

**LITTLE BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL –PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
Wednesday 22nd November 2017 at 7.30pm - At Little Birch Village Hall**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Councillors; (BR) Ben Roberts (Chair); (SN) Steve Naylor; (EG) Elaine Godding; (MM) Mike Morley; (AW) Annette Wissler

ALSO: Sophie Glover (Parish Clerk) Angela (footpaths officer). 6 members of the public.

Meeting Opened: 7.30pm

1.	Apologies - Ward Cllr David Harlow,	ACTIONS
2.	Declaration of interest None	
3.	Open discussion	
3.1	Police update Nothing sent.	<i>Clerk to chase up why no report.</i>
3.2	Ward Cllr report (Cllr Dave Harlow) Sent his report electronically which had been circulated around the cllrs. MM asked to discuss why we should put the Ward Councillors reports onto our website. BR suggested that we had some problems with the website at the moment, but previously we had uploaded his reports. MM asked to talk about the area of the report that included mentioned the minutes for the university had not been updated, but they are now on the site, but, he felt they were a very 'sanitised' version of the minutes. MM reported that:-“ In his summary on the John Jones application at the September Herefordshire Planning Committee meeting David Harlow failed to mention, 1. That the photographs displayed by the Planning Officer clearly showed other buildings in the vicinity thereby casting doubt on the claim that the site is in open countryside. 2. That the officer report said that the site is unsustainable. The words used are from the National Planning Policy. This introduces doubts about Core Strategy and the sustainability of any site in Little Birch. (The Core Strategy is required to comply with the National Planning Policy) The November report also says that the planning system is highly procedural. This is true but that does not include “open countryside” that in the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan is a judgement matter. David Harlow obviously decided not to confront the planning department and this was also evident at a previous LBPC meeting.”	<i>Clerk to contact the WC to explain about the website, and that we are rectifying it.</i>
3.3	Dave Atkinson, Balfour Beatty - Reports sent weekly.	<i>Clerk to invite him to a meeting.</i>
4.	To accept minutes of the Oct PC meeting EG was unhappy about an element in item 16, were they the PC's opinion, SN thought that they had been discussed at the meeting, and therefore should be minuted. MM suggested that following the discussion it was said 'thanks for the contribution, but we feel that that does not apply to Little Birch and Aconbury NDP.' EG voiced the opinion that all correspondence should come through the clerk, SN fundamentally disagreed, thinking that parishoners should feel happy to	

	<p>approach any member of the Parish Council. There was a discussion as to whether or not the agenda should be expanded to describe what would be discussed under each heading, the other councillors all felt that this was unnecessary. The Chair clarified the process of handling public questions or comments, verifying with SN that this was what he had meant; input to an existing thing, doesn't need additional info on the agenda.</p> <p>With the above amendment, the minutes were agreed.</p> <p>Proposed: MM Seconded: SN</p> <p>All in agreement. It was resolved to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting.</p>	
5.	<p>Action points from previous PC meeting (Oct)</p> <p>All addressed, on the agenda except:</p> <p>Bike racks at Kingsthorpe Bus Stop.</p> <p>Report of damaged drain on School Lane. This has been checked and has not happened.</p>	<p><i>Clerk to offer the information about free bike racks to Much Dewchurch clerk</i></p>
6.	<p>Planning applications</p> <p>Appeal decision for 172688 – Lower House Farm</p> <p>The appeal was refused, so they have to now take down the garden building.</p>	
7.	<p>Footpaths officer/tree warden</p> <p>AM talked about a meeting that she had had with Alison Clarke, Mike Morley and Sandra Cameron about listing the footpaths. They made a list of 7 footpaths that needed registering. Some of these just need extending, and one that needs creating. This is up from Higgins Well, at Yew Tree Croft, coming out onto the Mason's field. MM suggested that this should all be written down, and at our next meeting we could discuss these.</p> <p>Tree Warden: Martin Hales is coming to give a talk and walk on 13th December at 10am. As advertised in the Parish Newsletter.</p>	<p><i>Clerk to bring map on the lap top to the January meeting, MM to bring the projector.</i></p>
8.	<p>Neighbourhood Plan – update</p> <p>The clerk was tasked with meeting with Sam Banks and Karla. There was a discussion about the merit of the NDP being able to address sustainability. EG during the draft stages we will be working through what we want to see in Little Birch and Aconbury, she felt that there would be lots of opportunities to address these feeling.</p> <p>ML; Sustainability, and the response from the council, does Dr N know of this meeting and the outcome? Yes, the Clerk has been in contact with him.</p> <p>The Chair, said that he had concerns about impartiality. JJ said that he had always declared an interest, it was not a secret. He was clear that 'open countryside' and 'sustainability' were completely different things. He felt that the planning department were making decisions in an arbitrary fashion.</p> <p>MM: the thing about the sustainability issue, every time a planning application comes up, they can refer back to past decisions, so it will always be there to hold other planning applicants up. MM is also concerned that JJ is the chair of the steering committee due to his interest. BR seconds this, and thanked him for his efforts so far. SN felt that he was reflecting JJ view any way, and the next NDP steering group meeting will address this. AW proposed a vote of thanks to JJ. All were in accord.</p>	<p><i>Clerk to feed back on her meeting.</i></p>

<p>9.</p>	<p>Community Assets Higgins Well and the Castle Inn The clerk fed back that listing a thing as a ‘community asset’ only creates a six month breathing space for the Parish Council to raise the funds to buy the pub themselves. A number of councillors spoke passionately about the benefit of listing the pub to show that the community really want to keep the pub in the village. The chair asked for the lead from CAMERA to come and talk to the PC about the reasons for listing it. AW, EG were both in favour of listing it. AW felt that if it had not been listed it would already be a residential dwelling. MM recapped that it only comes into play if the place is for sale, until then it doesn't really mean anything. BR asked if we could find another route to preserve Higgins Well, listing or some such.</p>	<p><i>AC to ask him on the parish Council's behalf to the meeting on January 10th.</i></p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>To note the contents of the information sheet and take any comments from that. All duly read and agreed to.</p>	
<p>11. i ii iii iv</p>	<p>Finance Balances: HSBC account £ 5,647.48 Community Account: Closed Project account Closed</p> <p>Parish Acct Clerks Salary : £ 353.61 PAYE (HMRC) : £ 23.20 Clerks Expenses : £ 15.20 NDP expenses: £ 41.87</p> <p>Proposed: SN Second: MM All in agreement. Payments to be made.</p> <p>Receipts – £688.05 VAT return from HMRC (not yet showing on bank statement)</p> <p>Requests for financial aid – None</p>	<p><i>Clerk to make payments.</i></p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Precept Setting The finance group met before the PC meeting , and the suggestion was to increase the precept by £1,000. This is in part to make up the deficit in the lengthsman payment by Herefordshire Council, but also to try and get our income and expenditure at about the same level. So up from £4,500 to £5,500. All were in agreement.</p>	<p><i>Clerk to submit the paperwork.</i></p>
<p>13.</p>	<p>Dobbin Cottage The chair had received a phone call from the owner of the cottage next door. She had been talking to the enforcement officer, who allegedly told her that they were coming to start work on the house, but in fact they are coming to work on the garden. She also raised the concern about the chimney again. MM expected ‘shortage of monies’ to restrict the work done by the council workers. SN suggested that the clerk be notified if any work is seen to be done so that this can be followed up. Chair to contact the owner next door to update her.</p>	<p><i>Clerk to contact Simon Withers to ask what progress has been made and what are the next steps. Copy ward councillor in to this.</i></p>

14.	Lengthsman – jobs to be done One missed drain, down from Castle Nibol, second left bend, on the right there is a drain that goes under the road that continues down Pendant Pitch.	
15.	To Receive Agenda items for the next PC meeting Dobbin Cottage, footpaths with projector, Mark Haslam CAMRA.	
16.	To note date of next scheduled PC meeting – January 10 th 2018	
	Meeting closed at 9.00pm	

SIGNED:..... CHAIRMAN

Dated:.....

Future Meetings

Please	Wednesday January 10 th	7.30
Note	Wednesday Feb 7 th	7.30
New	Wednesday March 7 th	7.30
dates	Wednesday April 4 th	7.30
And this time	Wednesday May 2 nd (Annual Meeting)	7.00