

# MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at the Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025 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)  
Cllr Steve Turner (co-opted)

### **In attendance:**

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright and one member of the public who was co-opted

### **Open Session:-**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year. There were no further comments.

### **1.0 Apologies for Absence**

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

### **2.0 Co-option of Councillor**

One candidate was presented for co-option at the meeting. This was Steve Turner and he was co-opted to the parish council. Welcome to Cllr Turner. Cllr Turner signed his acceptance of office form.

### **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 5<sup>th</sup> December 2024, were approved as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

### **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 circulated information and her report. Housing targets had been made mandatory. It was agreed that review of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and planning targets should be back on the agenda in response to the planning changes. Herefordshire Council were engaged in the review of the Local Area Plan for Herefordshire.

#### **5.3) Locality Steward**

James Howells the Locality Steward had left. The parish council were awaiting details of his replacement. The Members Monthly Update had been received and also street works updates 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

### **Lengthsman**

The Lengthsman had supplied his insurance details.

### **Devolution Bill**

It was agreed that there was not sufficient information to discuss the Devolution White Paper proposals at the time of the meeting.

### **6.2) To review and make any determination on the Parish Assets Register**

The Chair advised that the parish assets had been reviewed. There was work required on the council notice board outside the community hall and also to the seat by the tree at “Conker Corner”, near to another parish notice board. There were two damaged grit bins, one at the Thorn opposite the junction with Wrigglebrook Lane and one at Little Birch Road at the junction with Wrigglebrook Pitch. The Clerk would report these and also check regarding the “annual” grit bin filling. The Chair advised that all requirements on the parish land at “Rosebank” had been completed and that the tenant had been advised of the rental change from 2025.

A new notice board for outside the community hall was being considered to house the newly acquired parish map and to present footpath information. The Chair would arrange for a list of parish assets to be included on the parish website. The Footpath Officer would check with Enviroability in regard to fitting a new notice board outside the community hall. This being subject to community hall management permission.

### **7.0 Financial Report**

#### **7.1) The following bank balance was noted:**

@ 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024 HSBC Community Account £14453.54

#### **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 January 2025

HM Revenue & Customs (tax December) £112.20

Much Birch Community Hall (hall hire) £54.00

Dore Community Transport (Donation) £500.00

**Resolved:** that the payments were passed for payment, including a donation towards the work in the community by Dore Community Transport: Unanimous.

### **8.0 Planning Matters**

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

There were new applications for consideration of comments:

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** Planning Consultation - 241292 - Glendene, Wrigglebrook Pitch, Wrigglebrook Kingsthorpe, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8AR

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Planning Permission

**DESCRIPTION:** Erection of agricultural unit. Repositioning of unit previously approved via Prior Approval Notice 231018.

**GRID REFERENCE:** OS 350327, 231610

The parish council discussed planning consultation number 241292 and resolved to object due to there being missing information about the water course proximity at the location.

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** Planning Consultation - 243057 - The Old School, Much Birch, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 8HJ

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Full Householder

**DESCRIPTION:** Proposed two storey extension to existing side wing. New front porch and boot room.

**GRID REFERENCE:** OS 350138, 230854

The parish council discussed planning consultation number 243057 and resolved that there were no objections to the proposals as stated.

**APPLICATION NO & SITE ADDRESS:** Planning Consultation - 243018 - Land at Helenswood Farm, Kingsthorpe, Herefordshire, HR2 8AL

**APPLICATION TYPE:** Outline

**DESCRIPTION:** Outline application with all matters reserved for the proposed erection of two self-build dwellings

**GRID REFERENCE:** OS 349769, 232028

The parish council discussed planning consultation number 243018 and resolved to object to the planning consultation for the reasons below:

“The Much Birch Parish Council has received information from a local resident, which have identified considerations, and these have been relayed below along with additional concerns from the parish council.

#### **1. Easement**

Persons resident at the property known as "Blue Haze" paid a previous proprietor of Helenswood Farm, in the Mid 1980's, for the grant of easement over the land at Helenswood. The easement was to facilitate the use of drainage spreaders running through the centre of this land, and this was all documented and fees paid via a firm of solicitors. It is said to be a legally binding document to this day. The resident's representative understands that no permitted structure or encroachments can be permitted within or over any drainage easement. It would be anticipated that due diligence would be carried out, by the current owner, in regard to the easement situation.

#### **2. Well being**

The proposed properties are felt to be overbearing, and out of scale and height in open countryside. It is believed that they will have a detrimental effect on the well being of the residents in the properties situated on the land above the development, and will impede on the privacy and enjoyment of the homes of the current residents.

#### **3. Access**

The lane is not believed to be suitable for the additional accesses of the proposed properties nor the volume requirements of construction traffic.

#### **4. Ancient Woodland**

The parish council would advise that the comments of the Forestry Commission are given due regard and that consideration is given to the status of the ancient woodland adjacent to the site and consequent impact of house building on an ecological habitat.”

### **9.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths**

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

Hollybush Lane was reported to be in a very poor condition and so also was Laskett Lane. There were broken edges and drops on the edge of Hollybush Lane and these posed a risk for damage to vehicles and pedestrians.

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

The insurance documents had been received. Enviroability and Mr Griffiths would be commissioned to undertake Lengthsman tasks as appropriate. Mr Griffiths would be commissioned for the more substantial topics such as drainage projects. It was agreed that a parish tour and meeting would be arranged with Mr Griffiths to discuss issues requiring attention. Hot spots would include Barrack Hill, Ladywell Lane and land near “Cress Cottage”. The Footpath Officer had contacted Enviroability and they had confirmed that they were willing to undertake identified tasks such as sign cleaning, bus stop cleaning and clearing of paths etc.

**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](mailto:MBfootpaths@btinternet.com)

The Footpath Officer, Cllr Irwin, was present at the meeting. He advised that he did not have an official report this month but that he had speaking to Enviroability as indicated about undertaking tasks. He updated regarding a bridge issue at path MB16A. The bridge had been washed away. Hopefully some new parish walks would be arranged for February and March. He updated about possibilities for the new notice board to house the parish map and a suitable one was discussed. This would be furthered. Cllr Irwin indicated that there was still no material, training or equipment being supplied via Herefordshire Council and their Public Rights of Way Team. Cllr Irwin would be speaking with the Ward Cllr concerning the situation. The Chair would speak to the Community Hall Management about fitting of a new notice board for the map and footpath information etc.

**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: any determination regarding the Parish Asset Register.

**12.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting**

The next Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2024, from 7.30pm, in the Much Birch Community Hall.

***The meeting closed at 8.43 pm***

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date