

# GREAT MILTON PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Great Milton Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2009 at 7.30pm in the Pavilion.

Present: Mr Ken Rogers (Chairman), Mr Stephen Harrod, Mr Phil Ashworth, Mr Doug Colley, Mr Ian Bradley, Mrs Christine Pepperell

In Attendance: Michele Block (Clerk)  
Manny Stone (Deputy Bulletin Reporter)  
9 members of the public

### 51/09 **Apologies for Absence**

Peter Fewell  
John Nowell-Smith (District Councillor)  
David Turner (County Councillor)

### 52/09 **Register of Interests for this Meeting**

None

### 53/09 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed as a true and accurate record. This was proposed by Stephen Harrod, seconded by Doug Colley and agreed upon unanimously.

### 54/09 **Matters arising from the meeting held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

#### **A The Maple Tree Children's Centre, Great Milton**

#### **Action:**

Ken Rogers (KR) opened the meeting with an update on the Maple Tree Children's Centre (MTCC) read from the previous month's minutes, wherein David Turner gave an overview of current progress on the Centre based at Great Milton School and also future proposals regarding building work. KR then introduced Fran Hill (Headteacher at GM School), James Cunningham (Chair of the School Governors) and Jenny Stoker (Manager, MTCC), all of whom, having read the Bulletin notes, felt that the information contained therein was misleading, incorrect and shows the MTCC in a negative light.

KR then explained to those present that the views presented in the Bulletin regarding the MTCC were not the actual minutes of the Parish Council meeting, but notes taken by the Bulletin reporter, Pat Cox. KR did agree that perhaps Mrs Cox, who at the time of this meeting was on holiday, did add her personal view on a couple of points, however, the tone and the content of the piece was in keeping with May's PC Meeting.

KR further explained that the PC's current view regarding the MTCC has come as a result of information given to the PC by the Recreation

**Action:**

Ground Committee. Andy Noble (AN) was upset that when approached by the MTCC about the Playbus and Toy Library visiting the Recreation Ground each week, it was presented as a 'fait accompli'. AN thought this unacceptable, especially as the bus was expected to park on the Recreation Ground itself, which would cause irreparable damage to the grass. KR did add that the PC was rather dismayed by this approach to the Rec Committee, and after extensive investigation could not come up with a replacement venue that was safe for young children.

James Cunningham (JC) then asked KR if he could tackle some of the factual inaccuracies published in the Bulletin, and give some reassurances about the MTCC.

JC stated that, in fact, Oxfordshire only has one double decker playbus, and not two as reported in the Bulletin. GM School has kindly come forward to house the playbus in Great Milton as no other suitable location could be found. It will also open class rooms and host the foundation outside play area when the playbus visits. The playbus visits will not be every three weeks, as stated in the Bulletin, as the bus has two other locations to visit at Garsington and Tiddington. It will therefore be in Great Milton just three more times this summer during July and August. JC stated that, in future, if the MTCC is to be discussed, he would like someone from the School, the Governors or the MTCC to be present at the meeting. KR replied by saying that the MTCC had not been on the Agenda in May, however, David Turner had raised the subject, whilst the PC was discussing general parking problems in the village.

KR felt that the village school should be connected to the community through the Parish Council. JC explained that there were opportunities on the Board of Governors for members of the Community, and Jenny Stoker (JS) also reported that a Stakeholders meeting of the MTCC took place last July, and another one will take place on June 26<sup>th</sup> for members of the Community to sit on an Advisory Board.

Fran Hill (FH) reported that she would be happy to come to PC meetings when necessary, as she is also very keen for the links to be maintained between the school and community. KR did add that it would be useful for the school to be slightly more pro-active, so that the PC heard about controversial items that may affect the village before they actually happen.

FH then went on to explain that GM School needed to extend its services to ensure its future. The school has rolled out the current extended services scheme including breakfast club and after school club, it is included in the Wheatley School Partnership for after school sporting activities, and now there is the Children's Centre Services. GM school bid for the centre, to draw on both health and education together, ie it gives people a chance to see therapists and specialists via school rather than through hospitals.

Phil Ashworth (PA) asked FH if there is to be any building work at the school. FH confirmed that there is to be a new school building to replace the old temporary terrapins, and also a further three rooms for

the Children's Centre. At the moment, it is proposed that building work will take place in 2010, starting in the Spring at the earliest.

