

MILBORNE PORT PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held on Tuesday 23rd April 2013 at Milborne Port Town Hall at 7.30pm

Present: Mr J Farley (Chair), Mr M Ritchie, Mr E Davis, Mr R Biss, Mr E Watts, Mrs M Lock, Mrs P Alexander, Mrs R Douglas, Mrs W House, Mr J Edmonds, Mr R Duckworth

Mr T Copper (Tree Warden); Mrs E Curtis (Clerk)

There were eight members of the public present, mostly representing local organisations.

- 1. Apologies for Absence** were received from Mrs S Shingleton, Mr R Lockey, County Councillor William Wallace and District Councillor Lucy Wallace
- 2. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 24th April 2012** were approved and signed as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 3. Finance**
The Annual Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2013 was discussed and after a few minor clarifications was adopted and agreed by all members.

4. Annual Reports

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

Mr Farley introduced the meeting and welcomed representatives from local organisations for attending.

Mr Farley expressed thanks to the following people:

- All Parish Councillors for their work over the past year
- The Parish Plan Action Forum and Focus Groups
- Mr Tony Higgins for maintenance of the Town Hall Clock
- Mr Neil Spencer for cutting the grass at Station Copse
- All members of the Spirit of Milborne Port
- Ex PCSO Mandy Forsey and Candy Smith for their hard work on the new Gainsborough Play Area
- Members of the Friends of Milborne Port Library
- Mr Steve Davis the village handyman
- 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.

Mr Farley reported two major changes over the past year. First, the longstanding Clerk Jackie Freeman had left the Council and was replaced by Emma Curtis, who has now been in the role for nine months. Mr Farley welcomed Emma and stated she had settled in to the

role well. More recently, PCSO Mandy Forsey had left her role and has been replaced by Mr Callum Davis, whom Mr Farley welcomed in to the role and village.

Mr Farley reported that over the past year the major achievement of the village had been celebrating the Queens Diamond Jubilee thanks to the Spirit of Milborne Port.

Another ongoing project was the process of the new Cricket Pavilion at the Springfield Memorial Playing Fields. Mr Farley confirmed that plans had been drawn by a local architect and that the bidding process for funds had begun.

Mr Farley also stated that a new Code of Conduct had been adopted by the Council in the past year and it was available to view if required.

Mr Farley gave a brief explanation of what the precept is and how the funding process works and that as a whole, Milborne Port was a very low spending Parish Council for its size. He explained the reason of the increase from £46,000 to £55,000 this year was due to the Parish Council committing £10,000 to the new Cricket Pavilion fund, which would be a one off expense. It was also reported that the raising of the precept may not be such a bad thing if the precepts are capped in the near future.

Chairman of the Open Spaces Committee – Mr R Lockey

As Mr Lockey was not present at the meeting, Mrs Douglas gave a brief update informing those present that the main topics over the past year had involved the issue with dog mess in the village, the new Gainsborough Play Area and fires being started at both the Gainsborough Play Area and Springfield Play Area. Mrs Douglas stated that the workmen carrying out the installation of the new Gainsborough play area had done a tremendous job and that the official opening would be held on Saturday 4th May at midday.

Chairman of the Planning Committee – Mr M Ritchie

Mr Ritchie gave a report from records received from South Somerset District Council. There had been 37 planning applications in the past year, 6 of which were tree order requests, 3 of which were for new residences, there were a variety of house alterations, 8 extensions 3 holiday accommodation requests and 3 change of use of land. Overall Mr Ritchie reported it had been a fairly quiet year in Milborne Port for planning.

Recently the Parish Council had been presented with a couple of contentious planning issues involving proposed development on land at Gainsborough and the planning application for a new convenience store at Gainsborough.

Chairman of the Footpaths Committee – Mrs M Lock

Mrs Lock reported that there had not been any major problems with footpaths over the past year and that any repairs had been completed when reported fairly swiftly by South Somerset District Council and that any issues could be monitored easily on the interactive mapping system online. Mrs Lock reported that the pathway running through the Bellway development was still closed and would remain so until the completion of the site. It was with regret that Mrs Lock commented that following advertising for volunteers to adopt a

footpath there had been no response from anyone in the village and that the WI were looking into getting involved in this project. Mrs Lock thanked Mrs Alexander for her support in attending a footpaths meeting in her absence last year and thank the Clerk for her support and assistance.

Chairman of the Parish Plan Action Forum – Mr J Oldham

Mr Oldham gave an introduction on the formation of the Parish Plan Action Forum and its Action Groups for the benefit of those present who were not aware of its background explaining that the three Action Groups were Economy, Environment and Transport and Community. Mr Oldham updated the meeting on the progress of each Action Group since 2010 confirming that the Economy Action Group had met 3 out of its 12 targets, the Environment and Transport Group had met 4 out of its 7 targets, and the Community Group had met 6 out of its 10 targets a lot of which was down to the formation of the Spirit of Milborne Port who had taken over the social arm of this group. Credit was also given to the new website www.milborneport.org.uk with its online diary, newsletters, social clubs leaflet and Welcome Pack. Mr Oldham explained that unfortunately things were not progressing as quickly as he would like as each Action Group is made out of volunteers who have busy lives, therefore the Action Forum is always on the lookout for new volunteers.

Tree Warden – Mr T Copper

Mr Copper confirmed that it had been a quiet year concerning trees but that the large amount of trees planted in the past 2 years were doing well and that Station Copse was worth a visit. It was reported that the Ash Trees in the village were looking healthy.

The question was raised whether Mr Copper would be happy would be happy with some wild flowers being planted in Station Copse due to Milborne Port being entered into the Village in Bloom competition. Mr Copper said he would liaise with Mr Lock on this project.

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 Rick Jones, Chairman of the Friends of Milborne Port Library gave an update on the progress made throughout the year and the background of the group which started in 2010 following threatened closure of the library. There are now 185 members of the Friends and 8 committee members. Mr Jones commented that the Friends of Milborne Port Library had joined forces with other Somerset libraries and had been successful in stopping many library closures in the County.

Mrs Christine Porter, on behalf of Milborne Port Women's Institute reported that the WI now had more than 40 members. Mrs Porter confirmed the WI meet on the second Thursday of the month and run a number of events such as their Friday coffee mornings, coffee and cake on Saturdays and scrabble on Mondays. Currently the WI is planning a "Nearly New" charity Fashion Show to raise money for the school library.

Mrs Susan Wales from Milborne Port Bell Ringers informed the meeting that the Bell Ringers now had 20 members ranging from the ages of 40 – 80 who ring the bells on a Sunday and Wednesday and that they were always looking for new members. Mrs Wales confirmed that the bells had been restored and re-hung and had been ringing again since December 2012. Mrs Wales expressed her thanks and appreciation to all who helped raise £60,000 for restoration of the bells and gave information on the groups activities and outings during the past year.

Mrs Julia Mortimore gave an update on the village magazine saying that most months she is inundated with contributions towards the magazine and thanked everyone for their input. She said that together with the Milborne Port website the magazine did well in getting information around the village.

On behalf of The Spirit of Milborne Port, Claire Andrews and Andy Maidment thanked the Parish Council for their invite to the meeting. Claire gave brief background information stating The Spirit of Milborne Port had formed in 2011 to bring life back in to Milborne Port and to fundraised for the village and St Margaret's Hospice. She thanked everyone for their continued support and said that they were very humbled by the response they had received. A review of 2012 was given along with feedback from each event stating that Wheathill Nurseries were happy to host more events there in the future. Information and dates for the 2013 events was given along with an invite to all to attend future Spirit of Milborne Port Meetings. Claire also confirmed that she had entered Milborne Port into the South West in Bloom competition and that this was being steered by Mr Philip Lock.

Mrs Maureen Lock gave a brief update on the Tuesday Luncheon Club supported by Somerset Active Living informing the meeting that they provide a two course lunch along with tea and coffee to those people who may otherwise be housebound. Mrs Lock mentioned they were always on the lookout for volunteers for the cooking group and drivers.

Mrs Pam Alexander the Programme Secretary for the Gardening Club reported that there were around 35 members of the club and that they met the second Tuesday of the month in the Camelot Room at the Village Hall. It was confirmed that subscription to the club was £7 which included discounts at Castle Gardens and that as the club was an aging club they were hoping to recruit some younger members.

Mr Rick Jones took the opportunity to praise and congratulate Mr John House for the recent refurbishment of the Village Hall which included new lighting, heating, and insulation along with the new roof.

Mr Richard Duckworth on behalf of the Commonality Charity confirmed that the charity had registered interest in purchasing the village toilets in the hope to run them and keep them open for the village. He did however comment that the offer given was lower than the asking price.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm