

Great Milton Parish Council

c/o Helen Cherry, 01844 278707

contact@clerkgreatmilton.co.uk

www.great-milton.co.uk

Minutes of the **Meeting of Great Milton Parish Council** held **Monday 14th April** at **7.15pm** in the **Pavilion:**

Present: Peter Fewell (Vice Chair), Doug Colley, Bill Fox and Christine Pepperell.

In Attendance: Helen Cherry (Clerk) 2 members of the public.

45/14 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Stephen Harrod, Gwen Harris and Rosalind Hayman

46/14 Register of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests for this Meeting

None

47/14 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

It was resolved to APPROVE the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 17th March as a true and accurate record.

48/14 Matters to Report

The District Councillor and County Councillor provided the meeting with updates from their respective councils to be published in The Bulletin.

Neighbours Hall Car Park

An email was circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting regarding the Neighbours' Hall Committee (NHMC) request to borrow money from the Parish Council to fund solicitors' fees. This item will be discussed at the next meeting (May) as the Clerk is to investigate whether the Parish Council is able to loan money. **Action: Clerk (HC)**

49/14 Correspondence and Public Discussion

The Clerk circulated 'Thank you' letters from Wheatley Park School and South and Vale Carers Centre in receipt of their donation from GMPC.

50/14 Planning Applications

A To consider the following Planning Applications from SODC:

None

B To review any planning decisions received and any outstanding planning matters from SODC:

It was noted that P14/S0279/FUL - Crofts Furlong Farm, application is being considered at the planning committee meeting on the 16 April

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51/14 Repair Lane – Lower End

It was agreed to request an additional itemised quote from Mr C Putt (village maintenance) regarding the work to be carried out, to repair the Lane (triangle).

It was noted that the clerk had requested several quotes from different contractors but only received the one.

52/14 Financial Resolutions

A To authorise cheques for payment:

Helen Cherry. Salary, Tax and Expenses. £382.96

Jonathan Dudley. Bulletin production. £338.60

Colin Putt. Village Maintenance (Repair path parallel to house, Clematis Cottage). £150

Thames Water. Allotment. £6.38

HM Revenue and Customs. (Tax for Clerk, mth 11, 12 and 1) £219.65

B Parish Council Annual Accounts and Bank Reconciliation

The Parish Clerk circulated the Parish Council Annual Accounts and bank reconciliation prior to the meeting. It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the Parish Council Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2014.

C Great Milton Parish Council Annual Internal Audit Plan

It was RESOLVED to APPROVE the annual internal audit plan.

53/14 Policy consultation transparency code circulated from NALC

Correspondence received from NALC referring to the draft transparency code for Parish and Town Councils with a turnover not exceeding £25,000 was circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Christine Pepperell reported that after reading the full report there were no changes for GMPC to consider.

54/14 School Playground – Tarmac of Path

There were no objections to the request to add a layer of tarmac onto the gravel path in the School Playground, however there was one condition that the School remove the tarmac surface and re-instate the area if the lease of the land in question was ever terminated.

55/14 Any Other Business

The meeting closed at 7:55

The next meeting of Great Milton Parish Council will be held on **Monday 19th May starting at 7:30pm in the Pavilion.**

Signed:

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Great Milton Parish Council would like to convene an
Annual Parish Council
meeting to be held on
Monday 14th April 2014 at 8:00pm in the Pavilion

Minutes

56/14 Apologies for absence

Cllrs. Stephen Harrod, Gwen Harris, Rosalind Hayman.
Andy Noble (Great Milton Recreation Ground Management Committee)
Victor Story (The Sheppard Charitable Trust and The Kent and Couling Charity)
Nollag on behalf of the Chairman (Hard Surface Play Area Committee)

57/14 Annual Report of the Parish Council

The report from Cllr. Stephen Harrod was circulated.
See appendix 57/14 a

58/14 Parish Council Accounts for the Year ended 31st March 2014

The Parish Council Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2014 was circulated.
See appendix 58/14 a

59/14 Parish Council Observations on its Finances

The Parish Council Observations on its Finances was circulated.
See appendix 59/14 a

60/14 Annual Report and Financial Statements from:

a) The Great Milton Recreation Ground Management Committee

A report from Andy Noble was circulated. See appendix 60/14 a

b) The Sheppard Charitable Trust

An email received from Victor Story was read out. See appendix 60/14b

c) The Kent and Couling Charity

An email received from Victor Story was read out. See appendix 60/14c

d) The Old Field Charity

A report was not received from Old Field Charity in time of the meeting.

e) The Hard Surface Play Area Committee

A report was not received from the Hard Surface Play Area Committee in time of the meeting.

61/14 To receive the observations of the County and District Councillors

A report was received from Cllr Stephen Harrod. See appendix 61/14a (District Councillor).

There was no report from the County Councillor.

62/14 There are no resolutions proposed for discussion at this meeting

63/14 Any other business

Views Farm

Charles Peers informed the Parish Council about his plans to relocate some of the public footpaths on his land.

Appendix 57/14 a - Annual Report of the Parish Council

Great Milton Parish Council Chairman's Annual Report 2014

- Planning
 - Crofts Furlong Farm is the only really controversial development that we have encountered in the past year. Although the planning application was approved by the PC, it has been called to committee at SODC and will be heard on Wednesday 16 April 2014, when a site visit will be requested on behalf of the Richardsons.
- Parking, traffic and roads
 - The road surfaces in and around the Parish are in poor repair and pressure is being applied for some action from OCC.
 - However, budget cuts have necessitated a significant reduction in funding available for repairs and, whilst OCC is doing what they can, we must live with the problems for a while still.
- Manoir
 - The Manoir continues to be a major drawcard for visitors to the Parish and receives on-going support from the PC.
- The Bull
 - The purchase of The Bull by 150 residents and friends was a highlight of the year and is proving to be a great success with much publicity being generated for itself and the village as a whole
- The Bulletin
 - Jonathan Dudley is doing a great job of editing and publishing the Bulletin. We have successfully introduced a full colour cover
 - Advertising revenue is holding up well and needs to be encouraged.
- Footpaths
 - Footpaths have been well maintained, by and large;
 - Dog bins have been installed at strategic locations around the footpath network and are being fully utilised, despite one of them having been removed by persons unknown!
- Crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour

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- There have been a few instances of opportunistic crime but these remain the exception (see Dog Bins above!);
- Litter and fly-tipping continues to be a problem and we encourage all walkers to continue their efforts in picking up litter during their wanderings.
- Despite a low turnout, a successful litter-pick was carried out again recently, resulting in the collection of a number of bags of rubbish and recycling. Thanks to all those who took part.
- The Parish Plan
 - The Parish Plan provides an action plan for our on-going use and is due for an update during the coming year. The possibility of undertaking a wider reaching Neighbourhood Plan in conjunction with adjacent parishes has been shelved

We now enjoy a full Parish Council of seven members since Gwen Harris joined our ranks during the year. Helen Cherry is fulfilling the challenging role of Parish Clerk and is undertaking regular training and development programmes to further enhance her contributions to the Parish. Thanks to both of them for their participation.

Thanks also are due to my fellow councillors for their continued support and tireless efforts to voluntarily manage the affairs of the Parish. As I now take on the role of County Councillor in addition to the District I may find that I am calling upon our vice-chairman more frequently to lead the PC meetings but I am hoping that once the dust of this new appointment has settled that I will once again be able to take up the reins fully. My thanks to Peter Fewell for deputising for me at this Annual Parish Meeting and my apologies for having been called away on pressing County Council matters.

Stephen Harrod

Chairman

14 April 2014

Appendix 58/14 a - Parish Council Accounts for the Year ended 31st March 2014

Great Milton Parish Council				
Bank reconciliation				
Balance at bank as at 31 March 14		£	Book balance as at 31 March 14	£
Current account		6,276.50	Brought forward	16,844.09
30 day Notice account		9,575.82		
		15,852.32		
Add: Outstanding lodgements	Current year	100.00	Receipts	18,538.49
	Previous years	0.00		
Less: Unpresented cheques	Current year	-1,154.12	Payments	-20,584.38
	Previous years	0.00		
Reconciled balance		14,798.20	Carried forward	14,798.20

Appendix 59/14 a - Parish Council Observations on its Finances

Observations on Great Milton Parish Council's Accounts 2013-2014
Accounts for the year ending 31st March 2014

Receipts

Income for the 2013-2014 financial year amounted to £18,538.49
(The opening cash book balance £16,844.09)

Bulletin Advertisement

Lower than estimated at £2,295.00, not sure why as the majority of advertisers have renewed their ads for the whole year. There are few new advertisers that have started advertising in the bulletin.

Another reason for the lower figure, of which Cllr Christine Pepperell commented on, could be due the fact that the budget was set in November 2012, when payments were paid promptly so there were less payments to collect in 2013/14.

Advertisers that have not paid (after several reminders being sent to them) and their advert time-scale has also come to end is automatically removed from the bulletin until the Clerk receives payment.

To note that Bulletin production exceeded advertising by £1,345.10, in previous year this had been vice-versa. But to also note the slight increase in bulletin production due to the colour cover.

VAT re-claim

Is slightly under at £923.93

Payments

Total expenditure was £20,584.

Areas that were over budget:

Grass Cutting

Received more invoices than anticipated.

The overspend was agreed by the Parish Council, it was to pay for the re-seeding and rolling of the Recreation Ground, in addition to their maintenance grant.

BT Sponsorship

The bill for last year was received too late to be paid in the 2012-13 financial year, therefore two payments were deducted from this financial year. Resulting in an overspend of £350

Areas that were under budget:

Donations

Gave a grant/donation of £1,500 to the Bull, which looks like it's over budget by £1,430 but in fact the grant for the Bull was from reserves to support a community asset.

All donations are noted under S137 expenditure.

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Staff Training

Staff training was actually under budget due to the £100 refund from NALC

Website

Previously £955 was allocated to an external web-hosting manager.

But due to Carina setting up a free website for the Parish Council, of which Cllr Rosalind Hayman is now managing, none of the allocated budget was spent.

Contingency

Only £172 from the £440 budgeted amount was spent, saving £267.80

Reserves

Spending £2,500 from reserves resulted in a drop to £14,798 at the year end. This remains in line with the recommendation that 3-12 months' expenditure should be held for emergencies or unexpected events.

Notes

Reserves were earmarked for Jenks Tree work, to avoid having to increase the precept.

Helen Cherry

Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer for Great Milton Parish Council.

April 2014

Annual Report and Financial Statements from:

Appendix 60/14 a - The Great Milton Recreation Ground Management Committee Annual Report for the year to 31 March 2014

1. The Recreation Ground, The Green, Great Milton, Oxfordshire, OX44 7NP is registered with the Charity Commissioners (No 304308) and constituted by a scheme dated 4th July 1979.
2. The charity is administered by the Great Milton Recreation Ground Management Committee, which for 2012/13 comprised

Chairman	Mr Andrew Noble
Vice Chair	Mrs Michele Block
Secretary	not filled
Treasurer	Mr Paul Dennis
Other members	Ms Clare Blakeway-Phillips, Mr Michael Robinson, Mr James Cunningham, Mrs Emma Wragg, Dr Emily Johns, Mr Darren Brown and Mrs Rachel Forsyth

3. The Custodian Trustees – Great Milton Parish Council

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4. Composition of the Committee – the maximum membership may be 3 elected members, 8 representative members and up to 4 co-opted members. The committee hold office until the following AGM.
5. Elective members – there were no members elected at the last AGM.
6. Co-opted members – Andrew Noble, Emma Wragg and Emily Johns were co-opted to the committee.
7. Representative Members – the appointing body and number to be appointed were-

Body	Number	Representatives
• Parish Council	2	Mrs Michele Block & Mr Michael Robinson
• PCC	2	Ms Clare Blakeway-Phillips
• Youth Club	1	Not represented
• Cricket Club	1	Mr Paul Dennis
• Football Club	1	Mr Darren Brown
• Governors of GM School	1	Mr James Cunningham
• Little Owls Nursery	1	Mrs Rachel Forsyth

8. Objects – the object of the Charity is the provision and maintenance of facilities for the recreation and leisure time occupation for the residents of Great Milton parish. In particular a playing field with ancillary facilities and a playground for young children.
9. Discussion – The Pavilion continues to be home to Little Owls Nursery, the Cricket & Football Clubs, Junior Sports, the JSC holiday clubs and for various social and fund raising events. It also serves as the venue for Parish Council meetings and as the village Polling Station. The Playing Field continues to be used extensively for various ad-hoc activities and also more formally by the Cricket and Football Clubs, Junior Sports, cricket coaching and for diverse events such as the Church Fete, the School Sports Day and the Fireworks Party.

