

**Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

**Present:**

Cllr Boyle, DCllr Haine (JH), Cllrs Pratt (JP), Smith (CS), Chairman Trotman (CT), Young (PY); Parish Clerk: J. Miller; 12 members of the public.

**1. Apologies for absence:**

Cllrs Rawlins and Ward.

**2. Declaration of interests**

JH declared an interest in all planning applications.

**3. Minutes of the last meeting**

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

**4. Matters arising**

None.

**5. Public session for items related to this Agenda**

None.

**6. To receive the following reports:**

**6.1 Chairman's Report (CT)**

*Littlestock Brook woody dams:* CT confirmed specifications of works have been amended to exclude Mr & Mrs Fox property. Works to commence on 13/03/17. Notices to alert public will be erected. Clerk to inform Farmer Coombes. Welfare Trust allotment holders to be informed (CT to liaise with John Naish).

*Wychwoods Together:* Milton PC hosted evening with Shipton and Ascott PC to discuss issues of common interest including transport, emergency planning, Neighbourhood planning and anti-social behaviour. Shipton will host the next meeting in 6 months time.

*Overhanging cemetery trees:* SSE work on trees will take place in stages in a long stretch between Milton Cemetery and Bledington.

*Church wall and footpath:* Wall rebuild cost and level of Diocesan permission will depend on whether foundations need to be excavated and relaid or just demolished and rebuilt. Footpath has been gritted which is thought to be an adequate intermediate measure.

**6.2 District Councillor Report (JH)**

*Planning:* JH informed the PC that he has learned that The Hare landlord has no interest in purchasing the land currently being used for parking in the event that it was offered for sale. The current planning application on the site allows for 10 public car parking spaces, with 14 cars estimated as the average number of customers' cars parking at the pub's busiest times.

*One Oxfordshire:* WODC continue to seek feedback from the public on the current reorganisation of local Council structures. They consider that low council tax and free parking would be the main casualties were a unitary system to take its' place. Both the WODC and OCC consultations end at the end of February. CCllr Rose is regrettably undergoing medical treatment but published a report which CT summarised. It detailed the unitary government update, spending cuts being made and a health services consultation underway as well as changes to the carer allowance which will result in less reduction than originally feared. CT to publish the report on the PC noticeboard.

**7. Consideration of village weed control (CT)**

Discussion regarding the merits of having the annual weed control. It was proposed that the PC request the spray should be carried out on the village green as usual and that the village spray should take place

provided that the chemicals used are effective in both wet and dry conditions. Vote taken. All in favour, vote carried.

### **8. To approve contract for internal auditor (JP/CT)**

A company specialising in local government audit has been researched for this year's internal audit and Clerk and Finance Committee are happy with scope of work and the references gathered. Proposal made to proceed with hiring of Philip Hood of Arrow Accounting for 2016-17 with proposal to retain for 2017-18 if the PC are satisfied with work carried out. Vote taken. All in favour, motion carried.

### **9. Neighbourhood Plan update (PY)**

PY gave a comprehensive update on the current situation. The designated area covered by the Plan has been submitted to the WODC. Planning Committee will meet shortly with Community First at no cost for an initial consultation. Surveys will be delivered to every household in the Parish with the next newsletter. The Planning Committee will be joined by a new resident who has volunteered to help with the Plan having had experience of such applications and knowledge which will aid the process. JH suggested making contact with another local Council known to him who completed a plan without the need for a consultant, thereby making huge savings.

### **10. Risk assessment update**

Clerk briefly explained the difference between a risk assessment and a risk register, which is required for the internal audit and which is much broader and more onerous. This will be the first of its' kind in the PC and will take some time to put together. Exemplar registers from other PCs will be used to inform development of our own register and the Clerk would appreciate the support and involvement of all Councillors who feel able to help.

### **11. The role of the Clerk (CT/JP)**

CT and JP have reviewed Clerk/RFO's job description in consultation with Clerk and this will now be reviewed by the HR advisor at OALC who will then advise on recommended salary. CT proposed that Clerk's monthly hours be increased from 26 to 32 from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017. Vote taken, all in favour.

### **12. Tree survey update (CT)**

At least one Lime tree on the Village Green has recently dropped a branch and it has been suggested that a survey be undertaken to assess whether remedial work is required. CT to advise on which trees are of concern and quotes are to be sought. It was suggested that a maintenance diary be kept to avoid duplicating unnecessary maintenance surveys before required.

### **13. Dog waste (CT/JP)**

#### **13.1 Proposal to support the dog waste watch with purchase of biodegradable spray paint**

CT to confirm with M.Gibbs that Clerk may order cans of biodegradable paint to support the NAG dog poo patrol.

#### **13.2 Discussion of dog waste bin provision**

CT has made an audit of dog waste bins around the village. There are 8 in total, the majority being on the village green. JP estimated the annual costs of installing 4 more bins will be around £600. Discussion followed regarding merits of installing more bins but it was concluded that more bins may not equate to less waste on pavements so therefore is not a worthwhile project.

### **14. Planning**

Please refer to [www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning](http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning) for further details of the following applications.

The following planning application was considered:

17/00198/HHD *Dougen, Frog Lane, single storey rear extension to garage (16/02/17). No objection*

The Planning Committee were requested to disseminate planning application decisions made by WODC.

## 15. Village Green

It was reported that water logged areas of the new play area which were problematic last year have not been a significant problem this year even after heavy rain. The missing railing will be replaced shortly.

## 16. Correspondence

All correspondence has been received and read by the PC.

*Memorial:* A memorial inscription satisfying the cemetery regulations has been approved on behalf of the PC by the Clerk.

*Robert Courts MP:* Clerk will contact Mr Courts office to suggest a time for an informal meeting with the PC. Venue to be decided once date is established.

*Wychwood Magazine:* JP to write the next PC entry for the magazine.

## 17. Donations under sec 137: Proposal to make a donation to the Wychwood Youth Club (JP)

Following information from the Youth Club treasurer and youth worker, the PC feel that the youth club has a healthy bank balance and require organisation support rather than financial. Given their current financial circumstances, the PC cannot justify a donation at this time. Clerk to inform the treasurer.

## 18. Accounts

Bank balance as of 31<sup>st</sup> January 2017: £91,257.21

### 18.1 To approve the payments out and to sign cheques

The following items of expenditure were approved and the cheques were signed.

|                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Wychwoods Together refreshments | 62.00         |
| Length person materials         | 7.02          |
| Clerk salary                    | 412.86        |
| Photocopying                    | 6.30          |
| Stamps                          | 55.00         |
| Length person salary            | 152.60        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                    | <b>695.78</b> |

The following items of income were noted:

|  |               |
|--|---------------|
| Pizza van rent   | 25.00         |
| Allotment rent   | 18.00         |
| Half of allotment taps repair & mower from Welfare Trust | 294.90        |
| Cemetery   | 150.00        |
| Refund for missed Cllr course                            | 65.00         |
| Fish & chip van rent Sept-Dec                            | 100.00        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>652.90</b> |

### 18.2 To sign Jan-Feb bank statements

Bank statements were examined and signed by CT.

### 18.3 To approve the draft annual budget 2017-18 (JP)

JP explained the significant changes to 2017-18 budget from that of 2016-17. JP proposed that the PC accept the draft budget and adjustments to the 3 year rolling plan. Vote taken, all in favour.

## 19. Public session

*The Hare parking:* 17 cars observed in vicinity at peak times, some parking dangerously on the bend.

*Abandoned bikes on the Green:* Query as whether bikes had been removed and scrapped. PC wasn't sure.

*Dog poo patrol:* Suggestion of placing warning/fine signs to deter culprits.

*Anti-social behaviour:* Query about installing CCTV cameras. It was deemed too complicated due to legal ramifications of such intervention.

*Church Road drains:* It is believed they have been repaired.

*Church wall:* Request that the PC ensures that any work on the church wall is carried out thoroughly with particular attention to adequate foundations, type of stones used and that references for potential contractors are sought to avoid the repeat of the problem and to determine cause of the subsidence.

*Village Green trees:* Query as to whether Limes need to be pollarded.

*The Paddocks exit:* It was noted that the hedges either side of the exit prevent clear turning out of the complex.

## **20. AOB.**

*Website:* Website is complete and will go 'live' shortly once all information has been uploaded. PY will circulate a link to PC.

*Emergency Plan:* JP informed PC that Wrights funeral directors have agreed to act as a temporary mortuary if required. In the event of a catastrophe, and on the advice of local expert, temporary accommodation will be managed by means of a reciprocal agreement with Shipton and hopefully Ascott PCs. JH to check Village Hall Committee are happy to lend their support to this.

*Badger sets survey:* JH to investigate whether results have been collected.

*Flood level monitor at The Heath:* JP to add to Emergency Plan as source of information/alert as to potential flooding.

*WODC waste collection:* Praise given for speedy removal of dumped tyres on Fifield Road subsequent to a report.

Chairman closed the meeting at 9.13pm.