

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 6th October 2016

Present:

Cllr. Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr. Roisin Burge
Cllr Andy Crum
Cllr Tim Jones
Cllr David Baldwin (co-opted at the meeting)

In attendance:

Parish Clerk: Alison Wright, Locality Steward: Dave Atkinson and 32 members of the public

Planning Meeting:-

The Meeting commenced at 6.30pm to allow for a meeting on the proposed planning application:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 130945 - Land at, Tump Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8HW

DESCRIPTION: Residential development comprising up to 20 dwellings, including up to 10 affordable dwellings with associated new access (via Tump Lane) and car parking arrangements for both existing and proposed and community facility.

APPLICANT(S): The Owner and/or Occupier

GRID REF: OS 349699, 230575

APPLICATION TYPE: Outline

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was explained that the planning application 130945 had been first considered in 2013 and the Parish Council had discussed it and decided not to support it then, for the reasons stated in the representation made to the Planning Authority. The application had not been determined, by the Planning Authority, and the intervening period of time, to date, had seen amendments made to additional parking within the estate and to some pavement provision. The Chair stated at this point that, having looked on the Herefordshire Council website, she had noted that the Herefordshire Council Highways Engineer had recommended refusal of permission, in spite of the amendments made as they were "not sufficient".

The Meeting then discussed the proposals and concern was expressed that the Lane was not wide enough to accommodate the proposed pavements and traffic use, it was a single carriageway road and service deliveries etc. were likely to be affected. Concerns over visibility and people having to walk on the road were explained. There were further concerns as to when construction was underway and access onto the Monmouth Road was described as already being "difficult".

Following representations from the floor, the applicant's representative, Kat Le Tsar, addressed the meeting. She explained that the statistics obtained on vehicle movements predicted an additional 11 trips, per hour, as a result of the application being effected. She gave clarification about the garage spaces as to ones being lost and then new spaces being introduced. She said that there would be a net increase of 11 spaces and potential for a further 6, if people chose to take them up. She also explained that in regard to traffic calming, long stretches of road with good visibility were not considered desirable as people could then drive more quickly, she said that perceptions held were that constraints and poor visibility may actually make it safer. She then went on to explain that the comments made by the Highways Engineer were out of date. At

a meeting, held in July 2016, different comments had been made, following the viewing of the amended proposals. Kat Le Tsar advised that she had been asking Herefordshire Council to update the website regarding the viewpoint taken, but this had not yet been done. There was information regarding the priority junction from the A49 to help traffic flow and other matters. The Clerk stopped the proceedings at this point and advised that no further discussion, or decision making, could be pursued due to the fact that the information under consideration was incomplete and, alleged to be, out of date.

The Clerk would contact Herefordshire Council Planning Authority and ask for an extension to the deadline, for comments, pending an updated account of the planning details and comments made on them.

The Planning Meeting closed at 7.20pm.

Open Session:-

During the Open Session a question was asked regarding the lengthsman's duties and a brief resume of tasks carried out was given. It was explained that there was a new post holder. It was noted that the Lengthsman cannot do works on the A49 as this is Highways England responsibility. The pathway at the top of Tump Lane, on the A49 and going towards the Axe & Cleaver Public House, was overgrown. This would be reported to Highways England. Miss Rigby outlined an event on the 11th November at 11.00am at which the war memorial on the Millennium Green would be dedicated. An invitation to attend was extended to the Parish Council.

The Open Session closed at 7.40pm.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies received from Cllr. Steve Turner (Vice-Chair).

2.0 Co-option of Councillor

There were two candidates who had kindly put their names forward for consideration. Miss Rosemary Rigby and Mr David Baldwin each gave a brief resume of their experience, and what they hoped to bring to the role of Parish Councillor. The Parish Council discussed the presentations and Mr David Baldwin was selected. The Parish Council welcomed Mr Baldwin to the Council and thanked Miss Rigby very much indeed for her interest in the position.

3.0 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations made.

4.0 Minutes of previous meeting

4.1) The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 8th September 2016 were signed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

5.0 Reports

5.1) P.C.S.O. from West Mercia Police

The Bulletins with updates had been received and circulated.

5.2) Ward Councillor Ward Cllr Harlow had sent his report as detailed here (sic):

Much Birch Parish Council

Ward member report, October 2016

This decade UK government / public spending is forecast to fall by 1/5th as a % of GDP which means that there will be a profound adjustment between local authorities, the individual and the state.

