

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 7th January 2016

Present:

Cllr. Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr. Ben Roberts
Cllr. Steve Turner (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Tim Jones
Cllr A Crum
Cllr R Burge

In attendance:

Parish Clerk: Alison Wright, the Locality Steward: Dave Atkinson, Ward Cllr David Harlow and 8 members of the public

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Open Session commenced. Mention was made of a coffee morning and notification of a meeting to do with Tump Lane and a possible forthcoming planning application. It was commented that an application from "Larkrise" was believed to be going to be presented. The Chair stated that as soon as any application was made known to the Parish Council, regarding "Larkrise", then a public meeting would be arranged to give residents an opportunity to discuss the application with the Parish Council. The public meeting would be publicised. The Open Session closed at 7.40pm.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies received.

2.0 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations made.

3.0 Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

3.1) The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 3rd December 2015 were signed as a true and correct record of the meeting.
There were no matters arising.

4.0 To receive any update regarding the Much Birch Old Charities concerning the Poor Acre

A notification of Planning Application had been received on the afternoon of the day of the meeting. There being no time to look at the details, in order to discuss at the Parish Council Meeting that evening, an extension for comments had been requested and the application would be considered, for comments, at the February Parish Council 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 reported here (sic):

Ward member report, January 2016

Petition

I was proud to be with Eric Joseph and almost a dozen residents of Tump Lane as he presented his 330+ name petition to the full council on 18.12.15. The Hereford Times were also present and the story appeared on their website. We must now keep the pressure on to improve road safety not just in Tump Lane but across the parish.

Neighbourhood development plan

I made the point at the last Parish council here that 'Not having a neighbourhood development plan means losing influence over where the housing growth in your area will take place.' This appears to be coming true with a highly contentious planning application on Tump Lane in the pipeline. Even though the application has not yet been submitted it has generated considerable interest both in support of and against the proposal.

I would once again urge the Much Birch parish council to move forward with any plans to commence a Neighbourhood development plan. Help is available from Herefordshire Council in the form of grants and also advice and there are now several parishes almost at the stage of adoption. Getting an NDP to the stage of adoption takes many months of work and consultation with the local community. The final plan needs to be put to a referendum with a 50% majority in favour in order to adopt an NDP and the community therefore needs to be fully involved in the process.

I will try to ensure that both sides of the proposal (Larkrise) have the opportunity to put their side of the argument across so that residents can make an informed decision. With the Parish council's blessing I will try and organise a meeting at the village hall whereby both sides get the chance to have their say.

There will be pressure on Much Birch for new homes and I urge the PC to start the process of writing an NDP either with another parish or alone.

Local transport plan 2016 - 2031

Herefordshire's new Local Transport Plan covering the period 2016-2031 is currently in draft form undergoing consultation. The Local Transport Plan sets out the council's strategy for supporting economic growth, improving health and wellbeing and reducing the environmental impacts of transport.

We are seeking your feedback from a questionnaire which will help to prioritise Herefordshire Council's objectives and spending priorities over the next 15 years. This survey will conclude on 29 January 2016 and we would urge you to take part by using the link below:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LTP-Consultation>

Bus Service No: 33 Hereford to Ross on Wye (evenings) Mondays to Saturdays; Sunday am and Service

Herefordshire Council managed to continue to fund a number of bus routes for an additional twelve months following the original proposal to reduce service levels. The additional journeys will cease to operate with effect from 10th April 2016 unless further funding can be found. There are pressures to withdraw a further £250,000 from the budget for 2016-17.

We would therefore encourage parishioners to use the service, or lose it. This may have the effect of making the service commercially viable.

5.3) Locality Steward Dave Atkinson reported that there were "potholes galore" and flooding but that the area containing Much Birch was not generally seeing matters reported as "serious". The ditch at the end of Wrigglebrook Lane, near to Cress Cottage, was reported as now "running". A couple of issues had been advised via Facebook. The matters identified related to items on the A49. Dave would advise regarding the contact e mail. At the lower end of Tump Lane, outside "The Firs", the last house on the corner, water gathers and does not disperse. There are issues of water lying on both sides of Tump Lane. Little Birch Road is coming apart and full of potholes etc. Potholes are cut

out and repaired on A and B roads but patched on C and U roads. Works carried out are inspected and overviewed. It was explained that the contract is a “self regulating” one. The Locality Steward system was felt to be working well with reporting, follow ups and the Parish was encouraged to refer problems back up. Patching of potholes is only a temporary repair. The situation regarding Little Birch Road is known and once the Annual Plan (Cabinet Meeting scheduled for 21/01/16) has been approved more will be known about what funds are available to carry out more permanent repairs to the road surface.

The gates for Footpath MB4 will be liaised on between Cllr Turner and the Locality Steward.

Dave Atkinson left the meeting at this point.

6.0 Clerk’s Update on Action Items

The updates were noted and included an update on the Lengthsman and Footpath scheme situation plus enquiries were in hand regarding road signs for Pages Pitch.

