

Milton Damerel Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes

of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Parish Hall on Wednesday 16th April 2014. The meeting commenced at 7.33pm.

Present: Councillors Stephen Moyse (Vice Chairman), Gareth Piper, Rose Haynes, Richard Piper, Jim Richardson
Mrs Lorraine Buttery (Clerk)

There were 20 members of the public present including County Cllr Robin Julian

Apologies were received from Cllr Grace Millman, PC Andy Moakes, P.C.S.O Racquel Rowe, Cllr. John Webb, Sheila Daniel, Joyce Daley

1. Welcome and Introductions by the Vice Chairman of the Parish Council.

Cllr Stephen Moyse chaired the meeting and opened by welcoming the guest speaker Councillor Philip Collins, leader of Torridge District Council. , Stephen also welcomed the members of the public and Councillors who needed no introduction as their names were displayed.

2. Parish Planning Update Councillor Grace Millman's report was read out by Stephen

Parish Plan Update....

Our Parish Plan was published in 2008 when it was agreed we should review progress with the actions at our Annual Parish meetings.

Neighbourhood Plans are the current initiatives for developing and publishing local plans and in due course the Parish Council will need to think about whether progressing a Neighbourhood Plan would be advantageous for our Parish, as an update of the Parish Plan as it becomes more dated.

What has been changing nationally and for local authorities?

As reported last year District councils are now compiling and consulting on revised Local Plans, which deal with economic development, encouraging employment and business opportunities, housing, the environment, etc., and the most recent consultation by NDDC & TDC (who have a joint plan initiative) covers the section on Rural Plans. For Milton Damerel it remains that Milton Town and Venn Green have development boundaries for housing and economic development; however, your Councillors views remain as previously, that any of our hamlets should be accorded minor development opportunity (say 1 or 2 houses), within a set of agreed criteria, and this has been re-iterated in our response to Rural Plans section of the Local Plan. We have also included the lack of public space and recreational play areas within the parish.

Where are we with our Parish Plan Action Plans?

Housing & Development

Re-submission of the application for housing development, including affordable housing, for Milton Town was made earlier in the year, but has yet to be accepted as a valid application by TDC Planning Department. The Managing Director of Drews advised the Chair of the Parish Council when the revised application was submitted and remains committed to come along to an open meeting to present the plans and respond to questions when the application has been validated and consultation can proceed.

Roads & Public Footpaths

Speed Watch has continued at Venn Green irregularly and little progress made towards any changes to tackle excess speed. There remains a lack of volunteers and obviously many demands on PCSO availability. There is a separate report on the agenda on our footpaths – and we are very grateful to Mike Jackson for the role he takes in checking our paths and liaising with DCC.

Community Involvement and Spirit

The Parish Hall Management Committee continues to work on the upkeep and improving the facilities, and there will be a separate report. The Methodist Church, with the upgrading of its premises, has been instrumental in attracting a Pilates Instructor for a weekly session and in starting a Baby & Toddler Group which also meets once a week. As with many events and organisations in the parish, I know all the organisers would be delighted for more support, for more volunteers to join the organising group, committee, leaders and for greater attendance at the events, clubs, etc., provided for our community. Thank you to all those who are involved and do support.

Our Environment

The Parish Council is consulted on renewable energy applications within the parish and surrounding parishes, and promote strongly with the Planning Officers that there is adequate consultation with all residents who will be directly affected by each of the developments. For all applications we also try to consider what the impact may be for neighbours and the wider environment

3. **Report from Parish Paths Partnership (P3) Co-ordinator.** Mike Jackson

We have only one major item to report at this time, which is the completion of the new boardwalk on footpath 16, which runs from the Church across Whitebear Cottage. This makes it far easier to get through the copse area, down by the stream, no matter how wet the weather has been. If anybody here has not yet been to see it, it is well worth the effort of going to have a look as it is quite a substantial construction.

All our paths remain open and usable although care is required in a few places which have become quite muddy after all the wet weather.

The informal monthly walking group which was set up originally with five other P3 parishes, with the aim of checking the state of paths, continues to thrive and two other Parishes have joined this year. The March walk at Halwill saw 31 people turn out which was a bit of a surprise as usually numbers vary between 10 and 20. Mike invited questions, but there were none.

4. Reports from Local Organisations

a) **Leslie Self read the report from Milton Damerel Parish Hall Committee.**

Once again, the Committee, would like to thank the Parish Council for the Grant received and also for their support in using the Hall for their Committee Meetings. All grants are gratefully received, to help keep the Hall in good repair.

Besides receiving income from individual hirers, we receive income from regular users, The Parish Council, The Skittlers, Line dancing, the over 60's Group and The Gardening Society. We believe that the Hall is reasonably used, but the income from hirers, very rarely is exceeded by the expenses. We have had the outside of the Hall repainted last year, partly paid for by a grant from Councillor Robin Julian.

If you use the Parish Hall you will realize that we still have a problem with damp in the kitchen, lobby and toilets, this is constantly being monitored. We now sometimes have rain water coming in the Skittle Alley roof/wall, which we hope to find and repair, before we refurbish.

The Committee organise several functions throughout the year, to boost our income. Our next is a Whist Drive, this Easter Saturday, a Coffee Morning on St Georges Day and a Wine and Wisdom on 26th April. Please support us if you can. Information on all our events can be found in the Parish Newsletter. Our next Committee Meeting is on 12th May, at 7.30. New Committee Members will be welcomed.

