there are no dimensions on the drawing to tell if the height reduction is

significant or not, and Wychavon's site no longer shows copies of the previous drawings. So, what are the actual height reductions?
Hedge planting shown along boundary between Northcroft and proposed unit 3. Please consider ensuring the acoustic fence is extended along this boundary.
The proposal indicates a 2.5m acoustic fence added along the boundary of the access road and the rear garden of Northcroft. Please consider imposing a condition that the acoustic fence (blue dashed line) should extend along the full length of the access road.
Please review the refuse store being relocated to the end of parking bays to units 5-6, to move away from residential garden, and retain central location between all units. Is there a better location to keep it entirely away from adjoining residential property.?
The access and egress of the enhanced vehicle movements generated by the proposal. We still consider this dangerous especially so close to a fast dangerous bend.
The massing, design and the scale of development proposed, continues to be out of keeping with, and may be deemed harmful to, the rural character.
If, you ultimately decide to grant the consent, we would ask you to consider a condition restricting the use to a narrow definition. As currently set out in the planning application A general Use Class E permission would allow the site use to change to any of the myriad uses listed within class E, some of which would be significantly more harmful in this location and impact greatly on its neighbours and indeed to village.
We once again ask you to consider limiting the trading hours during the week, and not allowing operations on the weekend, due to the proximity to local residential units, in a predominantly residential location."

ii. W22/02657/HP - Hills Cottage, Upper End WR10 3AA

First floor extension over existing carport. The enclosure of carport bay at ground floor level to create entrance hall and construction of zinc standing seam roof to link house to carport. Addition of PV solar panels.

Applicant - Mr Nicholas Aston

Parish Council comments:

"The majority of the parish council do not support the planning application as it has been submitted. The reasons for this decision are as follows:

The mass and the height of the proposed additional building, and in particular the height of the ridge line, detracts in a material way from the central part of the house that was so beautifully restored, with great care and attention. We feel it would diminish and detrimentally dominate the character of the listed building. The proposed addition mass and additional height is overlooked by the adjoining neighbours.
The proposed new ridge line over the garage is also nearly as high as the central part of the house/cottage. We feel it changes in a detrimental way the balance and the aesthetics of the listed building.
The front elevational treatment is a little brutalist compared to the sensitive way the central element of the cottage has been sympathetically restored.
The proposal conflicts with the Adopted Village Design Statement with regard to the proposed alternation of the shape and nature of the property and associated garage block.
However, as an observation only, the Parish Council would be minded to support an application with:

A lower height ridge line, with a less imposing mass, and use of materials in keeping with the main central part of the cottage.
The filling in and use of part of the ground floor area in the garage to be used for domestic use.

The use of the first-floor area over the existing garage as a domestic use, but with the existing ridge line height of the existing garage being adopted as the maximum height.
The use of solar panels on the rear of the properties roofing (so that it cannot be seen from the road or the immediately adjoining property)."

iii. W/22/02656/LB (Associated Ref: W/22/02657/HP) – Hills Cottage

First Floor extension over existing carport. The enclosure of carport bay at ground floor level to create entrance hall and construction of zinc standing seam roof to link house to carport. Addition PV solar panels

As with the Planning application the Parish Council comments are the same.

Amendment - Date received: 23 April 2023

Description of additional information/amendment: Reduction in ridge height of first floor garage extension. Omission of dormer window to front elevation of first floor garage extension and replacement with 2 number conservation roof lights. Relocation of conservation roof lights to rear pitch of car port roof and omission of 1 number solar panel. Addition of 1 number solar panel to east facing roof increasing the number of panels from 8 to 9. Addition of high-level window on east wall of carport.

30 April: the Parish Council is inquorate.

June 2023: Parish Council comments to Wychavon

Birlingham Parish Council noted the revised application but were unable to comment as it was inquorate at the time.

b) Applications granted: none.

c) Enforcement: -

Referred to local *authority for guidance following resident's comments:*

- Rose Cottage – garden room extension
- Birlingham Nurseries – erection of agricultural building

Birlingham Nurseries, Upper End - reference MGX-883972

23 March 2023

Case reference	MGX-883972
Name	June Hiden - clerk to Birlingham Parish Council
Email address	birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk
Location postcode	wr10 3aa
Location address first line	Birlingham Nurseries, Upper End, Birlingham, PERSHORE
Location UPRN	100121278100
Description of breach	A building has been erected at the nursery site and this may be a breach of planning regulations

Clerk has asked for a further update from the Officer.

Reference only - Michael Hastings, Highways & Transport Customer Service Manager

Illegal Works on the Worcestershire Highway

28 March 2023

"Worcestershire County Council has recently identified instances of unauthorised and illegal works on the Worcestershire Highway. These works were to install Vehicular Dropped Kerbs on the public footway outside of private properties. Initial enquiries suggest that there may be a larger problem countywide with tradesmen/contractors/companies falsely advertising that they are approved by Worcestershire County Council to undertake works on the Worcestershire Highway, thereby misleading the public into contracting them to undertake these illegal works.

Ringway Infrastructure Services (RIS) are the only contractor currently authorised by Worcestershire County Council to undertake this type of work on the Worcestershire Highway and residents must apply directly via our website (What is a Vehicular Dropped Kerb? Worcestershire County Council) in order to request a dropped kerb. It is essential that this process is followed so that Worcestershire County Council can ensure the standard of the work undertaken, that safe working practices are adhered to and that works are only undertaken that meet Worcestershire County Council's criteria. Illegal works on the Highway pose a risk to public safety and increases the financial burden on the council in order to make good sections of the highway network that are installed to an inferior and unsafe standard.

