

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 8th September 2016

Present:

Cllr. Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr. Steve Turner (Vice-Chair)
Cllr. Roisin Burge
Cllr Andy Crum
Cllr Tim Jones

In attendance:

Parish Clerk: Alison Wright, Ward Cllr David Harlow and 6 members of the public

Open Session:-

Issues were raised regarding the footpath in Wormelow from the Post Office end which was overgrown and missing "cats' eyes" on the road A466 through the village. These would be reported to the Locality Steward.
The Open Session closed at 7.35pm.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies.

2.0 Co-option of Councillor

There was no co-option carried out. The official notification of the vacancy had drawn no response. The Council may now co-opt a new councillor. This would be publicised with a view to co-opting at a future Parish Council Meeting.

3.0 Declarations of Interest

There were declarations made by Cllr Burge in regard to a donation request for the Birches Newsletter and by Cllr Jones in relation to planning application 162403 - The Swiss Cottage, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorne.

4.0 Minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

4.1) The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 7th July 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):

Wormelow shop

There is widespread disappointment in the community that the Wormelow village shop has not yet transpired. The many comments on Facebook show the frustration felt by many.

I have alerted Herefordshire Council's economic team to the opportunity and they will be promoting the site to their database. It may be worth the residents of the parish also proactively promoting the opportunity to any business contacts they may have.

Meeting the new Police and Crime Commissioner

The new Police and Crime Commissioner, John Campion was recently in town. He was well informed and very interested in the issues that affect people in Herefordshire. He discussed areas where public services can work together to address issues eg reoffending rates, domestic violence,

harm from alcohol and drugs, anti-social behaviour and hate crime, and road safety. He is keen to ensure the Police service is efficiently run and recognizes the importance of feeling safe which can be different to simply just considering crime statistics. I was reassured that speed of police response and police visibility are important to him in rural areas, and he made it very clear that rural areas would not be seen as the poorer cousin to urban areas.

A49 Roadworks

Paul Rone (Cabinet member roads) and I were contacted by a Much Birch resident in Late August with regard to the continuing A49 roadworks and the sloppy signage sending motorists on long detours unnecessarily. We are awaiting a response from the contractors (Kier) as well as Highways England.

As the PC will be aware, Highways England is outside the control of Herefordshire Council and I would urge concerned residents to take this up with our MP as well as making any direct comments known to Highways England. I will keep you informed of any response.

Do you use buses in Herefordshire?

Herefordshire Council would like Herefordshire residents' views on buses across the county to help shape how they will operate in the future.

The council's medium term financial strategy, approved by council in February 2016, includes proposals of £890,000 for passenger transport savings for the period 2016 to 2020.

Following public consultation in spring 2014, the council has saved £1 million on passenger transport provision through a combination of effective planning, integration of services, close working with operators and reductions in subsidy. We are now looking to update that consultation by seeking views from the public, bus users, parish and town councils, transport stakeholder groups and transport providers.

*The consultation is to gauge a range of views from those who use these services and those who currently don't. Comments will be part of a published report that will help Herefordshire Council make decisions on the best way of using the buses and prioritising services most important to residents. **Details available at <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-highways/public-transport/travelling-by-bus/bus-review-2016>***

5.3) Locality Steward Dave Atkinson was not present. Bulletins had been circulated.

6.0 Clerk's Update on Action Items

The updates were noted and included matters relating to travellers sites, tree warden briefings and the bus and transport consultation. Details of planning applications, received during the August holiday period, had been considered, collated and submitted to the Planning Department.

7.0 Financial Report

7.1) The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th Aug 2016 HSBC Community Account	£10,193.96
@ 13 th Aug 2016 HSBC Community Projects Account	£12,941.75

7.2) The following payments were approved:

Clerks salary (Sept)	£266.76
The Post Office Ltd (Tax)	£66.80
Expenses (mileage £26.10)	£26.10
Information Commissioner	£35.00
Lengthsman (for work around parish)	£262.50

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

7.3) To consider possible donation towards the Birches Newsletter

The donation towards the Birches Newsletter was discussed. There had been a request for two terms to be paid, a total of £700.00, but this appeared to be for advance payment as no years

had been noted as having been missed concerning the requests for support. It was resolved that the £350.00 would be paid that evening, as this was how much had been budgeted for, and consideration of budgeting to catch up in the following year would be given when the Finance Working Group met to discuss budget and precept matters.

8.0 School Parking and Village issues update

8.1) To receive related correspondence and any updates.

Information had been received from Graham Hornsby regarding collection of data for the pursuance of the Traffic Regulation Orders for Tump Lane weight restriction and speed limit reduction. It was noted that data collection wires were currently on Upper Wrigglebrook Lane, past Cuckoo Cottage.

