

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE MILTON ABBOT GROUPED PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4th NOVEMBER 2015 AT MILTON ABBOT VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM

(also available at www.chillaton.net)

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) A. Westcott (C)

Cllr C. Edmonds (WDBC), Cllr B. Baldwin (WDBC), Mrs E. James (Clerk) and one member of the public

71:15/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

72:15/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

73:15/16 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd September 2015 **were agreed** as a true record and signed by the Chair.

74:15/16 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

The member of public present spoke about the Appeal that had been lodged against the refusal of a retrospective planning application for the Stables, Edgecumbe Road, Milton Abbot. He outlined his concerns, in particular that WDBC now only seemed to be concerned about the business use of the premises rather than the size of the building.

It was resolved to bring forward Item 6 of the agenda for discussion at this point.

75:15/16 PLANNING APPEAL – STABLES, EDGCUMBE ROAD, MILTON ABBOT, DEVON

Previous events surrounding this application were outlined by Cllr Asbridge.

Cllr Baldwin was invited to speak; it was understood that there would be a public hearing, the date of which was not known, and it was also not known who, or how many people, would be permitted to speak at the hearing. The two enforcement notices that had been served were on hold until the outcome of the Appeal had been decided.

Concern was expressed that a business use on the site could not be limited to internet sales and that if the Appeal was allowed the occupant might have no restriction on what business activity could be run from the premises in the future. A change in business use could potentially generate more traffic in and out of the site, as well as an increase in noise levels.

Having considered the issues **the Parish Council agreed** that no new concerns had been raised that the Parish Council could take up with regards to this Appeal and no further representation would be submitted at this time. Interested parties should make their own individual representations to the Planning Inspectorate, before the 12th November 2015, either in writing or through the website;

<https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/CaseSearch.aspx>, Case Reference (last 7 digits) 3131024

(The member of public left the meeting at 8.15pm)

76:15/16 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Planning applications 00950/2015 and 00996/2015 had been considered by the Bradstone Planning Appraisal Panel and comments of support had been sent to WDBC by the Clerk, using the delegated power as set out on the agenda of the 1st July 2015 and approved at that meeting.

77:15/16 FINANCIAL MATTERS

Bank Accounts

In order to prevent the Current Account potentially becoming overdrawn, as had occurred in the past, **the Parish Council agreed** that all receipts should be paid into this account rather than the Reserve Account, and that the Reserve Account would hold contingency funds.

The Parish Council agreed that the Clerk would be the 'bank correspondent'.

Internet banking was considered and **the Parish Council agreed** that on-line banking be set up as outlined below;

- i. The Clerk to be granted 'View Only' access to the accounts and the ability to set up payments and transfers.
- ii. Two of the bank signatories to have access to authorise payments, and that the authorisation of both Councillors would be required to enable any payments or transfers to take place.

Clerk's Pay

Following consideration of both options, the Clerk undertaking the function or outsourcing, **the Parish Council agreed** that Hodgsons Accountants be appointed to process the Clerk's wages at a cost of £120 per year.

Only one quotation had been obtained because Hodgsons Accountants had been recommended by Lifton Parish Council, for whom they also carried out this service, and the cost of an advertisement for the tender of this contract would outweigh the size of the service required.

The Parish Council also agreed that the Clerk would undertake any work regarding Auto-Enrolment for pensions as required by the Pension Regulator in due course.

Clerk's Training

The Parish Council agreed to contribute half of the cost of the Clerk's training and expenses in obtaining the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), the total cost of the course being £250.

VAT Claim

Cllrs noted that a claim for the reimbursement of VAT to the sum of £1,086.79 had been submitted to HMRC by the Clerk.

Payments

Cllr Beighton declared a non-pecuniary interest in item iii.

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

- i. Milton Abbot Village Hall, which settled the account for hire of the hall for Parish Council Meetings to date, apart from the meeting currently in progress, in the sum of £82 (Chq No 483).
- ii. Clerks expenses in the sum of £6.48 (Chq No 484).

- iii. Reimbursement to Cllr Beighton for the purchase of the domain name for a website and emails from HostPapa in the sum of £115.32 (Chq No 485).

Budget

The revised budget, showing a likely spend of £738.33 in excess of income in this financial year, was considered and **approved by the Parish Council**.

A draft budget for the 2016/17 financial year was discussed in depth. Because projected expenditure in 2016/17 would exceed anticipated income by £313.56 it would be necessary either to reduce costs or raise the precept, if the budget was to balance.

It was agreed that the Clerk would contact all organisations receiving an annual grant and establish whether or not there was scope to reduce the Parish Council's support, if that was considered appropriate.

It was also agreed that the Clerk would find out if the Parish Council had a legal obligation to make financial contributions towards the upkeep of burial grounds and report to the next Meeting.

It was anticipated that a Precept increase of 10% would be required in order to meet proposed expenditure. An increase of this size would equate to an amount in the region of 12p per month/£1.40 per year on a Band D property.

The Parish Council agreed to give further consideration to the budget for 2016/17 at its meeting in January 2016, when other figures, such as the amount of Council Tax Support Grant that the Parish Council would receive would be known.

(Cllr Tucker left the meeting at 9pm)

78:15/16 DATA PROTECTION

The requirement for Councils' to register annually with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) was noted and **it was agreed** that the Clerk register the Parish Council, the annual fee currently being £35.

79:15/16 PARISH COUNCILS' USE OF IT

As agreed at the last Meeting Cllr's Beighton, Hough and Asbridge had explored options and the domain name 'magpc.co.uk' had been purchased from HostPapa who provided the best value for money compared with other providers of similar services. **It had been agreed at item 77:15/16** that Cllr Beighton be reimbursed for this cost. **It was further agreed** that an application for reimbursement would be made by the Clerk via the Transparency Code grant funding.

Email addresses had been set up for the Clerk and Councillors. The Clerk was already using the email clerk@magpc.co.uk and Cllr Beighton offered to assist the rest of the Councillors in setting up their new email addresses.

The new domain name would allow the Parish Council to build its own website, which Cllr Beighton offered to do. He also offered to train the Clerk to use the website to enable her to upload information, including agendas and minutes. **The Parish Council agreed** that this was the most appropriate way forward to meet the requirements of the Transparency Code.

80:15/16 RETAINING WALL, MILTON ABBOT

Following the last Meeting Cllr Hough had obtained a copy of a 999 year lease dated 23rd October 1963 between Milton Abbot Parochial Council, assumed to be the Parish Council, and the landlord.

The lease relates to two parcels of land; being the Village Hall and reading room, and the land used as the playground, but does not make it clear who has responsibility for the wall.

Councillors had also inspected the wall, which had been of concern to the Parish Council for some time. The Councillors were of the opinion that the wall was at risk of falling into the highway.

After careful consideration **it was agreed**, that although responsibility for the maintenance of the wall had not been established, the Parish Council had a duty of care to ensure that it was dealt with appropriately. **The Parish Council therefore agreed** the following action would be undertaken by the Clerk;

- i. That Highways be contacted regarding the Parish Councils' concerns over the condition of the wall.
- ii. That the Duke of Bedford, the Landlord, be contacted in an attempt to establish who was responsible for the maintenance of the wall.

81:15/16 HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE/ROAD WARDEN SCHEME

The item was deferred to the next meeting.

82:15/16 FELLDOWNHEAD ROAD

Cllr Pahlsson's report had been read by the Councillors and his concerns were discussed at length.

It was suggested that the best course of action would be for Cllr Phalsson to contact Cllr Ball who in turn could take up the issues with Highways, but this issue would be further discussed at the next Meeting in January.

(Cllr Anderson left the meeting at 9.45pm)

83:15/16 GRASS CUTTING QUOTATIONS

It was agreed that the Clerk obtain quotations for the grass cutting of Milton Abbot village green for the next financial year, 2016/17. Contractors to be approached are three who have recently expressed an interest in carrying out such work for the Parish Council and the current contractor.

84:15/16 SNOW WARDEN SCHEME

The current nominated Snow Warden for the Parish is Cllr Brewer and supplies of salt are distributed around the Parish in plastic bags for use as necessary. It was not known how this worked in Milton Abbot and **Cllr Anderson was requested** to provide further information at the next meeting.

85:15/16 CHICHESTER ARMS, CHILLATON

Cllr Asbridge reported that residents in Chillaton were concerned about the future of the building, which was currently closed as a business and described as being under refurbishment. The building was already in a poor condition and the onset of winter might make that worse.

Cllr Baldwin undertook to contact the Borough Council given that WDBC regard village pubs generally, as important community facilities in villages.

86:15/16 IMPROVE OUR RURAL ROADS PETITION

The availability of this petition, sponsored by Geoffrey Cox MP was noted.

87:15/16 DEVON MINERALS CONSULTATION

Cllrs had reviewed the consultation and **it was agreed** that no response was to be made.

88:15/16 PARISH COUNCIL DOCUMENT RETENTION

The Parish Council approved the sending of statutory documentation prior to the year 2000 to the Records Office in Exeter for permanent secure storage. It was **also agreed** that planning application documentation could be disposed of after a period of 1 year.

89:15/16 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA

None

90:15/16 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Wednesday 6th January 2016 Marystowe Church Hall
Wednesday 2nd March 2016 Milton Abbot Village Hall
Wednesday 4th May 2016 Parish Meeting for Chillaton Marystowe Church Hall
Thursday 5th May 2016 Parish Meeting for Milton Abbot, Dunterton and Bradstone at Milton Abbot Village Hall followed by the AGM and an ordinary Council Meeting.

The meeting closed at 10pm

Signed:
Cllr Hough, Chairman

Date: