

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held on the Zoom Platform, during Covid 19 Virus Pandemic, Thursday 3rd September 2020 from 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr Roisin Burge
Cllr Steve Turner (Vice Chair)
Cllr Andy Crum
Cllr David Baldwin

In attendance:

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright and Ward Cllr; Toni Fagan

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
There were no comments during the Open Session.
The Open Session closed at 7.31 pm.

1.0 Apologies for Absence and matters relating to attendance

There were apologies received from Cllr Veronica Thomas and Footpath Officer Steve Owen. Matters of attendance were discussed. Cllr Baldwin was welcomed back following a period of absence. General attendance protocols were discussed and HALC guidance on timeframes and disqualify periods was noted. It was agreed by the PC that Cllr Thomas would be granted approval not to attend meetings while they were held on Zoom.

2.0 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3.0 Minutes of previous meeting

3.1) The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held on the 9th July 2020, were approved as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

4.0 Reports

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

Golden Valley Briefing sent when received.
Golden Valley Police & Fire Crew Newsletter - August 2020
Police and Crime Commissioner Town and Parish Council Survey
PCC Town and Parish Council Survey
Urgent information from West Mercia Police about Courier Fraud

4.2) Ward Councillor Ward Cllr Toni Fagan outlined the Leader of the Council's report.

The Ward Cllr made mention of the white paper consultation on planning reform. The CPRE had produced some information on this topic.

The yellow lines and parking at the school had been raised with the Ward Cllr. It was commented that it was not possible to change Traffic Regulation Orders easily. It was noted that the School had not responded to consultations previously on the TROs. The Ward Cllr would be meeting with the school governors to discuss "transport issues, the school run and behaviour change". Some schools were using "cycling buses" this may be something worthwhile looking at? Any information or suggestions around the history of the parking issues - feed into the Ward Cllr.

Safety along Tump Lane and the ongoing issue of the footpath were “open for suggestions and feedback would be really useful.”

Herefordshire Council service areas were “quite stretched.” The Covid 19 virus measures taken for safe walking and cycling, in the city, had been subject to controversy. Transport issues were continuing.

The Fownhope road repair funding arrangements had been agreed at the last full Council Meeting. Herefordshire Council would be borrowing monies to fund this. The Ward Cllr advised that the Government had promised funding for road repairs such as this and the County should not have to dig into its own resources to pay for a central obligation. Moving forward, repairs had been started with underpinning because of a landslide.

4.3) Locality Steward James Howells, the Locality Steward, had sent his bulletins.

5.0 Update on Correspondence

The updates were noted and included from Herefordshire Council:

- NDP – The PC have selected examiner Rosemary Kidd to undertake the examination of the Much Birch Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Car Park Charges Consultation
- Drainage Grant Scheme
- WISH update
- Local public health guidance for community centres
- Call for Sites 2020
- Parish summit slides and papers
- Annual Canvass 2020 – Update
- Stop Loan Sharks Online Training Seminars - book through Eventbrite
- Letter to Parish Councils from John Harrington (re road building)

HALC

HALC Information Corner including 3 e mails of attachments
The Great Collaboration Zero Carbon Herefordshire

The Community Hall

Documents relating to Hiring the Hall in September – a possible discussion topic for Village update
Re-opening of the Community Hall

6.0 Financial Report

6.1) The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th Aug 2020 HSBC Community Account	£10,564.90
@ 13 th Aug 2020 HSBC Community Projects Account	£8,430.84

6.2) To approve list of payments (circulated separately)

The following payments were approved:

Payments to be made from main account

Clerk paid in accordance with contract	
HM Revenue & Customs (tax)	£69.60
Information Commissioner (ICO)	£40.00

A request for assistance with the cost of maintaining the village memorial clock and churchyard from the Much Birch PCC was considered. The PC resolved to pay for the memorial clock servicing and a contribution towards mowing. A total award of £298.00 was agreed.

Payments to be made from Community account

Nil

Resolved: that the payments were passed for payment: (proposed by Cllr Turner and seconded by Cllr Cook) Unanimous.

7.0 Village issues update

7.1) To receive any update on Village issues

School parking issues had been highlighted. The school were operating in “bubbles” with variable pick up times. The initial trials of this had seemingly not allowed sufficient time between bubble pick ups and traffic had been affecting the main road A49. New times had been arranged and the school were trying to improve the situation.

The Community Hall Management Committee had sent a use of hall questionnaire. The Clerk would ask the Booking Secretary to hold the Much Birch PC bookings for 2020 and the usual slot arrangement going into 2021. Provisional booking of 2021 dates would follow and forms would be completed as circumstances permitted regarding Virus control measures and shielding etc.

8.0 Planning Matters

8.1) To consider any planning applications

There was one new application for consideration at the meeting:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: Planning Re-consultation - 201830 - Land adj. The Pilgrim Hotel, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HJ

DESCRIPTION: Proposed erection of 5 dwellings

The Parish Council began to discuss the application 201830. The first Zoom call ended at 8.10 PM. Ward Cllr Fagan left the meeting at this point.

Zoom Call 2 commenced at 8.15 PM. The Councillors and Clerk were present as in Zoom Call 1. Further discussion on the application drew comments about the settlement boundary and the status of the site as to whether it was classified as “brownfield”. In conclusion, it was agreed that there were mixed views on the application and that the previous comments made in regard to the six house application on the site would be reiterated in regard to the application for five houses, with the addition of a question regarding clarification as to the status of the site as “brownfield.”

A further application, 192979, had been received, on the day of the meeting, for reserved matters (amended and additional) on the Tump Lane application for 20 houses and associated community building and associated works. An extension to the deadline for comments would be requested.

9.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

Lower Wrigglebrook Lane at the junction of Wrigglebrook Lane – pothole and an encroaching hedge. Some potholes in the village had been fixed. Verges were due to be cut and this did not appear to have commenced at the date of the meeting. Some pipes on Barrack Hill were blocked and jetting was possibly required. The Chair would confirm locations and defects for inclusion to Balfour Beatty.

9.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman

Weeds growing on the footpath past the school required attention. Salt bin levels to be checked. Grit stocks were with Cllr Turner.

9.3) Footpath Officer – to receive any update or action points

Footpath Officer Steve Owen had sent his apologies. He would be back in touch.

10.0 Neighbourhood Plan- update

The Steering Group comments, after the full consultation period, now needed to be ratified by the Parish Council and then the plan progressed. This would be done at the PC meeting in October. Councillors were asked to come primed to the meeting and to have clarified any questions with the Steering Group beforehand so that the plan could then move to the examination stage.

11.0 Parishes’ Newsletter and Much Birch Website

11.1) To consider items suitable for inclusion in the newsletter and on the website plus Twitter. Clerk would send a précis to the Newsletter. The newsletter précis would include a reminder to landowners to clear their ditches and to try to avoid hedge clippings falling in the ditches where possible.

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

All the usual items would be included. Also the self help gritting scheme and the confirmation of PC acceptance of the progression of the Neighbourhood Plan following the NDP Steering Group changes etc.

13.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on the Zoom Platform on Thursday 8th October 2020, from 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 8.40 pm

Signed:

.....
Chairman

.....
Date