

# MILTON ABBOT GROUPED PARISH COUNCIL

(Parishes of Milton Abbot, Chillaton, Dunterton and Bradstone)

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## To all Members of the Council

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the Milton Abbot Grouped Parish Council to be held at **7.30pm on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2014 at Marystow Church Hall** for the purpose of transacting the business set out below.

H.J. Asbridge, Acting Clerk to the Council

Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2014

## A G E N D A

### Part 1

1. **Open Session – Members of the Public may speak regarding parish matters**
2. **Apologies for Absence**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Confirmation of Minutes - Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2014**
5. **Progress Reports**

To review any developments since the last meeting, regarding the following matters:

Proposed Wind Turbine at Beckwell Farm – outcome of Appeal, if known.

Proposed Wind Turbine at Cardwell Farm – current position.

### 6. **Parish Clerk's report on urgent decisions since the last meeting.**

EIA Cardwell Farm: The Parish Council's views on the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment were requested by WDBC, by 26<sup>th</sup> August. Because there was no meeting of the Parish Council scheduled before that date, the Parish Clerk took action in accordance with the Parish Council's urgency procedure, to submit the statement attached at **Appendix A**, with the concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

TAP Fund application for Vehicle Activated Signs: See item 8. below.

Application 00844/2014 - Erection of four industrial units at Hayedown

An application had been made to provide four more industrial units at Hayedown industrial estate, but no information was available, other than the size of the development [375 sq metres] and the Use Classes applied for. They were for industrial use, including uses not allowed in residential areas, plus storage and distribution.

Although these uses were appropriate for the Hayedown estate, there was no reference in the application to any constraint on the number of HGV journeys that this development would be allowed to generate.

As nearby villages already had a significant number of HGVs travelling through them, the Parish Clerk sought the concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair to discuss this issue with the Highway Authority and if no suitable constraint was forthcoming, to object to the proposal on that basis and also to seek Section 106 funding to offset the adverse effects of additional HGV traffic in the villages concerned.

No constraints were applied by the Highway Authority and therefore an objection was made on behalf of the Parish Council, as follows:

*The Parish Council supports the operation of the industrial estate at the Hayedown site, because it is a potential source of local employment. However, the lack of a road network suitable for HGVs in directions other than Tavistock and the effect that has on road safety and the environment in nearby villages, is a matter of concern.*

*This application contains no information as to the scale of activities proposed, or their nature, apart from the Use Classes involved. No constraint is offered by the applicant that would provide some means of control over the number of HGV journeys through Chillaton and Milton Abbot to be generated by this development.*

*Therefore the Parish Council objects to the granting of planning permission, unless an appropriate limit is set on the annual tonnage of material to be delivered to this development, together with a requirement for an adequate monitoring system to demonstrate compliance. Also, the hours of operation proposed are excessive and should be restricted to 7am to 7pm.*

*If this is an application where a Section 106 Agreement would be appropriate, then consideration should be given to a requirement to fund works to enhance the safety of pedestrians on roads likely to be affected by the proposed development.*

## **7. Consideration of planning applications**

### Application 00797/2014 Dunterton Farm, Dunterton

This application fell to be determined by the Dunterton Planning Sub Committee. Cllr Gradidge had declared an interest in this application and in accordance with Standing Orders, it was necessary for either the Chair or Vice-Chair to join with Cllr Pahlsson in determining the Parish Council's views thereon. The Vice-Chair agreed to act in that capacity and the following decision was submitted to WDBC, as the Parish Council's views:

*The Parish Council approve of the application as it would enhance the current state of the property situated in an AONB location, based on a Conditional Planning Consent where the following points are taken in to consideration:*

*1-The drawings presented by the applicant should clearly mark his property boundaries. The main building (as shown on the map) does not belong to the applicant.*

*2-Regarding the intended use, it is stated in Clause 23 of the application "not known at the time of the application". Due to the history of applications made for this property, the use of the building should be strictly conditional (as we believe is the case at the moment).*

3-There is a window on the applicants drawing directly at the boundary to one neighbour (residential bungalow), which should have obscured glazing. As there are likely to be cattle on that part of the land of the adjacent property, such window should be secure and be opened inwards.

4-There are building works currently taking place on the property. This should be investigated.

In this particular case, we recommend that the planning officer in charge should visit the site prior to any planning decision.

