

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 5th September 2013

Present:

Cllr. Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr. S Turner (Vice Chair)
Cllr. Terry Cook
Cllr. Jon Norris
Cllr. A Crum

In attendance:

Parish Clerk, Alison Wright, CSO Witcher plus 6 Members of the public

Public Participation Time –

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The point was raised regarding traffic surveys in Tump Lane which were used in a recent planning application for a housing development in Tump Lane. The person raising the question had carried out his own survey and had found that the vehicle movements had been dramatically higher than those reported in the survey, which had accompanied the planning application. Details of the numbers had included that between 7 and 8 am 55 cars, 13 lorries and vans, 1 motorcycle were counted and then between 8 and 9 am 130 cars, 17 vans, 3 tractors, 6 bicycles, 15 pedestrians, 2 minibuses and 2 coaches passed through. There was ongoing anxiety over traffic volumes in the road and it was felt that further development of properties would exacerbate the situation. There was particular concern still over the movements of large vehicles, for which the road was believed to be unsuited. There are proposed changes re the weight limit and speed limits for the road, in the pipeline, via a Ward Councillor led initiative.

The Open Session then closed.

The Parish Council meeting was formally opened by the Chairman

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

2.0 Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

3.0 Minutes

3.1 The Minutes of 4th July, and those of the Emergency Planning Meeting held on 8th August, were signed as true and correct records of the meetings.

4.0 Reports

CSO Witcher, West Mercia Police

CSO Witcher explained that this would be her last meeting at Much Birch. Boundaries of policing were being altered from 1st October and she would no longer cover the patch. CSO Kevin Powell would be taking over. There was still some uncertainty as to where the Peterchurch Team would be based but it could be in an extended stay at the existing police station building in Peterchurch. Confirmation of this was awaited. CSO Witcher explained about the use of NPR cameras on the A49 which would “ping” if no insurance was held on the vehicle aimed at and

this could result in an instant seizure of the vehicle. Trailers and quad bike thefts were amongst the recent crime trend statistics. The Chair, on behalf of the Parish, thanked Fiona for her six and a half years of reporting, and attendance, at the Much Birch Parish Council meetings. This had been much appreciated and she was given every good wish for her future career.

Cllr Hamilton Not present

5.0 Clerk's Update on Action Items

- The information provided on the update sheet was noted. The culvert mentioned, at junction of Wrigglebrook Lane and Lower Wrigglebrook Lane, had been repaired with a concrete patch but there was still a sizeable gap between the concrete and the hedge. There was about a four foot drop and this would require filling in.

6.0 Financial Report

6.1 The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th August HSBC Community Account	£8384.35
@ 13 th August HSBC Community Projects Account	£14,408.00

6.2 The following payments were approved:

Clerk's salary	£442.36
Expenses (mileage £30.60)	£30.60
Tax due on salary	£105.40
I.C.O. Information Commissioners Annual Fee	£35.00
Grant Thornton Auditor (External)	£30.00
Much Birch Community Hall (Room hire)	£65.00

Resolved :- That the payments above were approved, and passed for payment

7.0 School Governor's Report

There had not been any further minutes sent or information to add as Cllr Turner had not attended the last Governor's meeting at the school. Cllr Turner had met with Cllr Russell Hamilton to discuss planning application details for the possibility of a new car park area in the monastery grounds. The idea may be that the monastery would hand over the green field site to the school who could then investigate the potential for conversion to a car parking area. The Diocese of Cardiff would be the ones to actually make the land available, if the plan were to go ahead. There had been discussion on the subject some time ago with the idea of fund raising mooted. Amey had provided an estimate of circa £48,000 for the conversion to a car park. Quotes would be required to ensure value for money was being obtained.

The yellow lines and prohibition signage had not yet been installed at the school. Clerk would check with Andrew Lee Jones as to where things were on this front.

8.0 Planning Matters

There had been no new applications and, as yet, no decision on either development in Tump Lane.

9.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

- 9.1) As previously detailed. Transitional arrangements were not yet finalised re the hand over to Balfour Beatty for Highways defect management and repair. As soon as contact details were known defect reporting would recommence.
- 9.2) The lengthsman should be getting out and about in the near future to clear areas identified as requiring attention. Clerk would try to find out if there is any help to be had for the knotweed issue.

- 9.3) Footpaths, no further details to report

11.0 Self Help Gritting Scheme including grit supplies and grit bins

Clerk to try to ascertain who to obtain grit supplies from. We would need to order allocations of grit for the Much and Little Birch Parishes for our shared initiative. Mr Mason would require the grit to be in one tonne bags. Grit bin orders and placements to be finalised at next meeting so new ones can be ordered. Grit bins will need topping up.

11.0 Correspondence

As per sheet and including a letter re parking objections as sent to the school and copied to the PC, a request for lengthsman attention on Tump Lane re overgrowth of weeds. Precept Information request from Herefordshire Council.

12.0 Parishes' Newsletter and Much Birch Website

Clerk to supply précis for the next edition of the newsletter and to send audited accounts summary papers to the Webmaster for inclusion on the web site.

13.0 Neighbourhood Plan

The question was asked of the councillors, "Do the Parish Council wish to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan?" Little Birch Parish are going ahead and Aconbury are likely to also. Factors to consider include, cost, time, and the process must be inclusive of parishioners. Pros and cons need to be carefully considered and there would need to be a referendum for acceptance of the finished plan. Other considerations were the retention of potential core infrastructure levy payments (15% without a Neighbourhood Plan against 25% with one) and also checking if the community wants to be involved, as a steering group would be essential. It may be a good idea to have a pre steering group fact find to see how the community feels before proceeding. This could be informal but may help to establish potential for take up.

14.0 Information on Maps Report

A number of A4 maps had been obtained. Clerk would try to find out how much A3 laminated maps would be to purchase.

15.0 Items for Next Agenda

Grit supplies, grit bins, feedback on maps, co-option of new parish councillor, Neighbour Plan – update, rental agreements for Parish Fields, finance meeting for precept setting.

16.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

Next meeting – Thursday 3rd October 2013 at 7.30pm in The Much Birch Community Hall

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date