

DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF MILTON ABBOT GROUPED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6th JANUARY 2016, 7.30PM AT MARYSTOWE CHURCH HALL

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

PRESENT: Cllrs J Anderson (MA), H Asbridge (C), C Beighton (C), R Brewer (C), A Cox (MA), P Hough (MA) (Chair), M Pahlsson (C), R Tucker (MA)

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

91:15/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr A Westcott (C)

92:15/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Brewer declared a pecuniary interest in Minute 98: 15/16 regarding Kelly Hall

Cllr Asbridge declared a personal interest in Minute 98: 15/16 regarding Marystowe Church Hall

93:15/16 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th November 2015 were **agreed** as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

94:15/16 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Members of the public advised they wish to speak about Felldownhead Road and it was **resolved** to bring this item forward.

95:15/16 PROGRESS REPORTS

Felldownhead Road

Members of the public spoke regarding the use of Felldownhead Road as a 'rat-run' and their additional concerns regarding the amount of traffic likely to be generated as a result of planned roadworks to the B3362, which adjoined Felldownhead Road.

The road was narrow and unsuitable for fast-moving traffic or large vehicles; adjoining property having been damaged by tractors and other vehicles on several occasions. Traffic also appeared to have increased over recent years, probably as a result of the use of satnavs.

Despite considerable effort, Cllr Pahlsson and local residents had been unable to obtain a satisfactory solution from DCC Highways and the situation had been made worse by their failure to reinstate 'Slow' signs after re-surfacing work.

Residents asked the Parish Council to take what action it could, to improve the control of traffic in Felldownhead Road. It was also asked to ensure that adequate measures were taken to divert traffic away from the road during the works to the B3362 and to emphasise the 30mph limit during that time.

It was understood that the 30mph speed limit on Felldownhead Road had been imposed by a Traffic Regulation Order and not as a result of any street lighting creating the circumstances in which such a limit would automatically apply. There did not therefore seem to be any reason to doubt the validity of the 30mph limit, nor for the Police not to take reasonable steps to enforce it.

Cllr Asbridge suggested that the hazards that might be caused by traffic seeking to escape delays on the B3362 during the road works, were likely to be such that a temporary traffic regulation order was appropriate. If that were so and the restriction imposed was to limit the use of the road to vehicles needing access to adjacent premises, then it would act as a trial of a similar, permanent, constraint.

Cllr Baldwin advised that representation be made to Highways by the Parish Council, copying in Cllr Kevin Ball, and that if no satisfactory response was received this should be forwarded to Geoffrey Cox, MP.

(7.53pm – Cllr Beighton arrived)

It was **resolved** that MAGPC would make representations to DCC Highways regarding:

- The need to reinstate the 'Slow' signs and hazard markings on the road which were covered during resurfacing work, together with the replacement of any damaged or missing signs
- The use of adequate advance warnings to drivers to use the official diversion route via Callington, during the works to the B3362
- The need for a temporary traffic regulation order restricting access to Felldownhead Road to adjoining premises only, for the duration of the roadworks.

96:15/16 PLANNING

Application

Planning application 00127/2015, Eastcott Barton, Dunterton had been considered by the Dunterton Planning Appraisal Panel and comment of support had been sent to WDBC by the Clerk, using the delegated power as set out in Minute 51: 15/16 of the 1st July 2015 and approved at that meeting.

Appeals

Proposed Turbine at Ridgecombe Farm, Lifton: It was noted that an appeal had been submitted and due to timescale restrictions the Clerk had resubmitted the Parish Council's previous comments with some additional wording, pointing out that the application did not have the support of the local community.

Stables, Edgecumbe Road, Milton Abbot: Noted that the appeal hearing date had been set for 19th January 2016.

(Members of public left the meeting at 8.05pm)

97:15/16 PROGRESS REPORTS cont.

Parish Council's use of IT

Cllr Beighton reported on progress advising that the Website was now live and information was starting to be added including agenda's and minutes, and that the Clerk had been trained to update the website. The Planning page would eventually contain links to WDBC Planning Department's pages. Cllr Baldwin suggested that WDBC be contacted with regards this due to their future plans to include links for parish councils. Cllr Beighton undertook to do this.

Cllr Brewer stated that he was completely against the provision of a parish council website and wasn't happy for his details to be included. The Transparency Code was discussed, and the requirement for all councils to publish certain information on a website, including the names of Cllr's and their Register of Interests.

The amount of detail and the need for photos to be included was discussed. The fact that not all Cllr's were happy for their photo to be added was noted. It was **resolved** that;

- Photos would be removed
- Council email address be provided for all Cllrs and that any Cllr requiring assistance in setting up their new council email address should seek assistance from Cllr Beighton
- Cllrs could include any other information they felt was acceptable
- A link would be added to the Register of Interests that WDBC hold on their website

It was further **resolved** that as agenda's and associated appendices would be available on the website only the agenda would be emailed to Cllrs along with the relevant website links to any other information. A permanent link to the new website would now be put on the Chillaton website.

A Dropbox account had been created by the Clerk which could be used for large documents. This would be further investigated at a later date.

Retaining Wall, Milton Abbot

Letters outlining the Parish Council's concerns regarding the stability of the wall had been sent to both the Duke of Bedford and the Highways Department. No response had been received to date.

Cllr Anderson had looked at the wall with the Neighbourhood Highways Officer who had not indicated that he saw a need for any action by the Highways Authority, he also suggested contacting WDBC. Cllr Edmonds suggested that Chris Brook at Building Control, be contacted and asked to undertake an investigation if thought necessary.

It was **resolved** that the Clerk chase up responses to the letters and contact Chris Brook.

Snow Warden Scheme

Salt was currently stored in Chillaton with no supplies anywhere in Milton Abbot. The scheme was discussed and it was noted that Snow Wardens would, as at present, receive notification of pending ice/snow, arrange for delivery of salt and coordinate its distribution around the area, for use by residents in public areas. Cllr Cox agreed to take on the role for Milton Abbot with the assistance of Cllr Anderson. Jamie Rutherford had been liaising with Cllr Brewer and had agreed to take on the role for Chillaton. Further volunteers would be requested to assist in this and other areas of the parish.

Chichester Arms, Chillaton

The nomination of Asset of Community Value form had been submitted to WDBC by the Clerk, the result of which would be known by 9th February. Cllr Baldwin had supported the nomination.

Although the building once again seemed to be occupied, it was felt appropriate to ask Building Control to consider if there was a need to review the condition of the building to ensure that there were no grounds for concern as to its structural stability. Cllr Baldwin agreed to approach them for their initial reaction.

Grass Cutting Quotations 2016/17

Quotations had been received for grass cutting of the green in Milton Abbot from two of the four contractors who had been approached, the cheapest being £600 from JS Murrain & Sons, the existing contractor. It was **resolved** to accept this quotation.

98:15/16 FINANCIAL MATTERS

Payments

The Parish Council approved the following payments for which cheques were signed;

- i. JS Murrain & Sons Ltd for £268 for grass cutting and spraying (Chq No 490)

- ii. Mrs James, Clerk's expenses in the sum of £66.98 as reimbursement for registration with the Information Commissioner, as agreed at the meeting held on 4th November 2015, and general expenses. (Chq No 491).
- iii. Reimbursement to Cllr Asbridge for MACKPlan expenses; monthly subscription to SurveyMonkey, pitch hire for the tractor run and the purchase of a banner, totalling £196 (Chq No 493).
- iv. Payment of £1061.40 (Inc VAT) to Stuart Todd Associates for MACKPlan consultants fees and travelling expenses incurred to date (Chq No 492)

Clerk's pay from starting date to the end of November, £303.24 plus HMRC £75.60 (Chq No's 486 and 487), and for December, £119.21 plus HMRC £30 (Chq No's 488 and 489), was noted.

Donation Request from CAB

The Parish Council **resolved** not to provide a donation at that time.

Bank Reconciliation

The bank reconciliation provided by the Clerk was noted. The Clerk explained that when the internet banking facility was activated it would be easier to provide up-to-date reconciliations as at present statements for the two bank accounts were received at three monthly intervals and at different times.

The bank had now changed the contact details to that of the Clerk. The internet banking form for view only access for the Clerk, as resolved at the last meeting of the Parish Council, was signed by Cllrs.

Grants to PCC's and Other Organisations

(The interests previously declared by Cllr's Brewer and Asbridge in this item were noted, and having declared a pecuniary interest Cllr Brewer did not vote on the matter.)

Information received from the PCC's and Kelly Hall regarding the use made of grants from MAGPC was discussed. It had been ascertained by the Clerk that the Parish Council did not have a legal obligation to provide financial support to any of these groups. Following discussion regarding the benefits to the community of maintaining this support and having noted some negative comments received from Cllr Brewer, it was proposed by Cllr Tucker that the Parish Council keep making grants to all the organisations concerned at the current rate.

A vote was taken and it was **resolved** that the Parish Council would continue to make donations to all of the groups at the current rate.

