

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 April 2026 from 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Alison Cook (in the Chair)
Cllr Chris Pickering Grey
Cllr Roisin Burge
Cllr David Irwin

In attendance:

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright

Open Session:-

Cllr Alison Cook (in the Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting.
There were no residents present at the parish council meeting. There were no items raised during the Open Session.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence received from Cllr Michael Agyeman, Cllr Steve Turner and the Ward Cllr; Toni Fagan

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 5th March 2026, 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 had sent her apologies.

4.3) **Locality Steward**

The Weekly 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 – Information Sheet**

Correspondence from Herefordshire Council

Talk Community bulletins

External Audit 2025 - 2026

Papers received. Auditor to be appointed

The internal auditor would be asked if able to undertake the process, as in previous years.

Defibrillator at the Tump Inn

The parish council decided that due to the proximity of other defibrillators, there would be no contribution towards the Tump Inn defibrillator from the parish council. Clerk would advise the correspondent.

Enquiry about dog waste bin in Kingsthorpe via the Ward Cllr. The Chair would respond to the Ward Cllr directly. No bin installation determined.

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

Ongoing changes were being made as required. The “ready reckoner” was at first level with the main points listed. Any version changes, requiring adopting, would be coming to the May meeting.

5.3) Parish Assets (land and property) to update regarding review of parish land/actions

Update reports would be tabled once both visits had taken place. Holidays had prevented a second visit to date.

6.0 Financial Report

6.1) The following bank balance was noted:

@ 13 th March 2026 HSBC Community Account	£11160.57
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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 April 2026

HM Revenue & Customs (tax) £118.80

T Griffiths Contracts (grant drainage works) £2640.00

Enviroability (PROW grant works) £385.00

Resolved: that the payments were passed for payment - unanimous

7.0 Planning Matters

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

There were no new applications for consideration of comments.

8.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

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

These were as previously advised and as ongoing.

8.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman and actions

Enviroability would be called in for works as and when required. The Lengthsman would be asked to quote for drainage works. Grant claims would be submitted.

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. Works were ongoing and eleven paths had been cleared during the last contractor visit. Repairs were being considered for the 2026 – 2027 grant funding and Cllr Irwin would submit the quotations for works for approval by the PROW Team. There would be a local Footpath Officers Meeting held on the 10/04/26 at Cllr Irwin's. The next Local Access Forum Meeting would be held on the 24/04/26. There would be a parish dawn chorus walk on the 5/04/26.

The Footpath IT Group had completed virtually everything they needed to map for the notice board map and copies would be made on the appropriate sized paper for display. The QR codes would be incorporated for additional footpath information. A “thank you” was recorded, to Cllrs Irwin and Agyeman, for all of their work on these items for the map and footpaths.

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

The Clerk was asked to request a replication of the previous works undertaken for drainage as a quote for 2026 - 2027.

8.5) Water Quality Monitoring – to receive any update

Cllr Turner had sent his apologies. Matters on water monitoring were ongoing.

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. The Chair would send an item for inclusion about keeping ditches clear, particularly from hedge cuttings.

9.2) Consideration of website, website hosting etc. going forward – if applicable

There were considerations regarding website accessibility for people with issues such as sight loss and the new AGAR Assertion 10 category would require that parishes met certain access criteria. The current website provider was retiring, imminently, and the proposal was made that the Much Birch website be transferred, temporarily, to an interim solution. Further quotes for suitable websites would be obtained and moves then made towards a “fully compliant” website provision. The web master would be standing down when the new website was incorporated. It was commented that the parish council would need to be aware of updates to the website and the potential cost of this.

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

All the usual items would be included, also parish assets/land visits and water quality monitoring, plus Much Birch website decisions/update

11.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Meetings of the Parish Council, the Annual Parish and Annual Statutory, would be held, consecutively, on Thursday 7th May 2026, from 7.30pm, in the Much Birch Community Hall. Cllr Irwin gave his apologies, in advance, for the May Meetings.

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date