**Action:**

KR reiterated that the PC's main concern is for the community. KR asked FH to drip feed information to the PC so that it is kept fully up to date on progress. Parking is obviously a major problem in the village, and the least disruption, whilst work is taking place, the better. FH suggested that the PC support the idea of turning some of the Recreation Ground into temporary parking for the school and village. KR concluded that the PC is very concerned with this problem and is looking for solutions, however, it is not an easy one, as there will be a lot of resistance from residents against new parking ideas.

JC returned to the notes that were published in the May Bulletin and stressed that he was very concerned that incorrect facts regarding the MTCC were published and out in the community. JC asked if the PC could amend the details before the next Bulletin and do some sort of leaflet drop in the village. After discussion, the PC concluded that this would be impossible and too expensive, and either JC could write an article for the July Bulletin, setting out the correct facts, or the PC could put a poster in the shop or on the PC noticeboard explaining the situation. KR confirmed that he would place an apology in the next Bulletin for the slightly personalised view given by Pat Cox regarding the MTCC.

KR

It was therefore proposed by Phil Ashworth that James Cunningham be allowed to write a 150 word article for the Bulletin to set the record straight. This was seconded by Ian Bradley and agreed upon unanimously.

JC

It was also suggested by KR that Pat Cox should circulate her notes to the PC before they are sent off to Manny. It was agreed that KR should speak to Mrs Cox on this matter.

KR

The Clerk also suggested that JS let her have a copy of the Playbus timetable that she could post on the PC noticeboard, so that residents would know when it was next due to visit the village.

MB/JS

## **B Boundary Potts Close/Backlands**

Stephen Harrod (SH) reported that he had now received all of the necessary documentation from Richard Keal (RK) to support the various issues RK has with SOHA, SODC and OCC regarding his property and boundary. SH also confirmed that he had spoken directly with Steve Lynch, Director of Development at SOHA, to gain his perspective on the matter. Now that SH has heard from both sides the parties need to get together to find a solution to the situation. SOHA has confirmed that it will hold off with the boundary fencing until after the meeting with RK, which should take place over the next week or so. SH to report back to Councillors next month on the outcome of the meeting.

SH

**C Recreation Ground Access**

**Action:**

SH confirmed that he is waiting for quotes to arrive from four potential suppliers to resurface the entrance to the Recreation Ground. James Cunningham did add that there is grant money available from Oxfordshire County Council for help with temporary parking projects for schools, and that this may benefit this proposal. SH thanked him for the information and confirmed that it may be useful.

SH

KR confirmed that he would chase Spadeoak (John Lewis), who had offered to drop off some cold tarmac, when he was next in the area, to fill up the worst potholes. KR added that he would endeavour to ensure this happened before the fete at the weekend. SH stated that if Spadeoak couldn't help, then he would speak to Bob Hutton about putting down some hardcore to temporarily ease the problem.

KR/SH

**D Temporary VAS in Great Milton**

The Clerk read out the average results of a speed check that had taken place outside 'Fernbank' in Lower End. The results published by OCC indicated that there was not a problem coming into the village (eastbound), where the average speed was 25.1 mph over a 24 hour period. Out of 707 vehicles, 7 (1%) were above the police enforcement threshold. Going out of the village towards Sworford Lane (westbound), the average speed was a little higher at 27.3 mph. Out of 806 vehicles, 64 (8%) were above the police enforcement threshold. The report did go on to say that although this figure appears high, in fact, compared to other villages, it is actually quite low.

Councillors discussed this matter in depth, with input from John Davis, who lives in Lower End, and who feels there is a real problem with youths who use the village as a race track and rat run. There were differing views on the VAS, Ian Bradley (IB) commented that he felt it was a waste of money, as the drivers who continually speed do not take any notice of flashing signs or any other deterrents.

John Davis asked if he could have a copy of the original article regarding the VAS, as he would still like a stand erected in Lower End (at his own cost).

Phil Ashworth still felt that it was worth investigating whether Oxfordshire Highways (OH) could impose a 20 mph speed limit in Great Milton. If 20 mph signs were to be erected in the village, then it may bring those who currently drive at 40mph in a 30 mph limit, down to 30mph in a 20mph limit, which would be safer. The Clerk informed Councillors that David Turner (DT) had set up a meeting with Peter Ronald of OH for him to visit Great Milton in early June to discuss both The Forties and the 20mph limit. However, as the Chairman had been on holiday, the date had had to be re-arranged. DT to inform the Clerk/Chairman of the new date for the visit.

DT

In the meantime, KR recommended that if Parishioners did see a car speeding through the village, write down its number plate and report to both Countax and Le Manoir. If the culprit is employed at either

company, then they would be given a severe warning by their employer.

**Action:**

It was agreed by all Councillors that a decision on the VAS should be held over until after the meeting with Peter Ronald, OH.

**E Clerk/RFO Vacancy**

SH reported that he had spoken to Joanna Botha (JB) who had applied for the position of clerk/responsible financial officer. He had circulated JB's CV to all Councillors prior to the meeting and the clerk had also had a chat with JB about the role. The Clerk felt that JB was an ideal candidate for the position.

KR had also drawn up a list of likely candidates, however, at present, he had not had time to progress them. All Councillors present gave their consent for KR and SH to draw up a shortlist of candidates and interview them as necessary. SH confirmed that he would circulate the time and date of any interviews, in case any other Councillors wished to attend.

SH/KR

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the job also came with a three drawer metal filing cabinet and a bookcase worth of lever arch files and filing. This would have to be taken into consideration when interviewing likely candidates, or alternative dry secure housing would have to be sought.

When asked, the Clerk confirmed that she wanted to hand over by 01 September, but would be willing to attend the September meeting to support the incoming Clerk, however, she would not want to type up the minutes or take away action points from that meeting.

The Clerk was asked by the Chairman to draw up a job description for the role, which they could give to prospective candidates.

MB

**55/09 Correspondence and Public Discussion**

**A Yew Tree Cottage – Proposed New Driveway**

Following correspondence between the Parish Council (PC) and Mr & Mrs Richards, SH announced that the issues over the new proposed gate and driveway at Yew Tree Cottage had been resolved. Mr & Mrs Richards have confirmed that they will comply with the conditions outlined in the PC's letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> May 2009, with the exception of the PC's request to move the left hand gate post, rather than the right.

KR explained that the Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) issued by SODC was done so using plans which propose moving the existing right hand gate post out to enlarge the gateway from pedestrian width to car width. The PC had requested that the left hand post be moved instead, so that the driveway was bought nearer to Yew Tree Cottage and away from the immediate neighbour. However, the Richards have stated that they wish the plans to remain as those approved, otherwise they would need to reapply to SODC for a new LDC and draw up new plans, all at vast costs for just a few feet. KR also added that there was

also an additional problem with moving to the left - an old septic tank which would need to be dug out and back filled.

**Action:**

The Richards have confirmed that they are going to infill the whole of the old driveway, using, where possible, the bricks from the new opening, and just use the front metal gate at the front of the house as pedestrian access. They have also confirmed that they will turf the original driveway, and put down grasscreeper hardstanding over the common land where the new driveway will pass.

Stephen Harrod proposed that the Parish Council should accept Mr & Mrs Richard's amendments, this was seconded by Ian Bradley and agreed upon unanimously. SH to write a letter of confirmation to Mr & Mrs Richards.

SH

**B Birch Trees/The Forties**

Norma and Norman Walters asked the Parish Council if any further action had been taken regarding the new birch trees in the Forties, as they are now overhanging the road. The Clerk confirmed that Oxfordshire County Council had asked who had planted them, and after discussion with Charles Peers, she had given OCC Mr Peer's details. No further correspondence has been received on the matter.

Whilst touching on the Forties, it was proposed by PA that perhaps the Parish Council could approach Charles Peers regarding a permissive footpath on his land to save pedestrians from walking up and down the Forties, as it is becoming more and more dangerous.

KR agreed to speak to Charles Peers regarding both the permissive footpath and the trees.

**C Flooding in Sworford Lane**

Norman Walters asked KR if any further investigations had been carried out with regards to the road flooding at the far end of Sworford Lane, by the railway bridge. KR confirmed that he would speak to David Turner about the matter. It was pointed out that the ditch that runs southwards from the road at the 'S' bend (with barbed wire each side of it) needs digging out. Unfortunately, the landowner is not known. KR to follow up with DT and OH.

KR

**D Old Field**

Fred Smith (FS) reported that the Old Field Committee felt very strongly about the PC Notes that were reported in June's Bulletin. FS stated that the article read as if the OFC did not care about the Read's ditch clearance. The OFC were so dismayed by the comments that they held an emergency meeting on Friday evening, on site, to discuss the situation. David Holme took notes and will forward these and the OFC's concerns to the Parish Council shortly. KR apologised for any misinterpretation, however, he did re-iterate that Marion Read is desperate to get the ditch dug out and rabbits moved on, so as not to lose a further year's crops. The Clerk confirmed that she would circulate OFC's notes when received.

MB

56/09 **Planning Applications**

**Action:**

**Great Milton Parish Council considers that the following planning applications should be approved by South Oxfordshire District Council**

- A The Old School, High Street, Great Milton. P09/W0465 & P09/0466/LB  
Repositioning and replacement of 5 rooflights. Addition of oak gate for security.

**Great Milton Parish has registered ‘no strong views’ on the following planning application, and accepts that SODC will determine it as it considers appropriate.**

- B Lantern Service Station, London Road, Milton Common. P09/W0310  
Proposed new LPG fuel facility for privately owned vehicles.

**South Oxfordshire District Council has granted planning permission on the following planning applications:**

- C Romeyns Court, Church Road, Great Milton. P09/W0231 & P09/W0232/LB  
Alterations and repairs to Romeyns Court Cottage to include repair of dormers and renewal of roof windows. Alterations to adjoining outbuildings and stores to include raising single storey slate roof.

**South Oxfordshire District Council has granted a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development for:**

- D Yew Tree Cottage, Lower End, Great Milton. P09/W0088/LD  
The provision of a vehicular access via new openings within the existing wall to a parking area within the curtilage of the dwelling.
- E **The Planning Inspectorate appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government has dismissed an appeal** by Mr Robert Marchbank against the decision of SODC to refuse planning permission at **Chilworth House School, Thame Road, Wheatley**. The development (app ref P08/W0807) proposed the construction of a single storey timber framed classroom building at the school.

57/09 **Financial Resolutions**

- A The following payments were agreed; proposed by Ian Bradley, seconded by Steve Harrod and agreed upon unanimously

Michele Block. Clerk’s Salary - £303.43  
Jonathan Dudley. Bulletin Production (May & June) – TBA  
Manny Stone. Editorial Services (June) - £50.00  
Enterprise. Rec Grd Grass Cut (April) - £58.32  
Windmill Landscapes. Verge Grass Cutting (May) - £429.42  
Stephen Harrod. Village Hawthorn Tree - £39.99

MB

**B VAT Return** **Action:**

The Clerk confirmed that she had completed the Parish Council's VAT Return for period 1/4/08 to 31/3/09 and submitted it to HMRC. The total amount claimed was £690.71.

**58/09 Items for Discussion**

A The Clerk asked Councillors if anyone was interested in attending the launch of the Oxfordshire LEADER Rural Funding Programme, details of which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Unfortunately, no Councillors were available to attend.

**59/09 Any Other Business**

A Doug Colley reported that he had received a call from Sheila Piper, 10 Thame Road regarding the building work going on at Oxen Field and asked whether the owner had planning permission. The Clerk confirmed that Planning Permission had been issued to Bob Hutton in April 2006 for new stables to be built. She also added that Keith Smith at Oxen Piece had requested and looked at the same plans recently and had been happy that the work was as per the approved scheme.

B Ian Bradley (IB) raised the subject of the new bin collection, and what happens to black bin bags left out on the street, which are now not being collected under the new scheme. It would appear that a few households have not read their new bin literature and as a result the village is littered with bin bags, which are being opened and scattered by birds. IB did call the Manoir as one of the households concerned is inhabited by Manoir staff, however, they were not interested in the matter. IB has also called the landlord to try and sort out the situation. However, in the meantime, the Clerk was asked to contact Environmental Services at SODC to see if the rubbish sacks can be removed.

MB

PA also asked the Clerk if any reply had been received from SODC regarding the public bin emptying. Local 'bin monitors' used to leave the contents of the public bins by the road to be collected with the domestic rubbish and then re-line the bins. However, now that black bin bags are not being collected, and people do not have room for extra rubbish in their bins, the village has a problem. Having already asked the question, the Clerk confirmed that she would chase this matter with SODC.

MB

C PA mentioned the website, and stated that a couple of items were still outstanding from the Clerk. The Clerk confirmed that these would be sent to the website company, as soon as possible, but at the moment the Audit was taking priority.

MB

The meeting closed at 9.30pm

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2009**  
**at 7.30pm** in the Pavilion.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_