

**LITTLE BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL –PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 at 7.30pm - At Little Birch Village Hall**

**MINUTES**

**PRESENT:** Councillors; (PR) Peter Rees (Chair); (KD) Kate Dillon; (MD) Mike Davies; (JG) Janet Gwinnett;  
(KR) Kate Robbins: 6 members of the public  
(AM) Angela Middleton (footpaths officer)

**ALSO:** Sophie Glover (Parish Clerk), Terry Griffiths from 8.30pm

**Meeting Opened: 7.32pm**

**A 10 minute period from 7.30 p.m. was allocated, before the meeting opened, to enable members of the public to address the Parish Council**

A parishoner mentioned that from the PC meeting last November ‘land adjacent to Sunnybank Cottage’ talks about it being a bungalow, but at no point was it ever put down as a bungalow. The PC commented that none of them were on the PC at that time (apart from JG). The PC were informed that the current house has been sunk into the ground to minimise the impact on the environment around it.

MM: mentioned a report on the HC website about the predicted new core strategy, and how this might affect Little Birch. It calls for the total number of houses being built in Herefordshire in the next 20 years is 18,000.

1.	<b>Apologies - Ward Cllr: Toni Fagan.</b>	<i>ACTIONS</i>
2.	<b>Declaration of interest</b> None	
3.	<b>To accept minutes of the Sept: Parish Council meetings</b> Proposed: JG      Seconded: MD All in agreement. It was resolved to accept that the minutes as a true record of the meeting.	
4.	<b>Action points from previous PC meeting</b> All addressed, or on the agenda apart from the need to get the defibrillator checked. The clerk has been in contact with West Midlands Ambulance Service who are sending a new battery for it.	
5.	<b>Ward Cllr report (Cllr Toni Fagan)</b> Sent electronically. They included the following points:- - Corporate plan consultation at <a href="https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ambition">https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/ambition</a> Please feed back on the ambitions. -Zero Carbon by 2030. This decision has been endorsed by the cabinet and Herefordshire is now looking at how it decarbonises. To this end there is an event prepared for parish councils (a letter should have gone out through HALC) called the Big Collaboration and is aimed at getting discussion going in communities about how we reduce carbon – I would strongly urge all parishes to get involved. -Verging on Wild – flower verges. Parishes are being asked to identify areas where verges can be allowed to flower, Balfour Beatty are keen to engage in this project to encourage pollinator corridors – they are urging the council to invest in capital equipment which would help remove clippings from the first and last cut and then allow a 12 week flowering period between that, but key to this is communities identifying areas where this would be viable without risking road safety.	<i>Clerk to invite the smart water police person to come and do a 10 minute presentation.</i>

	<p><b>Police update</b> Nothing sent, and they have again been invited to attend this PC meeting.</p> <p><b>James Howell, Balfour Beatty</b> - Reports sent weekly. Clerk had met with James to look at a number of jobs including reporting potholes on the extension of Parish Lane – although this appeared on the BB maps as an unadopted lane, so he did not think that they would be able to fill these in, however, he is checking this.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Neighbourhood Plan:</b> There is due to be an open event looking at the updating of NDP's in line with the soon to be new Core Strategy. PR explained that there are 3 possible ways forward for a completed NDP, no change, minor change or major changes, only the final one needs a complete rewrite of their NDP's. It was resolved to wait until the new Core Strategy is out in draft form before the PC get further involved. KD handed out bound copies of the Neighbourhood Plan to all cllrs.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Planning applications;</b> 193113- Brynarian, Little Birch Road LBPC has no objection to this application</p>	<i>Clerk to submit comment.</i>
8.	<p><b>Footpaths officer and Tree warden reports;</b> AM has put the contact details onto the web site for both MB and LB. The parish maps are also on the website. Next Tuesday there is a fungi foray in Aconbury, leaving from the village hall. At Athelstan an old stile has now been removed by the Duchy, they are still debating what to replace it with. Tree Warden: the old leader of the TW group has stood down and his replacement is being sought.</p>	
9.	<p><b>The Castle Pub</b> The Chair outlined that the PC took the decision at the last meeting based on the information that they had then. Further information came to light that the PC did not have to be responsible for the asset, a community group could pursue this avenue should the pub be sold. The councillors were asked if they felt that with the new information they wished to change their decision. MD did not want to stop any community group from having the chance to proceed. It was moved to list the pub as an Asset of Community Value Proposed: KD Secoded MD all were in favour.</p>	<i>Clerk to progress with the listing.</i>
10	<p><b>Refurbishment of the village hall.</b> Dave Baldwin came to talk through the proposed plans. He explained that heating was an issue with the existing hall. The new hall will be able to seat more people for events and be better able to offer catering for events. Concerns were raised that the development seemed heavily focussed on the drama group – many of whom were not villagers. The question was raised, did the new plans provide the villagers with more of what they wanted? It was explained that the drama group do bring significant funds for the hall, but the new plans encompassed trying to get the hall more financially independent, bringing in other people wanting to hire the hall as a venue for parties etc. The Village Hall Committee are currently going for outline planning to see if it is even a possibility going forward. The PC will be kept informed of the feasibility study as it progresses.</p>	

11.	<b>To note the contents of the information sheet and take any comments from that.</b> None.	
12.	<b>Finance</b> <b>Balances:</b> HSBC account (at 4.9.19)        £ 4,320.37  <b>Payments to be agreed:</b> <b>Parish Acct</b> Clerks Salary :                    £    286.56 Clerks Expenses:                £      5.00 HMRC PAYE:                        £     27.60 HALC training (J Gwinnett)    £     36.00 Contribution to newsletter    £    200.00  Proposed: PR            Seconded: KD  All in agreement. Payments to be made. <b>Receipts</b> – £2,750 second half of precept, not yet showing on bank statement <b>Requests for financial aid</b> – None	<i>Clerk to make payments</i>
13.	<b>Lengthsman – jobs to be done</b> The lengthsman had been out and cleared the gully above the Holy Thorn Lane as well as checking all other grips and gullies through the village. Below the pub the ditches need scraping clear before winter. TG proposed a couple of days work with a digger would do the job. Cost expectation of about £750. Cllrs were in agreement for him to do the work.	<i>Clerk to look at additional funding through ward cllr for any drainage improvements.</i>
14.	<b>To Receive Agenda items for the next PC meeting</b> Parish to recycle goods; Holy Thorn Lane needs a no through lane sign; what three words.	<i>Clerk to look at signs. KD to look at the recycling and MD to research what 3 words.</i>
15.	<b>To note date of next scheduled PC meeting –</b> Wednesday Nov 4 <sup>th</sup>	
	Meeting closed at 9.10pm	

SIGNED:..... CHAIRMAN

Dated:.....

Future Meetings

	Wednesday Nov 6th	7.30pm
<b>New 2020 Dates</b>	Wednesday Jan 8th	7.30pm
	Wednesday Feb 5th	7.30pm
	Wednesday March 4th	7.30pm