

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF MILTON ABBOT GROUPED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5TH OCTOBER 2016, 7.30PM AT MARYSTOWE CHURCH HALL
(also available at www.magpc.co.uk)

PRESENT: Cllr's Hough (MA) (Chair), H Asbridge (C), M Pahlsson (C), R Brewer (C), C Beighton (C), A Westcott (C), J Holland (D)

Mrs E James (Clerk), Cllr B Baldwin (WDBC) and 5 members of the public

67:16/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs R Tucker (MA) A Cox (MA) J Anderson (MA), and Cllr C Edmonds (WDBC)

68:16/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

69:16/17 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7th September 2016 were **agreed** as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

70:16/17 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

None

71:16/17 COUNCILLOR VACANCY (DUNTERTON)

Mr James Holland, who had expressed an interest in becoming a Cllr, was co-opted onto the Council following a unanimous vote and the Declaration of Acceptance of Office was signed.

72:16/17 PLANNING

2592/16/FUL Braemer House, Chillaton

Consideration was given to an application for planning permission to build a three-bedroomed detached house on land adjacent to Braemer House, Chillaton. The applicant had previously been a long-standing resident, who wished to return to the village with his family and construct a dwelling for his own use.

Previous applications for the provision of more than one house and a new access to the Chillaton–Lifton road had been refused; the current proposal would use an existing road access.

Concerns were expressed by residents of two nearby properties regarding their inability to determine the likely impact of the proposed development, because of the lack of the necessary information in the planning application made to WDBC.

The Parish Council noted that this proposal was outside the settlement area of the village and that such developments would only be likely to be approved if there was a local housing need that would be met by doing so and if the building was of an appropriate scale and did not detract from its immediate surroundings.

In order for the Parish Council to properly evaluate this proposal and for the residents concerned to determine whether or not it was acceptable to them, the applicant was requested to provide further information regarding:

1. The relative height of the proposed building compared with the height of nearby buildings, including those in Marlow Crescent, together with the height of the existing tree screens bounding the development site.
2. Revised exterior finishes to the building to reflect the character of those properties on either side.

The applicant was also requested to review the submitted ecological study with the consultant concerned, to determine if it should be revised to take account of the presence of roosting/nesting barn owls and the potential for dormice to be present in the area where hazel trees grew. **

The Parish Clerk was asked to seek a deferment of the determination of this application by WDBC, in order that further consideration could be given to the proposed development, at its next meeting.

** although not discussed at the meeting, that review should also establish if Japanese Knotweed is present on or adjacent to the site of the proposed development.

Action: Clerk

Decisions

2168/16/HHO Cllr's noted the refusal.

73:16/17 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Members of the public asked to speak at this point which was allowed and the following was discussed:

1. MABRAKE Tamar Valley AONB boundary variation proposal; the speaker advised that consultation with parish council's within the proposed new boundary was the first step in the process and that to date four of the parish councils had responded positively.
2. Graystone Quarry proposed extension. A planning application is expected to be submitted imminently.
3. Neighbourhood Plan (MACKPlan); the status of the plan was queried and Cllr Asbridge advised that progression of the plan had slowed due to the new Joint Location Plan which had taken over from WDBC's Our Plan, but that it would be progressed once further details of this had been confirmed.

74:16/17 COUNCIL TAX REFERENDUM PRINCIPLES - CONSULTATION

This item was brought forward to allow Cllr Baldwin to comment.

The government was concerned about the high percentage increases imposed by some parish councils and were considering capping town and parish council precept requests. This would probably only affect those 'higher-spending' councils, 'higher-spending' having been defined as those having a precept of over £500,000 or £75.46 per Band D property.

It was **agreed** that the Council respond to the relevant questions as below;

1. Do you agree with the proposed approach to take account of the transfer of responsibilities to town and parish councils as outlined in paragraph 3.3.5?

3.3.5 In doing this, the Government wishes to ensure that parishes continue to have the flexibility to take on responsibilities from other tiers of local government without being unduly constrained by council tax referendum principles. It is therefore proposed that parishes will not be in the category to which the referendum principle 14 applies where there has been a transfer of responsibilities, and where three conditions are satisfied:

- i. the parish council and a principal council covering the area of the parish council have each resolved that a particular function carried out by the principal council in relation to the parish council's area in the financial year 2016-17 is to be carried out instead by the parish council in the financial year 2017-18
- ii. the parish council and the principal council have agreed the reasonable cost of the exercise of that particular function in the parish council's area by the parish council in the financial year 2017-18
- iii. that the agreed cost, if collected by way of the parish council precept, would take the parish council over the threshold of a 2% or £5 increase on the previous year.

Such a proposal would severely impact upon councils with a small precept. Often the precept is the only possible source of income, other than grants for specific projects or donations, for small Councils. However, if managed correctly, this proposal could work reasonably well depending upon further future restrictions that could be imposed.

