

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish and Annual Statutory Meetings of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 5th June 2014

Present:

Cllr. Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr. Andrew Crum
Cllr. Stephen Turner
Cllr. Tim Jones
Cllr. Keith James
Cllr. Jon Norris

In attendance:

Parish Clerk, Alison Wright and 7 members of the public

Open Session:-

The commencement of the open session heard a report on the closure of the Wormelow Stores and Post Office. The store had closed suddenly on the 2nd June. Residents were trying to co-ordinate newspaper deliveries and the owner of the Tump Inn was looking at the possibility of opening a small shop to provide "necessities".

Anthony Bush, Parish Liaison Officer at the Herefordshire Council, had spoken to Londis to try to find out some information and would be contacting the Post Office also. The property had been valued on the 2nd June and this with a view to putting it up for sale on the open market as a "going concern". The Parish Council could consider the option of whether to make the shop a "community asset" and then approach the Herefordshire Council asking them to classify it accordingly. This would mean that if the shop came to market in the again future, the Parish Council could have a moratorium or period to "consider what may be done with it". Information about the closure had been on the television and radio. A comment made from the floor noted that the shop's employees were aware of the situation and had been paid up to date. Current information was that there were two groups interested in buying the shop.

Yellow lines on outside Fairview and raised kerbstone. Still no reply on these in spite of chases made. They will now be escalated again through the Ward Councillor, who has tried previously, also with no response.

Cllr Turner has resigned as School Governor and the Clerk had written to the School to advise that parking issues outside the school would remain as an agenda item for the Parish Council. There had been no response to, or acknowledgement of, the e mail.

The remaining part of the Open Session was based around the discussion of domiciliary care provision in the Parish. Kim Evans, proprietor of a Domiciliary Care Agency based in Llanwarne, had been successfully running an agency for several years and keeping people in their own homes using a band of carers who travelled to the homes of those requiring assistance. Their recent tender to continue to provide the service had not been accepted in terms of Herefordshire Council referrals which made up about 80% of their business but could not be sustained with a £1.00 per hour cut in rate. There had now been a refusal of the opportunity to take the case to judicial review, as there had been nothing untoward in the process of decision making used by the Council. The net effect will mean that the business had already shrunk in size and will need to look at private clients and there is a definite requirement for a local service.

People have a choice in their care provision and the clients were only told of the changes at the last minute by social workers.

Any actions to be taken by the Parish Council, in regard to this situation, can be viewed at item **13.0** of these minutes.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies

2.0 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3.0 Minutes

3.1 The Minutes of 8th May 2014 were signed as a true and correct record of the meeting with one amendment, Cllr James was present at the meeting whereas Cllr Norris had sent his apologies.

Matters arising: The daffodils and tree planting were discussed by Cllr James with Miss Rigby. Miss Rigby would not wish any more trees on the Millennium Green but the daffodil planting, including the rare variety, would proceed.

4.0 Reports

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

PCSO Kevin Powell was not present.

Ward Councillor Cllr Norris gave his report which he explained can be viewed in full at jonnorris.co.uk. He gave an overview of the HVOSS initiative to link up groups as a broker regarding the minibus scheme. The Core Strategy Consultation was underway until 3rd July and drop in dates had been arranged at the Courtyard plus other mechanisms for residents to have their say on the latest version.

Housing Developers were approaching with planning applications for villages which may not be in tune with the village inhabitants wishes.

There was a move to resurrect good neighbourliness and there was information about care packages and the fact that not many people get a direct allowance and then employ their carers themselves.

There was information about verges in that they are part of the Highway. It is a criminal offence to place stones on the verge to deter vehicles. Verges are facing ruination by large vehicles driving over them and eroding the road edge. Ditches are allowable as a boundary.

Bank House, Kingsthorpe, planning application for a house refused due to it being "too far to walk to school".

A meeting was being arranged for the 25th June at the Garway Moon Public House 7.00pm for the purpose of getting everyone together to encourage joined up working between parishes. A senior planning officer would be in attendance and bus scheme provision would be discussed. Cllr Norris reported that he had been exonerated following a complaint by the Deputy Leader of the Council.

5.0 Clerk's Update on Action Items

The updates were noted and representation on road issues had been conveyed to Balfour Beatty, the parish land rental monies had been collected and there had been footpath information from Cllr Norris in relation to Larkrise.

