

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at the Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 9th November 2023 from 7.30 pm

Present:

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

In attendance:

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright, Ward Cllr; Toni Fagan and Footpath Officer; David Irwin plus four members of the public

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

No matters were raised during the Open Session
The Open session closed at 7.31 pm.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

2.0 Declarations of Interest

There was one declaration of interest made. This was for Cllr Cook who was to receive reimbursement for the memorial wreath.

3.0 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held at the Much Birch Community Hall on the 5th October 2023, 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.

Locality Steward

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

Ward Councillor Ward Cllr Toni Fagan was in attendance at the meeting. The Ward Cllr advised about various grant opportunities that were available and would circulate more information about this. There were packages available to assist with leisure, food, vitamin supplements and also advice for listeners and stroke support. The levelling up grant funding was enabling the purchase of properties to help support homeless people and there was emphasis on supporting cycling and walking routes too.

The Ward Cllr left the meeting after giving her report.

4.2) To receive any update in regard to parish land/assets

Councillors had made a visit to the “Rosebank” parish land. The requirements that had been requested had been delivered, including the boundary fencing and access gate. Cllr Crum would speak to one of the tenants regarding a response to recent communications, contained in two letters from the parish council.

5.0) Update on Correspondence

5.1) To receive any correspondence – noting the Information Sheet

Correspondence from Herefordshire Council

Talk Community bulletins

5.2) To update following working party meeting on a parish council trustee for the Much Birch Poor Acre Charity

The meeting with the Poor Acre Trustees and councillors had “gone well”. Both trustees had acknowledged the parish councils position. The Rev. Mark would be leading on the Constitution for the Poor Acre Charity and Cllr Goldsmith would be assisting with this. Cllr Goldsmith was pending as an ex officio trustee, with the applicable paperwork to be organised first.

6.0 Financial Report

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

@ 13th October 2023 HSBC Community Account £18266.05

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 November

HM Revenue & Customs (tax) £97.00

Cllr A Cook (Remembrance wreath) £50.00

Much Birch Community Hall (hall hire) £51.50

Skyfire Designs (web services) £102.00

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

6.3) To determine the budget/precept request for 2024 - 2025

This would be placed on the December 2023 Agenda.

7.0 Planning Matters

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

There were three new applications for consideration of comments:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: Planning Consultation - 232807 – Field adjacent to Tump Lane, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8HW

DESCRIPTION: Proposed erection of 20 dwellings, with associated new access (via Tump Lane), car parking arrangements, communal house, new POS (extension of existing play area) and new stretches of footpath with passing places (north and west bound along Tump Lane).

GRID REF: OS 349808, 230587

APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission

The parish council chair introduced the planning section of the meeting with a preamble. She explained that the parish council comments carried no more “weight” than those of any one else in the consideration of a planning proposal. Planning matters would be considered on “material considerations” and such matters would be taken into account. It was commented that the parish council had prepared themselves for the discussion, of the planning applications, by

looking at any applicable reports and comments and by referencing the Neighbourhood Development Plan. There was a “thank you” from the residents present for the work undertaken by the parish councillors in this regard. The parish council heard a statement from the applicant of 232807 and the councillors then discussed and considered the proposals in application 232807 and resolved to comment accordingly:

“The Much Birch Parish Council has no objection to the proposals notified in planning consultation 232807. The parish council notes that the current application has addressed concerns around highway safety and, following strong views about highway safety on Tump Lane expressed previously, welcomes the initiatives to help improve this. The parish council also appreciates the future vision for an all-age development and the provision of affordable housing options. Previous boundary issues raised have been addressed by the Inspector in their report and the footpath proposals are indicated as “betterment”. In addition, no objections were raised by members of the public at the parish council meeting.”

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: Planning Consultation - 232837 – Seathwaite, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8AW

DESCRIPTION: Proposed externally insulation to all walls and finished with a light render. Proposed oak-framed front porch, replacement side extension and rear oak-framed sunroom. External works to include general consolidation and minor extension of rear terrace.

GRID REF: OS 350216, 231985

APPLICATION TYPE: Full Householder

The parish council discussed and considered the proposals in application 232837 and resolved to comment that there were no objections.

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: Planning Consultation - 233091 – The Bank, Ladywell Lane, Wrigglebrook, Kingsthorpe, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR2 8AW

DESCRIPTION: Proposed two storey extension to rear of property. Change of use and single extension to barn to provide annexed accommodation for a dependant relative. New roofing finish and ancillary works.

GRID REF: OS 350134, 231794

APPLICATION TYPE: Planning Permission

The parish council discussed and considered the proposals in application 233091 and resolved to comment that there were no objections to the proposals however a question would be raised about the mention of “listed building consent” within the application paperwork. This was being assumed to be erroneous as there was no listed building consent paperwork accompanying the planning permission consultation.

8.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

The Chair advised that a water leak at Wormelow, near to “Simply Stunning” had been attended to by Welsh Water. Balfour Beatty had also jetted a drain at the location.

The height of the hedges, on the left hand side of the road leading from the A49 towards the school, were discussed. There was concern for high sided vehicles trying to pass safely under the overhanging canopy. This would be followed up.

8.2) To discuss recruitment of a new Lengthsman

The vacancy for a new Lengthsman would be advertised. Adverts would go on the website, in the newsletter and in the notice boards.

8.3) 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 MBfootpaths@btinternet.com

The Footpath Officer was in attendance at the meeting. His report of footpath matters had been circulated to the parish councillors. A new e mail address for the Footpath Officer had been set up and is recorded above. The Footpath Officer was attending meetings every two months with fellow footpath officers and a representative from the Ramblers Association. The Footpath Officer highlighted some recent reporting of issues with path MB19 where there was a tree down, path MB24 where a diversion had been referred to Enforcement, path MB30 where a finger post was down and path MB17 where a broken gate had also been reported.

8.4) To receive any update on speeding in Tump Lane/Community Speed Watch (CSW)

The Chair reported that there had not been any further update on the vetting process nor on the training. The Chair would go back to progress this.

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). Clerk would send a précis to the Newsletter. This would include a summary of the responses to planning items and details about the Lengthsman vacancy.

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

All the usual items would be included. Also the Lengthsman vacancy update, NJC pay award 2023 and budget/precept plus any planning applications, as notified

11.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 7th December 2023 from 7.30pm in the Much Birch Community Hall.

Future Meetings for 2024: Jan 11th, Feb 8th, March 7th, April 4th, May 9th, June 6th, July 4th, No meeting in August, Sept 5th, Oct 3rd, Nov 7th and Dec 5th

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm

Signed:

.....
Chairman

.....
Date