

Little Milton Parish Council
Minutes of Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19th April 2023

Present: Cllr. Howard Harrison
Cllr Adam Sheppard
Cllr. Steve Sidhu
Cllr. Francois van der Merwe
Mrs Andrea Oughton (*Parish Clerk*)
Members of the public: 2

Parish Forum

A parishioner raised concern regarding the type and speed of vehicles travelling along Haseley Road. He had witnessed, on one day in short succession, three HGVs being driven in an unacceptable manor and travelling in excess of the 20mph speed limit. Two of the vehicles turned off the A329 onto Haseley Road at speed and without slowing, if a pedestrian(s) or a parent with a pushchair had been walking along the road the result would have been a very serious accident.

01/04/23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Cllrs Denby and Cllr Wakeling, also County Councillor van Mierlo.

02/04/23 Declaration of any pecuniary interests of members

There were no declarations of any pecuniary interests.

03/04/23 Approval of Minutes

Resolved to approve the minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 8th March 2023. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

04/04/23 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting that were not covered on the agenda.

05/04/23 Planning

There were no planning applications or planning items to consider.

06/04/23 Land at Warren Barn Farm, Little Milton

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

07/04/23 Report by District / County Councillors

County Councillor Freddie van Mierlo submitted apologies and circulated his monthly report.

District Councillor Caroline Newton submitted apologies and circulated her monthly report. Chalgrove: at a meeting with local councillors in March Homes England (HE) confirmed they are still determined to push ahead with the development of Chalgrove Airfield.

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However, in light of opposition from the Civil Aviation Authority, HE seems to have gone back to the drawing board. They gave very little indication at the meeting of their outline strategy, mitigation of traffic, etc.

It was noted that Cllr Newton is not standing for election in May. The Parish Council extended its thanks to Cllr Newton for her support whilst serving as District Councillor for Haseley Brook Ward and wished her success for the future.

08/04/23 Finance

Approval of Council Expenditure

Colourplus: April Newsletter 2023	£239.20
Raymond Fergusson: Month 1 2023-24, Editor	£76.50
Andrea Oughton: Month 1 2023-24, Clerk/RFO	£227.18
Francois Van Der Merwe- Microsoft 365 Licenses	£16.68
Howard Harrison (plants)	£72.56
Garden Kings (MUGA)	£114.00
HMRC: PAYE Months 10-12 2022-23	£323.00
SODC: Dog Bin servicing. Qtr. to 31 st March 2023	£226.04
NBB Outdoors (Inclusive Picnic Bench)	£565.20
Information Commissioners Office: Data Protection Renewal Fee	£35.00
GeoXphere (Parish Online) Annual membership to March 25 2024	£60.00
CPRE: Annual membership to 26/04/2024	£36.00
Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils (OALC) Annual membership	£156.00
Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association: Annual membership	£45.00
Community First Oxfordshire: Annual membership	£55.00
Society of Local Council Clerks: Annual membership	£83.50

Direct Debit

Intuit: Accounting software April 9th – May 9th 2023	£16.80
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Bank reconciliations for the current and deposit accounts were circulated and approved as a correct record. It was noted that nearly 50% of income generated from 2023-24 advertisements in the newsletter has been received.

The Clerk advised that it is likely the Parish Council's income and expenditure for 2022-23 will be below the £25k threshold and it can consider whether to exempt itself from an external audit. The year end financial accounts together with the Internal Auditor's report will be presented at the June meeting. If approved the accounts and accompanying information will be published on the website and made available for public inspection.

Resolved to appoint Mr Ian Dennis as Internal Auditor for 2022-23.

The Clerk advised she had assumed full responsibility for the financial affairs of the parish council from 1st April 2023. She and Raymond Fergusson had met on several occasions to go through various aspects of the Responsible Financial Officer's role.

Resolved that the newsletter editor will continue to generate invoices for advertisements in the newsletter using the council's accounting software.

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It was agreed that the Clerk investigate the cost of a fireproof safe in which to store the council's legal documentation.

09/04/23 King Charles Coronation

Details of the project to commemorate the Coronation of King Charles III on 6th May 2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting. It is planned to install a human Sun clock, sometimes called a "Shadow clock" which will be laid next to the children's playground on the village recreation ground. It is further planned to bury a Time Vault with instructions to hopefully be dug up and opened in 100 years, in 2123.

A quotation of £2,145 (excl. Vat) to provide the stone for the sun clock had been circulated. It was noted that several donations towards the cost had been received.

Resolved that the parish council contribute £250.00 towards the cost of the stone. It was further **resolved** that the parish council contribute to any shortfall in funding for the project on a 50:50 basis with the Village Hall Committee.

Once installed the sun clock will be registered as an asset and included on the parish council's insurance.

10/04/23 Tennis and MUGA Court

Further to the initial investigation work related to resurfacing the MUGA, an interested resident has identified some potential grant funding opportunities. An application has been drafted for grant funding up to 89.25% of the project cost.

It was noted that the roots of two birch trees adjacent to the MUGA are adversely affecting the surface. The trees will need to be removed before refurbishment work commences.

Resolved that the two trees are removed prior to commencement of work and that four trees are planted in a different location within the parish.

Resolved that the grant application is submitted in the name of the parish council.

Resolved that if funding for 89.25% of the project is achieved the parish council will underwrite the remaining 10.75% (approximately £7.5k).

Resolved that the parish council will create a maintenance plan for the MUGA.

Resolved to delegate responsibility to Cllr van der Merwe to create a new letting policy.

Lighting

Following receipt of £1k grant funding towards the refurbishment of the lighting and allowance in 2023-24 budget to cover the remaining cost it was **resolved** that work commence on the MUGA lighting.

A contractor has worked on the MUGA surface to reduce the moss. Signage will be put up advising users the surface is slippery when wet or frosty and that users do so at their own risk.

11/04/23 Reports from Councillor Representatives

Recreation Ground and Open Green Spaces

Wildflower seed has been sown along the western and southern edges of the recreation ground.

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The installation of new bollards on Gold Street was completed on 20th March 2023. On 29th March 2023 a cherry picker damaged two of the bollards. A County Highways Officer confirmed Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) will repair the two damaged bollards at OCC's cost. The work has now been completed.

Resolved to purchase two bags of chippings to be spread on the muddy areas at each end of the bollard installation.

Pedestrian gateway to the recreation ground: **Resolved** that 60 x 60cm slabs are laid to the level of the threshold to eliminate the puddle and make it level.

Utilities and Highways

In response to the concern raised by a resident regarding speeds along the Haseley Road, Cllr Sheppard has written again to the County Highways team to request speed limit signs along the Haseley Road are moved back.

It was agreed that implementation of the new 20mph speed limit had already made a difference, generally vehicles were observing the new speed limit and there was a noticeable reduction in vehicle road noise levels. It was noted that dragon's teeth road markings have not been completed yet. Cllr Sheppard will chase County Highways.

Contact has been made with Thames Valley Police via the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) to request that a mobile speed van is deployed on random occasions in the village.

It was agreed that now the 20mph speed limit has been introduced, a traffic survey is undertaken to gather data on speed, type of vehicle, routes taken, etc.

Cllr Sheppard has written to OCC Highways regarding the possibility of extending the barrier on the pavement by the school.

Cllr van der Merwe has responded on behalf of the parish council to OCCs Area Weight Restriction consultation to identify choke points and hot spots across the county for unsuitable traffic.

An opportunity to meet and discuss local issues with a PCSO at Pine Lodge was well attended. A PCSO can act as a conduit for evidence gathering, gather information on areas that may need patrolling, and areas related to speeding such as a community speed watch initiative.

It was agreed that the parish council investigate the possibility of purchasing and installing Speed Indicator Device Signs (SIDS) to help slow traffic.

Communication

OCCs Digital Team expects that by July commercial contractors would have notified the authorities what areas they intend to develop commercially. At this time, any areas not being covered by commercial operator plans will have the opportunity to once again apply for voucher funded schemes. Cllr van der Merwe expects to have a further update on this by the end of July / early August.

Cllr Sidhu indicated he is happy to carry on with social media on behalf of the parish council if required once he is no longer a parish councillor. The parish council thanked Cllr Sidhu for all he had done whilst serving on the council. Councillor responsibilities will be agreed at the Annual Meeting of the Council in May.

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12/04/23 Correspondence

There was no further correspondence to add to that already circulated.

13/04/23 Exchange of Information

Nothing to report.

14/04/23 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 17th May 2023, and will commence on the rising of the Annual Parish Meeting commencing at 6.30pm at Pine Lodge.

{Post meeting note: due to the parish council having an uncontested election on 4th May 2023 the next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th May 2023, and commence on the rising of the Annual Parish Meeting which commences at 6.30pm at Pine Lodge}

The meeting finished at 21:00 hrs

Signed by:  Date..... *10 May '23*

Chairman.....