The Ward Councillor reminded the meeting about the newly introduced Traffic Regulation Order Toolkit. The Clerk and Chair had attended a workshop, at Balfour Beatty, on this subject where the Toolkit was discussed. The option was available to fund fast tracking of TRO's but the cost was likely to be a minimum of £4000.00 per TRO. This was a matter for future consideration.

8.2) To consider options regarding the Wormelow Phone Kiosk

Miss Rigby reported that she had undertaken a lot of work on finding out options for the kiosk at Wormelow. She had obtained offers of help to refurbish the kiosk. Free paint would be available and also funded electricity supply for a period of seven years. Concern was raised by the Parish Council regarding the responsibility for ongoing repairs and maintenance of the kiosk. There was also the need to consider the location, glass breakage etc. The Parish Council would need to decide whether a purchase should go ahead but, after discussion, it was agreed that Cllr Turner would enquire whether another organisation such as the Millennium Green Trust might acquire it, and the responsibility for it, instead. The Parish Council may be able to buy it and then pass it on? Cllr Turner would enquire about the implications of the Millennium Green Trust buying the kiosk etc. and report back.

8.3) To consider Parish Land review

Some issues were discussed regarding the parish land plots in terms of one being in an "untidy" condition and the other regarding alleged sub-letting of the plot. These matters would be investigated by communication with the tenants.

8.4) To consider any possible action re hedge bordering Aconbury Close

The hedge bordering onto Aconbury Close had been reported as being overgrown and with brambles etc. overhanging. Some investigation had taken place to determine ownership but this had not yet been established. The overgrowth was not affecting the highway so enforcement was not an option. There was concern about the Parish Council commissioning a cut back of the hedge as this may set a precedent. Further enquiries would be made to try to establish ownership.

The small triangle of land by Pages Pitch was overgrown and was potentially a visibility issue. This would be looked into regarding communications to help alleviate the visibility problem.

9.0 Planning Matters

9.1) To consider any planning applications as circulated.

There had been one application for consideration:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: 162403 - The Swiss Cottage, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8AW

DESCRIPTION: Proposed two storey rear extension and change of use of agricultural land to domestic curtilage

APPLICANT(S): Mr & Mrs T. Jones

GRID REF: OS 349996, 232067

APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission

Cllr Jones had declared an interest in the application and left the room for the duration of the discussion. The Parish Council discussed the application and resolved to support the application. Cllr Jones rejoined the meeting.

A notification had been received, that afternoon, for planning application 130945 in terms of additional information for Larkrise on land in Tump Lane. An extension would be sought to the deadline for comments, if possible, and a meeting arranged, possibly on the 6th October before the October Parish Council Meeting. Details would be advised when known.

10.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

- The drain in the bus stop on the C1263 is blocked and water leaking from stop cock.
- Pothole on C1263 on straight down from the bus shelter
- Potholes and surface of road breaking up in Aconbury Close
- Drain in front of notice board outside Community Hall, tarmac washed out

10.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman

The Lengthsman had been undertaking an assessment of the area. It was commented that things were “not as bad” as may have been thought. Most of the drainage systems were okay but some sumps did need clearing out. The Hollybush HGV signs had been re-set and signs had been cleared around, bus shelters had been cleaned. The horse chestnut tree on Conker Corner was noted to be in a poor condition. The Lengthsman would ask a Tree Surgeon to make an assessment of the condition of the tree and report back to the Parish Council.

10.3) To receive Report from Footpath Officer

The Footpath Officer advised that there was a new footpath sign required for footpath MB20.

11.0 Neighbourhood Plan- update

The proposed parish area had been consulted on for the six week period and the plan could now proceed, based on the area as published. The next step would be to arrange a meeting to form a Steering Group from those people who had expressed an interest. Councillors Burge and Turner would represent the Parish Council on this. Feedback from Little Birch was that they had met, formed a Steering Group, appointed a consultant and elected a Steering Group Chair. There was also a dedicated Support Officer from Herefordshire Council to assist. A Face Book page and other media could be used to publicise meetings etc. The Clerk would liaise with Cllr Burge and Turner to find a suitable date for the Much Birch Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group inaugural meeting and book this with the Community Hall.

12.0 Parish and Town Council Bus and Community Transport Consultation

The Chair ran through the Questionnaire with the Parish Council at the meeting and the questions were answered. There were two subsidised routes noted as affecting the Kingsthorpe area. The Chair would return the completed document to the Herefordshire Council.

13.0 Correspondence

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

14.0 Parishes' Newsletter and Much Birch Website

14.1) Clerk to send a précis to the Newsletter. This would include details of councillor vacancy and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group Meeting details, once organised.

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

All the usual items, plus the Wormelow phone kiosk, Neighbourhood Plan, councillor vacancy, Self-help Gritting Scheme. A Finance Working Party Meeting would be arranged for November.

16.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Ordinary Meeting was confirmed as Thursday 6th October 2016 from 7.30pm in The Much Birch Community Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date