

## MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at the Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026 from 7.30 pm

#### **Present:**

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair)  
Cllr Roisin Burge  
Cllr Michael Agyeman  
Cllr Steve Turner

#### **In attendance:**

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright and the Reverend Mark Johnson (on behalf of the Much Birch Poor Acre Charity)

#### **Open Session:-**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no residents present at the parish council meeting. There were no items raised during the Open Session.

#### **1.0 Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence received from Cllr David Irwin and Cllr Chris Pickering Grey plus the Ward Cllr; Toni Fagan

#### **2.0 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

#### **3.0 Minutes of previous meeting**

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held at the Much Birch Community Hall, on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 2026, 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 – Newsletter circulated when received.

**4.2) Ward Councillor** Ward Cllr Toni Fagan had sent her apologies. Her written report had also been circulated.

##### **4.3) Locality Steward**

The Weekly Update had been received and also street works updates from Balfour Beatty.

#### **5.0) Update on Correspondence and Neighbourhood Development Plan**

**5.1) To receive any correspondence – Information Sheet and to consider any update regarding the Much Birch Poor Acre Charity.**

#### **Much Birch Poor Acre Charity**

Reverend Mark Johnson, Trustee of the Poor Acre, was in attendance at the meeting. There were three current trustees; Cllr David Irwin, Reverend Mark Johnson and Mr Dick Brimacombe. There were two amounts of money being held, the bulk of the proceeds from the land sale of £130,241.02 was in an investment account portfolio being managed by Redmayne Bentley, Investment Management and Stockbroking. The other portion held was £5000.00 in a “current” account for ease of access when required. Rev. Mark advised that no-one had applied for assistance from the charity in recent times, in spite of advertising. The Trustees were seeking to

raise the profile of the charity, to have a new logo and to produce flyers and advertising to promote the charity. Applicants would complete an application form and also recommendations could be looked at. The support was to assist the “poor of the Ecclesiastical parish of Much Birch”. It was going to be about getting people to recognise when people need some assistance. The signposting to other organisations, who may be able to offer practical and or financial support, was also mentioned.

Suggestions for help could include assistance with transport costs and student expenses. There were no predetermined ceilings on an award, with each being considered on the individual merits. Leaflets would be circulated, by the Charity, and representation at the Community Café would possibly include an information display, going forward.

The Parish Council thanked Rev. Mark for the update and he left the meeting at 7.45 pm.

### **Correspondence from Herefordshire Council**

Talk Community bulletins

New Much Birch IT and Data Policy (circulated) – this would be considered on the March parish council agenda.

#### **5.2) To receive any update on matters relating to the Neighbourhood Development Plan and also:**

##### **5.2.1) To affirm the draft changes made to the Much Birch NDP**

The draft changes to policies MB2 and MB4 were affirmed by the parish council. The changes to policies MB7 and MB9 would be reviewed separately.

##### **5.2.2) To confirm the ongoing assessment/review of the Much Birch NDP content**

The ongoing assessment and review of the NDP content was confirmed by the parish council.

#### **5.3) Parish Assets (land and property) to review parish assets as at 2026**

The new notice board for footpath information, outside the Much Birch Community Hall, would be added to the asset register.

The grit bins had been checked and the damaged ones appeared to have been replaced. They were all in working order. Cllr Agyeman asked if identifying numbers for the bins could be added to the asset register to make identification of location easier. The Chair would devise a numbering code.

### **Parish Land**

The Chair advised that both agreements for the parish land contained clauses saying that inspections of the land may take place. The Clerk would write to both tenants and say that in accordance with the agreements, which would be included with the letters, the parish council would like to pay a visit to inspect them. The visits would be arranged and it was agreed that the Chair and the Clerk would attend to carry out the inspections. All councillors would be furnished with copies of the two tenancy agreements. The visits would ideally be scheduled for before the end of February 2026 and would reflect the terms contained within the individual agreements.

It was also noted that the rental arrangements, on the Meadow View Parish Land, would be subject to review from November 2026, so this would be put forward for the start of parish council consideration at the June 2026 parish council meeting.

## **6.0 Financial Report**

### **6.1) The following bank balance was noted:**

@ 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2026 HSBC Community Account	£12393.30
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## **6.2) To approve list of payments (circulated separately)**

The following payments were approved:

### **Payments to be made from bank account**

Clerk paid in accordance with contract for February 2026

HM Revenue & Customs (tax) £95.00

Much Birch Community Hall (hall hire) £54.00

**Resolved:** that the payments were passed for payment - unanimous

### **Wormelow Tump Defibrillator – funding request**

The correspondence regarding the Wormelow Tump Defibrillator – the Chair advised that the money had been raised for the purchase. No further parish council action.

## **7.0 Planning Matters**

### **7.1) To consider any planning applications or appeals, as may be advised**

There were two new applications for consideration of comments:

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** Planning Consultation - 260081 - Walled Garden Adjacent Stable Cottage, Much Birch, Herefordshire, HR2 8HT

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Planning Permission

**DESCRIPTION:** Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 214165 (Proposed single-storey dwelling located within the Walled garden. New vehicular opening to be formed within the existing wall) - to make changes to the permitted layout and aesthetic of the dwelling proposed.

**GRID REFERENCE:** OS 350475, 230474

The parish council resolved that there were no objections to the proposals in 260081

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** Planning Consultation - 260105 - 3 Pilgrim Park, Much Birch, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8FR

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Full Householder

**DESCRIPTION:** Garage, landscaping works and replacement of a window with full height glazing.

**GRID REFERENCE:** OS 349951, 230749

The parish council resolved that they were in support for the proposals in 260105, but a comment would be made concerning the red line on the drawing in the application that did not appear to be in the correct place for the site boundary, having being shown as going over the joint access road.

### **Planning Comments - reminder**

The Chair reminded councillors to reserve their input to planning consultations for the discussion on the planning proposals at the parish council meeting, unless asked to comment, via e mail, on a “between meetings policy” basis.

## **8.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths**

### **8.1) To note any defects to be reported to Balfour Beatty**

Road C1263 – road going from the bus stop towards the town. Road broken away at side - Minster to Wrigglebrook.

Hollybush Lane – broken up and requiring resurfacing throughout

A49 to Cress Cottage C1263 and Tump Lane all requiring attention to potholes and deteriorating road surfaces

Missing 30 mph main speed limit sign at the Thorn - road C1263 - top of Barrack Hill

**8.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman and actions**

The instructions regarding the drainage grant actions for the lengthsman, in line with those identified at the January parish council meeting had been conveyed to the contractor. The lengthsman had been asked to indicate when works were due to commence.

**8.3) Footpath Officer – to receive any update or action points and funding /activities**  
**Mr David Irwin, the Footpath Officer** can be contacted on **07766 135068** or by e mail at [MBfootpaths@btinternet.com](mailto:MBfootpaths@btinternet.com)

The Footpath Officer, Cllr Irwin, had sent his report and his apologies for absence for the January Meeting. A further Footpath IT Group had been held and there had been input on the developmental work from a councillor from a neighbouring parish.

**8.4) Parish Drainage – to receive any correspondence and determine any actions**

This was covered previously during the meeting under instructions to the lengthsman in item 8.2.

**8.5) Water Quality Monitoring – to receive any update**

Cllr Turner advised that he had made contact with the CPRE representative and discussed the data collection for water quality monitoring. A site meeting would be arranged and supply of kit organised. Cllr Turner would discuss options for possible collection sites and engage with the team about potentially more beneficial data collection sites. Cllr Turner would keep the parish council updated on progress with the data collection.

**9.0 Parishes Newsletter and Much Birch Website**

9.1) To consider items suitable for inclusion in the newsletter and on the website plus X (formerly known as Twitter).

The Clerk would send a précis to the Newsletter.

The Chair advised that a third quotation for website services was being compiled and this would be sent to Cllr Agyeman for review, along with those received previously. The webmaster would put a paper together on website information for consideration at the April Much Birch Parish Council Meeting.

**10.0 Matters to be raised on the Agenda etc. for the next meeting**

All the usual items would be included, also parish assets/land review report and water quality monitoring, plus Much Birch IT and Data Policy

The Chair advised that she had sent in the parish council’s thoughts, as sent in by e mail, on the boundary review proposals for the parish. The final outcome of the review would be communicated once known.

**11.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting**

The next Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026, from 7.30pm, in the Much Birch Community Hall.

***The meeting closed at 8.40 pm***

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date