Our attempts to increase the usage of the facilities resulted in us hosting a number of cricket matches for the Oxfordshire Girls Under 13 team as well as a day of County trials. The introduction of a second football team means that there are now matches almost every weekend, and we have also hosted some games for the Long Crendon Under 15 team.

During the year the Recreation Ground was used as the base for the television companies involved in filming episodes of Midsomer Murder and Endeavour in the village, and their use of the facilities gave a welcome boost to our financial reserves.

Our newly negotiated tenancy agreement with the Little Owls Nursery has helped us ensure that the rent we charge is more closely aligned to costs we incur, and our review of the charges for all users has meant changes where appropriate.

Our project to renovate the Play Area has been ably led by James Cunningham who has successfully applied to SODC for a grant towards the costs, and we are now awaiting the results of applications to other grant making bodies to enable us to start work.

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During the year we have made concerted efforts to improve the visual appearance of the Recreation Ground to make it a more pleasant place for the users, and during 2014 we will make further enhancements.

Our on-going issue with damage caused by vehicles on the Rec, in particular by parents at the school who use the Rec as a car park, has not gone away. We continue to believe that the Recreation Ground is not the schools car park as this clearly conflicts with both the aims of the charity and the safety of the users of the Rec, and it is clear that we will need to develop a more formal long term plan to protect both the Rec and its users from cars.

The financing of the insurance and most of the grass cutting and grounds maintenance is provided by the Parish Council. The proceeds from the sale of the "garage strip" in 2003 continues to be invested according to the guidelines laid down by the Charity Commission and I would like to thank the Trustees of the Sheppard Trust for their continued support.

10. Financial Information - the Accounts for the Year ending 31st March 2014 shows that the Charity held uncommitted cash reserves of £3,947 as well as a grant from Oxfordshire County Council of £1,000 towards improving the seating and tables on the recreation ground.
11. Connected Party Transactions - Trustees have received reimbursement of expenses incurred with third parties on production of receipts.
12. Future Developments – as advised, the plan to revitalise the children's play area and to improve the range of activities available is underway and we are attempting to source funding for the project.
13. Conclusion – Finally, I would like to thank all the committee members for their many efforts, and I would also like to express my gratitude to all those people who have given their time throughout the year to help maintain the Recreation Ground, Pavilion and Play Area for the benefit of the community and we would be delighted if more people in the village would offer their help towards the common good.

Signed: Andrew Noble

Chairman

31st March 2014

Appendix 60/14b - The Sheppard Charitable Trust

The Sheppard Trust Clerk always publishes, in the Bulletin, the annual report which also goes to the Charity Commissioners. The Sheppard Charitable Trust does its best to support organisations which are based in Great Milton and who apply for support. Often our disposable funds do not allow us to support to the full what is requested of us and we then have to discern in a fair and impartial way the merits of each

individual application before we make our decisions of the level of grant.

Victor Story

Appendix 60/14c - The Kent and Couling Charity

The trustees meet a few weeks before Christmas. Our Income from the investments is roughly £350 per annum, but during the previous year a very kind benefactor gave us an admirable sum to allow us, not only to give to TEN recipients £50 in vouchers to spend in our shop in any way they so wish (but excluding tobacco products), but also to give to each recipient and additional £30 specifically to help with winter fuel costs.

I would ask if people discern a person in the village in need of support, within the guidelines of the statutes of the Charity-these are clearly set out on the wall plaque in the Church-then I would ask that they or their friend speak to Cynthia D'Anger or myself.

Victor Story

Appendix 61/14a (District Councillor)

South Oxfordshire District Council Annual Report

Overall report on the Work at South Oxfordshire District Council

The council continues to work in challenging times but has been able to cope without any cuts to services.

The efficiency savings made over the last five years by joint working with the Vale of White Horse District Council and shared contracts have meant that the council can once again reduce council tax by 2.5%. This being the third consecutive year means a total reduction of 7.5% which is very positive.

