

MILBORNE PORT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 11th April 2017 at 7pm at the Town Hall

Councillors Present: Mr J Oldham (Chair), Mr M Ritchie, Mr P Lock, Mrs M Lock, Mr R Lockey, Mr M Lancaster, Mr J Edmonds, Mr G Crudgington and Mr T Watts

Also Present: County Councillor William Wallace and Emma Curtis – Parish Clerk

There were twenty members of the public present. Mr Oldham welcomed everyone to the meeting and reminded all present that the meeting was the Annual Parish Meeting, and not a meeting of the Parish Council. Mr Oldham asked if the running of the agenda could be adjusted slightly to allow County Councillor Wallace to deliver his report first as he had to attend other meetings. This was agreed by all.

- 1. Apologies for Absence:** Received from Mrs A Flynn and Mrs R Barrett

Annual Report from County Councillor William Wallace – Councillor Wallace introduced himself and thank everyone for agreeing to move his report to the top of the agenda. Councillor Wallace reminded all present that the County Council elections would be taking place on Thursday 4th May 2017 and that he would once again be standing for election and that County Councillors were currently within purdah. Councillor Wallace commented that it had been a tough year for the Council but that he was satisfied, despite funding cuts, that Adult Social Care within the County was still of a high standard. Councillor Wallace commented that funding had been cut in all areas resulting in some services, such as Highways, suffering. Councillor Wallace concluded by confirming that he would be supporting a Small Improvement Scheme application for a crossing across the A30 in Milborne Port over to Crackmore Garage but that the infrastructure of implementing a crossing would be complicated. Councillor Wallace asked if there were any questions, none were raised.

- 2. Confirm and sign the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 19th April 2016:** Mr Lock proposed the minutes were agreed and adopted, this was seconded by Mr Ritchie with all agreeing the minutes were signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
- 3. Parish Plan Survey Prize winner draw** – Mr Oldham commented that following the recent Parish Plan survey the draw for the prize winner and two runners up would be undertaken. Mr Oldham asked for a volunteer to pick the winning tickets for the prize draw, the Clerk volunteered. The first ticket drawn for the first prize of £150 was ticket number 97 for Mr J Turner. The two runners up tickets, each winning £50 were ticket numbers 46 and 79 for a Mr B Tindale and Ms Sarah Copley. It was confirmed their cheques would be raised at the next Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 2nd May.

4. Annual Reports

PCSO Thelma Mead – No report received

Chairman of the Parish Council Mr Oldham – Mr Oldham gave the following report:

It has been a busy and sometimes difficult year. As the Parish Council makes the effort, actively to improve the village, this has meant considerable extra effort for several councillors and our clerk, Emma Curtis. For all their support during the year, may I offer my thanks.

There are many other individuals, both paid and unpaid who support the council's efforts, including our cleaner, Claire Ferrari, Tony Higgins who keeps the Town Hall clock working Nick Dungey who cleans the playing field toilets, our handyman, Steve Davis, our new tree warden Jeremy Pitman and Neil Spencer for maintenance of Station Copse.

I would also like to offer my thanks to the unnamed volunteers who cut the grass at the Churchyard. This, formally is the responsibility of the Parish Council so without their help, our council bills would be somewhat higher. (Phil Lock will report in more detail on some of the work being undertaken there.)

A final note of thanks to all those contributors to The Spirit of Milborne Port who continue to enliven the village with their efforts producing the summer fete and the Christmas tree festival.

We have finished upgrading the information about the Parish Council on the Council pages of the community website. Now virtually all of the documents defined in the model publication scheme are on the website including the last three years of council minutes and agendas.

We have made it easier to contact the clerk as she now has a council provided mobile phone and her access to on line documents is now equally good from wherever she is working.

We have made some improvements to the town hall, the council chamber of which now has a wireless projector, a limited WiFi internet connection and a hearing loop.

The Chapel at the cemetery is now in use by the Heritage group and the council is finalising an agreement with them for its use. Electricity is now available at the chapel. In addition, a bequest in previous years has enabled us to make improvements to the paths at the cemetery.

