

Little Milton Parish Council
Minutes of Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13th March 2024

Present: Cllrs Giles Denby, Howard Harrison, Ed Horwell, Adam Sheppard, Francois van der Merwe, David Wakeling

Mrs Andrea Oughton (Parish Clerk)
Members of the public: Five

Parish Forum

A resident raised concern about the condition of the footpath which runs from Chiltern View to the telephone box on Haseley Road. It hadn't been cleaned for years and was very uneven, especially at the end nearest to the telephone box.

Cllr Sheppard stated he had reported the condition of the footpath on two occasions via Fix My Street and will report it again. He urged residents to also report problems on Fix My Street.

A further question was raised asking if the Parish Council will pay for a private contractor to unblock the drains on the highway?

The Chairman reported that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) are responsible for keeping the drains clear on the highway. It was agreed to draw up a priority list of tasks including drain clearance and apply pressure to OCC Highways to get the tasks completed.

Another resident asked about progress on the installation of faster broadband to areas of the village not yet connected. The Chairman stated there was nothing further to report. The contract has been awarded but the timetable for delivery is not yet known.

01/03/24 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

02/03/24 Declaration of any pecuniary interests of members

There were no declarations of any pecuniary interests.

03/03/24 Approval of Minutes

Resolved to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14th February 2024.

04/03/24 Matters Arising

The Clerk had contacted the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC) for advice on when the Annual Parish meeting can be held. OALC responded that the Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para 15 (1)(a) & (b) states that a meeting should not be held before 6pm.

However, it seems, in the 21st century, entirely practicable and reasonable for a Parish Council to choose to hold the Parish Meeting at a time of day that will hopefully maximise the engagement of the community they serve.

Resolved to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on Saturday 4th May 2024, commencing at Noon.



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05/03/24 Planning

P24/S0570/LB - Plum Tree Cottage, High Street, Little Milton, OX44 7PU

Replace windows to the cottage and garage.

Resolved to Fully Support the application.

P24/S0636/LB - Pear Tree Cottage, Haseley Road, Little Milton, OX44 7QE

Installation of 11 solar panels onto the rear south facing roof.

Resolved to Fully Support the application.

06/03/24 Report by District / County Councillor

County Councillor van Mierlo and District Councillor Heritage had given their apologies. Their respective monthly reports had been circulated.

07/03/24 Little Milton Village Shop

The financial forecast presented to the Parish Council in January is still on track. It is not anticipated that financial support will be required for the next 2 to 2.5 years. Electricity usage has been cut back. There is a need for volunteers to step forward to help support running the shop.

Cllr van der Merwe reported a constructive meeting of the working group had taken place, identifying common goals for the shop and the village hall. Four companies have submitted quotations to supply solar panels to the shop roof. Approximately 18 panels on the shop roof will produce 60-70% of electricity requirements. All four companies have said the roof construction is such that there is nothing to attach solar panels to. A local builder is confident this problem can be overcome by adding more timber. Total cost, including additional timber supports is £15k excluding VAT without battery storage.

08/03/24 A329 Speed and HGV Issues

Speed Indicator Device Signage (SIDs)

Three possible locations have been identified. Agreed to prioritise the location nearest the school. Updated quotations to be obtained. A formal application to be submitted to County Councillor van Mierlo for £1,500 from his Councillor Grant Fund towards the cost of a SID.

The recent grant application to South Oxfordshire District Council's (SODC) Rural fund was not successful. Feedback has been requested on reasons why the application was declined. Dependent on feedback, consideration will be given to making a further application when Phase 2 of the grant opens.

Community Speed Watch

The group is registered, Little Milton Community Speed Watch, and the site is live on the centralised web service. Councillors who are willing to register and undertake the training



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are asked to sign up via the site and report back any problems. The next step is to identify locations in the village and seek approval from Thames Valley Police.

Weight Restriction

Nothing further to report.

Traffic Survey

Data from the surveys has not been received. OCC to be contacted to find out when the data will be sent to the Parish Council.

09/03/24 Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)

The contractor has been contacted to see if further discount can be applied to the quotation. The refurbishment is expected to be completed early summer.

