

Little Milton Parish Council
Minutes of Council Meeting held on Wednesday 10th February 2021

Present:

Cllr. Francois Van Der Merwe (Chairman)
Cllr. David Wakeling
Cllr. Steve Sidhu
Cllr. Howard Harrison
Cllr. Adam Sheppard

District Councillor: Caroline Newton (Part Meeting)
County Councillor: Stephen Harrod (Part Meeting)

Mr Raymond Fergusson (*Parish Clerk*)

Member of the public: One (Part Meeting)

01/02/21 Regulating the Conduct of the Meeting

The meeting was being conducted under THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE AND CRIME PANELS (CORONAVIRUS) (FLEXIBILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY AND POLICE AND CRIME PANEL MEETINGS) (ENGLAND AND WALES) REGULATIONS 2020. These Regulations allowed Parish Councils to conduct their meeting by video or audio link with Councillors and members of the Public and Press not being in the same location.

02/02/21 Apologies for Absence:

Councillor Alaric Smith

03/02/21 Declaration of any pecuniary interests of members

There were no pecuniary interests declared.

04/02/21 Approval of Minutes

The Parish Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of Parish Council Meeting held on 13th January 2021 as a true record of the meeting. The minutes will be signed by the Chairman outside the meeting.

05/02/21 Planning

P20/S4875/LB: Hillview Cottage High Street:

Create a work from home space in the existing stone outbuilding. Replacing one door with a secure cottage style external door & introducing two wooden windows in keeping with the house

The Council **RESOLVED** to support the application and allow the conservation team to determine the appropriateness of the proposed changes.

06/02/21 Matters arising

Re-siting of litter bin

The Clerk reported that the matter was still under consideration by South Oxfordshire District Council.

07/02/21 Report by District /County Councillor

District Councillor Caroline Newton referred to her latest update that the Clerk stated had been circulated to Council members. Caroline reported that the District Council would be considering its budget for 2021-22 at the District Council meeting on 11th February 2021. Caroline made some general comments about the financial challenges that the District Council were facing as a result of Covid although the District Council did have some healthy reserves that may be used in the short term.

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The Clerk highlighted a particular problem of an abandoned trailer in the layby at Frogmore and requested the support of Caroline to expedite its removal as the normal channels had been delayed due to Covid.

County Councillor Stephen Harrod reported on the chief features of the budget that the County Council had set on February 9th for 2021/22. He reported that there would be a 1.99% rise in the basic council tax plus an extra 1% that would be required to be spent of adult social care under national rules, making a total of 2.99%. The thrust of the budget was to invest in services that have a positive long term impact for local communities.

08/02/21 Report of Meeting held with OCC Officer from OCC Highways

The Chairman stated that the notes of the meeting held on February 3rd 2021 with an Officer from OCC Highways, members of the Parish Council, County Councillor Stephen Harrod and District Councillor Caroline Newton had been circulated to all Council members by the Clerk. The Chairman expressed his view that although the meeting had proved useful he believed that the Council had not managed to engage with the appropriate team within OCC Highways. However he was encouraged by the suggestion that Government were considering transferring powers to Local Authorities under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 that would empower it to enforce weight limits amongst other traffic offences. Barry Coward commented that volunteers could be used to help to enforce any weight limit on the A329 as had been done on the Haseley Road.

County Councillor Harrod reported that he was working with Officers within the Infrastructure Strategy and Policy Team to set up a further meeting to address the Council's concerns on the application of the LTP4 Freight Strategy and the Traffic Mitigation information provided by AECOM in support of the Outline Planning Application for Chalgrove Airfield. Councillor Harrod stated that he would include the Officer responsible for managing the Chalgrove Airfield Planning application.

The Chairman made reference to the fact that Great Haseley Parish Council were engaging with Officers at OCC Highways in respect of the implications of Chalgrove Airfield and suggested to County Councillor Harrod that working together could be mutually beneficial.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the County Councillor and District Councillor for their support.

The County Councillor and District Councillor left the meeting.

09/02/21 Recreation Ground/Playground

Grass cutting quotes 2021/22

The Clerk shared the grass cutting quotes received from three contractors. The Councillors discussed the merits of the quotes in terms of price and service and **RESOLVED** to accept the grass cutting quote and the verge cutting quote from the Council's existing contractors.