## **8. TAP Fund application – Purchase of VAS for Chillaton and Lifton.**

Lifton Parish Council considered this Parish Council's request to make a joint application to the Town and Parishes [TAP] Fund to pay for the clearance of neglected areas of highway and pavements, blocked gullies and drains, etc, so that they can then be brought back into regular cleaning/maintenance cycles in future.

Lifton Parish Council considered instead that it would be preferable to make a joint application for funding to enable the purchase of Vehicle Activated Signs [VAS] to deter motorists, travelling along the route from Tavistock to Launceston, from speeding in Chillaton and Lifton.

As the Highway Authority had agreed that two VAS were appropriate in Chillaton, the Parish Clerk then sought the concurrence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, in accordance with the Council's procedures for urgent action, to make the necessary application for funding and this was obtained.

It was necessary to take urgent action because the deadline for the submission of applications is the 4<sup>th</sup> September and there would have been insufficient time, after this meeting, to prepare the necessary documentation and agree it with Lifton Parish Council.

Each VAS sign costs £3,200 plus VAT. The Parish Council has previously earmarked £3,000 from its reserves for the purchase of a VAS for Chillaton and it is suggested that this be increased to £3,200 on the basis that the VAT will be recovered.

## **9. Neighbourhood Plan – update.**

The application to designate the Neighbourhood Plan area has been publicised by the Borough Council and will be considered early in October. The grant requested to fund the initial stages of the work of the Steering Group was approved in full and work on the website has now started.

Attached at **Appendix B** is a draft leaflet to be printed and delivered to every household in the plan area. The Parish Council is requested to approve the leaflet for publication.

Because the plan area has no central focus, like Lifton for example, it is not possible to come up with a name for the steering group or a 'brand' for the plan that represents the whole area. As the initial letters of Milton Abbot, Chillaton and Kelly produce an acronym that is at least pronounceable, a MACKPlan logo has been produced, with the word 'Plan' outlined in dotted lines to indicate uncertainty at this stage as to what it will contain. A sample letterhead is attached at **Appendix C** and the Parish Council is requested to approve this approach, which will then be worked on by a graphic designer, paid for with grant aid.

At the time of preparing this agenda, no Milton Abbot parish councillor had agreed to join the MACKPlan team. It has therefore not been possible to appoint a Chair of the team, nor to identify a suitable date for a public meeting in September. The Parish Council is requested to appoint a third

councillor to the team and decide on a suitable date for the public meeting to launch the plan process and to invite members of the public to join the team.

## **10. Localism Act 2011 – Identification of community assets**

Recent reports in the national press have stated that, on average, 31 pubs go out of business each week in the UK. Pubs, and other facilities such as public halls, make a great contribution to the quality of village life and this was recognised in the Localism Act 2011.

That legislation enables parish councils to nominate facilities that they regard as ‘assets of community value’. If they meet the criteria, then the Borough Council will list them and they will remain registered for five years. There are exemptions from this process and landowners can appeal against listing. Since the Act came into effect, there have been a considerable number of community assets listed.

If a listed community asset is put up for sale, there is an initial moratorium of six weeks within which the community has to decide if it wants to make an offer. If it does decide to do so, there is a further period of six months for the community to prepare and submit its bid. The owner of the asset is under no obligation to accept an offer from the community, even if it was the highest received.

The aim of this legislation is to prevent a ‘sold’ notice being the first indication that a local facility is to close and to provide a realistic opportunity for a community to try to organise funds for its purchase, if it so wished.

The sort of facilities that could be covered by the ‘Community right to bid’ include village shops, pubs, community centres, village halls, sports grounds and parks. Property owned by the Church is not included.

Obvious candidates within the parish would be Milton Abbot Village Hall and the pubs in Milton Abbot and Chillaton. There may well be others.

The Parish Council is requested to consider what action it wishes to take.

## **11. Traffic issues - Felldownhead Road**

Cllr Pahlsson has been in correspondence with DCC Highways regarding the excessive speed of vehicles on Felldownhead Road, where several properties have been damaged in ‘hit and run’ accidents and there is the potential for further accidents involving serious injury.

Although driver behaviour has improved since 30 mph signs were erected, Cllr Pahlsson considers that the solution to the problem of drivers using this route as a rat run, would be to erect ‘Local Access Only’ signs at appropriate locations.

DCC Highways’ view is that, as this road is actually a through road, the local drivers who are the main users of it would not be deterred by such signs. They also state that there are no ‘Local Access Only’ signs in the Traffic Signs Regulations and so they could not be approved.

