

# MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015

### Present:

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

### In attendance:

Parish Clerk: Alison Wright, the Locality Steward: Dave Atkinson, the Ward Cllr David Harlow, John Jones from the Community Hall Committee, and 7 members of the public

### Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the Open Session commenced.

Mr Padden from Fairview expressed the concern that time was moving on through the six month time-frame, previously stated as being when the TRO outside his home would be revisited. The Ward Cllr had chased this up with the Member for Highways, Cllr Paul Rone, but had not had a reply to his latest enquiry, as yet. The Clerk would chase up this matter, and the other TROs outstanding in Tump Lane, with Cllr Paul Rone. Mr Padden then left the Meeting.

Another resident, Mr Watson, raised the issue of a broken pane of glass in the BT phone kiosk outside the Wormelow Garage. He also asked if the phone was supposed to be working as it did not appear to be so. Cllr Turner would make contact with his contact, within BT, to try to establish the phone's operational status and to report the broken glass. The Open Session closed at 7.45pm.

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

There were no apologies and no further co-options.

### 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 9<sup>th</sup> July 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

There had been a further update received from Trustee Mr Dick Brimacombe via e mail on 1/09/15, as follows: "I have talked today to Ben Corbett and he tells me that they are progressing with the Outline Planning Application for 1 dwelling on the Poor Acre as detailed below. He hopes to be in a position to make the application by the end of September." Dick Brimacombe

It was commented that there did not seem to be a very good job having been done regarding the lay-out of the site. This related to issues with the entrance. Concern was also expressed as to how the Charity intended to terminate the existing agricultural tenancy agreement.

## 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 including information concerning “rogue trader” and bogus meter reader visits around the area.

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

#### **Hit and run on Tump Lane**

For the last couple of months I have been speaking to concerned residents of Tump Lane regarding excessive speeding and the use of Tump Lane by HGV lorries as a cut through. I have had meetings with both Rosemary Rigby and Keith James on the subject and our intention had been to lobby HCC for some changes.

Following on from the accident on Tump Lane on 21st August I spoke with Paul Rone (PR) (cabinet member for roads) as well as Jesse Norman. PR’s response is below:

“Evening David

Now that there has been a RTA in which there was a KSI (killed or seriously injured) it’s a game changer. Tump Lane was used as a getaway route after a vehicle theft and Mrs Preedy was badly injured. We can now move the need for enforcement up the ladder a few notches to say the least, however, the request for remedial work will still have to come from the PC to carry the localities clout. If you would like me to attend a PC meeting please let me know.

Paul”

The correct procedure is for the parish council to request whatever changes they see fit, perhaps a reduction in the speed limit to 30mph and some form of either weight restriction or indeed traffic calming (road narrowing?).

I have also been in touch with Lowri Anderson (our police liaison) and she has suggested that we ask the West Mercia Traffic management advisor robert.haynes@westmercia.pnn.police.uk to attend our next PC meeting.

#### **Planning**

Wormelow store – Permission has been granted for the store

Larkrise – I am awaiting an update from the council on this one

Court farm – There maybe a conflict at this site between the request for 4 additional chicken sheds and the homes that have been given planning permission due to odour issues...

#### **Kings Thorn bus stop**

Betty Philpott raised a concern that the solid stone bus shelter on King’s Thorn was going to be replaced by a modern green plastic and glass bus stop. I have spoken to Paul Williamson, who has updated me that they are still looking at the replacement of the bus stop and are talking through options with the Much Dewchurch PC and BBLP. They are currently investigating the roofing material of the shelter to confirm the material that has been used. There will be a further site meeting that I will be invited to attend before any decisions are made.

#### **Council launches priorities and budget consultation**

Herefordshire Council has launched its priorities and budget consultation for 2016/17 and is asking residents to participate and have their say.

The joint priorities and budget consultation will run until Friday 9 October and is asking residents to first of all rate the council’s priorities in terms of what they believe are the most and least important areas we should focus our resources on. Briefings for all members and for town and parish councils were held during July and a series of public engagement events are scheduled through the summer.

