Milton-under-Wychwood Parish Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Wednesday 19th June 2024

at Milton-under-Wychwood Village Hall

Present: Cllr Graham Smith, Chairman
Cllr Rod Blackman
Cllr Jeff Haine
Cllr Peter Rawlins
Cllr John Pratt
Cllr Pat Ward
Vanessa Oliveri, Parish Clerk
Chris Trotman, RFO
County Cllr Liz Leffman
District Cllr Adam Clements
28 members of the public

24/026 Apologies for Absence: had been received from Cllr Glynn Allcock.

24/027 Declarations of Interests: None to report.

24/028 Approval of the draft PC minutes dated 15th May 2024: Cllr John Pratt proposed to approve the PC minutes dated 15th May 2024. Cllr Peter Rawlins seconded the proposal. A unanimous vote was taken of all in favour of the proposal put forward.

24/029 Matters Arising: There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

24/030 Public Session: None at this point.

24/031 Chaiman's Report

The Annual Parish Meeting was held on Wednesday 12th June where approximately fifty people were in attendance. The Chairman proposed that any matters arising from the Annual Parish Meeting would be reviewed at the next PC meeting for action if required.

Neighbourhood Plan 2031 (NP): Implementation, Monitoring and Review - All six former members of the NP team have expressed willingness to take part in review of the NP from July 2024. Essentially according to the areas of specialisation that they were previously covering. Work would include consideration of the effectiveness of the current District Local Plan 2031, the relevance of NP Policies and broad responses to date published from WODC consultation for the formulation of the new Local Plan 2041

District Councillor's report

District Cllr Adam Clements had nothing to report at the meeting.

County Councillor, Liz Leffman's report

Traffic Calming Measures: The possibility of white lines on the road in Frog Lane was discussed to make on coming vehicles aware of pedestrians using the highways, as it had been reported that some pedestrians felt unsafe in this particular area. The PC agreed to have a meeting with James Wright, OCC Highways, County Cllr Liz Leffman and Parish Councillors to discuss this issue further.

Hedgerow encroaching footpath: County Cllr Liz Leffman to be notified of the location of this issue.

Surface dressing: The PC noted that quite a few of the highways in the county were being surfaced dressed. County Cllr Liz Leffman reported that the Shipton Road in the village was to be properly re-surfaced in September 2024.

County of Sanctuary: At a recent C/C cabinet meeting it had been noted that OCC was a County of Sanctuary where they were working with asylum seekers and refugees. The PC noted that OCC were working on a modern slavery document.

C/C Awards: The PC were notified that OCC had been presented twenty-one awards, including one on being the best Council tackling climate change.

24/032 Planning

24/01272/OUT – Church Road, MUW. Outline application for erection of 16 no. dwelling houses (8 affordable and 8 self-build dwellings) with associated works including access, provision of landscaping, public open space and new footpath links.

COMMENT: The PC strongly object to this outline planning application under the following reasons:-

- When **20/00070/FUL** for 5 houses was approved, WODC assured the PC that that was the limit of houses which would be permitted on that land.
- Application Number **23/02745/FUL** for 8 dwellings was objected by the PC and subsequently refused by WODC on 11.12.2023. WODC refusal reasons 1,2 and 4 actually apply to this latest application.
- The proposed development would severely over dominate the existing bungalows in Church Road and create a risk of flooding to them. The sewage treatments on the boundary with Shipton-under-Wychwood are one of the worst performing in the District, with regular overflows of raw sewage into the Evenlode river every time there is a heavy downpour of rain. The PC insist that there should be no further development permitted until improvement works have satisfactorily been carried out.
- Milton-under-Wychwood lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape and paragraphs 176 and 177 of the NPPF state that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty and it should have the highest status of protection and development should be limited. Permission should be refused for major development, considered to be 10 units or more, other than in exceptional circumstances and where it can be demonstrated that that the development is in the public interest. Clearly it has been shown by the number of objections from members of the public that there is not a need for this development and that there will be a considerable detrimental effect on the landscape and the environment.
- The Milton-under-Wychwood Neighbourhood Plan was made on 26th June 2023 and its policies should be applied to all planning applications, one of which covers the effect of further development. **Policy CH1** covers the village character and environmentally sensitive design and states that all development proposals should conserve and enhance local character. **Policy CH2** covers key views and states that these should be protected and enhanced. **Policy E1** covers green corridors and states that these should be conserved and enhanced for biodiversity and wildlife movement.
- The current application does not accord to paragraphs 176 and 177 of the NPPF and Local Plan policies OS2, OS4, EH1, EH2, EH7 and BC1 and Milton-under-Wychwood Neighbourhood Plan Policies CH1, CH2 and E1.
- The affordable housing element is not clear on the planning application.
- The local traffic impact has not been addressed in detail. The traffic congestion at the school and the co-op is already unacceptable at peak times.
- The rail transport is referred to but not recognised that local rail service is very infrequent and restricted service – 5 trains a day – 2 southbound and 3 northbound.
- Buses are referred to but no mention of reduced frequency and restricted routes.
- Local power and water outages are on the increase, this development will increase the frequency. There is no mention of assessment in the planning application.
- The land has not been assessed for contamination, any removal/disturbance would be risk to local water course and streams and rivers.

24/01386/HHD – The Homestead, Frog Lane, MUW. Erection of pool house, swimming pool and tennis court.

COMMENT: The PC had no objection to the planning application but stipulate that a condition to be applied regarding noise levels due to the close proximity of other dwellings.

24/01368/S73 – Vicarage Field, Church Road, MUW. Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 21/00776/FUL to allow design and layout changes to both dwellings including the addition of two dormers and two rooflights with the provision of a detached double garage (plot 1) and provision of office with dormer window above garaging (plot 2).

COMMENT: The PC object to this planning application as the dormer windows would make the dwellings look much larger and would be out of character within the surrounding area.

21/00776/FUL – Vicarage Field, Church Road, MUW. Erection of two replacement detached dwellings and associated works.

COMMENT: The PC object to this planning application as it has been noted on the application that the surface water would be going into the sewers.

24/033 RFO report

The PC received and unanimously approved the RFO report. The PC agreed for Cllr Jeff Haine to ask the burger van owner to provide a copy of their public liability for the PC's records and to remind the owner of the May 2024 invoice.

May Summary – The PC received and unanimously approved the May 2024 Summary.

24/034 S106

The PC received an update on the Art Project – The stones had all been installed, Cllr Graham Smith and Cllr Pat Ward had constructed concrete plinths for the engraved slates, Cllr Pat Ward had made posts on which to place the QR codes and website address, and Cllr Glynn Allcock had etched the QR codes and website address onto lime wood reclaimed from a tree in the Wild Garden, Cllr Graham Smith had covered the wood with several coats of protective varnish. Wendy Morris had designed the website pages which had been populated with text drafted by the Wychwood History Society and by some material referencing the sources of the various engraved quotes. The PC gave thanks to the Society, especially John Bennett and David Betterton, who had spent a good deal of time drafting the material and had been very helpful in helping improve the design of the website. It was intended to install the plinths and QR codes on Thursday 20th June so that the Art Project can go live on Friday 21st June under the title of the Milton-Under-Wychwood Heritage Trail. The website should be regarded as constantly being a work in progress so that users can provide feedback and suggest improvements and further material can be added about, for example, flora, fauna and the development of the landscape.

24/035 S137 applications

a) **WOCT** – The PC received an update on application for funding for £4,500. At the previous PC meeting councillors requested more information on contributions from other parishes and on passenger usage. Mike Parker, Chair of WOCT had provided the following additional information. There have been around 70 passenger journeys on the 210 each day in 2024, but in April the numbers using the 210 exceeded 90 most days, suggesting increasing usage, maybe weather related! Some 86% of the journey are people travelling to or from Milton-under-Wychwood. Contributions from other councils on the 210 route - Leafield agreed to give £1000. At the time of writing WOCT had not heard from Ascott or Shipton.
Decision: The Chairman to contact the bus provider to find if they had secured funding from Shipton-under-Wychwood and Ascott-under-Wychwood prior to making a final decision. The PC were to ask the bus provider how they would manage the deficit in the future. To be an agenda item for the July 2024 PC meeting where the additional information could be discussed and a decision made on the request put forward.

b) **Domestic Abuse Crisis Affecting Women and Children in Oxfordshire** – The PC received and considered an appeal for funding of £100.00 to help with the Domestic Abuse Crisis Affecting Women and Children in Oxfordshire made by a charity called Clean Slate.
Decision: The PC unanimously approved the request and agreed to provide £100.00 funding.

24/036 Eco Area transfer update – M&M have signed the transfer agreement and the PC have received copies of the transfer documents signed by the PC and by M&M, therefore the PC now own the land. The PC's solicitor applied to the Land Registry for formal registration in the name of the Parish Council. Guidelines for completion of the registration is by 20th January 2026. Note: To be added to the PC's insurance and the asset register.

24/037 Village green

a) Repair to the rope bridge on play equipment – The PC unanimously approved Cllr Glynn Allcock to source the parts required and carry out the repair.
b) Village Fete update – To be held on Saturday 13th July 2024, commencing at 2.00pm.
c) Insurance claim update – There was no update to report at the meeting other than the claim had been received.
d) Car park re-surfacing – The Hare and Co-op had been asked again if they would be willing to contribute. In addition, the Chairman had contacted WODC to check if S106 funding would cover this cost. WODC confirmed that the S106 definition mentioned maintenance. The next step was to arrange a meeting with the WODC leisure team to discuss further.
e) Re-draft of MSA lease – The Chairman had a tour of the MSA building with Cllr Jeff Haine a few weeks ago. The Chairman agreed to circulate the draft lease shortly for Cllrs to review prior to the next PC meeting.
f) Grass cutting contract – It was noted that Cllr Glynn Alcock had been managing the contractor on a weekly basis, to ensure that all elements were undertaken as per the contract. Separately a

number of other areas have come to the attention of councillors, including an area in Church Meadow which had previously been the subject of correspondence with Laserarch, and Wychwood Drive. The Councillors unanimously agreed to obtain a quotation from the contractor to cover the additional areas in Wychwood Drive and to provide the quotation for the next PC meeting.

24/038 Biodiversity plan

a) **Wild flower planting** – Following agreement at the last PC meeting Cllr Pat Ward purchased a range of wildflower plugs and seeds so that two areas in Sarah's Meadow could be planted. After the grass had been cut down to a reasonable height Cllr Pat Ward and Cllr Graham Smith removed all the turf in the selected areas and the plugs were planted on Sunday 9th June as part of the Big green Week initiative. Two mothers and four children from the village school had helped with the planting. Wire fencing had been put up until the plants were sufficiently mature.

b) Actions from Sarah's Meadow walk over - At the Annual Parish Meeting Toby Swift from Wychwood Forest Trust recommended developing much bigger areas for wildflower planting to increase the diversity of plants, insects and birdlife. The small initiative currently in hand would be a good test as to what might be involved in a larger scale activity. Toby also recommended a number of other actions to increase biodiversity, which would be evaluated over the next few weeks and proposals would be brought to future PC meetings as appropriate.

24/039 Safety of Lithiumion Batteries and e-bikes and scooters – parliamentary campaign – The PC had been contacted by a researcher on behalf of a member of the House of Lords asking if the PC would support a campaign and bill to ensure greater safety in the use and disposal of lithium batteries, following a number of fires caused by defective batteries.

Decision: The PC unanimously approved to support the campaign.

24/040 Waste Bins

a) To discuss and agree collections and costs for the waste bins – The PC considered the amount of litter bins (11) around the village green and how they were being emptied. The PC agreed for the PC's member of staff to not empty the bins as WODC were being paid to empty them. The PC agreed unanimously to reduce the litter bins around the village green to six. The Clerk was to notify WODC of this decision and a date was to be arranged for the removal of the five bins, as the PC were aware that a contract had been arranged to empty the bins.

24/041 20 mph speed limit flashing sign – The PC received a request for a 20-mph speed limit flashing sign on the straight stretch between the corner of the High Street and Green Lane.

Decision: The PC unanimously agreed to not pursue to this request.

24/042 SLCC membership – The PC unanimously approved to join SLCC's annual membership at a cost of £8.00 joining fee and £112.00 annual membership.

24/043 Public session for non-Agenda items

a) Re-surfacing road – A member of the public raised that it was good to see road's being re-surfaced in the area, and asked why Frog Lane had been re-surfaced and not others in the village. The County Cllr indicated that the C/C had a schedule of works for the re-dressing of the roads.

b) Grass cutting at the cemetery – It was noted that the grass cutting contractors were carrying out an untidy job at the cemetery. Cllr Rod Blackman agreed to contact the contractors regarding this issue.

c) Energy Hub – It was noted that Wilsdon College, Oxford were looking to create an energy hub and were interested in providing one in the village at no cost to the PC. The PC agreed to this request and asked for feedback on the findings.

24/044 Any Other Business

a) Cemetery contract – The agreement in the grass cutting contract was to collect the grass in a collection box, and it was evident that this was not being done. Cllr Rod Blackman to follow this up with the contractor.

b) Turning Circle at the cemetery – was getting overgrown. Cllr Rod Blackman was to discuss this issue with the contractor.

c) Heritage Trail – It was noted that the Heritage Trail was going live at the weekend, the Chairman asked Cllrs to test out the web site prior to going live.

d) D-Day 80th signs and flag – The PC agreed for the signs and the flag to remain in place for three months.

The meeting closed at 8.42 pm.

APPENDIX A

RFO Report June 2024

External Audit External Audit has now been sent and received by Moore Auditors for their assessment.

Cashbook By having some invoices that can be paid immediately, contractural and obligatory, and the rest brought to PC makes the system complex, but manageable.

Invoices for approval, not shown on the June Summary (as they haven't been paid) include:

Village Hall Rent - £380.00
WODC Litter bin collection - £2098.15
Groves Materials - £63.77 CAA
Payrole Company Quarterly Invoice - £69.00
GA - Materials - £74.95

The rest are shown in May's Summary
The WODC litter bin figure, the PC is looking to change. There are 11 on the Recreation Ground which the PC feels could easily be reduced.

May Summary
Receipts £127 plus £58,023.13 b/f from May = £58,150.13
Payments £16,112.37 This includes major payments of: -

£7000 for the Stones,
£2799 for Library staffing,
£1596 for grass cutting
£1791 for Solicitors fees for Sarah's Field transfer

Closing Cash Book £42,037.76
Investment Acc £36,333.84 no interest added for this month
1/4erly Bmm Account £0.03
Total balance carried forward £78,371.63

CT 14/06/24