

Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 19th April 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

1. Apologies for absence: None

2. Declaration of Interests: CT and JP on item 7; JH on item 12; JP on 14 (Wild Gardens).

3. Proposal to approve minutes of the March meeting

The March draft minutes were considered. CT moved to approve. All in favour, motion carried. Minutes were signed and dated.

4. Matters arising from the March meeting

New bus service: PR has been informed that a new service is due to start to include the Wychwoods en route to Witney or Chipping Norton. PR to liaise with PW regarding bus operator contact details.

5. Public session for items related to this Agenda

Speedwatch: Team of volunteers had a training session on use of the speed monitoring equipment led by the Police. They were informed about risks involved and the precautions to be taken when operating the equipment. 2 trial runs have now taken place and they await confirmation from PC that they will be covered under PC public liability insurance before proceeding with actual course of speed monitoring. Some discussion followed about where trouble spots are. The speed monitoring should determine whether speeding is a genuine issue for further intervention.

6. To receive the following reports:

6.1 Chairman's Report (CT)

Precept: CT responded to recent enquiries regarding increased Council tax. He confirmed that the PC has not increased the precept, but that independent variables such as the tax base used to calculate the tax as well as a smaller grant awarded by WODC and the PC election in May have resulted in the increase.

Woody dams: Work has now been completed at Littlestock Brook.

Drain in Church Road: Silt extraction work has resulted in a blockage which is now been dealt with.

Poplar tree at Cemetery: SSE will be attending to this tree which is overhanging power lines on 27th March. Those who may be affected by a power outage have been informed.

Cherry tree on Village Green: Arboricultural specialists have advised that the tree is rotten in the middle and to avoid branches dropping over time causing potential harm, it should be removed. The PC pledge to replace with another flowering tree.

Co-option: The PC have no-one to fill the vacant position of Councillor at present but are actively seeking a suitable candidate.

6.2 District Councillor Report (JH)

It was reported that the Local Plan is to be considered from 9th May and Planning Committee are optimistic that it will be accepted. JH informed the PC that the government is currently considering the role of Neighbourhood Plans. WODC has recently responded to a government white paper related to housing delivery and have disagreed with an amendment regarding housing allocation.

6.3 County Councillor Report (RR)

RR was pleased to report his improving health and thanked the PC for its concern. It is unlikely that the unitary council proposals now submitted to government will be considered before December due to the election now scheduled in June. RR is pleased to report that it is hoped that some funding will become available for areas such as bus services and day centres but more details will follow shortly.

7. Proposal that all members of the Parish Council and public working at the request of and on behalf of Milton under Wychwood Parish Council should be covered by PC public liability insurance, namely 'Speedwatch' and 'Milton Volunteers' (PR)

Clerk has prepared 'Speedwatch' risk assessment which is to be circulated to all Speedwatch volunteers prior to activity taking place as well as to the insurance company to confirm public liability cover for the volunteers. Vote taken to cover all volunteers of Speedwatch and Milton Volunteers under PC public

liability insurance. All in favour, motion carried. Clerk to carry out risk assessment for Milton Volunteers group.

8. Proposal to repair churchyard path (CT)

Briefing notes had been circulated. CT has met with St Simon and St Jude PCC which is happy for PC to choose how to repair the path. Discussion followed regarding the merits of self-compacting gravel versus a grid system. CT to seek quotes for both methods for PC consideration.

9. Consideration of how to proceed with Church wall restoration (CT)

Briefing notes had been circulated. St Simon and St Jude PCC is happy for PC to proceed with removal of ivy and gap-filling with mortar as an interim measure until the wall collapses when complete rebuild will take place. Ct to seek quotes for PC consideration.

10. Proposal to approve the Parish Tree Stock and Assessment Report and procedure (CT)

Briefing notes had been circulated. Areas where PC is responsible for trees include the Village Green, the Cemetery, Churchyard and Elm Grove. Annual maintenance inspections of trees will alternate between large and small areas and 3 year budget allows for this maintenance procedure. A vote was taken to accept the tree management plan. All in favour, motion carried.

11. Employees salary review & recommendations (CT/JP)

11.1 Lengthperson

Clerk gave a brief summary of issues raised by an appraisal of the Lengthperson, namely:

- Several bins need replacing. MR will make an audit of those in need of replacement and work party meeting shortly will examine bin which has recently been vandalised on Village Green.
- Clerk to write to the Co-op requesting that their bin be emptied more frequently.
- Lengthperson to inform PC of annual leave. JH offered to put out the MSA bin to enable MR to take longer period of annual leave when required.
- Clerk informed PC of necessary salary increase to £7.50/hr in line with National Living wage which will be backdated to 1st April 2017.

11.2 Clerk salary

OALC HR review has now taken place and review concluded that Clerk is currently within correct salary scale for the time being so salary will increase incrementally in line with that of the NALC SCP annual salary increase. Since Clerk is currently at the top end of the current pay level scale, this will be reviewed in 2 years' time. Hours were confirmed to be 32 hours per month from 1st April 2017 (see Feb minutes). Vote taken to accept the HR review. All in favour, motion carried.

12. Planning (PY)

Please refer to www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning for further details of the following applications.