To find out more and participate in the consultation, please visit

[www.herefordshire.gov.uk/budgetconsultation2016](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/budgetconsultation2016)

#### **Increase in recycling rates**

Herefordshire residents have increased recycling rates in the county since the introduction of alternate weekly collections in November 2014.

In a report to the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee the waste management team reports a 5.34% increase in recycling; the equivalent to 121 tonnes of recycling per month. The amount of waste going to landfill has reduced by 7%, which is the equivalent to 293 tonnes per month. The move to alternate weekly collection had also delivered annual savings of £500k and there had been no noticeable increase in fly-tipping. The figures are based on the first six months of the new scheme.

#### **Wellbeing Innovation Fund**

Herefordshire Council is inviting bids for grant funding from the county's voluntary and community sector, to pay for exciting and creative projects that can improve people's lives. The Wellbeing Innovation Fund was launched in November last year. It offers grants of between £5k and £20k for projects that aim to improve people's health and quality of life, particularly those who are vulnerable, at risk of social isolation or loneliness.

Since the launch in November, 11 awards were made across the county to a total value of £147k. Creative ideas submitted were broad, ranging from a "men's shed" project targeting older men and encouraging them to get out and meet others with similar interests, to a befriending project where lonely people are supported to get out and about by a band of volunteers.

Further details are available from - Alex Fitzpatrick on 01432 383038.

#### **Useful links**

Maps and timetables for grass cutting and pot holes are now available on the Council's website <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/grass-cutting> <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/maintenance/potholes>

Problems can be reported using <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/footpaths-byways-and-bridleways/cg-report-prov-problem>

It was commented that the instructions on how to complete the "Have your Say" Questionnaire needed improving to clarify, especially concerning Question 3.

The Ward Cllr would look into dates for a possible open meeting to promote the filling in of the Questionnaire.

It was commented that the Kingsthorpe Bus Stop has a perfectly satisfactory and usable bus shelter currently.

**5.3) Locality Steward** Dave Atkinson reported that matters had been quite quiet. The potholes issue had been moderate due to mild weather conditions. He updated regarding the Japanese Knotweed, some was dead and those not dead would be re-sprayed. Road signs were to be replaced on Barrack Hill and Little Birch Road. Some resurfacing (patch filling) had been carried out on Little Birch Road. Grass cutting to start in the next week with two contractors seeking to "blitz" the Herefordshire grass verges in a five week period. This would be a year on year contract.

The Balfour Beatty "Ditching" Paper was commented. In some areas people are looking after ditches really well, others are not. Certain conditions apply regarding responsibility but sometimes it is easier for Balfour Beatty to deal with the job than involve litigation. There needs to a joint working relationship between the landowners, the Parish Council and Balfour Beatty. The brochure is to provide guidance but the Locality Steward will become involved as and when required.

The hedge in Tump Lane, as notified, had had a notice served on the owner to instigate getting it cut back.

#### **5.4) The "Tump Lane Toppers" (including any update on the Play Space)**

No Tump Lane Toppers update. The Play Space Questionnaire had been chased up for feedback and this had been sent through. It was now a question of "where do we go from here?"

### **6.0 Clerk's Update on Action Items**

The updates were noted including matters relating to bus shelter, Tump Lane Play Equipment, Purchasing or hiring of Speed Indicator Device (SID). There was a discussion over the cost of the batteries for SIDs, insurance etc. To find out regarding hire and analysis of any data collected. Police Speed checks had been requested previously also.

### **7.0 Financial Report**

#### **7.1) The following bank balances were noted:**

@ 13 <sup>th</sup> August 2015 Community Account	£9679.27
@ 13 <sup>th</sup> June 2015 HSBC Community Projects Account	£14,408.00

**7.2) The following payments were approved:**

Clerks salary	£357.90
Expenses (mileage £22.95, postage £2.05)	£25.00
Information Commissioner (ICO) renewal	£35.00
Grant Thornton Auditor	£30.00

**Resolved:** that the payments were passed for payment: (prop. Cllr Turner 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. Two documents had been circulated, Publication Scheme and Communications Policy. Parish Council would look at adopting these policies at the next meeting. There were some alterations needed to the Communications Policy around references to planning, absence of web site and social media, such as "Face book" and "Twitter", information. Cllr Cook would review and advise Clerk of necessary suggested changes.

**7.4) To consider possible donation towards Community Hall development**

Mr John Jones from the Community Hall Committee gave a presentation to the Parish Council. He explained about the initial building of the Hall, its purpose, and the plans for its future development and improved services. It was not known at the time of the PC Meeting what the final cost of the works would be and the Parish Council commented that in principle they would make a contribution to the costs but would defer a decision, as to the amount of the donation, until the tender outcome was published. The Parish Council thanked Mr Jones for presenting the case to them and asked him to keep them informed of developments.

**7.5) To consider possible use of Section 106 monies (deferred)**

**7.6) To consider possible assistance with Public Liability Insurance for the Millennium Green**

The Parish Council requested more information regarding the type of insurance and existing premium costs. The Ward Cllr would speak with Mr James, who had raised the initial request, and feed back to the Parish Council.

**8.0 School Parking and related issues update**

**8.1) To receive related correspondence and any updates.**

Clerk to contact Highways Agency to try to revive Meeting Agenda

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

This was in hand, covered elsewhere (under Open Session).

**8.3) To consider Speed Indicator Device (SID) options and or speed survey at the Thorn, covered elsewhere (under Clerk's Actions Item 6).**

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

Covered under Ward Cllr Report Item 5.2

**9.0 Planning Matters**

**9.1) To consider any planning applications as circulated.**

One application had been received:

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** 151993 - Land at Court Farm, Much Birch, Hereford,

**DESCRIPTION:** Proposed poultry sheds and new access.

**APPLICANT(S):** Mr Mark Green

**GRID REF:** OS 350070, 229798

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Planning Permission

The Much Birch Parish Council had undertaken a site visit and thanked Mr Green, Senior, Mark Green and the staff for a most useful tour and site visit. The Parish Council commented that they had no objections to the application, as presented. This item was heard just after the Open Session in the meeting but is reported in the correct agenda order for conformity. The representatives, from the Farm, left the Meeting following the consideration of, and comment on, the application.

**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 previously

**10.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman**

Verges, grass cutting, strimming, ditch clearance and items round signs, bins and hot spots to be advised including ditch at the Thorn and outside Cress Cottage.

**10.3) To receive Report from Footpath Officer**

No further updates

**10.4) To consider any implications of Balfour Beatty document regarding ditch maintenance and drainage matters:** item covered under the Locality Steward's Report (Item 5.3).

**11.0 Neighbourhood Plan- to re-consider undertaking**

This would be moved to the next Agenda. Ward Cllr Harlow would e mail a copy of the Welsh Newton Neighbourhood Plan, to Cllr Turner, as a reference document.

**12.0 Correspondence**

**12.1)** Items were noted as per the information and correspondence sheet and included

**12.2)** To consider impact and initial response re the forthcoming Community Governance Review Proposals

**12.3)** To consider information regarding Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, to explore dates for a joint meeting with Little Birch, going forward.

**13.0 Parishes' Newsletter and Much Birch Website**

**13.1)** Clerk to supply a précis for the next edition of the newsletter. To include enquiry for Neighbourhood Plan volunteers for Steering Group with Cllr Turner as contact point. Also, to include note regarding the Herefordshire Council "Have your Say" Questionnaire to remind people to fill one in.

It was resolved that the Ward Cllr's reports would be published on the website.

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

All the usual items plus the self help gritting scheme. An overview of the scheme, with roads being gritted and grit stored at a local venue, was given for the benefit of the new councillor.

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

Next meeting – Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015 at 7.30pm in The Much Birch Community Hall

*The meeting closed at 9.10pm*

Signed:

.....  
Chairman

.....  
Date