Although the County Council does not routinely place out verge marker posts any more they would have no objection to residents providing them should they so wish. The posts would have to be kept back a minimum of 450mm from the edge of the highway and be of an approved type. DCC recommend ‘Glasdon Vergemaster’ which complies with the Traffic Signs Regulations.

Highways feel that recent road works may have made the problem temporarily worse and recommend that the Police be contacted to carry out speed enforcement in this area.

The Parish Council is requested to consider what action it wishes to take.

## **12. Vodafone Rural Open Sure Signal programme**

Following a successful trial, Vodafone is inviting applications from rural communities, with poor or non-existent mobile phone reception, to join their signal booster programme. Called Rural Open Sure Signal, it provides 3G mobile phone reception from several units mounted vertically on chimney breasts, poles or walls. Each unit is 38cm tall, 26cm wide, 6cm deep and weighs at least 2kg. There is a choice of coloured covers to help them blend into their surroundings. The electricity used by each unit is estimated to cost £30 per year.

The service is open to all Vodafone users at no additional cost to their normal charge for mobile usage. It is not available to subscribers to other mobile networks. Therefore those residents currently not with Vodafone, who wanted to use the service, would have to change supplier when their current contracts expire.

100 villages will be able to join the programme and applications have to be made by the 14<sup>th</sup> October. To apply, a village must have nominated a Village Champion, who will lead the process, have at least 4Mbps broadband and permission from property owners to have units installed on their premises. Applications also have to be supported by the local parish council and the local MP.

A local resident in Chillaton has volunteered to be the village champion and, using the village email network, has already found six homeowners willing to have units installed. As it happens, the distribution of those residents around the village is such that a good level of coverage should be achieved. Broadband speeds in Chillaton are at least 6Mbps. There is also a good level of support from villagers who do not necessarily want a unit on their property.

Chillaton has no reliable mobile signal that is receivable indoors and only a few higher areas in the open where a weak signal can be obtained. This has serious implications for businesses and tourists as well as local residents. Visitors to the village who do not have access to a landline are particularly at risk in an emergency. WDBC's IT based strategy, where officers off-site use networked laptops, will have difficulty in working effectively in Chillaton.

Those currently working on the project consider that householders who have benefitted the village by having units on their homes, should not have to bear the cost of supplying the electricity needed to run them. Rather than try to establish the exact cost of the power consumed by each individual unit, it is felt more practicable to pay an annual fee of £30 to each resident concerned.

The Parish Council has been asked to support this application. If it does so, it also needs to consider whether, if the application was successful, it should fund the annual cost of the units, which could range from £180 to £300, depending on the number needed. Alternatively, it could act as a guarantor for any costs not either waived by the residents concerned [as one has already agreed to do] or not covered by village fund-raising events. Or, it could limit its involvement to simply supporting the application.

The Parish Council is requested to consider what action it wishes to take.

## **13. Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014**

Advice has been received from DALC that Parish Councils may need to amend their Standing Orders to reflect changes in the law regarding the ability of the public to access documents, attend meetings and record and report what takes place.

As previously, all meetings of the Parish Council are open to the public unless it would be prejudicial to the public interest to do so. Examples of that would include the conduct of employees, negotiations of contracts, terms of tender or the early stages of a legal dispute.

The public now have the right, without notice, to record meetings of the Parish Council and to provide reports of those proceedings on social media.

In addition to notices of meetings, any written material to be considered by the Parish Council should be displayed on its website, if it has one. Currently, only the Agenda paper is placed on the Chillaton website.

Decisions taken by the Parish Clerk that are not routine, i.e. those that have been specifically authorised by the Parish Council must be recorded and kept for six years. We already have a procedure whereby decisions taken by the Parish Clerk under the Parish Council's urgency procedure, are reported at the next meeting.

DALC have provided suggested amendments to Parish Councils' standing orders, but as we have no prohibition on recording meetings and already comply with most other aspects of these changes, it is recommended that any necessary changes to Standing Orders be deferred until they can be included in an overall review.

The Parish Clerk will now publish all relevant papers on the Chillaton website.

#### **14. Payments due**

In accordance with Standing orders, the Parish Clerk will seek authorisation at the meeting for any outstanding payments to creditors, to be made by the Parish Council.

#### **15. Councillors' reports and items for future agenda**

Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. Councillors are respectfully reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.