7.0 Financial Report

7.1) The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th Dec 2015 Community Account	£10,810.93
@ 13 th Dec 2015 HSBC Community Projects Account	£14,408.00

7.2) The following payments were approved:

Clerks salary	£362.30
Expenses (mileage £16.88)	£16.88

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

8.0 School Parking and related issues update

8.1) To receive related correspondence and any updates.

A new schedule for the school parking should be produced by the end of January 2016.

8.2) To consider the traffic regulation order (TRO) outside the Much Birch School and those for Tump Lane

TRO’s for reduced speed limit, parking and weight restrictions were all in the list of requests and were awaiting attention

8.3) To receive any update re Speed Indicator Device (SID) options

Awaiting additional prices that were being obtained as per details in Locality Steward’s Report

8.4) To consider an approach to the Safer Roads Partnership Scheme regarding the A49 and adjacent roads within the Parish

A continued effort to make contact with Highways England to ask for an assessment of the A49 would be maintained. Contact would also be made with the Safer Roads Partnership.

9.0 Planning Matters

9.1) To consider any planning applications as circulated.

There had been further applications received for consideration and the comments were returned, following consideration, as follows:

1) APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 153516 - Land at Lyndhurst, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HJ
DESCRIPTION: Proposed demolition of existing chalet bungalow and erection of replacement dwelling.

APPLICANT(S): Mr Davies
GRID REF: OS 349852, 231041
APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission

The Much Birch Parish Council have no objections to the proposal.

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 153552 - Land adjacent Rangers Lodge, Little Birch Road, Kingsthorpe, Herefordshire,
DESCRIPTION: Proposed new 3 bedroom detached dwelling.
APPLICANT(S): Miss Leah Roberts
GRID REF: OS 350370, 231787
APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission

The Parish Council reviewed the application and are minded to **object** to it due to concerns over the size of the plot in relation to the proposed dwelling in that the plot appears too narrow, there is concern for the potential of overlooking and overshadowing of the neighbouring property and consequent loss of privacy. There are also concerns regarding drainage, and the land below the proposed building, and also the access with such a tiny space available for vehicular access and with no foot path etc. at the location. The proposal appears to be of an overbearing nature in relation to buildings adjacent to the site.

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 153313 - Land adjacent to Highland Cottage, Parish Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, Herefordshire
DESCRIPTION: Proposed cottage and alterations to existing access.
APPLICANT(S): Mr Josh Reynolds
GRID REF: OS 350483, 232168
APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission

The Much Birch Parish Council have no objections to the proposal.

10.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

Ongoing reports, as discussed with Locality Steward

10.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman

Ditching works were still on request and in hand

10.3) To receive Report from Footpath Officer

Replacement footpath gates as required were on order and in progress

10.4) To consider possible provision of a bin at the bus stop

A litter bin was proposed for the bus shelter on the A49 southbound opposite the Much Birch Church. Costs, siting and emptying matters all to be explored.

11.0 Neighbourhood Plan- update on position

The original idea had been for there to be a joint meeting with Little Birch Parish in order to share publicity of the Neighbourhood Plan idea. No-one had responded to an e mail message, on the subject, sent out by the Chair. Little Birch Parish had already resolved to go ahead with a Neighbourhood Plan. There were concerns regarding the holding of a joint meeting as there were likely to be different questions and issues for Little Birch and Much Birch. Thoughts on the subject were invited. There had been a date set aside, in early February with booking made for a representative from Herefordshire Council to come out and explain matters and answer questions on the topic. The Chair expressed the concern that she felt that it was important that there was the realisation that to undertake a Neighbourhood Plan would require a lot of commitment and work and a Steering Group would need to be in place. The Plan could

take in the region of 18 to 24 months to complete. The Parish Council and residents would need to be mindful of what was being committed to. The Weston under Penyard Neighbourhood Plan could be used as a reference document to see what has come out of a "Plan". Visions and objectives would be required plus a process leading to a referendum when the public would decide whether, or not, to endorse the plan - as produced. An article would be inserted into the newsletter and a leaflet would inform residents of what was happening. The Neighbourhood Plan Information Event for Much Birch would be held on the 9th February, from 7.30pm, in the Much Birch Community Hall. All would be welcome to come along and find out more about what would be involved.

12.0 Self-help winter gritting scheme

Grit supplies had not been used as yet, but the scheme was on standby.

13.0 Correspondence

13.1) Items were noted as per the information and correspondence sheet and included information from the Bank, HALC and advice on how to apply for a defibrillator for the community.

14.0 Parishes' Newsletter and Much Birch Website

14.1) Clerk to supply a précis for the next edition of the newsletter. This would include details of the Neighbourhood Plan Event on the 9th February from 7.30pm in the Much Birch Community Hall. Cllr Cook would also send in an article, specifically about the Neighbourhood Plan initiative, for inclusion in the Newsletter.

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

All the usual items, plus prices for a litter bin by the bus stop and for road signs for "Pages Pitch" also Neighbourhood Plan Event on February 9th.

16.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 4th February 2016 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