2. Do you agree with the suggestion that referendum principles may be extended to all local precepting authorities as set out in paragraph 3.3.6? If so what level of principle should be set?

3.3.6 A large proportion of parishes are modest in size – for example, around 4,000 parishes have precepts of £25 or less. However, the Government is aware that increases in these precepts continue to concern local tax payers and is therefore prepared to consider extending referendums to all parishes.

In 2016/17 the Council increased the precept by 9%. Although this seems to be a large increase it only amounted to an increase of £0.81p, to £12.13 for the year on a Band D property, raising the total precept income by £347, to £4,248.

The Council Tax Support grant of £163 is likely to be reduced further in the next financial year, this year's reduction being 11.2%. Any such reduction will have to be counteracted by increasing the precept.

The proposed restriction of 2% or £5 whichever is the higher, would not cause the Council undue issues as a much larger % increase would be needed to reach the higher figure of a £5 increase on a Band D property.

The precept is the only source of income for many Councils and any control measures imposed must be proportionate to allow small Council's to continue to operate effectively and manage necessary repairs and maintenance required.

3. Do you have views on the practical implications of a possible extension of referendum principles to all local precepting authorities as set out in paragraph 3.3.7?

3.3.7 We recognise that issues of proportionality, practicality and cost could be raised by such a step, and would welcome views on this.

The cost implications of a referendum for those Councils with small precepts would be debilitating and in themselves cause further need for an increase in precept to cover the cost.

(Cllr Baldwin left the meeting)

75:16/17 PROGRESS REPORTS

Risk Assessment

Following the annual review of the Council's Risk Assessment in May, the remaining action was completed and the passwords were handed to the Chairman.

1. *Carry out a review of the Council's record keeping and produce proposals for the safe and efficient use of computer systems for internal communication and archives, particularly in respect to electronic records.*
 - i) *Main passwords to systems such as the Clerk's email, to be held by the Chairman in case of emergency.*

76:16/17 FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank Reconciliation and Budget

Both the revised bank reconciliation and budget dated 25th September 2016 were **agreed**.

MAGPC Website

Cllr Beighton outlined the annual website costs. It was **agreed** that the domain name fee, £11.99, and backup of the website, £12.95, would be retained but that the security element, at an annual cost of £29.88, would be cancelled for forthcoming years.

Action: Cllr Beighton

Payments

The Parish Council **approved** the following payments;

- a) Reimbursement of £63.39 to Cllr Beighton for the renewal of the magpc.co.uk website and associated costs (BACS)
- b) Payment of £298 to JS Murrain & Sons for grass cutting (Chq No 510)
- c) Payment of £35 to the Information Commissioner for renewal of the data protection registration (Chq No 511)
- d) Reimbursement of £11.60 to Mrs James, Clerk, for the purchase of stamps and phone top-up (BACS)

Action: Cllr's/Clerk

Clerk's pay on 30st September 2016, paid by BACS, was noted:

- Mrs E James - £132.01
- HMRC – £17.20

On-Line Banking

New signatory banking form to be completed by Cllr Hough.

Action: Cllr Hough

77:16/17 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Personnel Committee had met immediately prior to this meeting in order to carry out the Clerk's annual appraisal and salary review. No issues had been raised and Cllrs noted that the National Pay Award announced in May 2016 had been approved and would be backdated to 1st April 2016. In addition the salary scale had been increased from SCP 15 to SCP 16 as of 1st October 2016.

78:16/17 GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT

Quotations for grass cutting for the 2017/18 financial year to be sought by the Clerk for consideration at the next meeting

Action: Clerk

79:16/17 COUNCILLOR TRAINING

Cllr Hough to attend a free Chairmanship course in Tavistock on 30th November 2016.

Action: Cllr Hough/Clerk

80:16/17 SUPER LINK MEETING

As the meeting coincided with the date of the December Parish Council meeting it was agreed no Cllrs would attend.

81:16/17 COUNCILLORS REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Graystone Quarry Expansion proposals - David Orriss to be invited to attend

Action: Clerk

82:16/17 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

2 nd November 2016	Milton Abbot Village Hall
7 th December 2016*	Marystowe Church Hall
4 th January 2017	Marystowe Church Hall
1 st February 2017*	Milton Abbot Village Hall
1 st March 2017	Milton Abbot Village Hall
5 th April 2017*	Marystowe Church Hall
3 rd May 2017	Annual Parish Meeting for Chillaton - Marystowe Church Hall
4 th May 2017 (Thursday)	Annual Parish Meeting for Milton Abbot, Dunterton and Bradstone in Milton Abbot Village Hall followed by the Parish Council Annual and Ordinary meetings

*Note: Meetings dates followed by * are additional meetings which may be cancelled if not required. All meetings are on Wednesdays at 7.30pm unless otherwise specified*

The meeting closed at 9.05pm

Signed:
Cllr Hough, Chairman

Date: