

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF MILTON ABBOT GROUPED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4th October 2017, 7.30PM AT MARYSTOWE CHURCH HALL

(also available at www.magpc.co.uk)

PRESENT: Cllrs, H Asbridge, (Chair), P Hough (MA), R Brewer (C), A Westcott (C), M Pahlsson (B) J Barkwill (C)

(Cllr Representation: C – Chillaton, MA – Milton Abbot, D – Dunterton, B – Bradstone)

Ms S Honey (Clerk), Cllr Edmonds (WDBC), Cllr Baldwin (WDBC)

The Chair welcomed Cllr Barkwill to her first meeting.

079:17/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

James Anderson (MA), Robert Tucker (MA), Andrew Cox (MA), James Holland (D)

080:17/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Asbridge – Parish Council Grants

081:17/18 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6th September 2017 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

082:17/18 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

None.

083:17/18 PLANNING

Noted:

2417/17/HHO

Higher Westcott Road Past Higher Westcott Brentor

Erection of glazed sun room to rear:

DECISION: Conditional Approval

3120/17/VAR

Lamber Hey 12 Venn Hill Milton Abbot PL19 0NY

Variation of conditions 2, 3 of planning consent 01830/2011 to allow erection of glazed extension and link attached garage and utility room with storage above.

The Council **resolved** to make no comment on this application.

084:17/18 PROGRESS REPORTS

Proposed Amalgamation of West Devon and South Hams Councils

At the last meeting, Cllrs Edmonds and Baldwin explained the reasons for considering the formation of a single second-tier council for the West Devon and South Hams districts. Information provided by West Devon on the implications of this proposed merger had already been circulated and Councillors were asked to put together their thoughts on the issue and report at the meeting.

Cllr Pahlsson was concerned because we now deal with West Devon and know people within the organisation. There is a risk that a small parish council might not be noticed or listened to so much in the future. Cllr Edmonds did not agree, as the same officers would be working within the new council.

Cllr Hough felt that to achieve savings of £500,000 from a budget of £17 million would require very careful management and seemed an ambitious target. Cllr Asbridge pointed out that taking an irreversible step to save £0.5m when the problem was a £1.9m deficit, did not seem to make sense.

Both Borough Councillors made it clear that there would be no bail out by the Government and that, with the ending of any financial support, both councils faced severe financial problems and had to consider every potential solution. Unless savings were found, drastic cuts in service would have to be considered. Cllr Barkwill suggested that fly-tipping could increase if waste collections were reduced. This would increase clear up costs.

Cllr Asbridge was concerned that it was likely that South Hams Cllrs would form a significant majority of the new Council and could therefore dictate policy to West Devon, should they so wish. That could be a concern, particularly over the application of planning policy, even though the Joint Local Plan would form a consistent framework across the area covered by the current authorities.

Cllr Baldwin said there had to be an equalisation process and boundary review and that was likely to reduce the number of West Devon Cllrs, because they covered areas with a generally lower population per ward, than those in South Hams.

Cllr Baldwin said that his expectation was that there would be two planning committees; one for each of the areas of the constituent authorities and this was considered by parish cllrs to be a sensible way forward, if that could be achieved.

It was suggested that there could also an opportunity for parish councils to monitor how contracts are delivered but there had been little, or no, engagement with them in the 'One Council' process, so far.

It was agreed that the Borough Council be informed that:

- i) Although MAGPC understands the need to take action to avoid a budget deficit in 2020/21, it has concerns over a proposal that does not deliver a solution to that problem as, in that financial year; it would only make a net contribution of £175,000 towards a combined deficit of £1.9 million.

ii) There is likely to be a disproportionate reduction in the number of West Devon Councillors compared with South Hams, leaving South Hams Councillors with a significant majority [58% to 42%] in the new council. In practical terms, West Devon would therefore be surrendering control over policy decisions to South Hams.

iii) The establishment of planning committees, each covering an area of one constituent authority, with a majority of councillors from the area concerned would be a practical means of allaying any concerns over the potential loss of local influence over planning decisions.

iv) There has, so far, been no engagement with Parish Councils, to see if they could have a more effective role in monitoring service delivery, reporting local concerns and otherwise support those ward councillors who would have significantly larger areas to represent, in a more remote District Council.

Disposal of cardboard

The problem of the disposal of cardboard and green waste had been raised at the last meeting. Cllrs Baldwin stated that if it was small, it could go with the normal recycled paper collection. Larger items could be taken to the local tip, burnt or used for compost.

