

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at the Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 10th November 2022 from 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr Roisin Burge
Cllr Chris Pickering-Grey
Cllr Andy Crum
Cllr Joseph Goldsmith

In attendance:

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright, Footpath Officer; David Irwin, Lengthsman; Paul Wright and Ward Cllr Toni Fagan

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.
The Open session closed, there being no comments.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence received from Cllr David Baldwin.

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 6th October 2022, 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 updated the meeting regarding the “gaping hole” that was likely to be in the Herefordshire Council budget. The gap was looking like an estimated £20 million between income and potential expenditure. The difference between funding streams for capital spending and revenue funding was highlighted with central funding for service provision, such as child social care and then possible grant funding and separate revenue pots being available, via a bidding process, for capital spending projects, such as museum and library ventures. The Ward Cllr indicated that she would “not be surprised” if the child social care section of the council was removed from Herefordshire Council administration by the Commissioner. She stated that agencies were making “a fortune” out of social care but that they were not “providing investment in to the service.” The Ward Cllr said that it was “unacceptable” in terms of closing certain services. Clarification of this word was requested and the Ward Cllr commented that as an example, at one point closing all of the libraries could have been viewed as “unacceptable.”

The Ward Cllr advised that the Cop27 summit links into the Citizens Assembly Climate Change projects information. The Talk Community was the umbrella vehicle, from Herefordshire Council, for information.

4.3) Locality Steward

James Howells the Locality Steward had sent his bulletins. Also Members Monthly Update received and Street works updates.

5.0) Update on Correspondence

5.1) To receive any correspondence – noting the Information Sheet (including any update on meetings attended by councillors)

Correspondence from Herefordshire Council

Herefordshire Council:
Talk Community bulletins
Parish recharges for May 2023 Elections
Section 106 Portfolio of works delivery update

HALC

Information Corner
Training
Pay Award for Local Government Officers
HALC Annual General Meeting 17/11/22

CPRE

Herefordshire AGM – 19/11/22 – Kindle Centre from 1.00 PM

There had also been a letter received from a resident concerning operational hours and overgrowth of tree hedging at a location in the village. The parish council chair had looked into the situation and the clerk would respond to the resident directly, the parish council not being responsible for the situation, as reported.

Meeting Attendance Update

Cllr Chris Pickering Grey had attended a meeting concerning a consultation on rural sustainability and he advised that information slides would be coming out. The consultation was looking at key facilities for new developments, settlements outside boundaries and was termed broadly, “necessities”, “nice to have” and “not needed”. He gave the message that, for the present at least, the status of the adopted Neighbourhood Development Plans was “reaffirmed.”

6.0 Financial Report

6.1) The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th Oct 2022 HSBC Community Account	£19024.49
--	-----------

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 for November	
HM Revenue & Customs (tax)	£90.80
Little Birch Village Hall (annual newsletter donation)	£350.00
Cllr A Cook (memorial wreath) (interest declared for this item)	£50.00

Resolved: that the payments were passed for payment: Unanimous.

It was agreed that the Birches Newsletter team would be asked for a sight of their latest accounts, in keeping with the terms of the Much Birch Parish Council Donations Policy.

6.3) To resolve request of parish precept for 2023 – 2024

The parish precept request for 2023 - 2024 was considered and discussed and, in acknowledgement of the healthy reserves held, it was resolved that the precept would remain at £6750.00 for 2023 – 2024. The Clerk would inform the Finance Department at Herefordshire Council of this request.

7.0 Update on speeding and Community Speed Watch

The Chair advised that she had chased up the police in relation to the information on speed watch possible locations etc. that had been submitted for their consideration.

8.0 Planning Matters

8.1) To consider any planning applications and appeals as may be advised

There were no new applications for consideration of comments.

9.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

Wrigglebrook Lane to Cress Cottage – there was mud on the road from the adjacent fields. The Environment Agency had previously been involved and the Chair had corresponded. Residents had also been asked to report. There was also a local ditch issue and the Chair would supply details about this for a possible letter to be sent.

9.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman

To check the drains etc. in the environs of Cress Cottage and to clear seedling tree saplings as identified on bank.

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

Mr David Irwin, the Footpath Officer can be contacted on 01981 345109 or by e mail at David.Irwin13@btinternet.com

The Footpath Officer updated the meeting regarding the fact that he had either walked or run over the footpaths recently. The crops were off the paths but would re-grow quickly as the weather was remaining so mild. Two paths including MB4A were being affirmed in the footpaths log and proposals for Pool Spring Farm path were on “the back burner until they get to it”. There were also potentially three new paths to be logged. The idea of using the “What Three Words” as a mapping and location aid was discussed and the Ward Cllr said that she would speak to John Harrington about the wider use of the application service in the public rights of way arena.

9.4) Update on parish land (as applicable)

This would be on the December Agenda for any follow up action as may be required

10.0 Parishes Newsletter and Much Birch Website

10.1) To consider items suitable for inclusion in the newsletter and on the website plus Twitter. Clerk would send a précis to the Newsletter.

11.0 To discuss any matters relating to the Local Area Plan (Core Strategy) revision, Neighbourhood Development Plan and the consultation process – as applicable

No further update this time.

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

All the usual items would be included. Also Community Speed Watch and parish land.

13.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 8th December from 7.30pm in the Much Birch Community Hall.

Due to the confidential nature of the business of these agenda items, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (3) it is proposed to put forward a motion to exclude members of the public during discussion of the following agenda item (14)

14.0 To discuss implementation of 1/04/22 pay award (back dated) in line with HALC and NJC correspondence

The members of the public, and the Clerk, left the room for the discussion of item 14. The parish council resolved that the NJC Pay Award should be implemented, with effect from 1/04/22, and the arrears backdated.

The meeting closed at 8.35 pm

Signed:

.....
Chairman

.....
Date