

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at the Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 6th February 2025 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 Ward Cllr; Toni Fagan

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no further comments during the Open Session.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence received from Cllr Chris Pickering Grey and Cllr David Irwin (also Footpath Officer)

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 9th January 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 the roads were in a “nightmare situation”. Laskett Lane was in a bad state and was being used as a cut through as the Hoarwithy Road was closed due to a landslip. The Ward Cllr was in contact with Ed Bradford the Herefordshire Council Head of Highways in relation to the difficulties being experienced with all manner of traffic taking diversions. The Ward Cllr said that the road at Wormelow was “horrendous”. Drainage grants were available and the parish council was meeting with the Lengthsman to discuss the options.

The Shire Hall Planning was going ahead.

There would be free parking in Hereford City on Saturday 8th February from 12 noon.

There would be a Herefordshire Council Budget Meeting held on Friday 7th February 2025.

There were “huge demands” on every income stream. Council Tax would be going up by 4.99%. The Government had decided not to pay the Rural Services Grant. This would lead to more challenges.

The five year land supply was out of date and running at 3.6 years due to new housing targets.

The Ward Cllr said that “speculative developments were more likely to go ahead and that this may impact on Neighbourhood Development Plans.”

The Council were waiting for updates on the Devolution proposals which may see amalgamation with Worcestershire for some service provision and a “Mayoral level” of governance being introduced.

The Ward Cllr left the meeting at 7.44 pm.

4.3) Locality Steward

The parish council were awaiting details of the new Locality Steward. The Members Monthly Update had been received and also street works updates from Balfour Beatty.

5.0) Update on Correspondence and Parish Land

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

Talk Community bulletins

Verge Cutting options

Information had been received on options for verge cutting, and it was decided, by the parish council, that the verges would be cut as would normally carried out, i.e. two cuts per annum to help preserve visibility at the splays and junctions.

5.2) To make any determination on the Parish Assets

The damaged grit/salt bins had been reported and feedback on these was awaited. The annual fill up of grit/salt had also been requested.

6.0 Financial Report

6.1) The following bank balance was noted:

@ 13th January 2025 HSBC Community Account £14098.14

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 2025
HM Revenue & Customs (tax February) £90.00

Resolved: that the payments were passed for payment - unanimous

7.0 Planning Matters

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

There was a new application for consideration of comments:

APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS: Planning Re-consultation - 230231 – Land south of Wormelow Shop, Wormelow, Herefordshire HR2 8EJ

APPLICATION TYPE: Outline

DESCRIPTION: Outline for the erection of up to 4 dwellings and associated works.

GRID REFERENCE: OS 349235, 229898

The parish council discussed planning consultation number 230231 and resolved to continue to object to the proposals due to the previously communicated concerns and with the reiteration of concerns over drainage, impact on ecological habitat and wetland plus access and exit highway safety.

The Clerk would ask for an extension to the deadline for comments on the Helenswood Farm - amended consultation number 243018.

7.2) To consider the Neighbourhood Development Plan and planning changes re any action required

This would remain as a standing agenda item while planning changes were evolving.

8.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

The parish council responded to Balfour Beatty who had said that the damage to the road at Hollybush Lane had not reached “intervention level.” The Clerk would enquire as to what was considered to be “intervention level?”

8.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman and to consider drainage issues/feedback from parish visit (as applicable)

The parish tour to look at potential works was being organised. Items for review were being collated.

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 his apologies. More details next time.

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.

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

All the usual items would be included.

11.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

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

The meeting closed at 8.12 pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date