The change had been made because Devon County Council, whose contractors received green wastes, was no longer able to accept cardboard with garden waste due to a legislative change in the standard of compost produced. Therefore it was suggested that cardboard should be;

1. Taken to a recycling centre
 2. Compost at home (this works best if it is torn up)
 3. Place in residual bag
- When the new recycling vehicles are in use (next spring) they will be able to recycle this material from the kerbside with the rest of the dry recycling - currently vehicles don't have the capacity.

[Cllr Baldwin left the meeting at 8.30pm]

Car Parking Chillaton

It was confirmed that, at the last meeting it had been agreed that, in view of the safer parking space created for the school bus, if a local resident's small car was parked on part of the hatched lines near the bridge in Chillaton, the Highway Authority be asked to consider revising those markings to create an official parking space. The resident concerned would, however, be advised that although the Parish Council was attempting to achieve the best practical outcome, it had to point out that until any changes were introduced, the current parking of a vehicle on the hatched area might constitute a breach of road traffic legislation.

085:17/18 GRANT THORNTON – NOTICE OF CONCLUSION OF AUDIT

A copy of the Notice of Conclusion of Audit had been received from the Auditor, Grant Thornton, and was now ready for completion and subsequent posting to the Parish website. 2016/17 was the last year for which Grant Thornton would audit the accounts.

086:17/18 Parish Council Grants

Cllr Asbridge declared a personal interest in this issue, but reserved the right to speak on it, should he so wish. Cllr Hough then took the chair.

It was decided to defer consideration of this issue until it was known whether further grant aid would be received towards the cost of repairing the churchyard wall at Milton Abbot.

087:17/18 MACKPlan

Questionnaires had been sent to every household in the MACKPlan area and an on-line survey made available to local businesses. 39% of the residential questionnaires were returned and were being analysed. The results would eventually be presented on-line and via e-newsletters.

A Draw prize of £50 had been offered to encourage residents to complete and return the questionnaires; 87 people entered and the winner was drawn at the meeting: Lorna Hewison.

Discussions will be held with West Devon Borough Council over the issues raised and to form some scope for local policies.

088:17/18 COMMUNITY DEFIBRILLATORS

It had been suggested that a defibrillator was obtained and installed in Chillaton. There were special packages for indoor and outdoor use exclusively for communities, parish and town councils.

It was **agreed** that the Clerk be authorised to investigate further and report back with options for the installation of defibrillators in Chillaton and Milton Abbot, for consideration by the Council.

089:17/18 CO-OPERATIVE LOCAL COMMUNITY FUND

The local Co-operative is offering funding for local causes such as playgrounds and life saving equipment. The Parish Council could apply for relevant funding through the Co-op Applications website.

The Council **resolved** to give this further consideration at the next meeting.

090:17/18 OVERGROWN GARDEN HEDGE - MILTON ABBOT

A Milton Abbot resident had neglected to cut their garden hedge which had resulted in difficulties for the refuse lorry on collection day.

Cllr Anderson informed the council (via email) that the hedge had since been cut.

091:17/18 FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank Reconciliation and Budget Monitor

The bank reconciliation and budget monitor, dated 15 September 2017, were reviewed and **approved**.

Payments

Mr C Beighton - £55.05
Mrs E. James - £3.00
Winner from MACplan grant £50

Clerk's pay for September 2017, paid by BACS, was noted.

- Ms S Honey - £170.17

092:17/18 COUNCILLORS REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

3018/17/FUL Planning Application to be discussed

093:17/18 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

1st November 2017 Milton Abbot Village Hall
6th December 2017 Marystowe Church Hall
3rd January 2018 Milton Abbot Village Hall
7th February 2018 Marystowe Church Hall
7th March 2018 Milton Abbot Village Hall
4th April 2018 Marystowe Church Hall
2nd May 2018 (7pm) Annual Parish Meeting for Milton Abbot Dunterton and Bradstone in Milton Abbot Village Hall
3rd May 2018 (Thu) (7pm) Annual Parish Meeting for Chillaton - Marystowe Church Hall followed by the Parish Council Annual and Ordinary meetings
Note: All meetings are on Wednesdays at 7.30pm unless otherwise specified

The meeting closed at 8.57pm

Signed:

Date:

Cllr Asbridge, Chair