Budget and Precept 2016/17

The draft budget for 2016/17 was discussed and it was noted that a precept increase of 9% would be required to balance expenditure with income, leaving a small anticipated surplus of just £5 at the end of the year.

Because the number of properties liable to the Parish Council's precept had increased, an addition of 9% would have the effect of raising the precept on a Band D property by 7.5%. That would cost each household at a Band D property, an additional 81p per year.

It was proposed that the Parish Council should be looking to at least increase the precept by an amount to cover expenditure and it was **resolved** to increase the precept by 9%. A vote on the proposal resulting in seven for and one against.

99:15/16 AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS

Appointment of Internal Auditor

It was **resolved** that Mr Jamie Rutherford be appointed to undertake the internal audit of the 2015/16 financial records.

Arrangements from 2017/18

The Clerk outlined the new Internal Audit arrangements coming into force from the 2017/18 financial year and the options available to the Parish Council; being that they could opt-in to the scheme and be appointed an internal auditor, or opt-out and source their own auditor. There would also be no external audit required from that date.

The fact that the cost of opting-in was not known and that the Clerk had been informed by DALC that the current arrangements and requirements for the internal audit and auditor, as far as they knew, would not change was discussed.

The benefits of opting-in were that a skilled person appointed by a completely independent body would ensure that the current level of scrutiny by an external auditor continued. The negative being that the cost was currently unknown, even though a decision had to be made by 31st January 2016.

If the Parish Council decided to opt-out and appoint its own auditor, it would have to take that decision at this meeting, in advance of any information as to whether the duties of the auditor would change and the availability of a suitable person to undertake it at no cost, or for a smaller fee than that to be incurred under the new scheme.

It was proposed that the Parish Council opt-into the scheme; a vote was taken, seven in favour and one against. The Parish Council therefore **resolved** to opt-into the scheme.

100:15/16 POLICIES/DOCUMENTS

The Clerk provided some policies and documents which the Parish Council had viewed; a Publication Scheme, Data Protection Policy, Information Security Policy and a Complaints Policy and Procedure. It was **resolved** to adopt all four documents and add them to the website.

101:15/16 TAP FUND - AMENDMENTS

The TAP Fund regulations had been relaxed for any required ditching and drainage work this financial year, collaboration with other Parish Councils not being required. Cllrs knew of no work that was needed.

102:15/16 FOOTPATH, MILTON ABBOT

A member of the public had been in contact with the Clerk regarding the public footpath in Milton Abbot which runs between the B3326 opposite the Church, along a lane meeting another footpath. Information was being sought regarding the status of the footpath. This had been passed to Highways Department.

103:15/16 DEVON AIR AMBULANCE TRUST – COMMUNITY HELIPADS

The Devon Air Ambulance Trust was seeking suitable sites for use as helipads which could be used when extending their flying time into hours of darkness. Suitable lighting as required would be provided.

It was **resolved** that Cllrs provide details of any possible sites to the Clerk for passing on to DAAT.

104:15/16 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

Cllr Asbridge suggested that the Parish Council meetings were generally too long and that the current cycle also made it impossible to bring every relevant planning application to a council meeting for consideration. He suggested that the Parish Council should consider meeting more frequently and it was agreed that this be added to the next agenda for discussion.

105:15/16 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Clerk advised that the Police and Crime Commissioner elections were being held in Milton Abbot Village Hall on 5th May and that the date of the Parish Council meeting would need to be changed. A revised date of Wednesday 18th May 2016 was agreed.

Proposed meeting dates for 2016/17 were circulated and agreed.

Wednesday 2 nd March 2016	Milton Abbot Village Hall
Wednesday 4 th May 2016	Annual Parish Meeting for Chillaton Marystowe Church Hall
<u>Wednesday 18th May 2016</u>	Annual Parish Meeting for Milton Abbot, Dunterton and Bradstone at Milton Abbot Village Hall followed by the AGM and an ordinary Council Meeting.

2016/17

Wednesday 6 th July 2016	Milton Abbot Village Hall
Wednesday 7 th September 2016	Marystowe Church Hall
Wednesday 2 nd November 2016	Milton Abbot Village Hall
Wednesday 4 th January 2017	Marystowe Church Hall
Wednesday 1 st March 2017	Milton Abbot Village Hall
Wednesday 3 rd May 2017	Annual Parish Meeting for Chillaton - Marystowe Church Hall
Thursday 4 th May 2017	Annual Parish Meeting for Milton Abbot, Dunterton and Bradstone - Milton Abbot Village Hall, followed by the Parish Council AGM and an ordinary Council Meeting

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed:
Cllr Hough, Chairman

Date: