Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 20th October 2021 at 7.30pm

Milton-under-Wychwood Village Hall

Minutes

Present:
Vice-Chairman Glynn Allcock (GA)
Councillor Rod Blackman (RB)
District Councillor Jeff Haine (JH)
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
Liz Leffman

2. Declaration of Interests
Jeff Haine - planning

3. Proposal to approve the minutes of the September meeting
Proposer- - PW
Seconder – GA
All in favour

4. Matters arising from the September meeting
4.1 Pruning of trees on Village Green – RB and PR are due to meet with the resident regarding the trees but this is still pending. Once this has happened, PR and RB will be seeking quotes for the trimming of the trees as they were last done two years ago so the pruning is due.

5. Public session for all items related to this Agenda
David van de Poll, MOP, queried the situation regarding the Sands/Jubilee Lane footpath and subsequent DMMO application stating that in his view the application was unnecessary. JP provided an account on behalf of the PC – 'The application for a DMMO in favour of a creation of a new footpath was the result of a Parish wide consultation whereby 78 out of 140 respondents wished to preserve the footpath. This consultation took place in 2018 followed by the PC applying for a DMMO in January 2019. Spitfire Bespoke Homes objected to the application and in consultations with the District Council footpaths planning team put up a case against it.
The District Council proposed the quashing of the rights of the footpath and was advised to go to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision. The Planning Inspectorate decided on an inquiry. The PC upheld the original request although the County Council responded that the District Council have the right to quash these rights.

In late 2020 the Planning Inspectorate proposed to hold an Inquiry relying on study of available documentation instead of representations in person. The PC opted to have an in person Inquiry. This was held in April 2021 using video conferencing. The Inquiry went against the DMMO Application and as a result the PC have been charged attendance costs of the respective Applicant, Spitfire Bespoke Homes and their legal counsel as a consequence of the decision to hold a face to face Inquiry. An outcome not anticipated.
Details of costs are listed in Item 8.

CT reminded the room that when the PC initially applied for this order, the County Council advised the PC they would cover all expenses if the Oxfordshire County Council took this case on – therefore the PC were acting on their guidance and in good faith.

6. To receive the following reports:
6.1 Chairman's Report (CT)

AGAR report.
Although the PC completed the requirements for the review, we didn't necessarily do them in the correct order. The PC need to make sure we adhere to the 2015 Audit regulations. In future the Council should ensure it has reviewed and approved the documents prior to the commencement of the "period for public rights."
This coincides with IAC/Kevin Rose's same observation and criticism in Box L of his Internal Audit Summary.
CT has responded to Moore & co auditors.

Finance Committee
In the October Finance Committee meeting, all systems were reviewed on the advice of our Internal Auditor, and felt there is no additional action required as a result of the External Audit for YE 31/03/2020. Although some instructions were given as to the completion of our next AGAR submission. The PC were also chosen as one of the 5% of dip test for further scrutiny. The 20/21 audit is now complete.

Church Wall
CT has been waiting for Robert Montgomery to sign off the church wall, which has now been completed! We now have the completion certificate. However attached to this was a retention which now needs to be paid to OG Stonemasonry for £2207.58 (£1839.65 Net £367.93 VAT)

Advertising on the Green
Just to comment that the PC feel, apart from the banner adverts that appear opposite the Co-op, all other forms should be restricted to the notice boards around the village. Nutmeg and Thyme no longer appear to be attending Milton.

Defib at Prew's
Still on order, as soon as it's here GA will install.

Planting at Elm Grove

CT has had another discussion with Dustin Hamilton regarding the hedging along Groves' fence. Last year the PC suggested a grant of £380 - as it is the right time of the year can the PC go ahead with this grant. **All in favour**

Accounts
Accounts will now show a full calendar month for the month preceding the PC. The workbooks have been rewritten thanks to CT which should ensure smoother reporting and easier access for viewing. Payments for day to day spending will still need two authorisations and anything over £5K will still need full PC consent, all as detailed in our Fin Regs.

