

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MILTON ABBOT GROUPED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1st JULY 2015 AT MILTON ABBOT VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM.

(also available at www.chillaton.net)

PRESENT: Cllrs J. Anderson (MA), H. Asbridge (C) (Acting Clerk), R Brewer (C), A. Cox (MA), P. Hough (MA) (Chair), M. Pahlsson (B) and A. Westcott (C)

Cllrs Bob Baldwin and Chris Edmonds (WDBC)

46:15/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs C. Beighton (C), R. Tucker (MA)

47:15/16 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 14th May and 10th June 2015 **were agreed** as a true record and signed by the Chair.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27th May 2015 **were agreed** as a true record and signed by the Chair, subject to the following amendment, as shown by the word in italics:

Having considered the issues referred to above and the fact that, at the conclusion of the opportunity for members of the public to speak about the application, the majority were not in favour of it being approved, the Parish Council agreed to object to the granting of retrospective planning permission for the *non-agricultural* development concerned, on the following grounds:

48:15/16 CO-OPTION OF Mr ANDREW COX

The Parish Council unanimously agreed that Mr Andrew Cox should be co-opted to the vacancy for a parish councillor for Milton Abbot. Having completed his declaration of acceptance of office, Cllr Cox was welcomed to the meeting.

49:15/16 PROGRESS REPORTS

The current position regarding the following issues was noted:

Grants to PCCs for burial ground maintenance: A further report would be made to the next meeting.

Traffic issues - Felldownhead Road: Further concerns had been raised regarding the safety of children using the school bus and Cllr Pahlsson would be raising this with the Police and the School.

MACKPlan: Attendance at a local fete had been successful with positive feedback from members of the public. Progress on the plan was falling behind schedule due to the pressure of other work on the Acting Clerk.

Application 00452/2015 Bennett's Barn Milton Abbot – The current position regarding the current application for retrospective planning permission for change of use, etc was noted.

NOTE: The question of inter-agency co-operation raised in connection with this planning application will now be brought to the attention of the Borough Council at the meeting being held on 1st September to consider, amongst other issues, the planning process.

50:15/16 PROTECTING THE LOCAL LANDSCAPE

At the last meeting, the Acting Clerk had been requested to establish the current status of Areas of Great Landscape Value [AGLVs], following the discovery that they were still in use in Cornwall, despite the Lyd and Lew Valley AGLV having been withdrawn by the current Local Plan.

The Parish Council had already objected to the draft of the new Local Plan 'Our Plan', because it did not contain provision for the implementation of Landscape Sensitivity Assessments [LSAs]. That objection had been made in view of local residents' concerns over the effect on the local landscape of increasing numbers of wind turbines.

The Parish Council considered that there was a need to review the effect of the removal of AGLV status and, if possible, to develop a shared understanding by the relevant agencies of the value of the landscape in the Lyd and Lew Valleys, that might then lead to a new level of formal protection.

Although the Parish Council would pursue its objections to Our Plan, if necessary, it would be preferable to establish a dialogue that might lead to agreement on a range of objectives; some aimed at protecting the natural qualities of the area, others at encouraging the appropriate residential and business development needed to sustain local communities. It should then be possible to identify either a statutory status that reflected the outcome of that dialogue, or a mix of policies and processes [such as LSAs] that could be given effect by their inclusion in Our Plan.

The Parish Council therefore agreed that other parish councils in the area of the Lyd and Lew valleys should be asked if they would support such an approach being made to the Borough Council.

51:15/16 PROFORMA FOR PLANNING ADVISORY PANELS

It was agreed that:

- i) the standard form to be used by Planning Advisory Panels, as set out on the agenda, be approved
- ii) that Cllrs Asbridge, Hough and Pahlsson be responsible for ensuring that their respective Advisory Panels reported to the Clerk by the due date set for each application considered.

52:15/16 PAYMENTS DUE

It was agreed that payments be made to the Council's creditors as set out in Appendix A to the agenda.

53:15/16 ACCOUNTS – QUARTERLY REPORTS

It was noted that although Appendix A to the agenda gave details of expenditure to date, it had not been possible to reconcile this to the Council's bank account because no statements had been received since the last quarterly report. Cllr Westcott undertook to rectify this and arrange for monthly statements in future.

54:15/16 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the press and public should be excluded from the remainder of the meeting because the public consideration of the confidential and sensitive information concerned would be prejudicial to the public interest.

55:15/16 RECRUITMENT OF PARISH CLERK

The Acting Clerk reported on the outcome of the recent advertisement of the vacancy for a Parish Clerk. Although there had been some interest, **the Parish Council agreed** that an insufficient number of potential candidates had come forward to make it possible to proceed to a viable interview process.

It was also apparent that, although there were significant variations between parish councils in the hours worked and rates of pay offered, the salary attached to this post did not appear to be competitive.

If the salary of the Parish Clerk was based on the National Joint Council for Local Government Services [NJC] salary scale for part-time clerks, it would then be on the same basis as that used by many other parish councils. It should then remain competitive through the ability to offer progression up the salary scale [subject to performance review] and by the application of national pay awards for such employees.

Personnel management would also be simpler and more robust, if the Parish Clerk was paid on the NJC scale and employed on terms and conditions that were based on the model contract and terms of reference provided by the National Association of Local Councils [NALC].

However, additional costs would arise from any decision to move to the NJC scale and to adopt the terms and conditions based on the NALC contract and they needed careful consideration by the Parish Council. Furthermore, the Acting Clerk was unable to confirm the exact amount of the Council's reserves, until the latest bank statements had been received.

Nevertheless, it did appear that the Council's revenue budget, based on the current level of precept, would be sufficient to fund the appointment of a Parish Clerk on the NJC scale, although that would not allow the recruitment of someone to the upper points on the scale.

The Council's reserves, which would be supplemented in 2015/16 by at least £800 because the Acting Clerk was unpaid, were more than sufficient to accommodate any one-off costs associated with the establishment of a new post-holder. However, those reserves could not be used to sustain any on-going deficit on the Council's revenue budget. Any such shortfall would have to be financed by an increase in the Parish Council's precept.

Because of the amount of developmental work undertaken by the Acting Clerk, it was difficult to use his experience to determine the hours needed by a post-holder carrying out only the normal functions of a parish clerk. However, taking into account the frequency of Council meetings and the hours paid by some other parish councils, **the Parish Council agreed in principle** to adopt the relevant NJC pay scale and base the job description and contract of employment on those provided by NALC.

The Parish Council also agreed:

i) To set the hours of work of the Parish Clerk at four per week, on the basis that this is regarded as an average and that claims for overtime payment will only be considered if they are in respect of specific pieces of work that are agreed in advance.

ii) To approve a revised budget for 2015/16, as set out below.

iii) To authorise a re-advertisement of the vacancy on village notice boards, parish magazines and the DALC and the Chillaton websites, together with a re-invitation to parish clerks, on the basis that the post will be for four hours a week and the salary will be based on the NJC scale for parish clerks starting at SCP 15 [£8.62 p.h.]

iv) To establish a standing committee called the Personnel Committee, comprised of Cllrs Anderson, Hough [Chair] and Westcott, the terms of reference of which are to approve the salary scale, job description and draft contract of the Parish Clerk, providing that the overall on-going costs can be found from within the existing standard revenue budget; one-off costs being met from reserves.

iv) To establish an appointments panel comprised of Cllrs Asbridge [Chair], Hough and Westcott to approve a shortlist, interview candidates and make an appointment to this vacancy as soon as possible.

Revised budget 2015/16

Expenditure	2015/2016
	Budget £
Grass Cutting	£608.00
Insurance	£190.13
Graveyard Upkeep	
Bradstone/Kelly	£100.00
Dunterton	£175.00
Marystowe	£315.00
Milton Abbot	£315.00
Village Hall Hire	
Milton Abbot	£109.50
Marystowe Church Hall	£45.00
Clerk's Salary **	£1,095.52
Clerk's Expenses & Overtime	£50.00
Payroll	£40.00
Other Expenditure	
Kelly Village Hall	£50.00
Bank Charges	n/a
Tavistock Times	£0.00
DALC	£162.71
MACKPlan	£0.00
Total	£3,255.86

Income	2015/2016
	Budget £
Precept	£4,085.00
Burial Grant	n/a
Bank Interest	£1.00
Total Income	£4,086.00
Net Income	£830.14

Actual expenditure

** Assumes 7/12th of new rate is paid in 2015/16