Signed

Date

Page 1 of 2 (APM 16/04/2014)

b) **Milton Damerel & District Over 60s** report was read out by the Clerk on behalf of Joyce Daley: This last year has been quite good for the club with an increase in numbers and a few more will join us in May at the AGM. Our trips were well supported with a request for an October outing which was spent in Taunton. Ten members enjoyed the Rotary Cream Tea on the 15th June. Holsworthy Lions gave the club tickets for the HATS pantomime which were passed to members who enjoyed the Matinee on the 8th February.

If any members would like to join our monthly meetings and trips they would be most welcome. Your own Lesley Self has joined us on several occasions, so hopefully she can recommend why you should join our activities.

c) **Newsletter Group**. David Taylor reported that 235 copies of the newsletter containing 26-28 pages are hand delivered to all households in Milton Damerel and Abbots Bickington, again our thanks go to all the volunteers.

Advertising charges were not increased in 2012 (12 months in advance) as funds were sufficient to cover printing costs. We have lost one advertiser but they have been replaced by two other businesses. Our finances show receipts of £1240.61 for the year with expenses of £977.65 which is a gain of £262.96, again no fundraising was necessary, the healthy finances are due to reduced printing costs and increases in donations. Newsletter group members remain unchanged. Community groups continue to support us with interesting reports. We continue to find it difficult to encourage input from individuals. Significant family events can only be included if we are made aware of them.

d) **Milton Damerel Gardening Society**: John Binns reported a steady year for the society with membership attendance slightly down on peak years/ The 2013 programme of monthly talks ranged from Hosta, herbal remedies to a quiz night.. For 2014/15 year Dowsing was the first subject with subsequent talks on adding structure to the garden the Forest Industry and many others. Meetings are the 1st Wed of the month from Feb-June and Oct- Dec and all members and non-members are welcome. The annual produce show in September continues to be well supported. The grant from the PC is particularly useful in supporting the society.

f) **Milton Damerel Sunday/Monster Club**. A report read by the Clerk on behalf of Sheila Daniel: Sheila feels it would be more appropriate to group the two together and gave a report with the title Milton Damerel Children and Youth. The Monster club is now a holiday club as the attendance for the monthly meetings were poorly attended, the Holiday Club has proved very popular with 18 attending a recent meeting. The attendance at the Sunday club has not improved with only two regularly attending, the Toddler group has 6 regular attending and it is hoped that more will be joining shortly, as the group has only been running since November all is as well as could be expected.

g) **Milton Damerel Neighbourhood Watch** report was given by Mike Jackson on behalf of Roger Copp who sent his apologies. He reported that Anne Hamilton-Clerk has agreed to being the co-ordinator for the Gidcott area, which means that whole of the Parish is covered with a co-ordinator for each Hamlet, household numbers now stand at 76. Whilst crime tends to be on the low side, we encourage all to report to the police any crime, however small. This enables the police to be aware of what is happening and to see if a pattern is building. The meetings for the co-ordinators are held quarterly. We pass on information and crime prevention tips through articles in the newsletter. A weekly newsletter is also sent out via email to members and Parish Councillors who wish to receive them. We continue to keep in regular contact with members of the Beat Team, who through the PCSOs keep us advised of problems that are happening in and around the area.

h) **Holy Trinity Parochial Church Council** The report was read by John Binns

The communities support and involvement in Church gardening continues to grow as does the grass.. There are some dedicated volunteers helping throughout the year and everyone's effort is greatly appreciated. The grass maintenance, hedges and general tidying up has been supplemented by transplanting some spring bulbs to the area in front of the lyth gave which gave a good show this spring.

The support from the Parish Council is greatly appreciated.

5. The Guest speaker Councillor Philip Collins, leader of Torridge District Council: Councillor Phillips stated he values the strength of Parish communities being very involved with the village where he lives. He spoke of the big challenge of being the leader of the Council and hoped to continue after the elections on the 28th April. The main problems he spoke of were the cutting of funds and the unfairness of how Government funds are spread out within communities and areas. The council had saved 2.2 million by the reduction of staff and more efficient working by other staff members. There will be tough choices in the future as another 2.2 million must be cut from the budget for the coming year, care homes and libraries to name just two will be affected. Discrenciary services (ones which are not compulsory) such as Leisure centres, footballs fields, toilets etc will also be affected. The economic development of the area is an important issue, with the new Holsworthy Market being on schedule to be completed June/July. The new supermarket and housing in Holsworthy will start as soon as possible. Altogether 200 new jobs will be created. Councillor Philips then went on to talk about the condition of the roads, there will be a new system by DCC highways, red roads which are too expensive to repair will be closed or advise given that they are unsuitable for general traffic and will be for access only, amber roads would be repaired as when necessary and there were enough funds to do so, priority would be given to 'green roads' which would be resurfaced and pot holes repaired promptly. There is a huge backlog of work to be done on our roads.

6. Questions from members of the community.

i) The amount of £40 per pot hole repair has been mentioned is this correct? The contract for all repairs is with South West highways this I believe to be about correct.

ii) Is there going to be a change of waste collection and will recycling be spread wider? There is no change being considered at present but this could be so in the future. With the consideration of does recycling cover its cost?

iii) Will Parishes be expected to carry out work previously done by local councils? The devolvment of tasks to Parish Councils has been considered but there are no definite plans at present. Issues should be reported to Elaine Lester at Torridge District Council.

iv) Have the 'Local Needs Affordable housing issue been agreed? As yet the application for 'affordable housing' has not been ratified

7. Any other matters: there were none

The Vice Chairman thanked the speaker for his interesting presentation and closed the Annual Parish Meeting at 8.45pm.

Everyone was invited to remain for refreshments before a Parish Council meeting commenced.