The Planning Committee gave reports on the applications below and the motions carried were as follows:

12.1	<i>17/00849/HHD</i>	<i>Lower Farm House, Upper Milton</i>	No objection
12.2	<i>17/00899/HHD</i>	<i>6 Elm Grove</i>	No objection
12.3	<i>17/01048/HHD</i>	<i>Little Heath bungalow, Green Lane</i>	No objection
12.4	<i>17/0019/HHD</i>	<i>Terrace House, 41 High Street</i>	No objection

13. Village Green

13.1 Consideration of quotes for dead wood removal from trees on the Green (CT)

Briefing notes had been circulated. CT has sought 4 quotes, all very similar in advice but some considerable difference in price. It was proposed to accept quote from contractor 'B'. Vote taken, all in favour; motion carried. CT will contact successful contractor.

Grass cutting: PR reported that VG is looking very good following the first cut of the year. Apology received from grass cutter regarding an oil spillage on the green. It was suggested that the new mower may be the cause of the recent broken window at the MSA due to the greater power and spray from the blades.

Work party: Members of the PC to meet at 10am on Sunday 23rd April to clear up the hard court area. Clerk to inform Teddy Tennis coach.

Gate opposite The Square: PR to oil the gate.

14. Correspondence (JM)

Details of all e-mail and postal correspondence received had been circulated.

15. Donations under sec 137: *South Central Ambulance Service Community First responders operating within the Carterton and Wychwood area*

Briefing notes had been circulated. JP reported that in details outlined by Clerk, only half of the £10,600 PC budget for sec137 has been allocated, allowing for flexibility to consider further donations in 2017/18. It was proposed to donate £200 to the SCAS. Vote taken; all in favour, motion carried.

16. Accounts

16.1 To approve the payments out and to sign cheques

The March/April cashbook was circulated to the PC. It was proposed to approve the payments out this month. Vote taken; all in favour, motion carried.

Bank balance at 31st March 2017: £88,718.80

March income received:

Interest	5.30
Parking rent x 2 spaces	162.50
Allotment rent	9.00
Cemetery	445.00
Pizza van rent	25.00
TOTAL	646.80

April expenditure approved:

PAYE	139.36
HR Clerk job review	60.00
Lengthperson materials	3.51
Roofing battens for Woody dams signs	8.46
Loppers for tree maintenance	28.58
Household waste collection 1/2	213.98
Woody dams work	2,400.00
Lengthperson salary	176.98
Replacement defibrillator pads	110.76
Community First Subscription	70.00
Mileage reimbursement for Neighbourhood Planning research 70.14 miles@0.469p/mile	32.90
Clerk salary & holiday pay	720.25
TOTAL	3,964.78

16.2 To sign Feb-March bank statements (CT)

The March bank statements were signed by the Chairman.

16.3 To approve fourth quarter vs. budget statement of accounts

The statement of accounts had been circulated. JP commended the statement to the PC commenting that the budget for the woody dams would be carried into 2017/18 due to later than expected invoicing, but would be £2,400 +VAT rather than £5,000 as budgeted. Clerk referred to the reserves of around £89,000 which are earmarked for the Church wall rebuild which will cost several thousands. It was proposed to approve the statement of accounts. Vote taken; all in favour, motion carried.

16.4 To approve the Annual governance statement 2016/17 of Annual return

The Annual governance statements had been circulated. Vote taken to approve the Annual governance statement; all in favour, motion carried.

16.5 To approve the Accounting statements for 2016/17 for the Annual return

The Accounting statements section of the Annual return had been circulated. Documents included were Section 2 of the Annual Return showing the balances brought forward and carried forward, total receipts, staff costs and payments out during 2016/17. Related to these accounts was the explanation of significant variances between year ending 15/16 and 16/17. The notable increase in parish fixed assets was explained as being primarily due to the extension of the MSA and associated adjusted insurance value; the inclusion of the church wall and paths at insurance value; also the current value of the parish half of the field currently rented by tenant farmer estimated at £134,717.58. Bank reconciliation as at 31st March 2017 was also presented. Vote taken to approve the Accounting statements and documents; all in favour, motion carried.

17. Public session for non-Agenda items

Speeding through Upper Milton: Request for speed limit signage through Upper Milton due to excessive speed and absence of pavements. RR replied that he would look into bringing a Highways Officer to view the site.

Defibrillators: Enquiry into whether another defibrillator training session may be possible shortly provided sufficient period of advertisement is given, perhaps in PC newsletter.

Bruern-Milton signpost: Request for erection of finger post to Milton at this junction.

Play area seating: Enquiry into play area seating fundraising. PC reported no further news.

Oxfordshire Way bridleway off Lyneham Road: Low branches of tree are reported to be obstructing the path for horse-riders. PR/CT to investigate.

The PC was thanked by a member of the public for their work.

18. AOB.

Grass cutting: CS reported that some areas listed within the PC grass cutting contract are still being cut by OCC contractors.

Allotments: CT reported recent vandalism and thefts. Reports too of dogs off leads in vicinity of plots. CT to erect new 'No dogs' signs and the situation will be monitored.

PC AGM: To take place on Wednesday 17th May at 7.30pm.

Annual Parish Meeting: To take place on Wednesday 10th May at 7.30pm. Clerk to confirm with EN about Village Hall booking.

Neighbourhood Plan survey: Number of returns totalled 139 out of an estimated 735 occupied homes which was disappointing though in line with local voting pattern. 90% of returns favoured the Neighbourhood Plan. Quotes are being sought for initial comprehensive survey.

Bus services: PW to attend a meeting at County Hall with the 233 bus operator. Report to follow.

Milton Volunteers: CT reported that the cemetery posts have now been completed. The hedge adjacent to the road alongside the allotments will now be cut back to layering; ivy will be removed from the Church wall. The group shall now meet to complete work over a period of one week every so often.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 9.18pm.