Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council

Wednesday 17th November 2021 at 7.30pm

Milton-Under-Wychwood Village Hall

Draft Minutes

Present:
Vice-Chairman Glynn Allcock (GA)
Councillor Rod Blackman (RB)
District Councillor Jeff Haine (JH)
County Councillor Liz Leffman (LL)
Councillor John Pratt (JP)
Councillor Peter Rawlins (PR)
Chairman Chris Trotman (CT)
Councillor Pat Ward (PW)
Parish Clerk: Mrs L. Jacques (LJ)
4 members of the public

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Declaration of Interests**
   Wild Gardens – JP
   Planning - JH

3. **Proposal to approve the minutes of the October meeting**
   Proposer – PR
   Seconder – PW
   All in favour

4. **Matters arising from the October meeting**
   4.1. Queen's Jubilee - To be dealt with under Item 10
   4.2. Christmas timetable - CT has spoken with John Witts who is making arrangements for the evening. CT has received no contact from No.1 High Street as yet. Timing will be 1830hours for Carols round the tree.
   4.3. Maintenance of trees on the Green- There are 20+ trees that need attention. Following the email update from PR he will now gain three quotes for the survey and potential work that is required on the trees. CT stated that the trees along Church Road and High Street are the priority.

5. **Public session for all items related to this Agenda**
   None

6. **To receive the following reports:**

6.1 Chairman's Report (CT)

Christmas tree had been requested from Bruern Farms.
Holes, left by utility workers, filled in around Christmas tree position but excavations were a little close to where the Tree goes so will need watching.
LJ and CT working through the new accounts package and all seems to her working well.
New councillor in the side lines who could not be present tonight. Graham Smith was approached by PW and CT subsequently had a chat with him. He is keep to start in January when he can be formally approved.
Lisa Wilkinson is leaving as clerk to SuWPC to take up a post as Clerk to Charlbury Town Council. I have sent her best wishes on behalf of MuWPC

6.2 District Councillor's Report (JH)

JH stated that the Community Wellbeing and Neighbourhood Sport Groups report has been published, and Milton-under-Wychwood came out very well. JH stated JP deserves recognition for his work on this and it was great that MUW can put plans in place without the need for outside assistance.

The Cabinet have approved an 18 month extension to the Housing First project régimes in Oxfordshire-specifically for the homeless and young people. JH stated it was a worthwhile cause and has been operating for 3 years. The Cabinet hope that the extension will allow more people in need to be reached.

6.3 County Councillor's Report (LL)

LL stated MUW was one of many areas that suffered due to the recent floods. LL stated she recognises that the drains need urgent attention but that the floods were mainly down to the severity of the recent rainfall. LL will contact Wayne XXX and request that he attends asap.

The OCC Cabinet have reported that greenhouse gas ommissions have gone down quite significantly which is good news.

Applications for the Government Sustainable Warmth Fund are now open.

There is still some funding available in the Councillor Priority Fund – approximately £1500 which needs to be utilised by the end of the year – applications must be submitted by January.

CT stated he had one cause which would be suitable – placing white lines on either side of the road by the pedestrian entrance to St Judes due to the risk of an accident. LL stated she would speak with James Wright

7. Update following the Finance Committee meeting on 3rd November 2021 (CT)

CT advised that the Finance Committee met on the 3rd November via Zoom and will ensure that meetings take place more regularly to allow quick resolutions to issues and Finance needs moving forwards. The FinCom will ensure that the PC are updated as and when meetings take place and when any financial decisions are made or need to be made.

8. NPSG (JP) Consideration of Neighbourhood Plan (NP) Feedback from Public Consultation and revised NP draft documentation for Regulation 14 Statutory Consultation (Reg 14 SC)

JP reminded all present that the minutes from the October meeting are available to view and have been circulated. JP stated the group felt it important for CFO to be the author of the Basic Commissions Statement which will incur an additional cost of £400 against the NP budget.

The NPSG have prepared a report following the feedback from the Public Consultation in September – and request that this report is made public on the PC website.
All in favour
CT requested that actual report to be published is resent to LJ and CT due to the substantial increase in email traffic.

In October the DC confirmed after feedback from Natural and Historic England that the NPSG do not need XXX which is good news.

NPSG felt that is was very important the latest draft of the NP be circulated to the PC for this November meeting due to there being no meeting in December. The content remains largely the same as September although the Heritage side has been reviewed and amended.

Proposal - JP stated that the CFO are satisfied that they think this current version of the NP would meet the basic conditions and proposed that the PC authorise the NPSG to go ahead with Regulation 14 of the Statutory Consultation.
CT stated that it was a very thorough document and personally would be happy to take it forward.
JH seconded
All in favour

PW provided and update regarding the Eco Area. PW met with Richard Hartley and suggested transferring the Eco Area to the Wychwood Trust. RH would like to still be able to clear the water courses. PW has spoken with Anne Barclay of Wild Oxfordshire regarding funding for getting the ponds dug out in Spring. PW is meeting with Neil Clennell from the Wychwood Forest Trust regarding the transfer of land from MM to the Forest Trust. Craig Ormond happy with this. PW is waiting for the solicitors details to get this transfer in motion.