New water troughs and supply has been commissioned at the Gainsborough allotments.

Phil Lock will report more fully on this, but thanks to his leadership, Milborne Port for the first time, gained a SW in Bloom Gold award.

Council worked with county and the Spirit of Milborne Port to gain permission for the welcome stone to be erected at the western entrance to the village.

After several failed attempts, and thanks to the persistence of Sal Phipps, we now have an active Speedwatch group in the village, supported by Councillor Lancaster. This needed much effort and close cooperation with the police in addition to training of volunteers to get this operational. More volunteers are always needed, but thanks to Sal and her team for the great work that has been done.

The effort on the Parish Plan has been slow to gain momentum but I will report on this later.

We reported last year on the grant for a kicking wall. This project has not been completed as we are still struggling to find a cost effective solution for this.

After the installation of the shelter to the bus stop seat opposite the Town Hall (following request to protect from dropping of birds nesting in the Holme oak), there has been an objection by a resident to this and whilst still ongoing, it has highlighted several issues of land ownership around the village. A working party has been formed to resolve these issues.

There have been a number of resignations from council over the last year and new members have joined the council by co-option as there was not enough support in the village for an election.

We are in the middle of making some safety improvements to the Town Hall. These will include escape route signage and lighting, improved availability of fire extinguishers and fire doors to maximise the viability of the stairwell, the only exit from the council chamber in the event of fire.

We are in the process of implementing an improved financial package which will assist with budgeting and reporting of our financials.

The Council have entered, on behalf of the village, the SW in bloom competition once again, seeking to maintain our gold standard.

There are further improvements which we are trying to secure for the village though several of these will depend on grant funding and subsequent council approval.

Following the relocation of the Post Office to the Crackmore garage site, pedestrian access has been made more difficult and hazardous in view of the need to cross the A30. We have been discussing the possible provision of a pedestrian crossing with highways and our county councillor, though this will depend on a number of things, not least funding from county.

As part of the ongoing improvements to access of the council chamber in line with the 2010 equalities act, council is investigating the provision of a stairlift. We are currently seeking grant funding for this.

There are ongoing issues at the Springfield road car park (commonly known as the village hall car park) occasioned by periodic antisocial behaviour and minor drug dealing. In addition, the car park is uneven, giving increased risk to users in the hours of darkness. Council has been looking for a solution for some time which will provide lighting without disturbing the neighbours and securing the car park against use out of hours. Following some budgetary estimates, we are now seeking grant funding to enable this to go ahead.

Council are investigating the possibility of providing free CPR training for village residents.

For many, our clerk, Emma is the face of the council. We have been looking at providing Saturday surgeries on a monthly basis whereby residents can have direct access to councillors, though the timing of its implementation has slipped due to the time constraints of those involved.

Mr Oldham asked if there were any questions, none were asked but Mrs Andrews commented that she felt disappointed that the village as a whole had not pushed to keep the Post Office in the village centre and perhaps a community store type operation should have been reached for. Mr Crudgington commented that he felt there should be a sub type Post Office within the village centre.

To conclude a member of the Spirit of Milborne Port Committee did thank the Parish Council for what they contribute to the village stating that it was a thankless task.

Chairman of the Open Spaces and Footpaths Committee Mr P Lock – Mr Lock commenced by giving details of the Parish Council Open Spaces and Footpaths Committee members. He stated that his report would take the bases of a SOFT report: Success, Opportunities, Failures and Threats. Mr Lock updated all on the following successful projects throughout the year:

- Installation of water troughs at the allotments along with Mrs Flynn investigating the possible installation of a compost toilet
- Cemetery pathway improvements with new chippings
- Improvements to the Cemetery Chapel which is now the home to the History and Heritage Group
- Hedge cutting and tree pollarding at the Cemetery
- Continued successful use of the SSDC Ranger Scheme
- Success entering South West in Bloom and receiving a Gold gilt. Mr Lock confirmed that the Parish Council had entered the village in the 2017 competition and that the Council had been approached by BBC2 regarding the possibility of being in a documentary following South West in Bloom entrants.
- St Johns Churchyard tree pruning and improvements
- Maintenance of play equipment at Gainsborough Play Area and Mrs Flynn investigating the possible purchase of play equipment for children with disabilities.
- Clearing of the land at Station Copse Community Woodland

Mr Lock confirmed that an opportunity for the following year could be to improve the piece of land opposite Ven House when entering the village and that Lord Allen had indicated he may be able to support this project.