If you observe, suspect or are notified that works are being undertaken on the Worcestershire Highway that are not approved by Worcestershire County Council then please let us know as soon as possible either by submitting a report via our website (Tell us about a road, highway or travel route issue Worcestershire County Council), emailing us at customerandcommunity@worcestershire.gov.uk *or by calling the Highways and Transport Control Centre on 01905 845 676."*

13. Financial Matters

a) The Accounts for 2022/2023

i) Bank balances as per year end spreadsheet - current is £7,022.72 as at 31 March 2023 and Business saving balance is £8,306.57 as at 31 March 2023.

ii) Receipts outstanding in 2022/2023

i. £97.50 – Worcestershire County Council – Lengthsman February 2023

iii) Payments agreed: –

i. £67.50 – Lengthsman January 2023
ii. £97.50 – Lengthsman February 2023
iii. £250.00 – Ian Morphett *annual* charge for maintenance of the Millennium Bench (Item 14 below)
iv. £40.00 – ICO Annual renewal charge
v. £1,107.17 – Litter bins x 3 contract and emptying charges
vi. £179.85 – Newcomers' meeting

Payments agreed as per budget 2022/2023: –

i. £620.00 – Clerk's Pay – July, August, September

ii. £104.28 – Clerk's Expenses – July, August, September
iii. £620.00 – Clerk's Pay – January, February, March
iv. £104.28 – Clerk's Expenses – January, February, March
v. £250.00 – Cuppa & Chat (Coronation Celebrations Divisional Funds)
vii. £155.00 – PAYE – January, February, March
viii. £351.68 – Zurich Insurance
ix. £246.42 – CALC subscription
x. £162.40 – PAYE – April, May, June

The Accounts for 2022/2023 for resolution (as per the audited financial year end), including the provision, as below.

b) The Accounts for 2023/2024

Acceptance of the accounting receipts and payments so far in the current financial year

i) Bank balance – as per the spreadsheet - current is £10,075.12 as at 22 June 2023 and Business saving balance is £8,321.86 as at 9 June 2023.

ii) Receipts

i. £200.00 – Wychavon District Council – Coronation Funding (Jubilee Committee 'acting as bank')
ii. £3,313.00 – Wychavon District Council (precept £3,223.00 and grant £90.00)
iii. £135.00 – Worcestershire County Council
iv. £157.50 – Worcestershire County Council

iii) Payments agreed

i. £200.00 – Jubilee Committee for the Coronation Funding

c. Future payments for consideration

i. £183.41(Materials £130.91 and labour £52.50)
Invoice received from Carl Brassington (Item 14 below)
Payment was agreed to Rupert Keys for gravel around the bench – previously discussed as necessary groundworks estimated at £60.00.
Carl Brassington has taken on the works. It was agreed that he should finish the works due to Rupert's other commitments.

ii. £135.00 – Lengthsman March 2023
iii. £157.50 – Lengthsman April 2023
iv. £10.00 – Birlingham Village Hall – charge for Annual Parish Meeting
v. £60.00 – Internal Audit Sadie Yeomans
vi. £245.00 – Lengthsman May 2023
vii. £20.00 – Birlingham Village Hall July meeting
viii. £650.00 - Clerk's Pay – April, May, June
ix. £104.28 – Clerk's Expenses – April, May, June
x. Training for Councillors
Clerk to collate some information from CALC. Possible training session in September.

d. Savings account – update. Any transfers from current account to savings for financial year to be actioned, if necessary, by the Clerk.

Clerk to action the change of signatories to remove Maxine Cook and add Katie Parsons.

To consider online banking.

The Accounts for 2022/2023 for resolution (as per the spreadsheet at financial year end), including the provisions.

The resolution of the 2022/2023 year was not completed by 30 June 2023 due to inquorate, members holiday absences and internal auditor availability. An extension has been requested to Messrs PKF Littlejohn LLP.

An acknowledgement from PKF Littlejohn has been received and confirms that the submission deadline has been confirmed as extended to 31 July 2023. It further states that should they not be in receipt of a submission by 31 July, reminder emails will be issued which will incur a charge of £40 plus VAT.

Clerk has submitted the Certificate of Exemption - 30 July 18.31pm

e. Internal Audit – completed (Annual Internal Audit Report – page 4 - 2022/23 of the Annual Return)
Internal Auditor's findings:

May 2022
Page 210 – correct 12d, £200 not £20 for Cuppa & Chat

September 2022
Clerk's expenses shown as £104.28 in minutes but cheque paid £104.24

Fixed Assets – suggest that the members review and value the assets. There was a nominal value that was set at £9,995.

f. Certificate of Exemption (page 3) – the date for the external audit from PKF Littlejohn has been given as 31 July 2023.

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) 2022-2023

h. Approval of the Annual Return:

Section 2: The Accounting Statements (page 6)

Are all Councillors in agreement with the Annual Return for the external auditor?

Clerk to return the agreed and completed 2022/23 Annual Return Certificate of Exemption Notice.

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

14. Millennium Bench

Clerk has emailed carpenter, Ian Morphett regarding the agreement on an annual maintenance which was suggested would commence Spring 2024. The carpenter had suggested fixing

brackets on the legs. He has been informed that the groundworks have been completed. No response to date.