6.2 District Councillor's Report (JH)
West Oxfordshire is known for its attractive environment but there have been lots of complaints recently regarding fly tipping. The District Council has recruited an Environment Support Officer whose job it will be to investigate reports and bring prosecutions where possible.
There is a Town and Parish forum on 4th November, 1830 -2100 at Tiddy Hall, Ascot. JH will be attending and there will also be the opportunity to meet the new Chairman of Ascot PC.

6.3 County Councillor's Report (LL)
I am sorry not to be able to attend the meeting this evening. I am able to report that at the Cabinet meeting yesterday the County wide 20 mph strategy and the Oxfordshire Bus Improvement Plan were both endorsed and will be going forward. Details about how parishes can apply for a 20mph speed limit will be published shortly. The Local Transport and Connectivity Plan was also discussed and there will be a consultation on this starting in November.

The County is also consulting on the new administration's priorities ahead of the budget setting process, and town and parish councils have been invited to attend meetings this week with me and the Deputy leader, Liz Brighouse, to discuss these. The first meeting was held on Monday evening and there was a very good attendance and a lively discussion. The second will be held this Thursday.

James Wright has been in touch with Brian Watson regarding the speed surveys in Upper Milton to agree the best places for the surveys to be conducted.

7. Recreation Ground (CT) P**roposal to amend Recreation Ground Charity Details**
Proposal to amend Recreation Ground Charity Details. This will remove the need to change the details every time a Cllr changes and more importantly it will (almost*) remove the liability from individual cllrs to the PC. (* Unless an individual Cllr breaks the law doing charity business.) Recommended by our Charity Commissioners Solicitors. CT was advised by Solicitors that the PC should be the sole trustee rather than individual Councillors. CT can rectify this but it requires the PC consent.
Vote : All in favour

8. Extinguishment of Public Rights on Claimed Footpath (JP):
Communication from OCC 07/10/2021 re. decision of Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate)
Payment to Spitfire Bespoke Homes Ltd £14,655.60 (£12,213.00 net of VAT) in respect of partial costs award by Secretary of State (Planning Inspectorate) against MuW PC.

JP advised that this cost is legally obligatory and the cost must be paid. The DMMO will be void in 28 days time.

9. NPSG Progress Report (JP)

JP advised that the NPSG met on 12th October to review the summary of all representations from the public both at consultation, by email and by letters left at the library. Useful remarks and guidance were received. As a result, the policies that have been proposed in the draft neighbourhood plan have been slightly reworded.

Within the most recent NPSG minutes there were some recommendations of a general nature received from the public for the Parish – these included implementing 20mph speed limit for Upper Milton and biodiversity efforts for the allotments and Charity field, (although separate charities) . Councillors can view these details in the NPSG minutes that have been circulated to them. ”

Max askew has kindly given guidance on reinforcing environmental boundaries which PW is now investigating.

There has been some good work by the steering group in preparation for presenting the proposals to the PC before statutory consultation.

10. Planning (PW/PR)

21/02995/LBC	Heath Farm, Green Lane, MUW	PC – This is a listed building which has got to be restored anyway - the PC can't see a problem in objecting as it needs to comply with listed regulations to comply with regulations anyway. No objection
21/02994/FUL	Heath Farm, Green Lane, MUW	PC – This is a listed building which has got to be restored anyway - the PC can't see a problem in objecting as it needs to comply with listed regulations to comply with regulations anyway. No objection
21/02966/LBC	Coldstream House, Upper Milton, MUW	PC – The PC can't see any reason to object as these works will need to comply with listed building regulations prior to approvial anyway. No objection

11. Village Green (PR,JH)

11.1 Update and recommendations following review of ROSPA report.

PR advised Playdale will be contacted to carry out any remedial works as a result of the report.

The Village Green is still being used a lot which is great to see. PR has also received contact from a Kent PC and Burford TC with positive feedback on our play areas which is great to hear.

JP – The allotment and gardens society, MUWAGA, will be planting the daffodils alongside the railings courtesy of the W.I

12. Contract Update for Grass cutting, Weed Control and Cemetery Groundsperson (CT)
Adverts in the Oxford Times and Witney Gazette were prohibitively expensive so the PC relied on local advertising within the Parish, website and social media posts. This has produced limited requests for information. Three tenders have been received for the general grass cutting contract but only two have been received for the Cemetery and Weed Spraying contracts. The PC are in agreement that these tenders should be delayed until the November PC meeting to allow for further submissions.

PR presented the three tenders received regarding the grasscutting contract.

Applicant A – total cost of £8000k
Applicant B – total cost of £22544
Applicant C – total cost of £6503

GA presented his observations and having watched the current contractor a few times and seeing how long it took him to do a cut, GA can't see how C could do it in less time – GA stated his worry would be C would be contacting the Council in a few months for a review of contract.

CT stated the price for A has increased by only £150 from 3 years ago.
Contractor B lives quite a distance from Milton so there is concern over mileage.

PR proposed the PC go ahead with Applicant A
Vote taken – All in favour

13. Christmas Timetable
John Witts has requested an update regarding Carols round the Tree. CT stated at present the PC plan to go ahead unless covid rules change. CT suggested John Witts MC's with the usual music/ readings JH requested the Vicar is invited and he will speak with the occupants of the property (.....) to enquire in to the mince pies and mulled wine donation.

JP stated there is a budget should song sheets needs purchasing etc
CT will speak to Bruern Farms to request a Christmas tree
The collection will be for the Day Centre.

14. Correspondence (CT)
None

15. Discretionary Donations (Sec 137) (CT)
15.1 Remembrance Day
Proposal to donate £50 as has been the case in previous years
Vote Taken – all in favour

RB has volunteered to present the wreath on behalf of PC

16. S106 Update (GA)

GA updated the PC that instead of the £118000 the PC were due to receive, £144000 is now the total to be received by the PC. WODC have confirmed the new total.

GA confirmed that improvements to the playground have been completed
Works to the car park have been completed
The improvements to the tennis court which were agreed in a previous PC meeting have yet to be instructed but following the Finance Committee meeting in October, the PC have confirmation that there will be funds available to go ahead and instruct Calloo to go ahead Calloo have agreed to keep the quoted price valid and would like to go ahead before Christmas. GA will speak with Calloo to ascertain their plans with wet weather and preventing damage to the green.
GA stated the Pump track project is still ongoing and GA met with Isaac Pattis who is now overseeing this potential project. The PC will receive figures regarding this project shortly. As this is a self help project the PC will be unable to claim any VAT back on materials.

17. Update from Finance Committee

17.1 Recommendations from the Finance Committee Meeting of 13/10/2021 regarding (a) impact of Spitfire billing and S106 VAT payments on PC cash flow and (b) administration (see draft Minutes)

CT stated at the recent Finance Committee meeting there was agreement to meet more regularly. Any documentation that needs to be submitted outside the Parish will require a meeting beforehand where LJ will present the information for submission.

The cashbook has been rewritten to ensure formula and presentation is correct.

JP explained the impact that all vat payments made under s106 would have on cash flow- identifying that as a result of large VAT payment in May this year there is enough cash flow to see through payments until the year end. LJ is investigating whether more than one claim can be made yearly re S126 VAT reclaims.

CT stated the Littlestock Brook water monitor was not budgeted for but there would be some virements to cover the cost.

JP thanked DVDP for looking at the PC accounts and scrutinising where necessary.

CT explained continuing laptop issues and that there would be need to factor in a budget for a replacement in 2022-23.

