

**Report on Little Milton Village Shop
Little Milton Annual Parish Meeting
Wednesday 11th May 2016**

Report given by Simon Oddie, Chairman, Little Milton Village Shop Limited

A Special General Meeting was held on 15th February following the resignation of the then Chairman rendering the Committee not viable. Six new members were elected giving a total of eleven members. The first meeting was held on 8th March and elected a new Chairman (Simon Oddie), Secretary (Sarah Wakeling) and Treasurer (Liz House). Three important work groups were established: Business Planning (Richard Yelland), Admin. & Staffing (Bertie Bright) and Finance (Martin Brough). At a subsequent meeting a discussion took place around the three options available to the business, namely closure of the entire operation, closure of either the shop or the Post Office or keeping all activities going albeit with a change of emphasis. I am pleased to say that the Committee chose the last of these and the Business Planning Work Group subsequently produced an Outline Business Plan which was discussed, commented on and approved by the Committee at a meeting held on 20th April. Two meetings have been held with representatives from Post Offices Ltd. These were very constructive in defining what improvements could be made to the layout and organisation of the shop and Post Office. In particular it was confirmed that any changes would not affect the status of the business as a Community Branch and that we would also be eligible to apply for a grant of up to £14,000 from the Community Fund. A planning meeting is scheduled for later in May. Overall progress on the Committee and new business plan has been encouraging and I am confident that we can turn the business around.

The shop finances have taken a downward turn in recent months and following a profit of £2,900 in the year 2014/15 the outturn for 2015/16 is expected to be a loss of about £800. Increased competition from nearby outlets (e.g. Stadhampton) and increased shop overheads are thought to be the main reasons for this decline.

The shop is in need of more volunteers and with currently only around ten in number this is significantly less than required compared to other village shops. This issue will be addressed as plans for the new business are formulated.

Finally a drive for more shareholders has been launched as we are aware that there is interest from the community since shares were last issued in March 2009.