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**MUCH MARCLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held

Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2024

7.30pm in Much Marcle Memorial Hall.

**Present:** Cllrs Mike Barber-Starkey (in the Chair); E Jefferson; D Griffiths; E Thomas; T Weston; F Powell; J Baldwin; S Cotton

**In attendance:** Rachel Freestone – Clerk  
Barry Durkin – Ward Member  
David Beckett – Footpaths Officer  
Jim Edwards - Footpaths Officer

**Public:** 4

**1. Apologies for Absence:**

There were none. Cllrs Cotton and Hope had informed the Clerk that they would arrive late.

**2. To receive any declarations of interest or written applications for dispensation:**

There were none.

**3. Open Session:**

**a. Report from the Ward Councillor:**

Ward Member Barry Durkin informed members that the Parish Council summit had taken place with 50 Parish Councillors attending, a successful event. There will be a further summit in 6 months time.

Following the Election, our new MP is now Ellie Chowns. With regards to Highways, he is investigating a more efficient way to address pot holes.

7.40pm Cllr Simon Cotton arrived.

**b. Public Participation:**

There was none.

**4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:**

Members considered the minutes from the Parish Council Annual Meeting held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes as a true record of the meeting. They were duly signed by the Chairman.

**5. To review the following policies for Much Marcle Parish Council (previously circulated):**

**a. Code of Conduct. It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the Code for 2024/25.

**b. Financial Regulations 2024 –** Members considered the proposed amendments highlighted in red. **It was RESOLVED:** to APPROVE the Financial Regulations with the agreed amendments.

**c. Risk Register – It was RESOLVED:** to APPROVE the Risk Register with no amendments.

**d. Risk Management Policy – It was RESOLVED:** to APPROVE the Risk Management Policy with no amendments.

7.45pm Cllr Alison Hope arrived.

**e. Reserves Policy –** Members considered the streamline of reserves accounting within the budget to correspond with the Reserves Policy. **It was RESOLVED:** to APPROVE the streamline of the reserves and the addition of an Asset Management Reserve to sit alongside the Asset Register.

**6. Much Marcle Memorial Hall.**

**a. To receive a report from the parish council representative:**

Cllr Baldwin informed members that the MMMH committee have applied for a lottery grant for £20k to fund window replacement. If it is awarded they will be able to complete the whole project if not will have prioritise.

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**7. To Receive a Report on the Community Shop:**

The Chair invited Mrs Elizabeth Lutzeier to speak. Members were informed that they now have 259 shareholders. The Fundraising Group have been present at many local events and still attend the Hellens monthly market. The launch of the 200 Club recently has been successful and will continue even when the shop is operating. The Open Gardens were also successful with over 70 people involved from the Community in the fundraising. The Steering Group have been working on the planning application which was submitted in November 23. They are continuing to push for a resolution of the planning application which has not been straight forward with a number of challenges and queries. Long lead time to get responses to any queries adding to the delays. Hoping to get planning consent through by mid to the end of August. They have raised about £112,000 with £103,000 remaining due to extra planning expenses. Shareholders funds are in a protected account until ready to build. To build the shop is estimated around £200,000 plus funds for stock, salaries etc. They remain optimistic for future government funding to help.

8.10pm Ward Member Barry Durkin left.

**8. Highways:**

**a.** Highways Working Group:

Cllr Powell continues to report pot holes and many are getting repaired at the moment and seem to be doing a better job. There are still many to report. Members were informed that it has been noted that several cars seem to be travelling at excessive speeds regardless of the reduction of speed to 40mph. **It was RESOLVED:** the Clerk to contact Alan Brace and Ward Member Barry Durkin to enquire re a Community Speedwatch Group.

**b.** To receive an update on the speed limit change: Members noted that this is now completed.

**c.** Members considered Finger Post signs to direct traffic to the School, Memorial Hall and Church. Cllr Barber-Starkey informed members that he had spoken with the Headmistress of the school and they are hoping to improve their visibility and marketing. They would like a school sign. It was noted that there is also no sign for the Memorial Hall. **It was RESOLVED:** the Clerk to approach Highways with the Environmental Working Group to lead.

**9. Footpaths:**

**a.** To receive a report on the Footpath Regeneration Project: Footpaths Officer, David Beckett updated members. Hoople (HCC commissioned to do footpath work on their behalf) have completed cat tests to read the ground where the gates are being positioned to make sure no cables. All areas have been cat scanned. HCC have given permission for them to carry on. Balfour Beatty have surveyed the sites officially. Our design for the bridges still needs to be validated and are approaching a structural engineer for comments. Groundridge approached to quote to compare to our quote and is not favourable. HCC have given the PC 8 self-closing gates so now have double the gates we thought so able to update more footpaths.

**b.** To receive a report on any other Footpath matters arising: Footpaths Officer Jim Edwards informed members that a lot of maintenance work has been completed (*See Appendix 1*). David Beckett commented that following a HCC 'Toolbox Talk', their only observation was that the Footpaths Group don't have a qualified First Aider. Members to decide whether provide a First Aid Kit or fund an outdoor first aid certificate? *A member commented that many of the local farms will have a qualified first aider on site, could they contact the farms near where working to be able to contact theirs if needed?* **It was RESOLVED:** Clerk to purchase a first aid kit for the Footpath Officers up to £50 and give to David Beckett. Footpath Officers to contact local farms to where working.

**10. Planning:**

**a.** To comment on Planning Applications for Determination by Herefordshire Council:

- There were none.

**b.** Members NOTED the Planning Responses Submitted between Meetings under Devolved Powers:

- 241187 Hellens Lodge, proposed extension. SUPPORT.

**c.** Members NOTED the planning decisions made by Herefordshire Council:

- 240942 Rhonville T1 and T3. CAN PROCEED.

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**11. Assets:**

- a. To consider the removal of the play equipment matting from the Bartons Field: Cllr Barber-Starkey confirmed that this has been completed. Thanks given to Cllrs Cotton, Powell and Weston. The area needs soil and seeding. There will be soil from the Gates Project, look to complete in the summer holidays.
- b. Cllr Barber-Starkey commented on the meeting held with Much Marcle Primary School regarding the land at Bartons as the school is going through the Academy process. He and Cllr Weston had met the Headteacher. The stretch of land behind the school was given to the PC originally for allotments. They were not popular so the school is able to use it but not build. The Parish Council is to write to the Governors to explain the land. A member of the public added that the Diocese remains in charge of the school building and the land, leased by HCC.
- c. Members considered the condition of the Old Pike Bus Shelter in Much Marcle. **It was RESOLVED:** Cllr Thomas to source a replacement roof. Defer the item to September pending quotes.
- d. Cllr Cotton updated members on the Bartons Gate Project. The gates are almost finished and can fit the week of the 29<sup>th</sup> July. Members agreed that the latch should be able to be padlocked if needed. The hedge will be surveyed by Say it With Wood prior to installation as is bird nesting time.

**12. Environment and Community:**

- a. Members noted the Parishioners Wish List from the Annual Parish Meeting. The Environmental Group will meet to shortlist and bring to the September meeting.

**13. Finance**

- a. Members noted the Bank Reconciliation and Bank Balances for May and June 2024. Cllr Baldwin as a non-bank signatory duly checked and signed the bank statements, invoices and bank reconciliation as a true record.
- b. Members noted the Budget Versus Actuals Figures to June 30<sup>th</sup> 2024 with no action required at this time.
- c. **It was RESOLVED:** to use BACS as the principal form of payment.
- d. Members considered the quote from Hiscox Insurance for £468.91 with no changes to assets. Active from 05.08.24 and in a long term agreement until 04/08/25. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the quote and cover for 2024/25.
- e. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the updated schedule of regular payments as per Financial Regulations 6.6,6.7 and 6.8.
- f. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the following invoices for payment:

• Clerk's Expenses printer cartridge and Microsoft Licence May, June and July 2024	£54.24net
• PATA Clerk Salary arrears calculation	£15.00
• MMMH hire May	£15.00
- g. **It was RESOLVED:** to ratify regular payments made between meetings, the schedule was duly checked and signed against the bank statements:

• Clerk Salary May/June	As per contract
• Unity Bank Fee June	£18.00
- h. Members noted the income received:

• VAT Claim	£320.12
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- i. To note virements made between Unity Accounts – There was none.
- j. Cllr Barber-Starkey informed members that following the Finance Working Group meeting further information had been requested regarding the new Garden of Remembrance. This had been received but as in its early stages costs are not available. **It was RESOLVED:** for the costs to be provided when available for consideration of a grant towards them. To add to the Agenda in September.

**14. Correspondence:**

Members noted the correspondence.

**15. Members considered items for the next meeting:**

Much Marcle Parochial Church Grant, Speedwatch, Wish List.

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**16. Next Meeting:** It was NOTED that the next meeting of Much Marcle Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> September in Much Marcle Memorial Hall.

Signed:.....*Alison Hope* ..... Date:.....*11<sup>th</sup> September 2024* .....

**Chairman**

**The meeting closed at 9.05pm**

#### **APPENDIX 1**

Footpath Officers Report for Much Marcle Parish Council.

17/07/2024. Jim Edwards. Mob [REDACTED]

29/05/2024. Meeting at MBS to establish the way forward replacing stiles with self closing gates. Construction and replacing two bridges one on FP MM23-PT13 in Kynaston, the second on FP MM16-MM15A-AL1.

Attended by JJE-MBS-JB-DB.

Working Construction visits.

21/06/2024 MM15 Rye Meadow. MBS-JJE-JB-DB

To remove stile and replace with self closing metal gate.

MM3 Ryelands. Remove V section on end of new council installed footbridge and replace with self closing metal gate.

02/07/2024 MM15 Rye Meadow. JJE-JB-DB

Replace and widen wooden footbridge and add handrails both sides.

MM3 Ryelands. Remove V section other end of bridge and install self closing metal gate, these are now at both ends of the bridge.

12/07/2024 MM8 Awnells Farm. JJE-DB

Fit new footplate and 6 foot post to stile screwing and bolting rails together.

Fit markers and clear stile at roadside.

MM26/8B Fitted new footplate to stile screwing together and fit direction marker.