

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at the Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 5th December 2024 from 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr Roisin Burge
Cllr Chris Pickering Grey
Cllr Michael Agyeman
Cllr David Irwin (also Footpath Officer)

In attendance:

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright, Ward Cllr; and the Lengthsman, briefly, at the beginning of the meeting

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence received from Ward Cllr; Toni Fagan

2.0 Co-option of Councillor

No candidate was presented at the meeting this month.

3.0 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

4.0 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held at the Much Birch Community Hall on the 7th November 2024, were approved as a true and correct record of the Meeting. There were two comments made, firstly Cllr Irwin asked for a change to his published contact phone number and this would be altered. There was also some alteration to the information about footpath gates which the Ward Cllr had shared. These were not forthcoming, as had been indicated.

5.0 Reports

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

Golden Valley Briefing – Newsletter circulated when received.

5.2) Ward Councillor Ward Cllr Toni Fagan had sent her apologies. She had continued to circulate correspondence.

5.3) Locality Steward

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

6.0) Update on Correspondence and Parish Land

6.1) To receive any correspondence – noting the Information Sheet Correspondence from Herefordshire Council

Talk Community bulletins

6.2) To update regarding the parish land and tenancy

The Chair advised that the parish land tenancy agreement had been signed by the tenant and the Chair on behalf of the Much Birch Parish Council.

7.0 Financial Report

7.1) The following bank balance was noted:

@ 13th November 2024 HSBC Community Account £14998.91

7.2) 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 December
HM Revenue & Customs (tax December) £130.80

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

7.3) To determine the precept request for 2025 - 2026

The Chair presented a budget proposal and the parish council considered the expenditure, as detailed, plus the reserves as held. It was resolved that the precept would remain at £6750.00 for the year 2025 – 2026. The Clerk would convey the request to the Finance Department at Herefordshire Council.

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. The meeting heard that the alterations to the property “Wenallt” in had been approved, with some amendments.

9.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

Ongoing pothole issues were being reported.

9.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman and to consider drainage issues/feedback

The parish council was still awaiting paperwork from the Lengthsman. The Chair advised the Lengthsman of this and he then left the meeting. The Chair had requested an inspection of the areas affected by flooding in the recent downpours. One of the affected lanes was a classified BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic). No further feedback had been received as at the date of the meeting. The situation of flooding at Cress Cottage had been looked at and described in comments by a resident. There were drainage grant funding amounts available from Herefordshire Council but there would need to be identified works quoted for by contractors and approval given before works could commence. The parish council agreed to obtain some quotes for works for drainage once the insurance papers had been noted. Cllr Irwin updated regarding Enviroability and what services they could provide. He would also check with them for availability for sign clearance and cleaning the bus shelter.

9.3) 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, was present at the meeting. He advised that the condition of the footpaths was not “too bad” at the time of the meeting. Crops were not obstructing paths. An issue of a lost bridge plank on path MB16A had been reported and a request for the path to be closed as unsafe had been made. The Footpath Officer had obtained a parish paths map. There would now need to be a notice board available to house it. The Footpath Officer would send the councillors a reference number to look at a possible choice of board which could be purchased

between meetings subject to parish council agreement. A nominated person would purchase the notice board and obtain reimbursement. This course of action was agreed.

The Footpath Officer advised the meeting that the Local Access Forum Meeting had been cancelled with only two days notice. The next meeting was well attended. The Footpath Officer was still trying get onto the Forum Committee and was waiting for details of the 2025 activities. The Footpath Officer was trying to obtain footpath supplies and had managed to acquire two gates.

An enquiry had been received about the possibility of putting the footpath numbers of the finger posts? Enquiries were in progress on this.

Cllr Irwin advised that the possibility of electric vehicle chargers at the Community Hall had been considered but was not being pursued at present.

10.0 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.

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

All the usual items would be included. Also: Parish Asset Register. Councillors would check on grit bins too, when passing them.

12.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 9th January 2024, from 7.30pm, in the Much Birch Community Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.45 pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date