

19/24-25

## MUCH MARCLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Extra Meeting held  
Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> October  
7.30pm Much Marcle Memorial Hall

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

**In attendance:** Rachel Freestone – Clerk

**Public:** 4

**1. To receive and accept apologies for absence:**

Apologies had been received and accepted from Barry Durkin, Ward Councillor.

**2. To receive any declarations of interest or written applications for dispensation from Councillors on agenda items:**

Cllrs A Hope (Tree Report) and M Barber-Starkey (potential use of his road for construction access) both declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 4.

The Clerk requested that an urgent financial item (HCC PROW Grant Application form) received be added to the end of the meeting. The Chair and Full Council approved the addition. There were no declarations of interest with regards to this item.

**3. Open Session:**

a. To receive representations from the Public:

A member of the public commented that although they welcome an Art Gallery to the village they had two concerns over the access arrangements. Firstly, the widening of the temporary road will encroach on the land designated for the Community Shop. Secondly, the widening of the road at the end of Monks Walk risks the fabric of a 400 year old brick wall, they had been assured at the public meeting that the Walk would not be widened on that side but the planning application has not been amended.

A member of the public asked members whether the application is being assessed purely on the planning application or with consideration to comments made at the public meeting. The Chair responded that considering only the planning application submitted.

A member of the public commented that the applicant has submitted a F2 Community Application without consulting with the community. Could the landowner elaborate on the community benefits of the gallery and they would like the parish council to request some kind of community benefit if the application is approved.

**4. Planning:**

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

Planning Consultation 241873 – Hellens, Monks Walk, Much Marcle HR8 2LY. Proposed erection of a gallery and recital building with associated engineering, drainage works and landscaping.

Cllr Weston reported that the gallery would be an important addition to the parish with more benefits than disadvantages. A member commented that the art to be displayed is of cultural benefit nationally and internationally and great to have this asset on our doorstep to support tourism and local education. Resident feedback has on the whole been positive however there are concerns on potential extra traffic and whether Monks Walk will still be available for walkers. The applicant has confirmed that it will continue to be open to walkers. A member added that entrance to the gallery is proposed to be limited to 150 per day and not everyday although concerts and special events are also proposed. A member commented that events are already held at the site. A member of the public added that additional car park spaces are not in the plans so numbers will be limited due to this.

The Chair asked whether the application falls out of the NDP? Cllr Baldwin confirmed that it didn't.

20/24-25

There are three relevant policies to support the application:

**Policy SD1** – Sustainable Development – environmentally sustainable economic growth, positive and low carbon.

Objective MM01- Ensure all new development makes a positive contribution to local character.

**Policy EM1** – Employment and Economy – development proposals for tourism and leisure.

Objective MM05 – Encourage and support employment that is locally based, sustainable and diverse.

**Policy CS1** – Community Facilities – Development proposals for new and /or improved community facilities will be supported.

Objective MM11 – Maintain and support existing community facilities and increase the range of activities they provide.

Cllr Weston added that the application meets the Parish Council’s Vision Statement. “Our vision is that we, as the present guardians of our built and natural heritage maintain and enhance the characteristic features which define our particular sense of place and local distinctiveness.”

A member added that the parish council comments to HCC planning must state that the visitor limit must be stuck to as owe a duty of care to reflect the views of the community. The commercial aspect of the application must not exceed their proposals.

A member added that any improvement to the lakes with a footpath and wildflower meadow would improve the biodiversity of the parish and be beneficial for local residents.

Cllrs M Barber-Starkey and A Hope abstained from the vote.

**It was RESOLVED:** to **SUPPORT** the application with all members in favour.

**Additional Financial Item:**

The Chair explained that HCC had submitted a grant application form with a return deadline of the 11<sup>th</sup> October as per meeting on the 11<sup>th</sup> September Agenda Item 9a.

Cllr Baldwin explained for those not present on the 11<sup>th</sup> September that HCC had confirmed their verbal proposal. HCC will provide two bridges for MM16 and MM23 but have asked for the parish council to provide funding of up to £8000 capped from the Lottery Fund to pay for the abutments. If the cost is found to be lower, the parish council will pay less. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the capped contribution of £8000 from the National Lottery Funding for the required abutments for both bridges and for the Clerk to return the signed PROW application form prior to the 11<sup>th</sup> October.

5. Members noted the next full council meeting to be held on the 13<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall.

Signed.....*M Barber-Starkey*..... Date:.....*13.11.2024* .....

**Chairman**

**The meeting ended at 20.09**