

MILBORNE PORT PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22ND APRIL 2014 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM

Present: Mr J Farley (Chair), Mr M Ritchie, Mrs R Douglas, Mr R Duckworth, Mr R Lockey, Mr C Laughton, Mrs P Alexander, Mrs M Lock, Mrs W House, Mr E Davis, Mr R Biss, Mr J Edmonds and Mrs S Shingleton

Also Present: Mrs E Curtis – Clerk

There were seven members of the public in attendance.

1. **Apologies for Absence** were received from County Councillor William Wallace and District Councillor Lucy Wallace.
2. **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 23rd April 2013** were approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
3. **Finance**
The Annual Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2014 was discussed and after a minor clarification was adopted and agreed by all members.

4. **Annual Reports**

PCSO Callum Davis

PCSO Davis gave a report on the past years statistics. Recorded crimes for last year were 67 and this year 61, an increase of 18%. Recorded incidents for last year were 273 and this year 298 an increase of 9.2%. There were 51 ASB Incidents, 68 Crimes, 37 General, 84 Public Safety/Welfare incidents and 58 Transport Incidents. PCSO Davis commented that the increase in crimes was not too dramatic compared to other areas. He reiterated the need to ensure everything is locked at all times and to always call the 101 number for any suspicious situations.

Chairman of the Parish Council's Report – Mr J Farley

Mr Farley introduced the meeting and thanked local representatives for attending. He started his report by mentioning that during the past year Mr Watts had resigned from the Council and Mr Laughton had been co-opted on to the Parish Council.

Mr Farley mentioned that the precept for the current year had stayed the same at £55,000 but due to the Council Tax Grant the Parish Council had actually received roughly an extra £3500 and that due to more houses in the village the cost per household had fallen slightly.

Mr Farley informed all that the new Cricket Pavilion was nearing completion and was looking good and would be an asset to the village. The official opening will be held on July 6th 2014 and to mark the President of the Cricket Club's milestone birthday, a clock for the pavilion was being added in his honour.

Mr Farley commented that throughout the year the issue of dog fouling in the village had been ongoing, specifically on the Memorial Playing Fields and that ways of reducing this problem were still being investigated.

Mr Farley also mentioned the village had been awarded a South West in Bloom Silver Award over the past year and that the Football Club were hoping to extend the playing fields to gain more space for football pitches.

Mr Farley concluded his report by expressing his thanks to the following people:

- All Parish Councillors for their work over the past year
- The Clerk for her hard work over the past year
- The Parish Plan Focus Group
- Mr Terry Butcher for completing the internal audit
- Mr Neil Spencer for cutting the grass at Station Copse
- Mr Tony Higgins for maintenance of the Town Hall Clock
- All members of the Spirit of Milborne Port
- PCSO Callum Davis
- Mr Steve Davis the village handyman
- Mrs Margaret Davis for cleaning the Town Hall for over 30 years
- The team of volunteers who regularly cut the grass at the churchyard
- Finally, Mr Farley gave thanks to all those people and volunteers in the village who he may have missed out.

Chairman of the Open Spaces Committee Report – Mr R Lockey

Mr Lockey gave thanks to the following people:

- Mrs Douglas for completing the weekly Gainsborough Play Area Inspection Reports
- Mr Biss for managing the allotments
- The Clerk
- Mr Steve Davis the village handyman
- Mr Tony Copper the village Tree Warden
- Mr Neil Spencer for cutting Community Woodland

Mr Lockey reported the Springfield Play Area was being well used with no major issues other than left litter. He commented the Gainsborough Play Area was also very well used since its makeover last year. Mr Lockey mentioned the main issue with the Gainsborough Play Area is the flower beds which need to be resolved but is currently delayed due to SSDC. Mr Lockey felt there were no major issues with the Cemetery and Churchyard however there had been some upset about the material used on the new paths in the Churchyard the previous year. The Grove Garden and Ball Court had recently been neglected with maintenance of the areas not being adequate recently. This has now been addressed and is in hand with new planting being organised. Mr Lockey stated there hadn't been any major issues with the allotments although there were a few vacant at present and would be allocated on a first come first served basis. Mr Lockey gave special thanks and appreciation to Mr Neil Spencer who voluntarily mowed and cut Station Copse making it presentable but added that some extra work would be taking place to tidy the area. Mr Lockey stated there was still an ongoing issue of dog fouling in the village, particularly on the Playing Fields and this situation was

being continually monitored with new dog waste bins being recently installed and investigations in to re-routing the footpath. This report was concluded by Mr Lockey congratulating the Cricket Club on the new pavilion as he felt it was a great asset to the village.

Chairman of the Planning Committee – Mr M Ritchie

Mr Ritchie gave a report from records received from South Somerset District Council. Over the past year there had been 48 planning applications, 12 of which were tree order requests which were all approved. 5 planning applications were refused. There were 18 residential applications including 13 requests for extensions. 43 new houses were applied for, not all of which have been approved as some are still in the planning process. There were no controversial applications over the previous year, however, there was a general feeling in the village from residents concerned about the growing size of Milborne Port and the feeling there was no need for more houses.

Chairman of the Footpaths Committee – Mrs M Lock

Mrs Lock reported that the Parish Council's relationship with Eve Wynn the Rights of Way Officer at SSDC continues to be good and that the status of outstanding problems can be easily found on the County Council interactive mapping system. Mrs Lock commented that several new waymarkers have been installed and although no volunteers have come forward to monitor the footpaths in the village the Parish Council are always pleased to receive any information concerning problems along the footpaths. Mrs Lock mentioned that the footpath at the back of the Bellway site was still not yet open despite the houses being completed. This is due to a dispute between Bellway and the landowner. The footpath closure will expire in May. The Council have also decided to apply to move the footpath which crosses the Memorial Playing Fields to try and help reduce the dog fouling problem. Mrs Lock concluded by giving thanks to the Footpaths Committee members and Emma Curtis the Parish Clerk.

Chairman of the Parish Plan Action Forum – Mr J Oldham

Mr Oldham commenced his report by giving background information on the Parish Plan Action Forum. He then reported that progress has been slower than desired this year. The action forum had only managed to meet once and it seemed that the few people with enough energy to take on roles that coordinating the group was proving very difficult. Mr Oldham made a request for other members of the community come forward and bolster the efforts of the group. Mr Oldham was saddened to report that the Farmers Market stated by the former PCSO Mandy Forsey no longer operated and that efforts to get Vodafone signal in the village had failed. In regard to Highways Mr Oldham reported that in summer 2013 South Somerset District Council supplied flower seeds and assistance to establish flower beds at the East and West entrances to the village. The idea, suggested by Sustrans, was to provide visual impact and hopefully encourage more considerate driving through the village. Analysis of the SIDS data from 2012 and 2013, however, revealed no discernable differences. South Somerset has offered more seeds and assistance this year to extend the planting. The bank on West Hill has been graded and planted, also with the intention of generating a visual impact to encourage considerate driving. All three areas will require regular attention to maintain vigour and order in the planting scheme. So far this has been done by a very small group of

volunteers. It is recommended that the horticultural aspects be formally contracted out for all three areas. In 2013 the village entered the Britain in Bloom competition under the sponsorship of the Spirit of Milborne Port. Our region was South West in Bloom (SWIB). Our efforts were rewarded with a Silver Medal. This year the village has been entered by the Parish Council but Mr Oldham felt it sad to say the state of our communal areas has deteriorated during the past year particularly the Gainsborough Play Area and the Grove Communal Garden. Special efforts will be required if these areas are to be fit for inspection by judges in July. Many of the benches around the village require painting and some should be moved to avoid fouling by birds. Mr Oldham commented that the social work in the village has largely now been taken up by SoMP who are concentrating their efforts on two big occasions. The pattern of classes and other social activities is ever changing and we do our best to keep abreast of these in the pamphlet published as part of the Welcome Pack. The community website now includes sections on the Parish Council and there is now greater coordination developing with the Milborne Port Magazine. The website now has some 130 subscribers to the newsletter. A recent upgrade also provides an automatic twitter feed.

Tree Warden – Mr T Copper

No report received

District Councillor – Mrs L Wallace

No report received

County Councillor – Mr W Wallace

No report received

5. Question Time and reports from village organisations

Mr Philip Lock made a plea to the Parish Council to consider the contract between the Parish Council and the contractors looking after some of the green areas in the village. Their current contract only covers 10 hours per month and general maintenance and it was felt the contract should be extended to cover replanting and rejuvenation of the areas.

The Cricket Club gave a brief update on the pavilion stating that work was coming along nicely and nearing completion. Thanks were passed to the Parish Council for help and support. It was reported that the Cricket Club would be holding a Jumble Sale and taking part in the Three Peaks Challenge to raise funds for the club. The Cricket Club made note that they needed to improve their communications with the village.

Mrs Julia Mortimore Editor of the Parish Magazine commented that the magazine had a circulation of around 700 – 750 people, most of whom pay annually for the magazine. She stated that single copies could be purchased from the Butchers, Post Office and Church. Mrs Mortimore stated that funding for the magazine comes via advertising and that printing costs had risen dramatically over the past year. Mrs Mortimore welcomed letters to the magazine and any articles which may be of interest and questioned whether the magazine could be linked to the village Welcome Pack.

Mrs Alexander on behalf of The Gardening Club reported the club has had an excellent year of monthly meetings including talks in the Camelot Room at the Village Hall,

notable summer garden visits to Corton Denham House and Hilltops Cottage Garden in Stour Provost and discount shopping trips to Castle Gardens, Sherborne and Poundbury Garden Centre. Subscriptions have been maintained at only £8 per annum with supplementary income to support club activities coming from plant sales at the Village Spring and Autumn Street Markets, the Summer fete and our own club sale in May. The club now has 36 members and have been pleased this year to welcome some new younger people as members and hope that this trend will continue to reflect the growing national revival of interest in gardening.

A brief report was received from Mrs M Lock about Milborne Port Women's Institute stating that there were currently 46 members and they had welcomed a number of good speakers throughout the year. Improvements were currently being made to the WI room with new tables and chairs being ordered and the WI kitchen soon to be refurbished. Mrs Lock concluded by saying that the WI was thriving.

Mrs Lock continued to give a report on the village Luncheon Club for over 65's saying that it was a lively group for people who otherwise may not leave their homes but that volunteers were also being sought for assistance with the club. A lottery grant had been applied for the previous year which was successful and resulted in new chairs and a dishwasher being purchased.

On behalf of the Commonalty Charity, Mr R Duckwoth commented that they were now in possession of the keys to the toilets on the High Street and plans were being made on how to open, manage and operate them. Mr Duckwoth stated that the Commonalty had offered to purchase a piece of equipment for the new Cricket Pavilion and also seeds for planting in the village.

The meeting concluded with a report from Mr M Mortimore, the Churchwarden who thanked the Parish Council for their contributions to the church including new pathways, cutting of the Yew Trees and flower bed which had improved the church's appearance. Mr Mortimore stated that over the past year there had been 10 funerals, 8 marriages and 8 baptisms. The Church is currently awaiting the new Vicar the Reverend Sarah Godfrey who will be inducted on 7th July 2014. During the interim period the Church has been supported by Canon Bede Cooper and Canon Brian Conway.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.