Mr Lock commented that there were no particular failures to report, however, the re-routing of the footpath through Springfield Recreation Ground had been delayed at County level and there had been a lack of volunteers for the Adopt a Footpath Scheme.

To conclude, Mr Lock stated that there may be a threat as some patches of land within the village did not have clear ownership and that a working party consisting of Parish Councillors had been established to look at these areas.

Mr Lock concluded by thanking the previous Tree Warden Kevin Jones for his work and welcoming the new Tree Warden, Mr Pitman, to the team.

Chairman of the Planning Committee Mr M Ritchie – Mr Ritchie gave details about the South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 commenting that there were still eleven years left. Mr Ritchie stated that at the present time development within the village was quite quiet, but that an appeal from a developer concerning 46 houses on land at Gainsborough was currently

being considered by the Planning Inspectorate. Mr Ritchie commented that the Old Church School was still empty and there was no clarity on what the owners were planning to do with it. Mr Ritchie said he felt that the village needed more business spaces and business units and that he would expect to see more housing developments in due course. Mr Ritchie asked for any questions. One gentleman commented that the Gainsborough appeal is yet to be won and Mr Edmonds stated that he felt industrial business areas should be identified prior to more housing being erected. Other members of the public agreed with this comment and felt that business units would be of huge benefit to the village with Mr Watts commenting that he felt a policy should be put together highlighting commercial space and that any future developments should be mixed developments of both business and housing units. Mr Oldham commented that he felt the Parish Plan produced between 2008-2010 did make some effort to support local business development, but not enough. Mr Edmonds stated that if an old people's home was developed along Gainsborough that he felt this was not safe to which a resident responded that they did not agree with this comment as Preston Road in Yeovil was much busier with many nursing homes. One resident asked what was happening with the Queens Head to which Mr Oldham responded that it was up for sale with planning permission but that the Parish Council did not know any more at this time. Mr Crudginton mentioned that he felt there was a need to draw tourists to the village and perhaps the Red Ball Soapbox event may be an idea to pursue, a resident responded that events can help to draw people to the village and enliven the village. A member of the History and Heritage Group commented that guided walks were arranged the previous year and that these were supported, but they needed to engage more people.

Parish Plan Steering Group Update Mr J Oldham – Mr Oldham gave the following report:

The original Parish Plan was drawn up between 2008-2010, and this in turn leant heavily on the Village design statement. Since that time, many of the recommendations in the plan have been actioned, but many have not. With the increased desire for decisions to be pushed down to the most appropriate local level it was thought sensible to revisit this plan.

A core group of councillors agreed to be part of the team, but it has always been felt that village residents should form the majority input to the work that needs to be done. Council is grateful for all those who have contributed and are always seeking more volunteers.

The first milestone in this work was to construct a model of the village in time for the fete last year and this was used in the "planning for real" exercise in which members of the public could input their views.

We have followed this up with a questionnaire sent out to all households in the village. This is a considerably more detailed survey than contained in the original plan work. The results of the "planning for real" exercise were used to inform the construction of the questionnaire. We have had some 280 or so questionnaires returned; some 40 of those on line. We are just starting to undertake the analysis and hope to have material to feed back by the time of the fete this year. The team are very grateful for the time that respondents have taken over this.

Tree Warden Mr Pitman – No report received

District Councillor Sarah Dyke – No report received

5. Reports from Village Organisations

Spirit of Milborne Port – Claire Andrews and Andy Maidment gave a report on behalf of the Spirit of Milborne Port including background information on how the group was formed and achievements the group had made throughout the years with note given to the new entrance stone which was erected during the previous year. Claire and Andy stressed that their main events within the village are the village fete with music event in the evening and the Christmas Lights Switch On. They commented that they had started a village market a few years back, but due to lack of volunteers needed there was not enough time to support this event. A request was made for any new volunteers to attend the Spirit of Milborne Port meetings. Claire gave a funding breakdown of the SOMP accounts commenting that £3,000 was always kept in the account as reserves and that the group was open to comments and suggestions on how any surplus could be spent. Claire asked if there were any questions, which there were not but Mr Oldham thanked all involved in the Spirit of Milborne Port for their hard work.

Milborne Port WI – Mrs Porter Chairman of the Milborne Port WI spoke on their behalf commenting that the group continued to meet on the 2nd Thursday of the month and that they enjoyed various guest speakers. Mrs Porter confirmed that there were currently 45 members of the WI with an age range of 30-80 and that the group continued its successful coffee morning in the Town Hall on Friday mornings with a special coffee morning in September raising funds for Macmillan Cancer Research. Mrs Porter commented that the WI had recently planted a tree at the Weighbridge as well as donating some plants to the village.

Milborne Port History and Heritage Group – Mrs Harrison a member of the History and Heritage Group spoke on their behalf and detailed the groups new constitution and mission statement. Mrs Harrison confirmed the group had gone from strength to strength during the previous year with some of their meetings attracting up to 60 people with new social groups being made. Mrs Harrison thanked the Parish Council and the Clerk for completing maintenance of the Cemetery Chapel, including installation of electricity, which is now the new home of the History and Heritage Group and would be used as a museum and storage area. A tenancy agreement had been agreed between the Parish Council and History and Heritage Group. Mrs Harrison concluded that the group was completely reliant on grant funding so any donations would be gratefully received.

Milborne Port Village Hall – Mrs Lancaster Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee spoke on their behalf confirming that during the previous year there had been a number of changes in the committee along with the secretary Jenny Hill stepping down. Mrs Lancaster thanked Jenny for her continued support. Mrs Lancaster confirmed that the Committee had commenced a maintenance programme to improve the Village Hall which included the purchase of new fire doors and roof sealing and that the next projects would hopefully be a new commercial kitchen and ladies' toilets. Mrs Lancaster commented that bookings for the Village Hall had increased and that a number of weddings were booked for the coming year. The Village Hall now has internet access and the New Scorpion Band would be returning in December 2017.

Milborne Port Bell Ringers – Mrs Wales spoke on behalf of the bell ringers commenting that they continue to regularly ring on a Sunday morning but that Wednesday evening practice was proving somewhat tricky. Mrs Wales urged anyone wishing to get involved in the bell ringing to come forward as the average age of current ringers was over 65. Mrs

Wales confirmed that the bell ringers had been completing muffled bell ringing on the anniversary of the deaths of WW1 soldiers and that a special bell ringing event would take place on May 27th 2017 in support of Julie Macdonald to raise money for Strike up Against Blood Cancer. This event will be between 10.30am and 12.00pm and would involve a quarter peel.

Milborne Port Parish Magazine – Mrs Mortimore gave the following report:

Milborne Port Magazine is published monthly and delivered to people's houses by a band of volunteers.

Magazines are also sold for 40p each at Waynes the Butchers, the Post Office, Milborne Port Library, Crackmore Garage, Milborne Port Surgery and at the school.

The magazine is very useful of publicising church programmes, village events and commercial traders. This year a new section on remembrance had been very much appreciated. Naomi Thorp has researched the stories of Milborne Port people who died while serving in the forces during the First World War. On the anniversary of the death of each one the bell-ringers have rung a muffled peel for remembrance. The story of each one is reported in the magazine.

New general interest items this year have been;

A new bishop of Bath and Wells has been appointed. She is Right Reverend Ruth Worsley. She is joining Right Reverend Peter Price. There are more reports from Somerset Libraries. The Library service is valuable for a lot of people and there always seems to be some worry about having enough funds. Milborne Port History and Heritage Group has brought a lot of new interest and enthusiasm into the village and they have converted the old Cemetery Chapel into a museum. Monthly Book Reviews from the reading group are very useful. At present there is a competition ongoing for a design for the front cover of the magazine.

This year some profits from magazine sales have been used to bind two-year sets of magazines to be kept for future reference. Already there are some bound copies kept in Church House. They date from 1896. Anyone wishing to see a particular magazine should please apply to Vilya Scott, the church secretary. Vilya can be contacted at Church House on Tuesdays and Thursdays 9.30-12.30. Phone 250326.

Circulation numbers; 576 delivered to houses; sales in shops 90-100; 6 posted to addresses

Contributions welcome. See editor's details page 26 of the magazine each month

Volunteers are occasionally needed to help with sorting when the magazines are delivered from the printers at the end of the month. If you would be willing to be on the list please contact Mrs Liz Redman 251145.

Milborne Port Tuesday Luncheon Club – Mrs Sue Scott gave the following report:

The Tuesday Luncheon Club operates from Church House, with the aim of providing a comfortable and social environment for the older residents of Milborne Port and the surrounding villages, where they can enjoy a two course lunch with tea & coffee. These lunches, for which there is a charge of £4.00 are held most Tuesdays except during August

and bank holidays. There are about 28 members but inevitably this number can change, so we are always happy to consider new diners. Sara, our vicar, comes for lunch and that is appreciated by everyone.

There are 5 members of volunteer cooks who prepare and serve the meals. There are also drivers who collect members who find getting to Church House extremely difficult. A big thank you to everyone who helps for without them the Tuesday Luncheon Club could not operate. We would also be very happy if we could attract any new helpers.

Milborne Port Primary School visit on a regular basis to help serve lunches. In December, there is a Christmas lunch with wine and presents and the choir join us to sing festive songs and carols. All the other volunteers are invited as well. In August there is a half day coach trip. Last year we went to Portland Bill, which is always a popular excursion, and enjoyed a cream tea at the Lobster Pot Café.

Support is still given by Somerset County Council, under the auspices of "Somerset You Can Do" who run courses and help out with any problems we may encounter. However, the financial support over the years has diminished and as we are looking to buy a more efficient and reliable cooker, we are in the process of trying to raise the necessary funds to cover the cost. On March 31st a bid was put into Sherborne Rotary, so fingers crossed, and last week we raised £200 from the green token donations at Waitrose in Sherborne. Other organisations will also be contacted to see if they can help with funds.

Friends of Milborne Port Library – On behalf of the library Mr Farley commented that the group was formed some 5 years ago and had seen the library survive through funding cuts and the threat of closure. Mr Farley commented that the library hours had been cut slightly and that a new member of staff had recently been recruited. Mr Farley stated that the children's summer reading challenge had 70 participants which was a 40% increase on the previous year. Mr Farley mentioned that the library was used by some groups such as the reading group and 50p per head was charge to cover insurance. Mr Farley confirmed that a computer and iPad were available for use within the library.

Milborne Port Community Swimming Pool – Due to Mrs Barrett giving her apologies, Mr Lockey reported on her behalf that the new pool enclosure was now completed and that the pool would be filled very soon and then be available for hire and that bookings could be taken via the Facebook page and community website. Mr Lockey commented that all were impressed with the new enclosure and thanked everyone who had been involved in the project. Last summer the swimming pool was extremely well used, and due to the new enclosure, it was hoped that this year there will be extended rental hours.

Milborne Port Football Club – Mr Lockey reported on behalf of the Football Club commenting that they had had a very successful season and that the first team had been promoted to 4th in the league with the possibility of being promoted again to the Dorset Premiership. However, this promotion would come with several conditions such as a fenced pitch and covered standings so the club are currently looking at the feasibility of meeting the conditions and funding options. Mr Lockey reported that the club would be holding a dinner with guest speaker on Friday 2nd June to celebrate the club's 125th anniversary and that tickets would be on sale for £30. Mr Lockey thanked everyone involved in the club including the players, managers, helpers and Steve Davis. Mr Lockey mentioned that after many years as

club secretary Simon Fox would be standing down and would be very missed and hard to replace.

To conclude, a member of the public commented that they were very excited about the South West Heritage Trust being interested in wanting to undertake a conservation review of Milborne Port and that it would be marvellous for the village if this was to occur.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Draft