Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council

Milton under Wychwood Parish Council meeting 16th February 2022

Milton under Wychwood Village Hall. 1930 hours.

APPROVED MINUTES

Present:
Vice-Chairman Glynn Allcock (GA)
Councillor Rod Blackman (RB)
District Councillor Jeff Haine (JH)
Councillor John Pratt (JP)
Councillor Peter Rawlins (PR)
Councillor Graham Smith (GS)
Chairman Chris Trotman (CT)
Councillor Pat Ward (PW)
Parish Clerk: Mrs L. Jacques (LJ)

County Councillor Liz Leffman (LL)
3 members of the public

1. Apologies for absence

Councillor Peter Rawlins

2. Declaration of Interests

JH- Planning, Jubilee

3. Proposal to approve the minutes of the January meeting

Proposer - JP
Seconder - PW
All in favour

4. Matters arising from the January meeting

4.1 Playdale – confirmation that Playdale have been instructed to proceed with repairs to play equipment less work on the roundabout

4.2 Maintenance of trees on the Green – dealt with in item 12

4.2 Replacement Bench – the revised quote is now £510 inclusive of VAT. Approval required to continue – JH proposed, GA seconded, All in favour

4.3 Storage of PC documents -JH stated there had not been a Village Hall meeting yet. JH will update the PC as soon as a meeting and decision has taken place

4.4 Platinum Jubilee – dealt with in item 17

4.5 Discretionary donations – AUW Pre School confirmed AUWPC had donated £500. Therefore the PC will be donating the £500 as matched funds

5. Public session for all items related to this Agenda

Chris Seviour, MOP, raised concerns regarding a recent post he had seen on social media relating to the proposed Pump Track. Seviour stated the following concerns:

As understood from previous information, the team that were proposing the Bump Track project were going to present their proposal to the Parish Council (PC) for consideration of both the viability of the project and possible locations for the Track. However, from today's Facebook post it appears that the location has already been decided, is that true? If the location is to be behind the tennis courts, as suggested on the post, then I feel that the PC needs to address a number of concerns, they are:

a. The noise, as we live adjacent to the play area for the older children on the Green, in the Summer we sometimes suffer from loud music and offensive language which prevents us from being able to stay outside

and enjoy our garden, so a further source of noise would aggravate, on occasion, an already unacceptable situation.
b. The project risks creating an area that cannot be seen from the road, which could increase the risk of under age drinking, drug taking and other antisocial behaviours. The Village has in the past seen such trends develop, with the distance from the road making it extremely difficult for the authorities to counter such behaviour.
c. The impression on Facebook also suggested that the Track could impact on the walking routes round the Green, currently enjoyed by many Villagers, and there seems to be a possibility of interfering with some of the Public Footpaths that cross the Green.
d. While not recorded in the draft minutes of the PC Meeting held in January, it is understood, from someone who attended the Meeting, that the proposer suggested that the track could be used by people beyond the Village, if so, where would the PC propose the additional vehicles should park, the parking area by the MSA is already very busy, even when there is no football on!
e. Who would be responsible for the Health and Safety aspects of the use of the Track, the PC? If so, would access be restricted to reduce the risk and nuisance levels?

GA confirmed that the photograph posted on social media regarding the pump track was an artist's impression and not specific to the Milton under Wychwood pump track – it appears to be a generic image.

6. To receive the following reports:

6.1 Chairman's Report (CT)

Cemetery – CT had another meeting with Julian Paul from KGS about the upkeep of the Cemetery and in particular the perimeter hedges which will need tidying soon before nesting takes place. He will, or may have already, top the front hedge to about 7'. This is enough to maintain privacy but will neaten and thicken it up. The side hedge will be kept back from the track and the rear hedge will be lightly pruned again to thicken it up.

OALC - Still no news from OALC on the stalled 2021 pay awards for clerical workers. Will only affect LJ who's salary will need to be backdated to 04/21 when the award is agreed.

Website - PDF editor requested for two months is now not needed. CT has discovered a way to remove pdf formatting using Google Docs which is free and also a good grammar editor as well. CT has been through the data on the PC website and downloaded it to his computer, converted what needed to be to docx format and he is now in the process of rewriting many pieces. GA has offered to edit and proof pieces before uploading later. For the moment the village website will be restructured, but still in its present guise, to accommodate the inclusion of the PC data. During the transition, and because CT will be moving files about, it has been agreed that CT will do all uploading on the websites. To make this easier CT requested agreement that all minutes will not be uploaded until 5 days after LJ has distributed them which should allow time for amendments before upload. Any later amendments will have to wait till the next meeting.
When the transfer is complete, CT would like to change the theme of the website and refresh the whole site. May need professional advice for this.

Sale of cemetery – CT has not received any adverse reactions to the sale of the cemetery or any further conditions added to it so will instruct solicitors to inform Commissioners to proceed with the schedule.

6.2 District Councillor's Report (JH)

WODC - WODC cabinet approved the increases for Council Tax on 16th February 22.

WODC are promoting 'hedgehog highways' - encouraging residents to allow hedgehogs to freely travel from garden to garden.

The new bin programme has been implemented- some bins are still to be replaced but all should be completed within a few weeks.

There have been complaints from Groves regarding the drain outside the entrance to the businesses – flooding is occurring by the playground entrance again. JH has reported the issue to OCC.

6.3 County Councillor's Report (LL)

Budget - The budget was passed last Tuesday and agreed. Council tax will go up 4.99 % - £78 on a band D home, most of which will go to adult social care. Some changes are taking place within adult social care- updates to follow.

Bus companies for routes including the S3 and S2 have expressed real concern regarding funding. If it is believed that the Government are withdrawing their covid funding then there will be little choice for the companies than to reduce services. Bus use is approximately 70% of what it was pre covid and the companies are losing a lot of money as a result.

Budget- 8 million pounds has been allocated for 20mph speed limits. There have been 60 expressions of interest so far.

1.3 million has been allocated to address climate change which will be spent on a variety of things. 2 million has been allocated to special educational needs and disabilities and a significant amount has been allocated to infrastructure.

Burford HGV Ban – this has been difficult and the cabinet decided on the 15th February to withdraw the ban which was upheld. There was a lot of displacement of traffic through Gloucestershire and it was believed the ban wasn't making a vast difference and a lot of the smaller villages were suffering. OCC will be looking at a freight strategy which will be countywide and this is currently being consulted on.

Sewage - LL has had conversations with WODC regarding the sewage concerns and there are going to be surgeries taking place between Thames Water, OCC, WODC and the environment agency and it is hoped that a multi agency response will assist in a resolution.

Library - The Library strategy consultation will be ongoing until the 18 March. GA asked what the consultation will be looking at. LL stated it will be how people will use libraries in future, the heritage, facilities and access.

7. Update following the Finance Committee meeting on 7th February 2022 (JP)

Regarding S106 and S137 it was felt that for both of these opportunities there was a further need to publicise the available funds better. The PC have made efforts to publicise the availability of funds for S106 but they need to advertise more. The Village Hall have submitted a further two bids but it was decided that for fairness, these would be deferred to the next financial year to be discussed with any new bids submitted. The FinCom would like to advertise the availability again through the website and social media to reach a wider audience. They will do this for S137 as well.

JP stated traditionally about a third of S137 money was used to support the library service but the PC are still awaiting an update from them regarding funding needs. This has become out of sync due to covid.

CT stated he would upload any adverts on to the village and PC website.

The FinCom discussed google drive and the website and future uses and processes.

8. S106 Update (GA)

8.1 Update on insurance and liability enquiries regarding the pump track - Isaac Pattis has put out a bid actively seeking 100 donations to fund the project – there is no requirement for the size or scale of the amount donated. IP is still researching insurance.

8.2 Art funding- GA has a meeting scheduled with Sarah Lovette from Publica to discuss the arts project. GA would like to put a note out through various channels to ask the community what they would like to see for the art work.

8.3 Further applications – 3 bids are being submitted to the PC. JH disclosed an interest on VH S106 funding. 2 bids have been received for the Village Hall and one from John Witts.
8.4 Clarification of total funds available from WODC – GA is still waiting to be informed on the total amount available. The reason the PC keep being told differing amounts is that the funds are index linked so the longer the pot of money is with WODC the more it 'grows'. The PC have already spent £69K with a further £34K due to be spent on the tennis court project and a further £15K potentially for the pump track project. GA stated Caloo will hold the quoted price for 30 more days but the price will increase after this. GA asked the PC if they can commit to this project within this timeframe.
JP stated there was still the possibility that the DC would refuse the application for the tennis court repairs. (GA stated the application was agreed in principle). JP stated the PC can't take the risk of signing the contract until they receive approval from WODC.
GA will update the proposal and engage with Publica in the hope they will agree to the PC proceeding with the project.

9. Contract update for Weed Control (CT)

This was discussed at the recent FinCom and it was decided that the PC would proceed with Complete Weed Control at a cost of £370+VAT. CWC stated if there was a need for a second spray this would be charged at the same amount although a small area could be price negotiated. CWC will commence the work in May.

10. Planning

22/00163/HHD	Proposed three and a half bay oak framed garage in front of dwelling	The Coach House Lyneham Road

PW visited the property and spoke to the neighbours either side. The border hedge is 12ft high beech and holly which completely shields the proposed garage. The neighbours have no concerns as they won't even see the building. PW can see no other reason to object to the application. PW recommended no objection. All in favour.

11. Discretionary Donations (S137) (CT)

CT stated he had received a late request from Alan Allday regarding the fete asking for donations for raffle prizes. JP stated he would be more comfortable if the PC made a donation rather than provided a raffle prize. Previously the PC have donated £50. As this is an exceptional year due to having Platinum Jubilee celebrations too, JP suggested a donation of £100 from S137 funds for a donation to the fete.
CT proposed a donation of £100 to the fete.
RB seconded
All in favour

JH raised the consideration of providing a mug for all children that attend the jubilee event, at a cost of £7.50 per mug. CT suggested Fin Comm will discuss and bring this to the March PC meeting for discussion.

12. Village Green (PR,JH)

12.1 Update from contractors regarding two additional tree surveys
RB stated he had only just received the further two bids required from contractors - one for £2700+VAT, one for £4730.01 and one for £6550+VAT. RB will bring this to the March PC meeting for discussion and consideration.

JH raised that he had received complaints from users of the recreation ground regarding an increase in dog excrement. A discussion was had regarding resolutions but a remedy was not forthcoming. The PC are in agreement that this is a difficult and increasing problem.

13. Budget 2022-23 and rolling plan (JP/CT/GA)

This was agreed in the January meeting and will now be published on the PC website.

14. Accounts (JP/CT/GA)

14.1 - To approve the January Receipts, Payments and End of Month bank reconciliation.

CT stated the MOJ payment was relating to Baby Alfred and the exclusive rights application.

The £1000 donation for trees had been received from M&M.

HSBC are now charging an account fee of £8 per month.

There are recurrent payments to Groves relating to various invoices for bin bags. The invoices received from Groves were not all in sync and has resulted in a review of the account and any outstanding invoices. These have all been settled.

PW proposed the approval of the January accounts

GS seconded

All in favour

February Receipts				
			TOTALS	***75.00***
Date	Description	Name	Method	Amount
4-Jan	Vendor Trading	PITSTOP	BACS	£75.00

February Payments			
	TOTALS		£7,697.87
Date	Description	Payee	Amount
22-Feb	S137 Donation Ascott PreSchool	Ascott Pre Schoo	£500.00
22-Feb	Monthly Bank charges	HSBC	£8.00
22-Feb	External harddrive clerk laptop	CT	£109.99
26-Feb	S106 Donation MUW Village Hall	MUWVH	£6,232.08
22-Feb	Toner - Chairman	CT	£40.06
22-Feb	Defib Pads	WEL Medical	£55.08
28-Feb	Clerk Salary	LJ	£515.60
28-Feb	Lengthsperson Salary	MR	£237.06

Bank reconciliation as at end of February			**TOTALS**
Opening Cash Book			**£28,642.40**
Add Receipts			£75.00
Less Payments			£7697.87
Closing Cash Book			**£21,019.53**
Less: uncleared cheques			£0.00
Add: unpresented credit			£0.00
Current Account			£21,019.53
Difference			£0.00
Investment Account			£34,267.93
Money Market			£0.03
Balance as per statement			**£55,287.49**
Less: uncleared cheques			
Add: unpresented credit			

15. NPSG Update (JP)

The statutory consultation ended on 20th January. The DC replied to the NPSG on 2nd February and JP stated the response was detailed, systematic and helpful. Janice Bamsey prepared the report.

Among the other respondents OCC gave a very systematic response and overall seemed keener than the DC on retaining possibilities for development under special circumstances.

The NPSG have made good progress in the analysis of the report.

The NPSG will be consulting with CFO once the analysis has finished. There is lots of further work required and some policies need modifying. The protection of the Groves estate is still ongoing. Steve Whiting is

developing documentation for the consultation statement. The NPSG will not be pursuing the green space by the Paddocks as this is private land.

16. Future of the M&M Ecological triangle (Eco Area) (PW)

16.1 Decision on the ongoing management and ownership of the Eco Area.
There was a proposal discussed with Wild Oxfordshire that the land is transferred to a trust. M&M and Richard Hartley agreed to this with no objection. PW continued conversations with WO but it was decided that Wychwood Forest Trust would not take the land as it was too small.
PW stated there are three options:
1. The PC create a trust and transfer the land to that trust
2. Take in to land assets with the council. PW would prefer this as a better option as it is easier and quicker. There is no reason once the land is with the PC that it can't then be transferred to trust.
3. Let M&M hand the land back to Hartleys Farm. PW stated that this is the least favoured option as it is not what the land was originally intended for.

JH stated he agreed with PW and for the end result it would be better if the PC took responsibility for the Eco area. JH queried the maintenance costs. PW suggested it would be the same as the Woodland Walk but CT raised the concern regarding drainage of ponds and other maintenance costs.

JP stated he would feel comfortable if the PC acquire ownership of the land but if RH would include it in the management of his wetland property. From experience wild land can't be left to go wild. JP has concerns that if the PC took on the land with the commitment to maintain it, it could be a financial step too far for PC.

JP stated the Wild gardens in Shipton costs £7k to maintain and this is just routine maintenance.
CT stated that if the PC can persuade the Hartleys to do the maintenance the PC could take it on. It would be in RH's interest as he wants to continue to dredge the area. It is also part of the Evenlode catchment area so it is in the PC's interest. CT requested that the final proposal for ownership of the area needs to be in writing and there needs to be a paper trail so that decisions and agreement of relevant parties is clear to see.
PW is meeting with Anne Berkley from Wild Oxfordshire and RH on Monday 21st.

JP proposed that PW explore option 2.
CT seconded
All in favour

PW stated the trees are coming from the Woodland Trust in March – 420 of them. He will be seeking volunteers to plant them on Saturday 2nd April at 0930 hours.

17. Platinum Jubilee (CT)

17.1 Update regarding FinCom decision – the fete committee are aware that GA will be sitting in on the meetings as an agreement regarding the £3000 PC funding. JH stated that next meeting was 4th March.
17.2 Craft Café request – CT stated the craft café had submitted a request to create a map of the village in ceramics and have it on display on the village green for the Jubilee. JH stated the entrance to the village green would be the best position and the least likely opportunity for vandalism.
All in favour

18. Correspondence (CT)

All mentioned in previous items

19. Public session for non-Agenda items

MoP requested more information regarding the arts funding and what it could be used for. GA explained regarding S106 and opportunities available.

20. AOB.

Chris Seviour – MoP raised concern regarding the increase in dog excrement, stating that something does need to be done – but calling people out for not picking up their dog excrement is concerning to some indivduals.
CT confirmed the council are powerless when it comes to fining owners but the community is less so. GA suggested some social media posts to start the conversation again.

JH will email CT regarding the Jubilee mugs.

GA requested as a result of LL 20mph funding update that the 20mph speed limit is considered for the whole village and not just Upper Milton. GA requested this be added to the March agenda. CT will speak to the Chairperson of SUWPC to gain interest.

JP queried the S145 donation to the owners of the High Street regarding the Christmas lights. GA will speak to the owners regarding a potential £50 donation for the mince pies and mulled wine provided by the owners for the event.

JP stated that MUW was included in New Scientist regarding the sewage works.

PW stated WOCT have sent a request for funding to the PC due to the decrease in passenger numbers. They will have a £12k deficit for the next financial year. CT requested PW go back to WOCT for more information and if necessary bring this proposal to the March PC meeting.

CT has spoken with Jill Mavin of SUWPC and they are trying to arrange a date for Milton, Shipton and Ascott Chairpersons to get together regarding joint working.

Meeting terminated 2114 hours.

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