New Homes Bonus money is received from the government for new homes that are built in the district. We received one million pounds this year and expect to receive nearly two million pounds next year. This money will be spent on projects where houses are being built to improve infrastructure.

Grants

The council continues to understand the difficulties communities and charity groups face when trying to develop their own facilities. For that reason we continue to have a one million pound community grant fund.

The council has given a £15 million loan to SOHA to enable them to accelerate their housing programme.

Planning

The council is pleased to have an approved local plan which means that large developers cannot gain planning permission on any site they feel is desirable as is happening in districts that do not have such a plan. During the last few months we have been working with other Oxfordshire districts as instructed by

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the government to review social housing numbers. This means that we will shortly start a process similar to the local plan to accommodate more houses and the plan will be extended from 2027 to 2031. This is not a happy position but is one where we have no choice. There are more houses actually being built than in previous years.

Neighbourhood Plans

Thame now has an agreed neighbourhood plan following their referendum and Woodcote will shortly be holding their own referendum. We have lots of similar plans in the pipeline such as Sonning Common. Smaller parishes prefer community led plans.

Planning Enforcement

We have put additional resources into this area as it is important to explain to parishes what we can and cannot do. Where there is a breach of planning there is frustration at the limit of what the council can do and the speed at which it can be done. We are required to give those in breach of planning time to make amendments where possible. However, some issues raised as enforcement are actually minor developments and are now permitted under permitted development rights. Government reforms have now made it easier for people to erect extensions.

Housing

The council continually works in partnership to keep the number of homeless people needing temporary accommodation low. We have seen a rise in this number in the past year but it remains fewer than 20 households. The cost of providing temporary accommodation can be high so it is important to keep this number down.

Waste

We continue to be one of the highest recycling councils in the country. The joint contract with the Vale of White Horse District Council works very well. Residents say "this is a good and easy system". The floods caused some areas to have collection days changed. However, everyone did their best in exceptional circumstances.

The Big Clean Up continues to be a huge success so once again we have increased the budget by £90K with even more money for the market towns over the next two years.

Market Towns

The market towns are very important to the district and we work in partnership with town councils, business partnerships and share costs of town centre coordinators where agreed. Our economic development team work hard across the whole district involving many small businesses. Car park charges have not increased and free parking on Saturday afternoons in some of our car parks has proved popular. Any surplus car park income is spent on upgrading toilets and car parks and not on any other services.

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Leisure Centres

Leisure centres are well used by all ages. We work with the contractor to ensure that the facilities are of a standard acceptable to the user. The present provider's contract comes to an end next year so we have been going through a procurement exercise for the letting of the new contract which will be shared with the Vale of White Horse District Council giving more scope for better value.

Didcot

Didcot is the largest growth area in the district with Great Western Park building 3,000 houses, one of the largest sites in the South East. We are working with Hammersons to achieve phase two of the Orchard Centre development which is still proving difficult to secure an anchor store in the current economic climate. Didcot will benefit from Science Vale Oxford as the government has agreed millions of pounds to encourage new business growth to the science parks. There will also be government monies for infrastructure. This is a very exciting part of the district which should create spin off businesses for the whole of the area.

Cornerstone Arts Centre is well worth a visit for the wide variety of shows, exhibitions and children's sessions plus the café.

Boundary Review

The boundary review is now complete and the commission agreed the reduction in the number of councillors from 48 to 36 which will happen following the May election in 2015.

Community Governance Reviews

Community Governance Reviews have not taken place for many years and started at the end of last year. The process is looking at parish boundaries so we are suggesting some changes and where it would affect residents they are being consulted. Parish councils have already been involved and no changes will be made until we hear the views of the parish councils and residents. The review must be complete by August so will be decided at the council meeting in July.

Office Accommodation

If you have had reason to visit the council office at Crowmarsh you will have seen a lot of activity. Vale staff are moving into our accommodation giving us an annual rent of £175,000. Their Abingdon office is being rented to an Oxfordshire County Council service. This is good partnership working of local authorities.

We will continue to work hard to provide good services and value for money in partnership with others.

The council website (www.southoxon.gov.uk) can give you details of all our services, councillors' allowances, contractors and meetings that you can watch at home as they are webcast.

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