Herefordshire Council's solution is to focus its endeavours on both public sector reform & economic growth – this can be a positive story!

Public sector reform – We need to change our perception from state as provider to a new deal with citizens. Our ambition is to provide the best possible care for the vulnerable be they old or young and to work with voluntary sector as much as possible (as we do locally with OWL).

We will seek to drive savings in the public sector where possible, ideas include:

Police/fire & rescue – One Herefordshire hub with a joint site and possibly multi skilled teams.

Work & pensions – Investment from DWP to integrate services and therefore better services for less.

Health – Joint commissioning of health and social care.

Education - Herefordshire Council support for university project has been crucial. Will drive ambition, skills and inward investment.

Communities – Re-balancing relationship between council and community.

Economic development - Herefordshire Council is leading economic development in the county, examples include:

Leading with the LEP – We have an excellent track record of securing funds from the LEP, the most recent growth deal includes 4 Herefordshire projects in the top 7 for the three counties.

Leading with economic plan – We will be publishing a 15 year plan focussing on major projects which will drive the county's economy, this will be for the market towns as well as Hereford.

Leading with the local plan – The bypass will allow us to deliver 16,500 new homes and will help to support 6,000 jobs, it will also deliver health and environmental benefits.

Public investment including £32M on Fastershire, £10M on the livestock market, £23M on the energy for waste plant (going live in Spring 17), over £60M on roads as part of £160M investment in the county's infrastructure.

We need to make these investments for the economic development of the county leading to better skills and better jobs and then to more business rates which are needed to support our services.

The aim of this piece is to briefly summarise our strategic direction of travel with the council driving change focussing on:

1. Reforming the public sector to deliver good, sustainable services in an era of severe cuts
2. Driving economic development & investment through strong plans
3. Recognising that public services and a strong economy are interlinked – business rates will replace central government's RSG

Trams

You may have read articles in the press suggesting that a tram system is being considered for Hereford city – this is not currently an option. Our infrastructure strategy is clearly explained at www.hereford2020.com – we are not saying that a tram could never be an option but we have to do one thing at a time and our clear priority is to deliver the bypass. When completed this will alleviate many of the worst traffic delays for people from this area either getting into Hereford or wanting to bypass the city.

New logo for Herefordshire Council

There has been some comment in the press and on social media suggesting that Herefordshire Council has wasted considerable sums on a new logo. The facts are as follows:

- * We are re-designing the council website as the existing site is no longer up to scratch
- * The new site which goes live this winter will make it easier for more residents to find what they are looking for and transact online. By helping people to go online Herefordshire Council will save money on customer services.
- * The 'new' logo is the familiar apple but has changed from a green apple to a black apple!
- * The work was done in house and will save on printing costs.
- * The new branding will therefore save us money rather than waste money as has been suggested in some local publications!

Pest control

I recently went out for the day with Herefordshire Council's pest control service and can vouch for the fact that they offer a first class service. Details are available online.

University

Herefordshire Council has been heavily involved in writing the business case for the proposed NMITE university in town, as Cabinet member for the Economy I have attended the regular

meetings ad can report encouraging progress. We expect to have feedback from Westminster before Christmas.

5.3) Locality Steward Dave Atkinson was present. Bulletins had been circulated. He explained that he was engaged in the issuing of hedge notices to ask people to cut back their overgrown hedges where required. He also said that he would be trying to attend more meetings. His role would be to pick up on issues that can be worked with. Potholes would be considered on a “safety” basis as opposed to a “maintenance” basis.

6.0 Clerk’s Update on Action Items

The updates were noted and included information on the following queries:

- 1) Footpath in Wormelow from the Post Office end which was overgrown
- 2) Missing “cats’ eyes” on the road A466 through the village
- 3) The drain in the bus stop on the C1263 is blocked and water leaking from stop cock.
- 4) Pothole on C1263 on straight part of road down from the bus shelter
- 5) Potholes and surface of road breaking up in Aconbury Close, Much Birch
- 6) Drain in front of notice board outside Community Hall, tarmac washed out
- 7) Very overgrown hedge along the road leading from the bus shelter at Kingsthorpe towards the school on left hand side of road C1263, outside Highview.

Answers had been received, from the Locality Steward, as follows:

1. *Although there is some minor detritus along the footway it is not deemed as requiring intervention at this moment.*
2. *There is an issue of this nature throughout the whole of the A466, which is waiting funding.*
3. *The drain has been raised for clearing within the next 28 days.*
4. *Pot hole has been scheduled for repair.*
5. *Aconbury Close. This has been forwarded to asset management for resurfacing, though I suspect based against all other similar roads it may well be some considerable time.*
6. *I have asked for the drain to be cleared, but will monitor the surface, that said I have asked for a few small pot holes to be repaired.*
7. *Hedge –I will get a notice served on the owners requesting it to be cut.*

7.0 Financial Report

7.1) The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th Sept 2016 HSBC Community Account	£9,638.60
@ 13 th Sept 2016 HSBC Community Projects Account	£12,941.75

7.2) The following payments were approved:

Clerks salary (Oct)	£298.56
Tax refund to Clerk	£64.80
Expenses (mileage £23.85, home office £50.00, stamps £6.60)	£80.45
Much Birch Community Hall (room hire)	£70.00

Resolved: that the payments were passed for payment: (prop. Cllr Crum and sec. Cllr Jones)

7.3) To set Finance Working Party Meeting date to discuss budget and precept
The Finance Working party members were named as Cllrs Cook, Turner and Burge. A meeting would be arranged before the November Parish Council meeting.

8.0 School Parking and Village issues update

8.1) To receive related correspondence and any updates concerning position of TRO’s.

Data was being shared and up to date information was pending.

8.2) To consider any feedback regarding the Wormelow Phone Kiosk

This would be carried forward to the November Meeting for Cllr Turner to update

8.3) To consider Parish Land review and update

The tenanted land, at Rosebank, had been reviewed and the Chair would be speaking with the tenant.

Cllr Crum would make contact with the tenant of the other parcel of land to check regarding the tenancy status.

The situation regarding the triangular parcel of land, at the top of Wrigglebrook Lane, and the planted shrubs was in the hands of the Chair.

9.0 Planning Matters

9.1) To consider any planning applications as circulated.

There had been two applications for consideration:

Planning Application 130945 was discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

Also received was:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 162933 - Mushroom Farm, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HY
DESCRIPTION: Application for variation of condition 17 of planning permission P140554/O.

APPLICANT(S): Mr G Thorne

GRID REF: OS 351401, 229720

APPLICATION TYPE: Outline

This was for a variation of condition 17 only, concerning technical reporting on asbestos, and the Parish Council had no further comments to make.

10.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

10.1) To note any defects to be reported to Balfour Beatty

Details were in hand with the Locality Steward as before

10.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman

The footpath up from the school was to be cleared of vegetation. A full update and outcome of the assessment of the Chestnut tree at Conker Corner would be discussed at November Meeting.

10.3) To receive Report from Footpath Officer

A wooden bridge had been installed on Path MB6.

11.0 Neighbourhood Plan- update

A resume of the situation so far was given. The area had been mapped and published.

Volunteers were now sought to take the Plan forward. There would be a Steering Group Meeting on the 27th October from 7.30pm in the Much Birch Community Hall. The Agenda for the meeting will include the setting up of the Steering Group, election of a Chair, clarification of roles and responsibilities plus openness and communications.

A skill set analysis would be undertaken and inclusivity and diversity encouraged. The aims of the plan would be made clear and views would be sought in a variety of ways, including questionnaires and consultation meetings.

Details of activities and updates would be on social media. A suggestion was made to include the school also as this could be a useful publicity avenue via the PTA. Cllr Burge would speak to a school contact.

12.0 Self-Help Gritting Scheme

This was still in place and ready for inclement weather conditions.

13.0 Correspondence

13.1) Items were noted as per the information and correspondence sheet and included information on a Green Lanes Seminar, Phone Kiosk Decommissioning Consultation. A note had

been received regarding HGV access to a local farm via a conversation with one of the councillors. The resident may be attending the November Meeting to discuss the matter. The Parish Council would talk to the resident, if they were in attendance at the November Meeting.

14.0 Parishes' Newsletter and Much Birch Website

14.1) Clerk to send a précis to the Newsletter. This would include details of seasonal bonfire and firework safe practice.

15.0 Matters to be raised on the Agenda for the next meeting

All the usual items, plus the Wormelow phone kiosk, Neighbourhood Plan and any feedback from Herefordshire Council on the Tump Lane planning application.

16.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Ordinary Meeting was confirmed as Thursday 3rd November 2016 from 7.30pm in The Much Birch Community Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date