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

The Parish Council has received an update from Airband regarding the full fibre broadband. They have recently completed installations in Pershore, Wick and the Combertons and are currently working in Eckington. They have advised the Parish Council that they will be starting the installation of the fibre infrastructure in Birlingham in September. The revised design means that full fibre connections will be available to all properties in the parish (should residents want it) except for those at Nafford Lock. These will be connected separately later from Eckington. Despite the pole notices that went up last year, the Parish Council understand now that there will be very few if any new poles required in the village. The intention is for the fibre cables to be installed alongside the existing copper telephone cables. Last year the Parish Council submitted to Airband a list of 69 residents who had expressed an interest in their service. They have now started to contact some on this list with the following email:

Dear Defford & Birlingham Resident,

Thank you for registering your interest for our FTTP Broadband.

As part of Airband's promise to transform connectivity for people and communities who deserve better, we plan to build and deliver speeds of up to 900Mbps in the area around Defford & Birlingham.

Over the coming months you will see lots of activity from our teams in the area from Planning & Design, Civils & Engineering. We really are proud of what we deliver, and we hope you will see the benefits of the infrastructure we are building. Airband would like to encourage as much interest as possible, please pass our details on to friends, family & neighbours whom you may think would also benefit from our FTTP build.

Please call 01905 676121 select option 1 and option 1 for residential or 2 for business to speak with our sales team or alternatively please go to the website www.airband.co.uk and enter your postal code in the availability checker box and submit.

They are also offering some promotional pricing for those that sign up in the next month:

150Mbps Download and 50Mbps Upload – FOC Installation – Free router – £25.00 (usually £30.00) per month for 18 months

300Mbps Download and 75Mbps Upload – FOC Installation – Free router – £30.00 (usually £35.00) per month for 18 months

If you are currently in contract with another broadband provider, Airband will pay £250 towards any cancellation fees when you switch!

The Parish Council still have further questions they want Airband to answer, in particular how the voucher scheme will work.

The Parish Council believes that full fibre (FTTP) broadband will be an essential technology for online access in the future and has therefore encouraged Airband to install their full fibre infrastructure in Birlingham. However, it cannot make any recommendations regarding Airband's service. It is up to residents to decide whether to switch to full fibre or stay with their existing copper-based service.

16. Telephone Kiosk

The company that has refurbished the kiosk do not have standard locks and suggested using a Camlock Locker with a 38mm barrel. However, this would have to be fabricated to fit accordingly. The Parish Council decided that at this time a lock would not be fitted however should the kiosk fill with rubbish then a discussion would be revisited.

17. King's Coronation Celebrations

The King's Coronation Celebration was well received by residents and their guests. It was an excellent village event and very well attended. The Councillors agreed that the event was a great success and thanked all the very many volunteers who gave up their time to help and support to make it such a success. Steve Morris was congratulated for his fantastic job; without whose leadership and determination the event would have never happened.

18. Councillors' reports and items for next agenda

It was reported that there had been some issues with loud music on Saturday evenings. This would be monitored.

19. Closure and date of next ordinary meeting

With nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.15pm and the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance.

The next Parish Council Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 20 September 2023 at 7.30pm.

The meeting will be held in Birlingham Village Hall. Clerk has booked hall.

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

Date: .....

Appendix 1

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.

Appendix 2

Lengthsman Provision 2023-2024			
	Month	**Value of work (£)**	**2149.00**
	April	157.50	
	May	245.00	
	June	245.00	
	July		
	August		
	Sept		
	Oct		
	Nov		
	Dec		
	Jan		
	Feb		
	Mar		
	Total for year to date		
		Left to use	**1501.50**

Appendix 3 – Lengthsman's Report

Reports to Worcestershire County Council

DRAINAGE

UPPER END

Drainage Report 16197 – gully
17 March 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry. This issue has been highlighted with our contractor Ringway for further information and investigation. Any defects will be addressed accordingly*."

1 April 2023 - Drainage Report 18454 – gully
16 May 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry, we have inspected the site and have raised a work order*."

1 April 2023 - Drainage Report 18455 – gully
16 May 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry, we have inspected the site and have raised a work order*."

1 April 2023 - Drainage Report 18456 – gully
20 April 2023 reply - "*Thank you for your enquiry. Worcestershire County Council would like to advise that a new gully was installed, however, it will require a new survey. The area will continue to be monitored on our routine inspection regime.*"

1 April 2023 - Drainage Report 18457 – gully
16 May 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry, we have inspected the site and have raised a work order*."

24 April 2023 - Drainage Report 20265 – gully
31 May 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry. We are unsure at this time where these gullies are connected to, there is a ditch close by, but we couldn't find a head wall, so we will need to get the system checked out and surveyed*."

DEFFORD ROAD

23 March 2023 - Drainage Report (Reference 17609) - gullies full
5 April 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry. Worcestershire County Council would like to advise that the site has been inspected and a works order has been raised for the gully to be cleaned.*"

12 April 2023 – Drainage Report (Reference 19248) – gully blocked
25 May 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry, I popped out to have a look and all the ditches were looking in good shape with the outlets visible, but I noticed that the gullies were full of detritus, I will pass this to our contractor for jetting and investigation*."

13 April 2023 - Drainage Report 17609 – Bakers Hill

ECKINGTON ROAD

24 April 2023 - Drainage Report 20263 and 20264
12 May 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry, this location has been attended. The blocked drain will be cleared shortly."*

BROADWAY ROAD

26 April 2023 - Drainage Report 18457

THE AVENUE

17 May 2023 - Drainage Report 21976 – gully full opposite Field Cottage
26 July 2023 reply "*Thank you for your Pothole Report at UPPER END that you reported on 17 May 2023. We have inspected this site and confirm that no safety issues were identified. The road will continue to be monitored and action will be undertaken if required*."

BERWICK LANE

17 May 2023 - Drainage Report 21977 = gully full outside Tadpole Cottage
27 June 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your report regarding a blocked gully at BERWICK LANE that you reported on 17 May 2023. We inspected the site and have raised a works order to jet the gully. We will continue to monitor the drainage system as part of our routine inspection regime."*

<u>POTHOLE</u>

UPPER END

Pothole Report – Reference 16199

5 April 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry. Worcestershire County Council would like to advise that the site has been inspected and a works order has been raised to repair/make safe*."

Pothole Report - Reference 16202

5 April 2023 reply – "*Thank you for your enquiry. Worcestershire County Council would like to advise that the site has been inspected and a works order has been raised to repair/make sense."*

<u>SUBSIDANCE</u>

UPPER END

17 May 2023 - Report 21974

…….. R E P O R T JULY 2023 ……..

Carriageway

The road subsidence just up from Hill Cottage has deteriorated further. The carriageway appears to be sinking along this whole stretch.



There is also movement in front of the Pound outside the village hall.

The pothole outside the Court House has been marked for action for several weeks but is still unresolved (reported again).



There is damage to the kerb stones around the war memorial probably due to vehicle impact.

Vegetation

The two dead trees are still standing on the verges in Rectory Road.

Several roadside trees around the village have had boughs broken off by passing large vehicles.

Overhanging trees around the cricket ground are again causing some concern particularly for the properties in Church Lane as the heavy boughs reach well over the carriageway to the gardens.

The footway in Eckington Road remains badly overgrown.

Drainage

As there has not been much rain it's difficult to say whether there are any new problems but the water has been issuing from the Manor House field at various times which do not seem to correspond to the rainfall which is odd.

Gullies are still blocked in Defford Road going down to Bow Brook (reported).

Gullies outside Maryworth barn are very slow draining and the carriageway floods in heavy rain. They have been reported and marked but no action that I am aware of.

Blocked gullies by Field Cottage reported and marked awaiting attention from Highways.

Other issues

The exhaust stolen from the Pound recently turned up dumped over the wall in the Churchyard. I did try and inform the Police but gave up after 20 mins on hold. The catalytic converter had been cut off and the remainder left behind. I removed it to the tip.

Appendix 4 – Clerk's Report

i. Highway Issues

17 March 2023 – overgrown / fallen tree – reference 15105.

17 March 2023 – reply from Worcestershire County Council "*Thank you for your enquiry, we have inspected the site and there is no safety issue but we will continue to monitor.*"

The resident at The Dairy has been informed and has acknowledged – "*I was watching it in high winds a few days ago. It looked precarious to me. I will sort when conditions are right. Thanks.*"

ii. Swan's Neck

Correspondence to Clerk

Hi thoughts on Swan`s Neck

Well I seen tree Felling but this takes the Biscuit the carnage has left exposed 2 Ugly Pumping Buildings (I assume) as a newcomer to the village this area and Bench now broken was a wonderful area to get peace and Calm now its an eyesore that's putting it mildly I thought part of the area was Public Land and was to be a possible ANOB the Contractor could have just trimmed the Trees a little not fell Major Trees it was used by Rooks and Nesting Birds assume that the Damage done to Jubilee Wood was from these felled trees I hope the Parish Council will somehow be able to deal with this Terrible situation
sent by (Anonymous)

……

Hello Ms Hiden,
On a walk through your charming village, I noticed that the local trees at Birlingham Wharf have been felled which has devastated the beauty of the area.

I'm just enquiring, is there a reason for the felling, and are replacement trees due to be planted?

……..

Dear Sir, Madam,

We were passing Birlingham Quay at Swan's Neck on the Avon recently and were disappointed to find that all the mature beech tress had been cut down at some point since the last time we were there last autumn, completely changing the nature of the area.

We wondered whether the Parish Council knew why this had been carried out, by whom and, if so, what the purpose of cutting them down was.

If you have any information we would be interested to understand.

……

Correspondence to Chairman

Hi, whilst out boating today on the river Avon we moored up at Birlingham quay on the swan bends. We were devastated to find that approximately 25 trees had been felled. Some of these were mature and nearing 100 years old. The majority of them were healthy and some were quite rare. Are you aware of
any reason why this work might have justifiably been carried out? Considering the environmental challenges we face at the moment I find it very difficult to understand why these trees needed to be felled. Whilst there we spoke to others who were out walking and were devastated at the destruction. I have taken several photos of the site and of individual healthy tree stumps.
I would be interested, as chairman of Birlingham parish council, what your thoughts are on this matter?

All enquires have been answered.

iii. Councillor Ron Davies - retirement

Chairman to Ron Davies

"Dear Ron

We were all very sorry to hear that due to health reasons you have decided not to stand again. All the members of Birlingham Parish Council want to pass on their very best wishes to you along with their thanks for your dedication and service over so many years. We hope to still see you around and about in the parish. Enjoy your retirement!

Yours sincerely
Ian Yates
Chairman Birlingham Parish Council"

Clerk has also sent a message of thanks and visited in person.

iv. County Councillor Adrian Hardman

Cuppa & Chat

Thank you from Sue Hermon on behalf of the Cuppa & Chat Group

"Many thanks indeed for this very kind donation for Cuppa & Chat, which was completely unexpected! The team were delighted when they heard about it at our March get together

yesterday. We will put it to good use for our Coronation Cuppa & Chat on May 3rd and you and your wife are most welcome to join us if you are free.

Once again, our sincere thanks for your generosity.

Kind regards

Sue"

Roundels

Thank you for remarking the roundels in Upper End

v. Nafford Lock – footbridge

May 2023 - Avon Navigation Trust made more 'permanent' repairs. The 'gripper' on the bridge was lifting.

vi. Road Closures

First - *this was published in the Birlingham News with the notice and map. The Notice is also printed in the Evesham Journal*

Defford - Wychavon District – 1432423 ECKINGTON BRIDGE

Second – *not published as resolved before need for closure - UPPER END*

11 July - The Clerk contacted Worcestershire Council and highlighted the issues a road closure in August at the Upper End would cause. Red Star Growers were copied in.

The Clerk and Redstar continued to communicate and consequently Red Star Growers were successful in stopping the road closure.

13 July -

From Steven King, Infra R & M – Team Manger to following:

Jan Clerk at Worcestershire County Council Street works

"I have sent one of my guys on lights duties to this location today to take a look and he has renewed this stop tap in the chamber no excavation, so we no longer need this road closure. I am going to get this job cancelled with the notes."

Redstar Growers

"This closure is no longer going ahead so will not effect your works vehicles."

Palvinder Sanghera

"Can you please cancel this job or change the notice to a no excavation / no carriageway so a team can close it down."

Original message to Sid

Not sure if the below work is being carried out you your team or still in planning stage, but, can you please arrange for someone to liaise with redstargrowers.co.uk with regards to how they are going to move their vehicles through your closure.

I have suggested that same day reinstatement would also help.

If I can help in any way, please come back to me.

vii. Julie Pardoe, Pershore Community, West Mercia Police

Clerk has sent a message to Julie Pardoe, as follows:

I hope my message reaches you before you leave the team at Pershore and your role within West Mercia. I would like to say 'thank you' for all your assistance and advice over the years to Birlingham Parish. It's been great to have you as a contact and we have valued your experience.

Good luck in your next endeavours and a fond farewell.

viii. Local Policing Community Charter – Parish Priorities

From SNT Pershore Rural South and Rural North to all Parish Council's

"As you may be aware, within West Mercia Police we have a Local Policing Charter which allows Parish Councils to outline their priorities to us that the Safer Neighbourhood Team can work on. These can range from Speeding, ASB or drugs etc.

Attached is a copy of the contract which renews every 3 months. I have also attached our SNT Newsletter alongside a letter from our Safer Neighbourhood Inspector Dave Wise which details more about the contracts and commitments.

Should the Parish Council wish to participate, please read through the contract, newsletter and letter from the Inspector and return the contract with required details filled out to pershorerural.snt@westmercia.police.uk

Any questions, concerns, or issues with the above, do let us know.

We look forward to hearing from you,

Kind Regards
PCSO Ash Smith"

Chairman and Clerk -- Clerk has completed the form:
1 - Suggest rural theft higher priority 2 - Increase in drug and ASB 3 – Speeding

ix. Public Rights of Way Parish Notice

Public Rights of Way Parish Notice - Sent to Clerk from William Sauder, Public Rights of Way Improvement Officer, The Countryside Centre, Worcester Woods 30 June

"Good morning,

Worcestershire County Council's Public Rights of Way team have produced notices for parish councils to display on noticeboards for members of the community, landowners, and visitors to see. The Parish notice has QR code links to take you to the specific Public Rights of Way page on Worcestershire County Council's website, the Countryside Code page on the Government website and Worcestershire's Public Rights of Way Interactive Map.

If you could please get back to me with a postal address for the poster to be sent out to it would be greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

The Public Rights of Way Team"

Clerk has replied.

..... Birlingham News .....

Extracts of interest

Birlingham **News 300 – 22 March 2023**

This 300th edition of Birlingham News contains all you need to know about the preparations for the Coronation weekend, the May local elections and several other village events planned for the next few weeks.

The online edition of this email is available at www.birlingham.org/village/bno.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham News Online
2. Friends of St James' Church AGM, Monday 27th March
3. St James' Church Services – April
4. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 5th April
5. Coronation Weekend Survey, Closing Date 10th April
6. Coronation Celebrations Open Meeting, Tuesday 11th April
7. Churchyard Tidy-up, Saturday 22nd April
8. Parish Council Elections, Thursday 4th May
9. District Council Elections, Thursday 4th May
10. Coronation Memories
11. Parish Council Report
12. Age UK Wellbeing Activities

8. Parish Council Elections, Thursday 4th May

Ian Yates writes:

Members of the Parish Council are elected every four years. The next election will take place on 4th May 2023. If you are passionate about your community and want to help make a difference or have concerns about a specific issue and want to do something about it then why not apply to become a councillor? Nomination Papers must be submitted by hand not later than 4.00pm on Tuesday 4th April.

They can be delivered between 10.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday to the Elections Team at the Committee Room at Pershore Civic Centre WR10 1PT.

9. District Council Elections, Thursday 4th May

District Council elections also take place on Thursday 4th May. Nomination papers must be hand delivered to the Civic Centre by 4.00pm on Tuesday 4th April.

If you want further information about these elections, please email the Clerk to the Parish Council at birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk.

Birlingham **News 301 – 4 April 2023**

This extra edition of Birlingham News contains information about events during the coming week. If you have not yet filled in the Coronation survey, please do so – details below.

There is no online edition of this email – all the articles will be included in next week's normal Birlingham News Online.

In this issue:

1. Geoff Taylor
2. Easter Day Service, Sunday 9th April
3. Coronation Weekend Survey, Closing Date 10th April
4. Coronation Celebrations Open Meeting, Tuesday 11th April
5. Coronation Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 3rd May
6. Help with Deliveries
7. St James the Great – Change of Services

Birlingham **News 302 – 13 April 2023**

There is a great deal going on in April and May, with a number of events coming up next week and a busy Coronation weekend in three weeks' time.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham News Online
2. Annual Parochial Church Meeting, Wednesday 19th April
3. Birlingham IW, Thursday 20th April
4. Churchyard Tidy-up, Saturday 22nd April
5. London Marathon, Sunday 23rd April
6. Coronation Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 3rd May
7. Elections for Parish and District Councillors, Thursday 4th May
8. Coronation Celebrations, Saturday 6th – Monday 8th May
9. Church Floodlights Switch-on, Sunday 7th May
10. Coronation Garden/Window Art Project, Friday 5th – Monday 8th May
11. Coronation Memories
12. Evesham Walking Festival, Sunday 2nd July
13. Parish Council Report
14. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

7. Elections for Parish and District Councillors, Thursday 4th May

Nominations for Birlingham Parish Council and for the Eckington Ward of Wychavon District Council (which includes Birlingham) closed on Tuesday 4th April.

There were only two nominations for the seven seats on Birlingham Parish Council. Therefore, Paula

Aston and Ian Yates have been duly elected. The Notice of Uncontested Election for Birlingham Parish Council can be viewed at www.birlingham.org/pc_info/parish_elections_2023.pdf.

There are four candidates for the Eckington Ward of the District Council. The list of candidates is included in the online edition of Birlingham News at www.birlingham.org/village/bno. More information on the candidates will be included in the next edition.

Voting will take place on Thursday 4th May from 7.00am until 10.00pm in Birlingham Village Hall. You will need to show photo ID to vote in this year's local elections.

Please note the following key local election 2023 dates:

- Register to vote deadline 11.59pm on Monday 17th April 2023
- Postal vote application deadline 5.00pm on Tuesday 18th April 2023
- Proxy vote application deadline 5.00pm on Tuesday 25th April 2023

8. Coronation Celebrations, Saturday 6th – Monday 8th May

Steve Morris writes:

Thank you to all those who took the time to complete the Coronation survey and make their preferences known. As a result, the programme of events for the Coronation celebrations from Saturday 6th to Monday 8th May has now been finalised. The programme (including events organised by other village organisations) is as follows:
Wednesday 3rd May

- Coronation Cuppa & Chat (organised by the Cuppa & Chat team)

Saturday 6th May

- Shared Experience – Coronation televised in Village Hall, from 10.30am
- Quiz Night, 7.00pm in the Village Hall

Sunday 7th May

- Church Service, 10.30am (organised by the Churchwarden)
- Coronation Lunch at cricket ground from 1.00pm (including children's competition and traditional games for all ages
- Shared Experience – Coronation Concert televised in Village Hall, from 7.00pm
- Church Floodlights Switch-on (organised by the Friends of St James')

Monday 8th May

- Big Help Out – tidying up Jubilee Wood

A programme will be delivered to every house over the next few days. Please take a moment to complete the accompanying form, so that we have some idea of numbers attending each event, and return it to the box in the church porch (or complete the form online).
Results of the survey are included in the online edition of Birlingham News.

9. Church Floodlights Switch-on, Sunday 7th May

Peter Luff writes:

To mark the Coronation, the new church tower floodlighting will be turned on officially at 9.00pm on Coronation Sunday, 7th May. The work has been paid for by the Friends of St James', who will organise a short celebration to which the whole village is invited. Further details to follow.

The LED lighting is low-powered, providing gentle illumination of the tower that should be both attractive and in keeping with the village character. Its colour temperature means it causes no issues for bats.

There will then be a period of several weeks trialling different options for days of the week and times for use of the lighting, after which the village will be consulted on what is felt most appropriate. Details of this consultation will be available after 7th May.

13. Parish Council Report

Ian Yates writes:

Birlingham Parish Council held its meeting at 7.00pm on Wednesday 15th March in the Village Hall. A summary of agenda items follows:

- **Broadgrove Farm Planning Application** Several residents attended the Parish Council meeting to give their comments on the Broadgrove Farm planning application during the Democratic Opening. These, along with other written comments that had been received from villagers, were considered by council members when drafting the formal response to Wychavon's planning department.

- **Communication between Woodfield Farm and Birlingham Village** Council members were very pleased that a representative from Woodfield Farm was able to attend the Parish Council meeting. This followed previous discussions, already reported in Birlingham News on 22nd February, that had the objective of improving communication between the farm and the village (and vice versa) to ensure that all parties are kept informed of planned activities. It was helpful to be able to share views on several of the items on the agenda and it is hoped that attendance by the Farm will continue from time to time.

- **New Tree Warden** As previously reported, the Parish Council has been looking for a new Tree Warden and we are very pleased to report that Rupert Day has agreed to fulfil the role for the next twelve months.

- **Footpath 506C** This is the footpath that runs behind the Old Rectory and then across the asparagus field parallel to New Barn Road. There is an alternative permissive path that runs around the edge of the asparagus field but we are grateful to Revills at Woodfield Farm for ensuring the official path across the field is walkable following feedback from villagers.

- **Telephone Kiosk and Millennium Bench** As already reported in Birlingham News, both of these have now been reinstalled following restoration and very positive comments have been received from villagers. Council members thanked Maxine Cook for all her efforts on these projects. Some final work needs to be completed with gravel spread around the base of the bench. It was also agreed that the carpenter who restored the bench would be contracted to maintain it annually to ensure that the correct preservative is used.

- **Newcomers' Drinks Party** A very successful newcomers' drinks party was held on Sunday 5th March to welcome the 16 new households that have moved into the village over the last two years. The Luffs were thanked for hosting the event.

- **Roundels** As soon as the weather improves the four sets of 30mph roundels will be repainted as they have been damaged by flooding and road repairs.

- **Full Fibre Broadband (Fibre to the Premise – FTTP)** The Parish Council has recently received an update from Airband who have advised us that the start date for installation of the fibre infrastructure in Birlingham is still on schedule to start in July 2023.

- **Elections** Members of the Parish Council are elected every four years. The next election will take place on 4th May 2023. Nomination Papers had to be submitted by hand not later than 4.00pm on Tuesday 4th April.

Birlingham **News 303 – 26 April 2023**

The big event is almost here; the Coronation celebrations take place on the weekend of 6th-8th May – details below.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham News Online
2. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 3rd May
3. Election of District Councillors, Thursday 4th May
4. Coronation Programme, Saturday 6th – Monday 8th May
5. Special Commemorative Service, Sunday 7th May
6. Church Floodlights Switch-on, Sunday 7th May
7. Coronation Garden/Window Art Project, Friday 5th – Monday 8th May
8. Coronation Memories
9. Churchyard Tidy-up

1. Birlingham News Online

As well as all the information included in this email, the online edition contains:

- Statements from the four candidates for Wychavon District Council's Eckington Ward (which includes Birlingham)
- The full programme for the Coronation weekend
- Recent photographs of the village and dates for your diary between now and mid-June

The online edition of Birlingham News can be found at www.birlingham.org/village/bno.

2. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 3rd May

Sue Hermon writes:

Our special Coronation Cuppa & Chat is being held on Wednesday 3rd May from 3.00pm to 4.30pm in Birlingham Village Hall. This event is almost fully booked and everyone who has reserved a place should now have received confirmation. We do have room for two or three more, so if you are interested, please call me on 01386 750096 or email sue.hermon@me.com.

The next Cuppa & Chat after this will be on Wednesday 7th June and we look forward to seeing you.

3. Election of District Councillors, Thursday 4th May

There are four candidates for the Eckington Ward of the District Council. The online edition of Birlingham News at www.birlingham.org/village/bno contains a statement by each of the candidates.

Voting will take place on Thursday 4th May from 7.00am until 10.00pm in Birlingham Village Hall. You will need to show photo ID to vote in this year's local elections.

Birlingham **News 304 – 10 May 2023**

Now that the Coronation Celebrations are over, we can expect a few quieter weeks.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham News Online
2. Horace Hewitt
3. Annual Parish Meeting, Wednesday 17th May
4. Birlingham IW, Thursday 18th May
5. Lighting Up St James'
6. District Council Election Results
7. Coronation Celebrations Thanks
8. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

3. Annual Parish Meeting, Wednesday 17th May

The Birlingham Annual Meeting takes place on Wednesday 17th May at 7.00pm in Birlingham Village Hall. 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. Any member of the public can ask for an issue to be debated, even if they are unable to attend the meeting. Questions that require a response must be submitted in writing before 15th May.

The bi-monthly meeting of the Parish Council scheduled for 17th May has been cancelled due to the recent election and further details will follow.

6. District Council Election Results

In a closely fought election on 4th May, Paul Middlebrough (Conservative) was elected as the new District Councillor for the Eckington Ward (which includes Birlingham). The turnout for the election was an impressive 45.7%.

Birlingham **News 305 – 23 May 2023**

You have two days left to get your nomination papers in for the Parish Council.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham News Online
2. Parish Council Elections, Closing Date, Thursday 26th May
3. Funeral of Horace Hewitt, Wednesday 7th June
4. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 7th June
5. St James' Church News
6. Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council Meeting
7. Wychavon Councillor Report

1. Birlingham News Online

As well as all the information included in this email, the online edition contains:

- Notice of election for Birlingham Parish Council
- Annual reports from the Annual Parish Meeting
- A report from our new District Councillor
- Results from the Coronation Quiz and raffle
- Recent photos of the village and dates for your diary between now and mid-July

2. Parish Council Elections, Closing Date, Thursday 26th May

There are still five vacancies on Birlingham Parish Council following the recent Parish Council elections, so a new election has been called.

Nomination papers may be obtained from the offices of the Returning Officer, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, WR10 1PT; phone 01386 565437 or email elections@wychavon.gov.uk.

