

# MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013

### Present:

Cllr. Alison Cook (Chair)  
Cllr. Stephen Turner (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr. Terry Cook  
Cllr. Jon Norris

### In attendance:

Parish Clerk, Alison Wright, CSO Fiona Witcher and Ward Cllr Russell Hamilton  
18 Members of the public

### Public Participation Time –

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained some guidelines in regard to how the meeting would progress, for the benefit of all present. There was representation at the meeting from Sophie Bell, of Sanctuary Housing, and Ian Green, from MG Property Consultants Ltd, who showed the Parish Council, and members of the public, some illustrations of how the affordable housing project, that they were working on, could look in Tump Lane, Much Birch. The proposal was for 12 units and was in response to assessments of requirement for affordable housing in the area. Some questions were asked by members of the public and councillors and concerns were expressed re narrowness of the roads, access, parking etc. The time being constrained, it was stated that a consultation event opportunity would be arranged, at a later date, to enable the parish residents to contribute to an informed discussion on the proposals.

There was some feedback from the Larkrise Consultation Event, held previously, and concerns had been raised in regard to cars speeding down what was a “narrow” road, school traffic, parking and it was felt that additional housing would add to the issues being experienced. It was also commented that it had been one of the best attended meetings that they had held. The Chairman explained that once an application had been registered a special Parish Council meeting would take place to discuss the application and take on board comments and suggestions from the public.

The self help gritting had been seen to be a success and had kept the roads free of ice and traffic had kept moving around the parish. Thanks were recorded to all those who had made it possible. There would be advance planning made for the scheme for next year.

The Open Session then closed.

### The Parish Council meeting was formally opened by the Chairman

#### 1.0 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Cllr A. Crum.

#### 2.0 Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

### **3.0 Minutes**

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2013 were accepted as a true record and were signed by the Chairman.

### **4.0 Reports**

**CSO Witcher, West Mercia Police** CSO Witcher reported that it had been relatively quiet whilst the snow had been around but there had been a number of reports of thefts from outbuildings such as barns, sheds etc. Most usually tools, power tools and fuel had been taken.

**Cllr Hamilton** Cllr Hamilton explained that the rates bill would rise by 1.9% (inside the 2% ceiling above which a referendum would be required to be held). He outlined briefly the position of the Council's budget proposals and said that the gritting scheme had received good feedback. He spoke of interest by the Ukrainians in the Model Farm at Ross and also the possibility of interest in the Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas by the Americans and Georgians who may seek to establish a training school with apprenticeship opportunities in the aeronautical industry there. He answered questions about the state of the roads in Herefordshire and explained some of the remedial measures, including the early release of some of next year's road budget, to help target some of the worst problems, potholes etc.

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

The information provided on the update sheet was noted.

### **6.0 Financial Report**

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

@ 13 <sup>th</sup> Oct HSBC Community Account	£ 13,419.00
@ 13 <sup>th</sup> Oct HSBC Community Projects Account	£9,408.00

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

Clerk's salary	£205.15
Expenses (mileage £15.30)	£15.30
Tax due on salary	£51.20
Lengthsman	£187.00
Donation to Little Birch Village Hall Committee (Contribution for hall for BEM celebration)	£25.00
Mr R M Hughes (grit spreader attachment)	£446.00

**Resolved** :- The payments were approved and passed for payment

### **7.0 School Governor's Report**

Cllr Turner, School Governor, gave a resume of the last meeting of the Governing Body of Much Birch School. A new Head, Hilary Hiynes had come into post. The Chair of Governors had resigned and also the Clerk had left after 14 years in the post. The governing body had a new chair as the Reverend had taken over. A new clerk would be sought.

### **8.0 Planning Matters**

The following Planning Application had been received re Site; Counties View, Much Birch, HR2 8HL

App No: S130079/FH

Grid ref: OS 350101/231046

Desc: Demolition of existing garage and the erection of a two and single storey extension

After consideration the council **resolved** that there were no objections to the application.

Clerk to convey this back to the Planning Department at Herefordshire Council.

**9.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths**

- 9.1) Off the A49 road towards Kingsthorpe, new pothole by the bus stop Loc. C1263
- 9.2) Little Birch Road, bottom of Barrack Hill the road is breaking up
- 9.3) Lengthsman issues in hand and meeting arranged re tasks outstanding
- 9.4) Report on Footpaths by Footpath Officer. Cllr Crum not present

**10.0 Self-help winter gritting**

The attachment invoice had been presented and would be reimbursed, as resolved at this meeting. The future plans for the scheme would be devised and the item would remain on the agenda going forward.

**11.0 Correspondence**

Other correspondence received, as per update sheet.

**12.0 Parishes' Newsletter and Much Birch Website**

12.1 The Clerk would supply a précis for the Parish Newsletter by the 18<sup>th</sup> February. This would again include a list of councillor's contact details as it was agreed that it would be a good idea to let the Parish know how they could contact their councillors, and to ensure that everyone knew who they are. Also, a reminder would go into the newsletter that new councillors are still required.

12.2 Website update. The Web Site was under discussion and was moving forward.

**13.0 Larkrise Consultation evening feedback**

This was a well attended event and comments were made as per details in the reporting of the open session.

**14.0 Smart Water Marking and Identification System**

The opportunity to use this would be explored and the Clerk would ask CSO Witcher to explain the process, benefits etc. and provide further details of the scheme at the next Parish Council meeting in March. The details, as explored, could then be published in the next available newsletter to help promote the initiative.

**15.0 Update re Cluster co-operation re Localism**

There had been some feedback from councils re the initial enquiry. Further update would follow at the next meeting as some parties needed to hold meetings to decide which course of action they wished to take.

**16.0 Matters to be raised on the agenda of the next meeting**

Smart water, Cluster meetings, Gritter scheme, housing developments

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

Next meeting – Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2013 at 7.30pm in The Much Birch Community Hall

*The meeting closed at 8.30pm*

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date