9. Planning (PW/PR)

21/03502/S73	36 Elm Grove	Non-compliance of condition 2 of permission 17/00016/HHD to allow changes to the external appearance of the building (retrospective) No decision required by PC at this time.

10. Village Green (PR,JH)

10.1 **ROSPA** – following the ROSPA inspection and Playdale quote for repairs, PR raised a query regarding the replacement quote for the roundabout bearing. Having viewed the risk assessment, it was placed at the lowest risk level as it stood, so repairing this part would not impact on the safety of the roundabout whatsoever. The PC were in agreement that replacement of this part would be put on hold and the roundabout monitored regularly.

10.2 LJ will submit the Charity Commissioners report by 31st January 2022

10.3 – **Platinum Jubilee** - JH presented a detailed booklet to the PC detailing the planned celebrations for w/c 3rd June 2022 with a request for interim funding from the PC to allow for deposits to be paid. JH stated the total upfront cost to the PC would be £3k, however the planning committee aim to recoup this through sales of tickets from the event, essentially costing the PC no more than the initial £1k agreed in October.
PR – proposed that the PC go ahead with the £3k funding for the event.
CT stated that the funding of £3k will be discussed at the December FinCom meeting to ascertain whether the increase in S145 funding could be met. CT advised JH to go ahead on the presumption that the FinCom will make a decision in December.

LJ will go ahead with Plaswood bench order as agreed in July PC meeting.

11. Contract Update for Weed Control and Cemetery Groundsperson (CT)

CT updated the PC that there had been no interested parties for the Weed Control contract. The previous person, Dave Knight is now in a fully employed role.
WillBee Services are interest in the Cemetery contract and CT awaits his tender although WillBee did advise he had concerns with provided a quote for 3 years as fuel and labour costs may change significantly in this time.
Julian form KGS Gardening is still interested in the Cemetery contract and LJ/CT will make contact with him.
CT asked the PC whether they would be happy for the FinCom to make the final decision on contractor if two quotes are received due to the recess in December and the contract starting in January.
JH proposed
RB seconded
All in favour
CT will contact Complete Weed Control to gain a quote from them regarding the Weed killing contract.

12. Correspondence (CT)

12.1 - Litter bin survey WODC – completed and returned to WODC
12.2 - Email regarding temporary campsite – CT has responded and JH will investigate further stating that he had received numerous complaints regarding the temporary campsite which the owners are looking to make permanent.

12.3 - Robert Courts correspondence regarding recent flooding - received but nothing further to report

13. Discretionary Donations (Sec 137) (CT)

13.1 – **Baptist Church** - CT has received an email requesting the next phase of donation for the Mini's Playgroup at the Baptist Church. 20weeks @ £20/week will take us up to Easter. GA requested sight of their spending. CT has received a balance sheet and will circulate.

All in favour

13.2 - **Wild gardens** – LJ received a subscription request from the Wild Gardens for their annual donation.

CT proposed the same donation of £500

PW seconded

All in favour. JP abstained

14. S106 Update (GA)

GA has submitted the application regarding the Village Hall donation to WODC and is awaiting an update.

GA has not heard anything further from Isaac Pattis regarding the pump track.

15. Budget 2022-23 (JP/CT/GA)

CT discussed the proposed budget for 2022/23. CT mentioned the upcoming necessary Cemetery purchase within the next 12 months – an historic omission missed by previous PC's and Charity Commissioners. It is hoped that this will cost no more than £8k but there will be solicitor costs as well.

In budgeting for the upcoming year the precept request could have remained the same had there not been a Cemetery purchase needed. As a result, there is a requirement to increase the precept by £4000 – an 8% rise which is more than what the PC would have liked to do. This is roughly £6per year per household. The PC will find £4k of funds to pay the remaining 50% of the Cemetery purchase.

Over the next 6 years the PC would like to return to the equivalent of one year's spend as a reserve – how this is done is unclear at present.

CT stated that there is no intention to further increase the precept for 2023-24.

JH – stated that whilst he was in support of the increase, he was surprised the PC need to do this having been under the impression that before paying for the Church Wall repairs the PC bank balance was circa £100K. CT advised that the investment fund at the start of the year was £34K and the current account was down to £8k at the end of last financial year having paid circa £73k on the Church Wall repairs.

CT stated that the increase to the precept £50k was agreed a several years ago to allow the PC a budget to pay for the Church wall repairs and purchase playground equipment hence the large carry forward year on year.
JP stated that the increasing precept population had risen by 12% since 2014. GA could demonstrate his Council Tax precept portion steadily declining over the last 5 years with the same £50k divided by an ever growing population in our village. If the Council Tax bill was compared to 2015 the precept element has actually declined.

JP – Bringing the draft budget to the PC this evening has also factored in a spend of £1k for the Jubilee under S145. There is also carry over of unspent funds for the Neighbourhood Plan. The FinCom have also taken account of increasing salaries and admin costs.

CT stated that the FinCom have calculated the draft budget very carefully and would like to propose this budget is agreed for the purpose of precept review and application of £54k. CT proposed that the budget be approved as a draft budget to be finally approved in January to include any last minute changes.

JH stated that he has no problem with the increase as there had been no increase for a number of years.

PR stated the previous PC made a mistake not increasing the precept year on year and when the PC opted to increase the precept back in 2013 it was difficult and was an error of the Council not increasing the precept by a small amount more regularly.

CT proposed based on the presented draft budget that the precept application be increased to £54,000
RB seconded
All in favour

CT asked whether the draft budget be agreed by the PC although this will l remain as a draft budget until January 2022.
PR proposed
PW seconded
All in favour

16. Accounts (JP/GA/CT)
16.1 - To approve the October Receipts, Payments and End of Month bank reconciliation.
PR proposed
JH seconded
All in favour

16.2 - Clerk annual review – LJ has been in post for 12 months and an annual review has been carried out with CT. CT approached the PC with regards to an annual pay increase and the FinCom have approved an increase from point 0.13 to 0.15 on the scale, in monetary terms an increase from £11.76 to £12.24 effective from 1st November 2021.

CT proposed the Clerk annual review and increase

PR seconded

All in favour

CT advised the PC that MR is back to work and advised the PC that her grandson carried out some litter picking duties whilst she was unable to work.

CT proposed a contribution of £25 to George for his work. CT to make contact with Clare Harper, his mother.

PR seconded

All in favour

October Receipts				
			TOTALS	***42,155.98***
Date	Description	Name	Method	Amount
05-Oct	Refund of duplicate payment	CT	BACS	£99.98
19-Oct	PITSTOP rent	Pitstop	Cheque	£75.00
20-Oct	S106 - Caloo	WODC	BACS	£41981.00

October Payments			
	TOTALS		£24,893.77
Date	Description	Payee	Amount
27-Oct	Grasscutting	Kevin Grant	£1,525.00

27-Oct	HMRC Vat reclaim repayment	HMRC	£2,146.53
27-Oct	Bin Liners	Alfred Groves	£4.77
27-Oct	Bin Liners	Alfred Groves	£4.41
27-Oct	External Audit 20/21	Moore Stephens	£480.00
29-Oct	Village Green Car Park works	Hickmans	£19,253.52
29-Oct	Clerk Salary	LJ	£801.54
29-Oct	Lengthperson salary	MR	£188.92
29-Oct	Printer Ink - amazon	LJ	£18.24
29-Oct	Stamps	LJ	£10.20
29-Oct	Google Storage NPSG	JP	£15.99
29-Oct	Dog bin emptying Frog Lane	Ubico	£100.15
29-Oct	Bin emptying	UBico	£344.50

Bank reconciliation as at end of October			**TOTALS**
Opening Cash Book			**£59,812.14**
Add Receipts			£42155.98
Less Payments			£24893.77
Closing Cash Book			**£77,074.35**
Less: uncleared cheques			£0.00
Add: unpresented credit			£0.00
Current Account			£77,074.35

Difference			£0.00
Investment Account			£34,254.98
Money Market			£0.03
Balance as per all statement			**£111,329.36**

17. Public session for non-Agenda items

JvdP mentioned the temporary campsite near Church Meadow is now taking bookings for 2022 and noted that it completely obscures the open view contradicting Article 12 of the NHP. Noted by JP. JH will investigate and update the PC.

JvdP mentioned the Church Wall repairs are showing cracks and chunks of mortar have been seen on the floor. CT is aware and will raise this with the company.

JvdP raised concern that there had not been mention of cost cutting in the draft 2022-23 budget stating that the PC owe it to the young people of the village to demonstrate cost cutting efforts. CT acknowledged the concern but stated that the council is virtually running at a break even level with the Precept and that items budgeted for were necessities rather than desirables. Had the cemetery not had to be purchased then the Precept could have remained the same.

DvdP raised an issue with the website stating that the current 2021-22 budget is still shown as Draft version on the website and needs to be updated.

18. AOB.

PR stated that some St Jude's residents raised concern that no dog poo bins had been placed in the area but was unsure who to contact.

JP questioned whether there were any further invoices due relating to the recent inspection of the Church Wall. CT advised no invoice had been received.

PW stated that Craig Ormond from MM has offered £1k for the purchase of trees for the eco area and PW is awaiting an update on payment.
CT stated that OCC highways patching work is taking place on the Milton Road from the A361 to Ballards Close. CT did ask OCC for an update regarding repairs to Shipton Road up to The Green but was informed this would not take place as the repairs were 'uneconomical'.

CT stated that M&M had a reparation order and should be asked to repaired the High Street verge, coming out of Village past M&M's site, damaged by contractor vehicles. JH will enquire.

Meeting closed 21.15hrs