

Little Milton Parish Council
Minutes of Council Meeting held on Wednesday 13th December 2023

Present: Cllrs Giles Denby, Howard Harrison, Ed Horwell, Francois van der Merwe, David Wakeling
Mrs Andrea Oughton (Parish Clerk)
Members of the public: Three

Parish Forum

A member of the public asked if there was an update on the drainage problem raised at the last meeting? It was suggested that the Parish Council may consider whether to employ a County Council Highways approved contractor to take on routine drain clearance to help reduce flooding during periods of heavy rain.

The Clerk will ask Cllr Sheppard to provide an update on progress regarding contact with the riparian landowners and the County Council.

01/12/23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Cllr Adam Sheppard.

02/12/23 Declaration of any pecuniary interests of members

There were no declarations of any pecuniary interests.

03/12/23 Approval of Minutes

Resolved to approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th November 2023.

04/12/23 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising that were not already covered by the agenda.

05/12/23 Planning

At the time of publishing the agenda there were no planning matters to discuss.

06/12/23 Report by District / County Councillor

Cllr Freddie van Mierlo had given his apologies.

Cllr Geogina Heritage circulated her report prior to the meeting. Cllr Heritage reported she had attended several meetings over the last month, sitting on Planning and Licensing Committees. It had been a good month for Neighbourhood Plans, Referendums had been held for Lewknor, Towersey and Wheatley Plans. All received a majority 'Yes' vote.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are preparing to launch a second round of consultation early next as part of the development of the new Joint Local Plan to 2041. Cllr Heritage reported the Chalgrove Airfield housing development site has been deallocated from the Joint Local Plan.

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At present SODC cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply (currently 4.2). This is due primarily to the slowness in delivery on the part of developers. SODC continues to defend its policy robustly.

07/12/23 Little Milton Village Shop

Resolved that Cllrs van der Merwe and Horwell will represent the Parish Council on an informal group tasked to investigate the legal structures of the village hall and shop, explore grant funding streams, further explore the possibility of fitting solar panels to the village hall and to draft a village wide consultation. The group will also include two representatives from the Village Hall and the Village Shop. The first meeting will take place early in the New Year.

08/12/23 A329 Speed and HGV Issues

Installation of new bollards

Oxfordshire County Council has confirmed the contractor has been instructed and it is hoped the work will commence shortly.

Speed Indicator Device Signage (SIDs)

A grant funding application has been submitted to SODC's Rural England Prosperity Fund for the purchase of two SID signs. It was agreed to wait for the outcome of the grant award (not expected until March 2024) before placing an order for the signs. Cllr Heritage offered to contact County Councillor van Mierlo regarding his offer to provide £1,200 of funding towards SID signage for the parish.

Cllr Denby will contact residents close to the two proposed SID sign locations.

Application to Oxfordshire County Council for a Weight Restriction

A local resident with professional experience in air quality monitoring addressed the meeting. The resident reported the national monitoring company he works for does not consider the A329 as a significant road.

A proposal / quotation to install diffusion tubes in three locations for six months to provide an idea of mean concentration values was discussed. It was noted that nationally Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) levels are dropping, this is expected to continue as the use of electric vehicles increases.

After consideration it was agreed not pursue the proposal and quotation. Instead, the resident will share with the Parish Council informal data gathered from monitoring tubes on his property. It was noted that a diffusion tube, with an SODC sticker on, is in place opposite the Old Forge. District Cllr Heritage will investigate and report back.

It was noted that data related to the recent traffic survey had been received. The data will be analysed and a summary of the results circulated in the new year.

Community Speed Watch

At least seven members of the village have volunteered to help with the Community Speed Watch. Cllr van der Merwe is waiting for an application number to register the group.

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09/12/23 Footpaths / Public Right of Way

In May the owner of land at Warren Farm Barn submitted a Highways Declaration which prevents unrecorded rights of way from being legally recorded based on presumed dedication in the future.

Cllr Horwell confirmed there were several living witnesses to challenge the footpath has been a Right of Way dating back to 1992. There is enough evidence to support a change to the Definitive Map. The parish council is keen to have established footpaths protected. It was agreed to start the process to add the footpath to the Definitive Map.

10/12/23 Finance

Approval of Council Expenditure

Colourplus November 2023 newsletter	£291.18
Clerk (A Oughton) Month 9 2023-24	£384.70
Editor (R Fergusson) Month 9 2023-24	£130.50
Francois van der Merwe (Microsoft Licences - Nov)	£18.24
Howard Harrison (Chippings x 2 bags and Plants)	£503.86

Oxfordshire County Council (Traffic Survey)	£456.00
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Direct Debit

Intuit: Accounting software: Dec 9 th 2023 – Jan 9 th 2024	£16.80
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Bank reconciliations for November had been circulated.

Resolved to add Cllr Howard Harrison to the bank mandate for the Current and Deposit accounts held at National Westminster Bank plc. It was further **Resolved** to remove Steve Sidhu who stepped down as a Councillor at the May elections.

11/12/23 Reports from Councillor Representatives

Recreation Ground / Open Spaces

Rainfall over the last few weeks has prevented heavy machinery coming onto the recreation ground to cut the hedge behind the MUGA and playground. The verges were cut on 21st November.

A new bench for Old Fields was delivered to Wayside on 1st December. It was delivered assembled. A means of transporting it to Old Fields is required. It is hoped to have the bench insitu before Christmas. The cost of the bench is £722.40 (incl. VAT).

Two bags of bark chippings have been spread along the footpath beside the church. Carol Turner has completely reworked and replanted the three planters, millennium beds and the area around the water pump. These have been planted with seasonal bedding and spring bulbs.

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Cllr Denby reported the Christmas Fete was well attended.

Cllr Denby confirmed he had spoken to a resident whose hedge was encroaching onto the highway. The resident confirmed it will be cut back in the new year.

12/12/23 Correspondence

Notification has been received that SODC's Waste team will undertake a deep clean service in the village in February.

A report of the services Citizens Advice provided over the last year had been received. It was agreed to make a £200 donation to Citizens Advice (payment to be authorised in January).

13/12/23 Exchange of Information

The following Planning application was considered under this item, not being formally published on the agenda and a response to Planning Authority being required before the Christmas break.

P23/S3821/LB - Manor House, Church Hill, Little Milton, OX44 7QB

Repairs and alterations to Grade II* listed dwelling and other buildings within the curtilage. (as amended by plans 002A and 001 A which retain the expression of the original plan form with down stands and corbels received 12 December 2023).

Resolved to Fully Support the application.

14/12/23 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th January 2024, commencing at 7.30pm at Pine Lodge. Cllr van der Merwe provided his apologies for the next meeting.

The meeting finished at 9.30pm

Signed by:
Chairman.....

Dan Wain

Date.....

16th Jan 2024