

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 9th July 2015

Present:

Cllr. Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr. Tim Jones
Cllr. Andy Crum
Cllr. Ben Roberts

In attendance:

Parish Clerk: Alison Wright, the Locality Steward: Dave Atkinson, and 6 members of the public

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Open Session commenced. Mr Padden from Fairview thanked the Clerk regarding the Action Plan for the lines outside his property. He asked that now the new Ward Councillor was involved please could we all keep on with the initiative to get the matter resolved. Mr Padden then left the Meeting and the Open Session closed at 7.40pm.

1.0 **Apologies for Absence and co-option of councillor(s) plus signing of forms**

There were apologies received from Cllr. Steve Turner due to an eye injury and from the Ward Councillor, who had sent a report.

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 4th June were signed as true and correct records of the meeting.
There were no matters arising.

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

There had been a further update received from Trustee Mr Dick Brimacombe, as follows:
"I have now received the views of the Planning Officer and Ben Corbett's recommendations regarding the Pre. App. for the Poor Acre, these are attached for your information. You will see that the Planning Officer would not be in favour of 3 dwellings but he indicates that an application for 1 dwelling would probably be acceptable. The Rev. Mark and I have asked Berrys to make an outline Planning Application for 1 dwelling on the road side plot with access to Bigglestone Farm on the East End of the Pours Acre.
I will keep you informed of the progress."

5.0 **Reports**

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

The PCSO was not present. Bulletins with updates had been received and circulated.

5.2) Ward Councillor Ward Cllr Harlow had sent his report as reported here:

"Core strategy & Neighbourhood Development Plan

We are awaiting the planning inspector's report which will be available by mid-July. Should the report be favourable, the Core Strategy then requires approval at cabinet for recommendation to Full Council.

At the time of writing we anticipate a full Council meeting to debate this before the end of July. This may change!

As soon as the Core Strategy is passed at full council it becomes the planning document for all applications to be judged against in tandem with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It also paves the way for adopting the Neighbourhood plans when they are accepted by local communities at local referendum.

Having a neighbourhood development plan is the best way for parishes to influence where new homes are to be built. There is a team at H.C.C headed by Samantha Banks who is there to help you - if you need any help from me then I will happily assist.

I met with Samantha on 22.06 and the file she has on Much Birch shows an estimation that the parish will need to build approx. 57 homes over the next 15 years to satisfy the targets (14 already committed). This figure may even increase as Much Birch has all the characteristics needed for a sustainable community (as discussed last meeting)

I can happily share the Welsh Newton NDP if you need help as it is a good thorough example. I am appearing before the planning committee on 15.07 to speak on behalf of Dave Davies regarding his planning application on Wrigglebrook Lane. Mr Davies has many letters of support from local citizens and the proposed site is close to the A49.

The issue of parking around Fairview (near the school) is being sorted out by HCC and we are now in a 6 month consultation phase.

The drainage issue on the Thorn has been attended to.

Fastershire (taken from their web site)

Work has been going well across sector 11 (Little Birch, Much Birch) and we're on track to hit our target of making fibre broadband available to 20,000 homes and businesses across Herefordshire by the end of the summer. We now expect the majority of work to finish by December 2015. Further work to ensure all premises have the capability to access faster broadband with a minimum of 2Mbps is expected to be completed by December 2016

Herefordshire Council Budget Outturn 2014/15

The 2014/15 revenue budget, which included savings of £15millions, under-spent by £639k in the year.

Herefordshire Council 2016 – 2020 Budget Planning

Council approved the current Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in February 2015. This will be updated over the coming months, based on revised grant assumptions and savings plans, and extended to cover the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.

The overall savings requirement in the period 2015/16 to 2019/20 is £42millions. This assumes the removal of central government formula grant funding from 2019/20 with the council becoming self sufficient from business rates; council tax and specific grant allocations from that date.

We will know more after the budget....

Community first responder scheme

I attended a presentation recently given by the West Midlands ambulance service and they are keen to push the community first responder scheme, particularly in rural areas such as ours.

(Could we have a community emergency kit in the shop for example?)

Community First Responder Schemes are teams of volunteers who are trained by the Ambulance Service to a nationally recognised level and provide life saving treatment to people in their local communities. Community First Responders are always backed up with the nearest available emergency ambulance. Thorough training is given and having someone trained in first aid on the scene of an accident within a couple of minutes might make a crucial difference. I am going to try and organise some training locally and will be pushing this scheme with each of the parish councils on my ward. (This might be something that could be incorporated into the proposed new community shop on the A49)

Parish Councillor Training

There is a parish councillor training session on 9th July that will be of particular interest to new councillors”.

5.3) Locality Steward Dave Atkinson reported success with the project to sort out the drainage issues at the Thorn. There had been many solutions to problems implemented by Balfour Beatty including pot hole filling. There were ongoing public rights of way (PROW) issues and Balfour Beatty would be working with PROW Officers under the P3 (Parish Paths Partnership) Scheme. Vegetation overgrowth was a seasonal issue. The grass cutting project for Balfour Beatty had been hampered due to contractor issues and delays had meant a late start to many areas regarding seasonal grass cutting contracts. Balfour Beatty had been using their own contractors to fill the void and had been responding to a high volume of queries and complaints. The A49 and A466 roads and splays were noted as requiring attention. The Birch and Llangarron Wards have suffered as a result of the delays.

Some highlighted issues were noted by the Locality Steward namely: 2 “visibility” splays Firstly on the A49 at the top of the Callow, Kingsthorpe when looking to turn right, this was Highways Agency but BB to escalate. Secondly - Wrigglebrook Lane U71606 at the junction with Ticklewithy Pitch U71607 at the top of the Thorn is overgrown. Clerk to refer this to the Much Dewchurch (Lengthsman).

The bus shelter meeting at the Thorn was mentioned with reference as to why there was consideration of replacing a robust and adequate shelter?

The A49 going towards Kingsthorpe the 30mph sign is obscured by the hedge on the left. The Locality Steward to look at moving the sign further down (legal order would be required).

The Locality Steward explained that the issue of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) did not fall within the Locality Steward’s remit. The Locality Steward left the meeting at this point.

5.4) The “Tump Lane Toppers” (including any update on the Play Space)

No Tump Lane Toppers update but Play Space update noted under Clerks Actions (Item No.6).

6.0 Clerk’s Update on Action Items

The updates were noted including details regarding Tump Lane Play space Questionnaire. The feedback interval had closed on the 30th June. 33 replies had been received and this information would now be fed back to the Team responsible for grounds maintenance and repair. Next steps would involve discussion and customer involvement.

7.0 Financial Report

7.1) The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th June 2015 Community Account	£11,657.50
@ 13 th June 2015 HSBC Community Projects Account	£14,408.00

7.2) The following payments were approved:

Clerks salary	£503.74
Expenses (mileage £40.73)	£40.73
Much Birch Memorial Clock servicing	£168.00

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

7.3) To consider revision of documents timetable

The Communication Policy would be the first Policy for revision. New Draft Policy to be drawn up.

7.4) To approve the end of year accounts

The statements were read out and the declarations made. The End of Year Accounts were approved and signed ready for submission to the external auditor.

7.5) To consider possible donation towards Community Hall development

This was deferred to the September Meeting and John Jones would be invited to present to the Meeting.

7.6) To consider possible use of Section 106 monies

These would be considered at the next meeting and consideration would be given regarding possible local uses. The School could be one choice.

8.0 School Parking and related issues update

8.1) To receive related correspondence and any updates.

The issue of parking and lines is under going remedial action

8.2) To consider the traffic regulation order (TRO) outside the Much Birch School

This is in hand as at 8.1.

8.3) To consider Speed Indicator Device (SID) options and or speed survey at the Thorn

Clerk to request that the Ward Councillor investigate the seemingly high cost of undertaking the surveys.

8.4) To hear any update re the bus shelter at the top of the Thorn

As reported previously, no further update at present.

9.0 Planning Matters

9.1) To consider any planning applications as circulated.

Four applications had been received:

1) APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 151550 - Wormelow Stores, Wormelow, Herefordshire, HR2 8EJ
DESCRIPTION: Proposed demolition of shop and erection of shop with flat over and 2 no. houses, all with parking
APPLICANT(S): Sweetman Developments Ltd
GRID REF: OS 349246, 230070
APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission

The Much Birch Parish Council wish to comment in support of the application

2) APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 151783 - 14 Tump Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8HW
DESCRIPTION: Proposed demolition of existing single storey area and construction of new single storey extension.
APPLICANT(S): Mrs S Rogers
GRID REF: OS 349822, 230553
APPLICATION TYPE: Full Householder

The Much Birch Parish Council wish to comment in support of the application

3) APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 151791 - White Gates, Holly Bush Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8HX
DESCRIPTION: Proposed single storey front extension.
APPLICANT(S): Mr & Mrs D Jones
GRID REF: OS 351407, 230158
APPLICATION TYPE: Full Householder

The Much Birch Parish Council wish to comment in support of the application

4) APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 151555 - Farriers, Wrigglebrook Kingsthorpe, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8AL
DESCRIPTION: Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 141226/FH (Proposed alterations and extensions to cottage) Alterations to brickwork and cladding on extension and 2 no windows.
APPLICANT(S): Mr & Mrs T Strange
GRID REF: OS 349847, 231987

The Much Birch Parish Council wish to comment that they have no objections to the application, as presented

At this point in the Meeting a request for an item to be heard was presented. This concerned information from Miss Rosemary Rigby MBE about a forthcoming auction to see the sale of some personal effects belonging to, and medals awarded to, national heroine Violette Szabo GC.

Miss Rigby was engaged in trying to raise awareness of the sale and to seek sponsorship to try to acquire the medals for the museum in Violette's name at Cartref, Tump Lane. The Parish Council empathised with Miss Rigby's quest and it was agreed that details of the appeal for funds should be placed on the Parish Website to help inform the parish of what was happening. Miss Rigby thanked the Parish Council for their support, and good wishes, and then left the Meeting.

The Parish Council noted that planning application 150717, land on Wrigglebrook Lane: proposed detached single storey bungalow with storage/garaging under was going to the Planning Committee for determination on the 15th July. The Parish Council would not be taking up the three minute opportunity to speak on this application.

10.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

Items were generally advised to the Locality Steward under the reports item No. 5.3.

10.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman

Verges, grass cutting, strimming and items round signs, bins and hot spots to be advised when seasonal BB contract work completed. The road by the school had been sprayed off but the residual dead weeds had not been cleared.

10.3) To receive Report from Footpath Officer

An issue with a Little Birch Footpath (LB22) and overgrown prickly crop was noted. Cllr Ben Roberts to take this up through Little Birch PC.

MB15 required some clearance, okay at one end but "bad" towards the other. Clerk to send letter template to Cllr Roberts to send to landowner regarding footpath clearance. It was noted that sandbags for the parish had been held at Frank Green, Court Farm and a new storage venue was required. The Clerk would put a request into the précis in the Newsletter to try to find a new venue for the sandbags to be held at.

11.0 Parish Plan- to consider review of 2004 Parish Plan

To consider revision of elements and consider impact of Core Strategy - as applicable in regard to the Neighbourhood Plan initiative and the Parish Plan. This would be on the next agenda.

12.0 Correspondence

12.1) Items were noted as per the information and correspondence sheet and included a request for financial assistance from the Citizens Advice Bureau. This was passed to private donation option only and no donation was awarded by the Parish Council. There had been concerns raised by a resident about compliance with planning regulations at the Old Mushroom Farm, planning application reference 140554. The comments would be taken up with the Enforcement Team at Herefordshire Council.

13.0 Parishes' Newsletter and Much Birch Website

13.1) Clerk to supply a précis for the next edition of the newsletter. To include the funding appeal for Violette Szabo and the medals plus the request for a volunteer to store sandbags for the parish.

13.2) To consider possibility of Parish Council “Facebook” Page
This idea was passed for a conjoined birches site. Terry Cook and Ben Roberts would collaborate to set this up. The page would be public but with restricted updating rights. This would be monitored going forward and lessons learned to see if the idea works or otherwise.

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

All the usual items plus donation for Hall consideration, Section 106 monies, Neighbourhood Watch and crime prevention, including possibility of general meeting to raise awareness with neighbouring Little Birch.

15.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting(s)

Next meeting – Thursday 3rd September 2015 at 7.30pm in The Much Birch Community Hall

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date