**LITTLE BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL –**PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON

Wednesday 2nd March at 7.30pm - At Little Birch Village Hall

M I N U T E S

**PRESENT: Councillors Mike Morley; Annette Wissler; Steve Naylor; Ben Roberts;** **Elaine Godding**

**ALSO: Sophie Glover (Parish Clerk), 2 from Aconbury Parish. 12 Parishoners Ward Cllr David Harlow**

**Meeting Opened: 7.36pm**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Apologies - None** |  |
| **2.** | **Declaration of interest**  Cllr Mike Morley on item 15  Cllr Annette Wissler on item 15 |  |
| **3.**  **3.1**  **3.2**  **3.3**  **3.4** | **Open discussion**  **Police update**  Came electronically  **Ward Cllr report (Cllr Dave Harlow)**  Had sent a report electronically. Re-emphasised the CIL and the impact of completing a NDP where Parishes keep 25% of the CIL as opposed to a much lower percentage  If you don’t have a NDP.  He emphasises that the Westerly by pass will go to planning in April, hopefully work will start shortly afterwards.  Council tax is going up at 3.8%  **Public comments/questions**  Cllr Harlow was questioned by the parishioners: will there be additional hospitals and Schools for the housing being built? No  Will there be any easement for Belmont Road? No  What consideration has been given about increasing the Council Tax to cover the gap from the Government? We cant do that with out holding a referendum – this would cost £100,000 and possibly be unproductive.  MM questioned the logic of building new houses to bring in money – but building houses have its own costs. DH we need to generate money for the provision of basic services.  EG: has any consideration been given to the rail links? Yes, it’s too expensive.  Parking fees: Why don’t council employees pay the same for parking as the public have to? Yes you are right, this might be some thing that needs to be looked into.  MM: The University, has been put forward by a number of private individuals, but there has been no public consultation. DH, yes but it is necessary. People don’t know where Hereford is. Public comment: I’m a young person, and in my travels no one knows where Hereford is, and it would be great for the young people in the county.  AW: there is a national shortage of nurses and doctors. We must make sure our hospital works.  Public: if they keep putting up the parking fees, people wont come to Hereford any way, they will vote with their feet and shop elsewhere.  MM: cost cutting? Surely all costs have been cut as hard as they can be, what else is there to cut?  This ended the questions to Cllr Harlow, and was followed by Ken and Sue, with a planning application in for a retirement development in the village. He has arthritis, and wants to move whilst he can.  Jackie Morley spoke about their planning application for a retirement development at their property. Wanting to move whilst they can.  **Dave Atkinson, Balfour Beatty.**  Not present. |  |
| **4.i** | **To accept minutes of the January PC meeting**  Proposed: Ben Roberts Seconded: Steve Naylor |  |
| **5i** | **Action points from previous PC meeting** (Jan)  Information about NDP meeting to go into Newsletter – Clerk – Done  Ward Cllr to visit Dobbin Cottage – not done yet but he still intends to.  Clerk to get minutes to BR to put onto web site – Done  Clerk to tell Folly Cottage of BB visit - Done | *Cllr Harlow to visit Dobbin*  *Cottage.* |
| **6** | **Neighbourhood Plan**  MM asked for thoughts following the NDP meeting in February.  SN: Thought Lynda had given an excellent summary, although he added that it didn’t change his view that we are better off doing a plan rather than doing nothing and letting the council make our decisions.  AW: Important to get everyone involved. She questioned the necessity of doing one.  EG: Feels it’s really important to do a NDP  BR: Is definitely ‘in’. Thinks why wouldn’t we want to decide planning policy for our area.  Audience: Jackie Morley – it’s a load of rubbish and wont be listened to.  The chair asked about doing a joint NDP with Aconbury. He asked for views on this. A wide ranging discussion followed, these were some of the points raised:-  Audience: you should have a referendum to see if Aconbury want to join Little Birch, and does LB want to join with them.  Roger: feels that it would make financial sense to join.  AW: do we know enough to join together?  EG: the idea of a NDP is to ask people what type, where, what size etc should future planning be allowed in the parish.  The Clerk asked: does Little Birch need Aconbury in the joint plan?  Roger: Parish meeting in the middle of April, where Aconbury will decide if they want to join the plan. Chair asked if Aconbury could move their meeting to earlier. Roger thought not. Although it might be possible.....  Chair: if we follow the suggestion that we get working parties together before the Aconbury meeting.  AW: when do we need to decide?  Proposal: EW funding starts in April.  Chair proposed that LB records interest in doing a NDP.  He thought the steering committee would identify the areas for consideration for development. He surmised that LW suggested getting ideas together before going out to the public for a referendum.  It was resolved that the clerk signs LB up for a NDP. Clerk also to find out if they can add Aconbury in a month or so if they want to join us? If yes, register now. If ‘no’ we think of Little Birch, and have paperwork ready to submit for funding at end of March. Little Birch will give Aconbury a 2 week deadline to make a decision if they want to do a NDP.  Ben suggested that we don’t rush to a decision.  AW: do we know if we want Aconbury to join our NDP?  John: get a working party together to talk together before the next meeting. Backed up by Sue, who wants to get people together.  AW: Get the people who put themselves forward to be on the ‘steering committee’ and get them together.  EG: We had a NDP meeting for every one. It is the PC decision if we go ahead with a NDP.  It was resolved that the clerk would find out if the designated ‘area’ of a NDP could be altered once it had been set. If, as expected the answer turned out to be ‘no’, then she would write to Roger asking for Aconbury to let Little Birch know by 18th March if they did want to undertake a NDP. | *Clerk to action.* |
| **7** | **Parish Field –** Alison Clarke: A generous donation from Tony Rees has come in recently for its upkeep. The field has been sprayed recently to kill back the grasses to allow the flowers to grow. On going upkeep is being done by volunteers. She said that due to this donation, the Parish Field would not need to come to the PC for assistance with funding. |  |
| **8** | **Footpaths –** some issues have been passed onto lengthsman |  |
| **9** | **The Castle**  Will re-open on the 18th March, food available from the 19th. It should be open on Friday’s, Saturday’s and Sunday’s. |  |
| **10** | **Lengthsman**  The Chair will let the lengthsman know about the hole on School Lane.  Clerk told about lengthsman funding for 2017/18 will not be available from the Council. |  |
| **11** | **Dobbin Cottage**  EG said that it was now listed as ‘not habitable’ in its present state. |  |
| **12** | **Parish Website**  Have had 1652 hits since September. |  |
| **13** | **To note the contents of the information sheet and take any comments from that.**  Pensions: The clerk has opted to opt out of the pension scheme, the PC dually noted this.  Letter from Bannunt Tree Lane: concern about work to one property damaging the lane. Wanting a weight restriction putting on the road. PC felt that as an unadopted lane, they had little jurisdiction on the road. It was resolved that the clerk would write back to them explaining that, also that should there be a planning application on the property the PC would raise the point then | *Clerk to tell pensions agency*  *Clerk to respond to them.* |
| **14**  **I**  **Ii**  **Iii**  **iv** | **Finance**  **Balances:** Community Account: £4466.15  Premium Account : £ 50.51  **Cheques to be paid this period**  SG Clerks Salary : £190.43  PAYE (HMRC) : £115.20  SG Clerks Expenses: £37.38  NDP Refreshments: £ 8.07  ICO (Data Protection):£35.00  Terry Griffiths( Lengthsman): £300.00  Halc (Subs) : £313.64  Halc (Training) : £15.00  SLCC training : £50.00  LBVH (Room Bookings): £100.00  Election Expenses: £ 41  1/3rd membership SLCC: £47.00 To be discussed at meeting  Proposed: Steve Naylor Second: Ben Roberts  **Receipts –**  VAT Returned: £524.99  **Money agreed but not yet showing on statement**:  Payment from BB for lengthsman P1 and 2: £824.50  **Requests for financial aid – None** | *This payment was deferred*  *Until next meeting - for*  *Further discussion.* |
| **15** | **Planning Matters**  P160491: Land adjacent to Fernleigh, Little Birch **AW left the meeting**.  Retirement dwelling.  SN: Idea of building on your property to downsize seems to make sense in general. The positioning of the house in the scope of land that you have seemed to be unfortunate, if it was taken down the hill a bit it would be less conspicuous.  BR: like Steve, generally I cant see any objections to it.  ER: Reiterate what Steve says, no issue with down-sizing. Though, unfortunate that it is situated on the outer perimeter of your property. You’ll be exiting onto a footpath, I’d prefer to have seen the development nearer the garages so that it is less exposed.  It was resolved that the clerk would submit the comment that ‘LBPC would like to support the proposal, but we’d like there to be a discussion between the owners, the architect and any immediate neighbours. The pc would like to see the building located the plot further down the hill as mentioned above.’    **AW came back into the meeting and MM left it.**  P160476: Land adjacent to Uplands, Little Birch, Hereford.  Retirement dwelling.  SN: No issue with building on own land, and a retirement property.  BR: no problems, you wont even see it.  EG: NO objection, using the same access.  It was resolved that the clerk would submit the comment:- ‘The parish council has no objections’. | *Clerk to submit comments* |
| **16.** | **To Receive Agenda items for the next PC meeting**  Neighbourhood Plan, Parish Field, the Castle |  |
| **17.** | **To note the date of the next meeting**  Wednesday 4th May 2016 at 7pm Annual Parish Meeting followed by Parish Council meeting. |  |
|  | Meeting closed at 9.30pm |  |

SIGNED:................................................................ CHAIRMAN Dated:..................................................................

Future Meetings

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Wednesday May 4th Parish Council Annual Meeting | 7.00pm |
|  | Wednesday July 6th | 7.30pm |
|  | Wednesday September 7th | 7.30pm |
|  | Wednesday November 2nd | 7.30pm |
|  | Wednesday January 4th | 7.30pm |