Two quotations have been received for the removal of two trees behind the MUGA.
Resolved to accept the lowest quotation and engage BGG to carry out the work.

10/03/24 Finance

Approval of Council expenditure

Colourplus: March 2024 newsletter	£239.20
Raymond Fergusson: Month 12 2023-24, Editor	£82.50
Raymond Fergusson: Editor's Expenses	£57.80
Andrea Oughton: Month 12 2023-24, Clerk	£244.66
Francois van der Merwe (Microsoft Licences - Feb)	£18.24
Wel Medical (Defibsafe2 cabinet)	£504.00
Renewal of Lottery Licence	£20.00

Direct Debit

Intuit: Accounting software March 9 th – April 9th 2024	£16.80
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Bank reconciliations available.

The latest forecast for 2023-24 and 2024-25, together with an overview was circulated prior to the meeting. Current initiatives were discussed, including the MUGA Refurbishment, MUGA Lights Refurbishment, Speed Indicator Devices, replacement fencing for the playground.

The impact of proposed expenditure on Reserves during 2023-24 and 2024-25 was discussed. It was agreed that careful monitoring and regular review of the forecast is essential. Dependent on timing of projects it may be necessary to make monthly VAT reclaims to maintain cash flow. It was agreed the forecast will be updated and presented at the next meeting.

Resolved to approve the Effectiveness of Internal Control and Risk Management.



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11/03/24 Reports from Councillor Representatives

Recreation Ground / Open Spaces

A planter will be ordered in the next couple of months to be placed on the corner of Haseley Road and A329. As agreed at the last meeting a water carrier at a cost of £280 will be ordered in May.

Cllr Harrison will pursue the Senior Officer for Cyclical Works at OCC to push for drains in the village to be cleared. Biffa has agreed to clear the build up of material on a section of pavement along the A329.

Contact has been made with the Senior Bridge Technician at OCC who has agreed to schedule work to repair the bridge parapet. This will take some time due to winter damage workload throughout the county.

There is a possible grant funding opportunity to apply for funds for a fully paid pitch inspection on the recreation ground and provision of metal goal posts. It was agreed to explore this.

Playground

County Cllr van Mierlo has agreed to contribute £1.5k from his Councillor Grant fund towards the cost of new fencing around the playground. The application form has been submitted to OCC and is being processed.

Village School

The village school has been asked to consider projects which might be eligible for funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy and submit these suggestions to the Parish Council prior to the Annual Parish Meeting.

Due to a lack of volunteers, the summer fete will not take place this year.

Highways

Three separate reports via Fix My Street for repairs on the highway beside the brook have been made. It was agreed to write to riparian landowners asking them to carry out their responsibilities to help alleviate flooding.

The missing signage and lighting from the chicane at the entrance to the village from Thame will be reported again using the new highways engagement email.

Several Thames Water trucks have been busy at the pumping station during recent periods of heavy rainfall. Thames Water reported a further release into the brook warning it may contain effluent. Agreed to publicise this via social media to dissuade people and pets from going near the brook.

12/03/24 Correspondence

The nursery has written asking permission to have two donkeys and some lambs on the recreation ground as part of their spring fete on Saturday 23rd March 2024 from 2pm-4pm.

Resolved to grant the request with the proviso that the recreation ground is left clean and tidy after the event.



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Cllr Horwell has successfully applied to Thames Water for a grant of £1.5k towards the cost of a water refill machine on the recreation ground.

A request has been received from a resident asking the Parish Council to consider converting part of the MUGA to a padel tennis court. The Chairman will ask the resident to attend the Annual Parish Meeting to explain more about the idea.

13/03/24 Exchange of Information

The external electricity cabinet is broken, SSE to be contacted to arrange the repair.

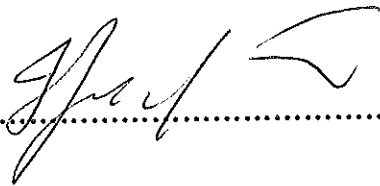
14/03/24 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th April 2024, commencing at 7.30pm at Pine Lodge.

The meeting finished at 10.15pm

Signed by:

Chairman.....



Date.....

10 Apr 24