Nomination papers must be submitted by hand not later than 4.00pm on Thursday 25th May. They can be delivered between 10.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday to the Elections Team at Pershore Civic Centre.

If more than five people put their names forward, an election will be held on Thursday 22nd June.

More information can be obtained from the Parish Clerk, June Hiden (birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk).

5. St James' Church News

Revd Claire Lording and Adrianne Woodward write:

It has been a challenging time at St James' since the pandemic. Unfortunately, our regular congregation has now been reduced to four to six people at a usual service and the PCC now has only five members (gratefully supported by Martin Frost and Andrew Jowett, who are helping with the fabric as non-PCC members). There is a huge pressure on those who are involved to carry out all the duties required of a church and to maintain regular worship. We are so pleased that the few do so much, but it is not sustainable. In light of this, the PCC has decided that instead of offering two regular services a month, as we have done for some time, we are going to focus instead on special services as and when they fit in the church's year.

6. Annual Parish Meeting and Parish Council Meeting

The Birlingham Annual Parish Meeting took place on Wednesday 17th May.

In the absence of the chairman the meeting was chaired by Paula Aston.

The Annual Parish Meeting included the following:

- The Chairman's annual report
- Annual report from District Councillor Ron Davis
- Annual report from the Footpath Warden
- Annual report from the Jubilee Committee

7. Wychavon Councillor Report

Paul Middlebrough was elected as our new District Councillor earlier this month.

He has sent us a report, which is printed in full in the online edition at www.birlingham.org/village/bno.

Birlingham **News 306 – 14 June 2023**

There are still three vacancies on the Parish Council – now is your chance to get involved in local decision-making.

1. Birlingham News Online
2. Rake & Cake, Saturday 24th June
3. Parish Council Vacancies
4. Recent Thefts of Car Parts
5. County Planning Involvement
6. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

1. Birlingham News Online

As well as all the information included in this email, the online edition contains:

- Notice of Uncontested Election Result for Birlingham Parish Council
- Full details of the County Council's initiative to involve residents in county-wide planning matters
- Recent photos of the village and dates for your diary between now and the end of July

3. Parish Council Vacancies

As previously reported, the Parish Council is going through a re-election process. There are seven members on Birlingham Parish Council. The new members are Ian Yates, Paula Aston, Steven Byrne and Katie Parsons.

The Parish Council will therefore be looking to co-opt members to fill the three vacancies that now exist. Serving on the Parish Council 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. If you are interested in becoming involved please contact the Parish Council Clerk, June Hiden, before the next Parish Council meeting on Wednesday 19th July at birlingham_clerk@yahoo.co.uk.

The Notice of Uncontested Election Result for the recent (second) election can be viewed at www.birlingham.org/pc_info/parish_elections_2023_june.pdf.

5. County Planning Involvement

The planning consultation database for the county is being refreshed and Worcestershire County Council would like to invite residents and businesses to register so that they can have their say on planning matters.

The Council plays a significant planning role across the whole of Worcestershire including policies and strategies about minerals and waste and major infrastructure projects like new railway stations and bridges.

Birlingham **News 307 – 28 June 2023**

Here is your round up of events for the next two weeks plus advance notice of the St James' Day service and the closure for a month of Eckington Bridge.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham News Online
2. Kath Payne
3. Memorial Service for Pat and Geoffrey Taylor, Saturday 1st July
4. Evesham Walking Festival, Sunday 2nd July
5. Cuppa & Chat, Wednesday 5th July
6. St James' Church News
7. Eckington Bridge Closure, Tuesday 25th July – Friday 25th August
8. Opening and Closing of St James' Church
9. Rake & Cake Thanks
10. Top Garden Awards
11. Dog Fouling

7. Eckington Bridge Closure, Tuesday 25th July – Friday 25th August

Eckington Bridge will be closed for a month from Tuesday 25th July until Friday 25th August. This is to allow the rebuilding of the part of the bridge that was destroyed in the fatal accident on 26th August last year.

The official diversion between Birlingham and Eckington is shown as a route via Tewkesbury and Upton Upon Severn but obviously the quickest route is through Pershore and Nafford.

11. Dog Fouling

There's no such thing as the dog poo fairy!

Having a pet means taking responsibility for their care and wellbeing. This includes cleaning up their poo. Dog poo is not only unpleasant, but also dangerous. Whilst rare, contact with dog poo can cause toxocariasis – a nasty infection that can lead to dizziness, nausea, asthma and even blindness or seizures.

Please note:

- Anyone who fails to clear up after their dog can be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice of up to £100. If the case goes to court this could cost the owner or person in charge of the animal up to £1,000.
- The law states that being unaware a dog has fouled or not having a suitable bag is not a reasonable excuse.
- There are many bins throughout the village; however, any public bin can take the waste.

There is no excuse to leave it.

Birlingham **News 308 – 12 July 2023**

This edition contains reminders about July events and a first mention of the Flower & Produce Show.

In this issue:

1. Birlingham News Online
2. Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 19th July
3. St James' Day Service, Sunday 23rd July
4. Eckington Bridge Closure, Tuesday 25th July – Friday 25th August
5. Birlingham Flower & Produce Show, Saturday 2nd September
6. Bystander Archives on the Village Website

2. Parish Council Meeting, Wednesday 19th July

The next meeting of Birlingham Parish Council takes place on Wednesday 19th July 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.