

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at the Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 2nd October 2025 from 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr David Irwin
Cllr Michael Agyeman
Cllr Steve Turner
Cllr Chris Pickering Grey
Cllr Roisin Burge

In attendance:

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright, Ward Cllr; Toni Fagan and one member of the public

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There was one resident present at the parish council meeting. There were no items raised during the Open Session.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence received.

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 4th September 2025, 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 was in attendance at the meeting. The Ward Cllr advised that she had sent her general update report. A neighbouring parish had applied for some works to be carried out in regards to drainage and jetting on Parish Lane. The Chair had liaised with Henry Snell at the Flood risk Team and had advised that the Much Birch Parish Council would not be applying for drainage grant funding in respect of Parish Lane in the absence of a quotation. An issue with the Forge Lane street sign had been sent to Much Dewchurch Parish Council. There was a discussion about safety of pedestrians walking down the Thorne footpath regarding ways to make it safer. The Ward Cllr would speak with Ward Cllr Thomas whose parish the bus stop and path was in. It was agreed that it was important for pedestrians to wear, or carry, something visible in the dark. There was a discussion about the recent planning permission granted at Wrigglebrook for a “large shed”. There were concerns expressed and there had been “strong feelings” expressed about the importance of the tributaries and the Wye catchment regarding drainage and pollution. There was a local group called the “Friends of Wrigglebrook” who were looking out for the water course. The Ward Cllr advised that she would speak with a representative from the CPRE regarding the testing of the brook.

The Ward Cllr left the meeting at 8.40 pm.

4.3) Locality Steward

The Monthly 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 – noting the Information Sheet

Correspondence from Herefordshire Council

Talk Community bulletins

Parish Summit

Invitation to the Parish Summit on 7th October at Plough Lane

5.2) To receive any update on matters relating to the Neighbourhood Development Plan (as applicable)

Cllr Burge outlined the changes made to Policy MB2 which was ready for consideration. It was noted that in part 5.3) the comment could contain “could” rather than “will. A final copy would be drawn up for consideration and adoption. Tracked changes or annotation would be used to show where changes had been made. By Christmas it was the aim to have gone through the next sections and foul and storm water drainage - Policy MB4 with links to policies SD3 and SD4. Policy MB8 on Housing Commitments – also required updating.

5.3) Parish land – Rosebank – to consider correspondence and any actions required

The parish council had received a proposal from the tenant of the parish land at Rosebank. The proposal detailed a possible purchase of a portion of the land, and an option for the conversion of the balance of the land and a drawing of the land parcel with proposal. The correspondence had been circulated to the councillors.

Two options were put forward:

Option 1) Being that the Much Birch Parish Council were not willing to accede to the request to sell part of the tenanted parish land parcel adjacent to “Rosebank”

Option 2) Being that the Much Birch Parish Council would require more information before entering into any discussion about the request and that it should be noted that the outcome may still be an answer of “no” to a prospective sale of part of the tenanted parish land parcel adjacent to “Rosebank”

The two options were announced to the parish councillors and they were asked to vote for their preferred option. The vote after each councillor had cast their vote was 3 votes in favour of Option 1 and 3 votes in favour of Option 2. The Chair used a casting vote in favour of Option 2. The vote for Option 2 was declared the majority decision.

The parish council would, therefore, seek the information required to consider the content of the letter. The Chair would circulate a copy of the current tenancy agreement to all parties. The tenant would be advised of the receipt of the correspondence and that further information would be sought. He would be asked to ensure that no works be undertaken, in terms of any changes, whilst the topic was under review.

6.0 Financial Report

6.1) The following bank balance was noted:

@ 13 th September 2025 HSBC Community Account	£9755.25
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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 October 2025

HM Revenue & Customs (tax October) £124.40
HM Revenue & Customs (Er's NI) £63.04
Hugh James (web services) £119.50

Resolved: that the payments were passed for payment - unanimous

6.3) To consider and move to determine the precept request for 2026 – 2027

The precept request was discussed and it was resolved that the amount would remain the same for 2026 – 2027, that is £6750.00. The Clerk would advise the Herefordshire Council Finance Team accordingly.

7.0 Planning Matters

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

There was one application for consideration of comments:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: Planning Consultation - 252458 - 5 Pilgrim Park, Much Birch, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR2 8FR

APPLICATION TYPE: Full Householder

DESCRIPTION: Proposed garage

GRID REFERENCE: OS 349930, 230805

The application for a garage at Number 5 Pilgrim Park was discussed and the parish council resolved that there were no objections to the proposal in application number 252458.

8.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

As previously advised, plus pot holes on the C1263 near to the "scout hut." Also Tump Lane was in need of resurfacing with poor road surface over a large proportion of the lane.

The path by the school had been cleared. Clerk would send an e mail back to the person who had asked about this.

8.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman and direct/determine actions

Awaiting confirmation on drainage application

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

The Footpath Officer, Cllr Irwin, had sent his report and he updated the meeting about the contents. There were three bridges waiting for assessment. Two paths, MB1 and MB6 were awaiting some enforcement measures. A further booking for works by EnviroAbility for stiles and steps had been made for early December. The team were very well booked up prior to that. Local PFO meetings were still taking place on a monthly basis. There would be a further parish walk on the 26 October - "beginner" level in terms of difficulty.

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

There was an update on Parish Lane in the Ward Cllrs Report. The parish council were awaiting confirmation of the revised drainage grant submission to the Floodrisk Team.

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. This would include a summary of the responses to planning items. A reminder about fireworks/bonfire safety and about staying safe, regarding visibility, in the darker months would be included.

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

All the usual items would be included, also parish land update and drainage issues.
Neighbourhood Development Plan

11.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 6th November 2025, from 7.30pm, in the Much Birch Community Hall.

The meeting closed at 9.04 pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date