Hard Standing for Grundon Refuse Bins

The Clerk informed the Council that he had obtained a quote to create a hard standing for the Grundon refuse bins sited at the entrance to the car park. The Councillors discussed the quote and requested that two further quotations were obtained to allow them to assess its competitiveness. Cllr. Steve Sidhu and Cllr. Adam Sheppard offered to obtain a quotation and have it provided to the Clerk.

10/02/21 MUGA

The Chairman informed the meeting that he had invited En Tout Cas Tennis Court Ltd (ETC) and Chiltern Sports Contractors Limited to provide a range of options to address the current condition of the surfaces on both the carpet court and hard court. The Chairman has also asked them to comment on the problems currently experienced with the floodlights,

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11/02/21 Finance

Approval of Council expenditure

Colourplus: February 2021	£199.74
Raymond Fergusson: Month 11 2020-21, Clerk/Editor salary	£214.28
SODC – Dog Bin emptying 3 months to 31 st December 2020	£53.82

Direct Debit

Intuit: Accounting software February 9th – March 9th 2021	£24.00
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The Clerk reported that the bank statements at 4th February 2021 had been reconciled with the ledger at 10th February 2021 and were available for viewing on Quickbooks.

12/02/21 Recruitment of Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

The Chairman reported that he had been informed by Cllr. Alaric Smith that a meeting had been set up with the candidate on Friday 12th February 2021.

Cllr. Steve Sidhu proposed that the recruitment steering group should exchange information prior to the meeting to ensure that everyone shared a common understanding of the details and expectations of the replacement Clerk/RFO

The Chairman commented that the Councillors needed to consider what aspects of the current clerk's duties would not transfer to the new clerk. He suggested individual Councillors could take responsibility for specific areas of activity. The Clerk stated there were tasks e.g. Fix My Street that could be done outside the Council but he considered most of what he did was Council specific.

The Chairman asked the Councillors to bring forward suggestions to the meeting on March 10th.

13/02/21 Thames Water/OCC Highways

The Chairman reported that the Council had received a copy of a letter from Thames Water, as part of the pre-application enquiry into the possible development of Milton House, from Mr Henry Venners. He stated that the Council should review the current effectiveness of the drainage and sewerage system in advance of any planning application for development and consider how it wished to engage with Thames Water.

The Clerk gave a brief background on the drainage and sewerage issues experienced by the village over the past few years. These included the following:-

- Flooding on the lower end of the Haseley Road
- Gainsbridge brook
- Thames Water sewerage network at Little Milton School and adjacent area
- Sewerage Treatment Works (STW) and associated pumping station

The Chairman invited Barry Coward to comment in his capacity as Chairman of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group. Barry referred the Council to page 15 of the Little Milton Neighbourhood Development Background Studies Part 6. This section included the details of a letter received from Thames Water in respect of the Neighbourhood Development Plan that commented upon the likely upgrades of the waste water network under the projected developments within the Plan.

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The Clerk informed the Council that previous councils had a good working relationship with Thames Water and had regular meetings to review the issues that were of concern to the village. The last meeting had been in January 2020.

In the light of a possible development the Council **RESOLVED** that it should arrange a meeting with Thames Water to review the progress on the meeting held on 11th January 2020 in respect of tanker activity, infiltration ground water and to review with them their communication included in the Little Milton Neighbourhood Development Background Studies. The Clerk stated that he would draft a letter for consideration by the Council.

14/02/21 Correspondence

There were no items of correspondence.

15/02/21 Appointment of Vice Chairman

The Chairman reminded the Council that it had not elected a Vice Chair following his election as Chairman at the January meeting. The Council **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr. Steve Sidhu as Vice Chairman.

16/02/21 Exchange of Information

Cllr. Steve Sidhu requested clarification on the process for filling a vacancy on the Parish Council when it is expected that Cllr. Alaric Smith resigns. The Clerk stated that he would update the Council at the next meeting but emphasised that no action can be taken before the resignation of any Councillor.

17/02/21 Date of Next Meeting

The Parish Council will convene at **8.00 p.m. on Wednesday 10th March 2021 under the new Regulations unless otherwise advised**

The meeting finished at 9.57 p.m.

Parish Forum

There were no matters raised

Signed by:

Chairman.....Date.....