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## MUCH MARCLE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held  
Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> November  
7.30pm in Much Marcle Memorial

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

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

**Public:** 6

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

Apologies had been received and accepted from Cllr E Thomas, T Weston and S Cotton.

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

There was none.

**3. Open Session:**

It was agreed to hear Agenda Item 3b first.

**b. To receive representations from the public:**

Regarding Agenda item 11A Holmleigh, a member of the public asked whether the parish council are aware of the historic planning applications for the outbuildings and the conditions that were then laid out? They added that they have concerns over a number of inaccuracies within the application including the measurements, a gable end is not shown in the drawings and the boundary is closer to other properties. The change of use would affect privacy and increase noise and light pollution. Cllr Barber-Starkey advised that they must submit their own comments to the HCC planning portal, explaining clearly their objections and why as it is important for the planning officers to hear from those living nearby.

**a. To receive a report from the Ward Councillor:**

Ward Member Barry Durkin informed the public that his monthly Ward Reports are available online on the MMPC website. Currently focussing on flooding issues; where flooding occurs both historically and recently. Each parish council has been asked to identify locations where there are concerns. All County Councillors recently met at a Flooding Summit. Shire Hall is being renovated and the Library will be relocated in Autumn 2025 along with coroners offices. The building will also have many community spaces.

'Help Shape Herefordshire' initiative asking the public for their opinion on the redevelopment of the Hereford museum. The Transport Hub is progressing with the tender process to find a construction partner. Ward Member Durkin commented that he is assessing the number of planters in the city They will be taken out for the fair in December and would like to put back only what need, there are 49 currently.

The second parish council summit was an interesting session. *Cllr Barber-Starkey commented that it was disappointing as the audio was poor.* Homepoint is being revamped to improve the service for users. Film on You Tube released called 'Everything' to promote fostering and celebrate those who already foster. Warm Conditions to write about. Children's Services are slowly improving, there is an online survey for parents/guardians of SEND children to assess the services provided.

**4. Members considered the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> September 2024. It was RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes as a true record. They were duly signed by the Chair.

**5. Members considered the minutes of the Extra Parish Council Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024. It was RESOLVED:** to approve the minutes as a true record. They were duly signed by the Chair.

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7.55pm 5 members of the public left

It was agreed to move Agenda item 10 forward.

**10. Footpaths:**

a. To receive a report on the Footpath Regeneration Project:

Footpath Officer Jim Edwards provided his report attached as appendix 1. Cllr Baldwin commented on the frustrations experienced from HCC's inaction. The parish council have volunteers in place and are prepared to get on with the required work. HCC had requested a quick decision from the parish council with regards to the approval of the required contribution and have subsequently had no confirmation or response. The service they provide is substandard and as a department it is not functioning adequately. Ward Member Durkin confirmed he had both spoken and written to them asking them to get on with it but has had no reply. Ward Member Durkin asked to be copied into any emails sent.

Footpath Officer David Beckett showed members a map of all the footpaths in Much Marcle and everything achieved to date with the newly accessible circular routes. MM16 once completed will be a major walkway which links Much Marcle with Ledbury as it interacts with many other footpaths. Plaques have been designed for installation on each gate to show they are funded through the Awards for All grant, a proposed cost of £144.

**It was RESOLVED:** to approve the purchase of 16 plaques.

He added that the proposal to purchase and install more self-closing gates can not be brought to the parish council as unsure of the current financial position, the bridges are holding up the project.

- b. Members were informed that the First Aid training for David Beckett and Cllr Baldwin would take place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November.
- c. There were no other Footpath matters arising.

It was agreed to bring Agenda Item 11 forward.

**11. Planning:**

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

- 242410 Land opposite Hardwick Oaks, Kempley Road. Demolition of barn and erection of two semi detached dwellings. Cllr Baldwin informed members that the Planning Working Group had met and looked at the site. The plot is specifically mentioned in the NDP. **It was RESOLVED:** to SUPPORT the application.
- 242372 Holmleigh, Much Marcle. Proposed alteration and part conversion of existing outbuildings. Cllr Baldwin reported that he had looked at plans which have missing information and inaccuracies. There are previous restrictions from 1998 which can't be seen so unknown if they apply to the application. As don't have the full suite of information and there are obvious inaccuracies which need resolving a decision can not be made. He reiterated that concerned members of the public need to make their objections and they must be inputted to the HCC planning portal before the date advertised. **It was RESOLVED:** The clerk to request an extension pending the provision of the correct information and the inaccuracies being amended. The Planning Working Group will need to meet again following receipt. Ward Member Durkin requested a copy of any emails to be sent to him.
- b. Members noted the Planning Responses Submitted between Meetings under Devolved Powers:
  - 242396 Land opposite Hardwick Oaks. Construction of agricultural vehicular access. SUPPORT
- c. Members noted the planning decisions made by Herefordshire Council:
  - 241895 Hale End Refurbishment of Existing Bungalow. APPROVED with conditions.
  - 223195 The Bounds B8 storage and 24 storage silos. APPROVED
  - 233010 Proposed Community Shop, post office and café. APPROVED with conditions.

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

a. Reserves Policy. **It was RESOLVED:** to adopt the amendments and approve the policy.

8.15pm Jim Edwards left

- b. Le Barroux Twinning Grant Procedure and Application Form. Cllr Hope queried whether the grant is given out in its entirety or retain some for each year. Any applications to be copied in to the Twinning Association. **It was RESOLVED:** with an amendment that once the fund is depleted it will cease. Each grant application will be assessed on its own merit.

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- c. Risk Schedule. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the updated risk schedule including the Memorial Hall insurance details.
- 7. Much Marcle Memorial Hall:**
- a. Members received a report from Cllr Baldwin. The work to replace the windows will commence in the next couple of weeks. The Memorial Hall needs to attract new hirers to boost income.
8. Mr Lutzeier provided an update on the Community Shop. Planning permission has now been granted with a few manageable conditions and he thanked the Parish Council, Ward Member Durkin and the community for all the support. The conditions include a sustainable drainage strategy, bird boxes and a construction management plan to not put mud on the road. Their focus is now on grant applications with Cllr Baldwin helping, he was thanked. He informed members of the latest outcomes from the most recent report 'Community Business – A Better Form of Business including that 86% of community businesses are in rural areas. The Community Shop now has 262 shareholders with £93k share capital, much more than the average and three times the share capital of the average so this should support grant applications. Members congratulated Mr Lutzeier and the team for their success with the planning application.
- 9. Highways:**
- a. Members NOTED the response from HCC regarding 20mph flashing signs and SIDS (provided previously). It was **RESOLVED:** Cllrs Griffiths and Powell to look into SIDS and bring back to full council. The Clerk to look at funding opportunities.
- b. Cllr Barber-Starkey shared the update received from PCSO Kysow that the data boxes will be installed the week commencing the 20<sup>th</sup> November for a week. This data will be used to determine whether a Community Speedwatch scheme is viable.
- c. To consider any other matters arising from the Highways Working Group. Cllr Powell confirmed that he had checked the bridge at Rye Meadows following a report from a member of the public and he could see nothing of concern. The Clerk added that the concern had been reported on Fix My Street.
- 12. Assets:**
- a. Members NOTED the report provided by Cllr Thomas. The bus shelter is overgrown but the structure is sound. Some roof tiles will need replacing. **It was RESOLVED:** to complete the work required in the Spring with an agreed budget of £100.
- b. Members NOTED the works carried out to trees at Bartons following the latest tree inspection, Adrian Hope Ltd were thanked.
- c. Members NOTED the purchase of a replacement noticeboard. David Beckett was thanked for installing it. Cllr Barber-Starkey informed members that a member of the public has offered to varnish the surround. This was accepted and thanked.
- 13. Environment and Community:**
- a. To consider the questions posed by Ward Member Durkin on Identification of Flooding Issues in Old Gore: **It was RESOLVED:** Cllr Barber-Starkey to meet with the Clerk and send the response to the Ward Member.
- b. Members NOTED the damage to steps and sign by the Hills Ford Stages Rally. Members thought that the Rally had been well organised. Cllr Baldwin is in contact with the person who is to complete the remedial work.  
8.41pm Ward Member Barry Durkin left.
- c. Parishioners Wish List from the Annual Parish Meeting. **It was RESOLVED:** the Community Working Group to meet and report. The clerk to send them the wish list and a reminder.
- 14. Finance**
- a. Members NOTED the Bank Reconciliation and Bank Balances for September and October 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 successful conclusion of the External Audit with the Notice added to the website.