18. Accounts (JP/GA/CT)

18.1 - To approve the September Receipts, Payments and End of Month bank reconciliation. Note agreement to present full calendar month moving forward
18.2 – 2nd Quarter report

September Receipts				
			TOTALS	41,384.18
Date	**Description**	**Name**	**Method**	**Amount**
1	Pound Parking	Hissey & Bloy	BACS	£39.00
1	Pound Parking	M&L Stacey	BACS	£91.00
1	Pound Parking	Light	BACS	£78.00
1	Pound Parking	Light	BACS	£13.00
14	Repayment	B Watson	BACS	£118.58
22	Precept #2	WODC	BACS	£25000.00
22	S106 payment	WODC	BACS	£16044.60
				£41,384.18

September Payments			
	TOTALS		£8,213.74
Date	**Description**	**Payee**	**Amount**
7	Printer ink	Amazon	£36.99
7	Village Website renewal	CT	£19.19
7	NPSG printing	B Watson	£118.58
7	NPSG printing	B Watson	£118.58
18	Clerk cover	J Miller	£50.00
27	NPSG Admin costs	JP	£514.39
27	Payroll Company	C Arnold	£60.00
27	Website upgrade	T&C Websites	£225.00
27	Littlestock Br Telemetery	Meteor Comms	£1,730.40

27	Grass cutting	K Grant	£1,455.00
27	Bin bags	A Groves	4.23
27	Batteries	A Groves	£9.44
27	Gloves	A Groves	£41.22
27	Playground Inspection	ROSPA	£301.20
27	Village Hall Hire	MUW VH	£110.00
27	Traffic Cones church loan	CT	£99.98
27	Computer RAM	CT	£32.39
30	Lengthperson Salary	MR	£459.52
30	Clerk Salary	LJ	£637.52
30	Defib Cabinet and Pads	WEL Medical	£649.14
30	Grass cutting	K Grant	£1370.00
30	PAYE	HMRC	£170.97
			£8,213.74

Bank reconciliation as at 30th September 2021		**TOTALS**		
Opening Cash Book			**£26,741.68**	
Add Receipts			£41384.18	
Less Payments			£8213.74	
Closing Cash Book			**£59,912.12**	
Current Account			£59,812.14	
Deposit Account			£34,254.98	
Money market			£0.03	
Balance as per statement			**£94,067.15**	
Less: uncleared cheques	Chq Nos	Values	£0.00	
Add: unpresented credit		Values	£0.00	

Adjusted bank balance			**£59,912.12**	
Difference			-£99.98	Duplicate payment to CT £99.98

CT explained the revised spreadsheets and quarterly summaries .
CT explained the variances in the Q2 report. These relate to the Littlestock Brook monitor, the PC website Assessment Review, the need to purchase a replacement defibrillator cabinet and Playdale repairs for the village green which missed the 2020-21 year.
Proposal to agree the September Payments, Receipts, Bank Reconciliation and Q2 Summary
PR Proposed, JH Seconded, All in favour

19. Public session for non-Agenda items
DVDP, MOP queried whether there would be an explanation of variances added to the website for this financial year – CT confirmed that all submissions will be available on the website as and when they are agreed by PC

20. AOB.

- JH raised the Queens Platinum Jubilee 2-5th June 2022 citing planned events for the village. Some entertainments will require paying in advance so there will be a request submitted to the PC in November to propose the PC underwrite the plans by £1000. JP confirmed there was possibility to budget for S145 public entertainments for the coming year.

- PR was in favour of supporting the request. CT stated in principal this is something the PC could support. **All in favour**.

- JP was interviewed reference the response to the coronavirus pandemic as a result of the PC being more proactive than some other Parishes. The panel wanted to find out how the PC approached the situation and what was done. This footage will be shown at the upcoming meeting at Tiddy Hall in November.

- Printed copies of the Emergency Plan will be disseminated to the distribution list imminently.

- PW will contact Craig Ormond regarding the offer of planting trees two years ago in the ecological area. PW stated that he has submitted an application re the Queen's Jubilee for 420 trees. The Scouts will be planting the leftover trees from the Woodland Walk on 27/28th November in the Eco area

- JH stated a resident is concerned about the pedestrian egress by St Jude's – and queries whether white lines could be placed either side of the road to prevent cars parking opposite the entrance. CT will deal with this and JH will contact Abby Fettes for an update regarding the additional chicane.

- CT raised the PC website and the unhelpful platform which does not allow any visual changes to take place – problems with updating the website and its overall usability. CT will investigate possible new website hosts and costs**. PC in favour**.

Meeting concluded 2100 hrs