

# MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2012

### Present:

Cllr. Alison Cook (Acting -Chairman)  
Cllr. Andrew Crum  
Cllr. Stephen Turner  
Cllr. Terry Cook

### In attendance:

Parish Clerk Alison Wright  
Ward Cllr. Russell Hamilton  
2 Members of the public

### Public Participation Time –

**The meeting was formally opened by the Chairman at 7.30pm**

#### 1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies apart from CSO Witcher.

#### 2.0 Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

#### 3.0 Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2012 were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 4.0 Reports

**West Mercia Police** In the absence of CSO Witcher, the Clerk informed Councillors regarding the latest Police Briefing dated 2/10/12.

##### **Cllr Hamilton**

Cllr Hamilton gave an update on various issues including: re the Amey drainage survey at Gamber Head Farm after the flooding there. The most recent flooding problems had been in relation to the cottages at the location. It was felt that once the works had been completed there, the flooding should not re-occur as the reservoirs should have sufficient capacity to capture the water. The farm owner should maintain the ditch. The roadside ditches would be on a routine maintenance program with a three month check by contractors. The section 106 agreement in relation to the affordable housing in Much Birch was about to commence. More information and guidance notes were to be on the Herefordshire Council Website in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan Opportunity. There was an update re Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) and there were about 120 on a list of which about 30 were completed each year. Yellow lines near the school were among the TRO's for Much Birch. Cllr Graham Powell had been trying to speed things up and Ward Councillors had been asked to prioritise their outstanding TRO's.

## **5.0 Clerk's Update on Action Items**

Main details as per the October update sheet. In brief, the Japanese Knotweed was believed to be growing on the land of Elwyn Brooks. Cllr Turner would confirm this to the Clerk. The Bins had been emptied and a thank you letter had been received from a resident who had previously raised concerns that have now been addressed. The file size and advertising re the Parish Newsletter have been resolved. Following publicity, the Information Evening had gone ahead and had been a success, funded by HALC, a presentation and advice from Lynda Wilcox had been very informative. The Clerk had been to see the Director's representative about flooding issues at Gamber Head Farm and the adjacent properties.

## **6.0 To elect Chair and Vice Chair and to discuss outcome of meeting re selection of new Parish Councillors for Much Birch and the way forward re vacancies**

The Clerk, Mrs Wright, took the chair for the following item concerning the election of Chair of the Parish Council and asked for nominations for the position. Cllr Alison Cook was nominated by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr. A. Crum. Cllr A. Cook accepted the position of Chair. The Chair then asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Parish Council. Cllr Steve Turner was proposed by Cllr A. Cook and seconded by Cllr. A. Crum. Cllr Turner accepted the position of Vice Chair.

The Parish Council then co-opted a new Councillor, Mr Jon Norris. Cllr Norris had attended the information Evening and had decided to stand. Proposed Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr. Cook. A warm welcome was extended to Cllr Norris. Acceptance of Office and Declarations of Interest forms would be brought to the next meeting for completion by councillors.

Vacancies would continue to be mentioned in précis etc to encourage further new councillors to come forward.

## **7.0 Financial Report**

### **7.1 The following bank balances were noted:**

@ 13 <sup>th</sup> Sept HSBC Community Account	£ 11,503.30
@ 13 <sup>th</sup> Sept HSBC Community Projects Account	£9,408.00

### **7.2 The following payments were approved:**

Clerk's salary	£164.08
Expenses (Home Office £50.00, mileage £26.69)	£76.69
Tax due on salary	£41.00

## **8.0 Bank Signatories**

There were currently two signatories, Cllr A. Cook and Cllr T. Cook. Both would be signing the payments for the evening, in the absence of other signatories. Cllrs Crum and Turner would be visiting the bank to register as signatories and this would be updated at the next meeting. It was resolved that there should be a number of signatories, to facilitate making payments, and to avoid not having enough people present, who could sign, given the small number of councillors on the Council in the first place.

## **9.0 Planning Matters**

Application S122048/F Site: Much Birch VC School Description: Erection of a canopy to provide shelter with the protected play area of Cabin Childcare (retrospective). The Parish Council had no objections to and supported the application.

## **10.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths**

To be reminded to Amey, issues as already reported, as below.

10.1) Pages Pitch, Much Birch, eroded road surface and potholes are reported as making this road dangerous to the public.

10.2) Wrigglebrook Lane, outside property called Buddleia. Huge pothole

10.3) Cllr Crum had spoken to the person who was thought to be interested in the Footpath Officer role. Unfortunately, they could not now take on the commitment. Cllr Crum kindly volunteered to take up the role. He was then formally proposed for the position of Footpath Officer by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr. A. Cook. Thanks were extended to him for taking on the role. The paths would be walked twice a year and the Parish Clerk would order maps for him, of the Parish, with points to note shown on them for reference. It may be possible to get feedback re issues on the paths from the "Ramblers" also.

## **11.0 Self-help winter gritting**

Cllr Turner had spoken with the Chair of Little Birch and a meeting had been arranged for the following week.

## **12.0 Correspondence**

The following had been received.

12.1 Much Birch Community Hall Booking Form received with request for 2013 bookings to be advised. Clerk would determine every first Thursday in the month, excluding August, and complete the Booking Form, returning it to the Booking Secretary to confirm the Parish Council's 2013 booking requirements.

12.2 Reminder re HALC AGM & Conference on 13/10/12

12.3 Information Corners (HALC)

12.4 SAM Meeting Minutes

12.5 HALC Training Courses to December 2012

12.6 Neighbourhood Planning Questionnaire. This was completed by councillors at the meeting and would be returned to the Local Authority by the Clerk.

## **13.0 Parishes' Newsletter and Much Birch Website**

**13.1 Action:** The Clerk to provide a précis of the meeting to be published in the newsletter by the 18<sup>th</sup> October. Advertise the Finance aspect of next meeting in Newsletter précis.

Issues over file size and advertising in the Parish Newsletter had been addressed. Thank you to those concerned for responding to the request.

## **14.0 Update on Code of Conduct Meeting held on 18/09/12**

The Clerk had attended the update meeting but had felt that the information was broadly as already advised.

## **15.0 Standing Orders**

An annotated version had been obtained by the Clerk and would be considered and remodelled to suit the Parish Council's requirements. Cllr A. Cook would compare the various versions and advise re her recommendations at the next meeting.

## **16.0 Precept 2013/2014**

There would be an opportunity for parishioners to comment on what they would like to see their precept payments used for at the next open session during the November meeting. The précis for the Parish Newsletter would invite people to come along and contribute their ideas. A

sub-committee for Finance consisting of Cllrs A. Cook, S. Turner and Parish Clerk Alison Wright would be joined by a newly co-opted Cllr. J. Norris. A Finance sub-committee meeting would be held, after the feedback received at the November meeting, to look at a draft budget and precept requirement.

**17.0 Matters to be raised on the Agenda of the next meeting**

Gritter Scheme, Standing Orders, Footpath Officer Report and Allowances for Councillors

**18.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Ordinary Meeting**

Next meeting – Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2012 at 7.30pm in The Much Birch Community Hall

*The meeting closed at 8.44pm.*

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date