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- c. Members considered the Draft Budget for 2025/26 prior to public consultation. Cllr Barber-Starkey reported that the Finance Working Group had met and considered future expenditure including projected staff costs. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the draft budget and release for a period of public consultation. The budget and precept will be approved at the meeting on the 8<sup>th</sup> January.
- d. Members NOTED the agreed NJC scales increase of £1290 per grade pro rata backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.
- e. Members NOTED confirmation of no amendment to the insurance cost with the new gates added.
- f. Members NOTED the addition of the laptop to the Asset Register. **ACTION:** The Clerk is to add the hedgetrimmer.
- g. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the following invoices for payment:
- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| • Clerk's Expenses Microsoft Licence   | £24.72                |
| • MMMH Hire September                  | £15.00                |
| • MMMH hire October                    | £15.00                |
| • Zeroridge Footpath Grant expenditure | £486.03net/£583.24gr  |
| • Signs of Cheshire final payment      | £272.50net/£327 gross |
- h. **It was RESOLVED:** To ratify regular payments made between meetings:
- |                                  |                 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| • Clerk Salary September/October | As per contract |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
- i. **It was RESOLVED:** To ratify the following payments made between meetings:
- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| • Zeroridge Footpath Awards for All    | £661/£793.20gross     |
| • PKF External Audit                   | £210/£252 gross       |
| • Clerk Expenses Screwfix hedgetrimmer | £116.66/£139.99 gross |
| • Signs of Cheshire Ltd 50% deposit    | £272.50net/£327 gross |
- j. Members NOTED income received:
- |                   |          |
|-------------------|----------|
| • Precept         | £5425.00 |
| • Credit Interest | £282.41  |
- k. Members NOTED the virements made between Unity Accounts:
- |                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| • Instant access to current total | £3100 |
| • Current to Instant access       | £5000 |
- l. Members considered the response from the Twining Association and Much Marcle Primary School regarding the La Barroux Grant. **It was RESOLVED:** to contact the school to get quotes on the French language learning scheme.

**15. Training:**

- a. Members NOTED that Cllr Baldwin and David Beckett are scheduled to attend First aid Training with Forestry on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> November.

16. Members considered the Clerks request for annual leave for the weeks commencing 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December and the week commencing 17<sup>th</sup> February. **It was RESOLVED:** to approve the leave.

**17. Correspondence:**

There were no further items.

**18. To consider items for the next meeting – no discussion.**

To include Community Speedwatch and SIDS. The budget and precept for 2025/26.

19. **Next Meeting:** It was NOTED that the next meeting of Much Marcle Parish Council will be held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January in Much Marcle Memorial Hall.

Signed:.....M Barber-Starkey..... Date:.....8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 .....

Chairman

The meeting closed at 8.48pm

**Appendix 1 – Jim Edwards Footpath Report**

04/10/2024 Location MM4 Watery Lane opposite Sunny Bank. Remove stile and cut back vegetation, replacing with a metal self-closing gate. This is the last of the HCC supply of eight gates. This now completes another stile free loop. JJE.JB.DB.RB.

22/10/2024 Meeting at the Walwyn to discuss forward planning regarding the purchase and installation of a further twenty metal self-closing gates to replace the stiles. The question of the two bridges regarding lack of information or action from HCC. MBS.JJE.JB.DB.

13/11/2024 Visit to Newent book launch of walks linked to the Daffodill Line bus service. This was well attended and people spoken to knew of the progress we have made regarding footpaths in the Much Marcle area. The guide books are now available at £6. JJE. DB.