6.0 Financial Report

6.1 The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th May 2014 Community Account	£9836.70
@ 13 th May 2014 HSBC Community Projects Account	£14,408.00

6.2	The following payments were approved:	
	Clerk's salary	£203.60
	Expenses (mileage £23.49, stamps £6.36)	£29.85
	Tax due on salary	£50.80
	Came & Co Local Council Insurance*	£265.00

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

* The 5% loyalty discount was accepted and the annual renewal payment reduced from £278.95

6.3 End of Year Audit by Grant Thornton

The end of year papers were ratified, with declarations noted, and made ready for sending to Grant Thornton. Grateful thanks were once again extended to Rose Wathen for carrying out the internal audit process on behalf of the Parish Council.

7.0 Much Birch School Parking and Road issues update

Clerk would ask the school if there any been any update, regarding parking matters, following on from the governors' meeting.

8.0 Planning Matters

There were three planning applications to discuss as follows:

- 1) Site: High Gables, Holly Bush Lane, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HU
Description: Proposed erection of single storey front extension to replace existing conservatory
Application No: P141067/FH
Grid ref: OS 350864, 230313
Application Type: Full householder

The Parish Council resolved to make the following comments, they supported the application.

- 2) Site: Counties View, Much Birch, Hereford, HR2 8HL
Description: Proposed erection of a detached dwelling
Application No: P141230/F
Grid ref: OS 350098, 231058
Application Type: Planning Permission

The Parish Council resolved to make the following comments, they objected to the proposal due to the overbearing nature and size of the property in relation to the properties on either side.

- 3) Site: 2 Coronation Cottages, Forge Lane, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, HR2 8AL
Description: Proposed alterations and extension to cottage
Application No: P141226/FH
Grid ref: OS 349855, 231988
Application Type: Full Householder

The Parish Council resolved to make the following comments, they supported the application.

9.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

9.1) Balfour Beatty: -

- Large pothole has reappeared outside the Community Centre and Much Birch Surgery
- Road Number U71603 crumbling at the side, turning from the road U71609 on the left hand side and crumbling due to potholes and subsidence

- Junction with Ticklewithy Pitch – U71603/U71607 deteriorating road surface with wheels “slipping” on it.
- Junctions onto the A49 verges not cut and visibility issue. When will these be cut?

9.2) The Lengthsman: - On next agenda, opportunities for additional works. There are several hedges requiring attention, on U71608 opposite deep culvert, Upper Wrigglebrook Lane lower end of the hedge is encroaching onto the road. On road number U71608 the hedge by the property “for sale” in Forge Lane encroaching. The footpath from the school towards Hunter’s Lodge at the top of the Village is overgrown.

9.3) Footpaths: - No issues to report

10.0 Parish Plan- to consider review of 2004 Parish Plan

No update this time.

11.0 Correspondence

These were noted as per sheet and included the opportunity to comment on the consultation on the Core Strategy by attending drop in sessions, by post or by web at:

www.herefordshire.gov.uk/local-plan . Closing date for comments set as 3rd July 2014.

Phone Kiosk at Kingsthorpe HR2 8AL, Cllr Turner declared an interest here and left the hall for the discussion on the proposed removal of the kiosk. The kiosk was “pay by card” only and just one call had been made from it (allegedly) for the past number of years. The Parish Council recorded no objection to the removal, however it was decided that more details on options for the kiosk would be ascertained and reported back. Cllr Turner had rejoined the meeting and would find out details and convey at the next meeting.

12.0 Parishes’ Newsletter and Much Birch Website

12.1 Clerk to supply précis for the next edition of the newsletter.

13.0 To consider implications of public spending reduction to social care provision

Following on from discussion items raised in the open session, and in consideration of the rural nature of the provision and travel implications, the Clerk would write to the Head of Commissioning, Helen Coombes to convey the concerns. Cllr Cook to confirm e mail address for Helen Coombes and Cllr James to provide details of the situation for the letter.

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

Lengthsman – potential for extra duties. Telephone kiosk update and purchase options – Cllr Turner to report findings. Feedback on filming and protocols at meetings.

15.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Ordinary Meeting

Next meeting – Thursday 10th July 2014 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