

Milton Damerel Annual Parish Meeting

Minutes

of the Annual Parish Meeting held at the Parish Hall on Wednesday 15th April 2015 The meeting commenced at 7.30pm.

Present: Councillors Stephen Moyse (Chairman), Richard Piper (Vice Chairman), Grace Millman, Jim Richardson, Rose Haynes, John Webb and Lorraine Buttery (Clerk).

There were 6 members of the public present

Apologies were received from PC Andy Moakes, P.C.S.O Racquel Rowe, Cllr. Gareth Piper, Sheila Daniel ,Christine Cook,. I.Gifford , Roger Copp and David Taylor

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

Cllr Stephen Moyse chaired the meeting and opened by welcoming the guest speaker Sallie McKay-Roper, Community Champion from Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue. Stephen also welcomed the members of the public and Councillors who needed no introduction as their names were displayed.

2.Parish Plan Update a report from Councillor Grace Millman....

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 ; however it is also appropriate to consider updating the 2008 plan. Councillor Grace Millman report contained :

What has been changing nationally and for local authorities?

As reported last 2 Annual Parish Meetings District Councils have compiled and consulted and the most recent consultation By NDDC & TDC (who have a joint plan initiative) deals with development, encouraging employment and business opportunities, housing, the environment, etc., and the most recent consultation by NDDC & TDC (who have a joint plan initiative) deals with over 2500 comments received about the Draft Local Plan published last year. For Milton Damerel it remains that Milton Town and Venn Green have development boundaries for housing and economic development; however, your Councillors views , that all of our Hamlets should be accorded minor development opportunity(say 1 or 2 houses), within a set agreed criteria, has been adopted in the most recent version of the Local Plan, with particular emphasis on local need criteria. The current consultation ends on the 1st May and then the Plan with all comments received will be submitted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate hopefully leading to adoption by 2016.

Where are we with our Parish Plan Action Plans?

Housing & Development

Another re-submission of the application for housing development for Milton Town was made in late January. The details in this latest re-submission is not known, although it is understood it still proposes 27 houses in total. Whilst the Managing Director of Drews contacted the Parish Council when the revised application had been submitted and offered to come a long to a Parish Council meeting, or an open meeting, to present the plans and respond to questions, your Councillors decided the correct time for this will be when the application has been validated by the Planning Officers and consultation can proceed. The latest info is that the application remains invalid as further information is required from the developers.

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 continues to host Pilates sessions and Baby & Toddler Group sessions. The Gardening Society has ended and a new Gardening Club is being organised.

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 continues to be consulted on renewable energy applications within the parish and surrounding parishes,. For all applications we also try to consider what the impact may be for neighbours and the wider environment.

Finally, returning to our Plan the Parish Councillors are looking for your comments on whether there is support for updating our Plan. Such a review would look at the progress made with the actions agreed in 2008, whether some alternative actions are needed to meet the issues we selected for action, and whether there are some newer issues for which action plans should be developed. What are your views? Should we initiate a review? In retrospect do you think we dealt with the right issues then? Are there more issues of importance that we should now look at? An example is affordable housing – the housing needs survey was completed in 2009- is there still support and more identified needs for affordable housing in the Parish?

From the floor it was suggested that it is more important to attend to local needs as opposed to ‘affordable housing’, as in houses only being sold to local people and cannot be sold on to non-parishioners.

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

All our footpaths are open with the only caveat being that ‘wellies’ are needed for FP15 which runs from Whitebear Farm across to Chapel View. The only major work which has been undertaken this last twelve months is to the ladder stile opposite Whitebear Cottage, which was renewed on the field side due to rotting joints some of which had broken. This will probably be a regular occurrence due to the damp conditions and it might be worthwhile considering replacement of the whole stile at some stage in the future, by one of the metal self closing gates which seem to work well.

Tim installed the metal self closing gate at the top end of the boardwalk to make it easier for people to access the electric fencing. Tim has also offered to supply similar gates for all the paths which are crossed by electric fencing but Whitebear Farm would have to do the installation work themselves as he doesn’t have the budget to pay for the installation work.

I understand that people are still not replacing the insulated handles correctly when using these paths, which was why I put the short article on the subject in the last Newsletter. Only time will tell if people will take any notice.

The monthly Inter-Parish walks are going extremely well and we regularly get 15 – 20 people turning out. The largest turnout being 31 last Spring when we were at Halwill Town. The weather does seem to impact on numbers. These walks are open to everybody bearing in mind that they are frequently over rough or muddy ground and suitable footwear is recommended. Mike invited questions but there were none.

4. Reports from Local Organisations

Roberta Jackson read the report from Milton Damerel Parish Hall Committee.

a) The Parish Hall committee would like to thank the Parish Council for the grants received each year which helps towards the upkeep of the Hall. Regular users include Line Dancing, the Parish Council, Over 60's, Keep Fit, Gardening and three Skittles Clubs. The income from these bookings along with the occasional private booking just about covers the very basic running costs without any maintenance. To maintain and improve the Parish Hall regular fundraising events are held, include monthly Whist Drives and the other events each held once or twice a year, these include Beetle Drives, Bingo, Social Pudding Evening, Cider & Pasty Walk, Coffee Morning and Wine & Wisdom.

The skittle alley is currently undergoing a refurbishment but I have to say that the historic concrete alley will remain; this is liked and disliked to varying degrees by the users from the home teams and the many visiting teams.

At the end of last year work was carried out on the roof to stop rain water blowing in under the corrugations. We are very grateful to the TDC Councillor's Community grant which covered the cost of this work.

Forthcoming events include the monthly Whist Drive on Saturday, the Wine & Wisdom on 25 April, Lesley is taking booking for that and on 31 May we are holding a 35th Anniversary Lunch to celebrate 35 years since the old Church Hall was purchased and became the Parish Hall registered charity it is today. Tickets for the Lunch will be available from committee members from 25 April.

b) **Milton Damerel & District Over 60s** report was read out by Leslie Self: The club has continued to hold meetings on the first Tuesday of each month, an average of 20 members attend and enjoy playing cards or bingo. In January this year members were invited by Holsworthy Lions Club to a New Year Dinner. Several coach outings were arranged through the summer, which were well supported. In June the members were invited to a strawberry tea by the Lions Club. New members are always welcome.

c) **Newsletter Group**. David Taylor report was read out by Councillor Stephen Moyse: The newsletter has continued to be favoured with the support of advertisers, from within the Parish and neighbouring parishes and towns. The Parish Council kindly gave a grant of £100, and loyal supporters have given a few subscriptions/personal donations. The various forms of community support enable the continue delivery of approximately 220 copies, free of charge, to each household in the Parish and Abbots Bickington. We record our sincere thanks to all supporters and to those who deliver your newsletter to your doorstep, and to Nicola Wrighton for independently examining our records and accounts.

d) Milton Damerel and District Gardening Group:

Edgar Pett reported that the new group had a different 'agenda' than the old society and be more proactive with the community by perhaps helping with the gardens of those less able. They hoped to take over the Annual Show. The next meeting was to be on the 21st April after which there will be more ideas on the future of the group.

From the floor the question was asked regarding the Diamond Jubilee Cup as it was engraved Milton Damerel Gardening Society "Best in Show", it was agreed that the wording on the cup was not an important factor and could still be awarded by the new group. The Chairman and all Councillors voiced their appreciation that a Gardening Club would be continuing.

f) Milton Damerel Holiday club and Toddler Group

A report read by the Chairman on behalf of Sheila Daniel: Sheila apologised for not attending. The toddler group continues with 6 regular children, we would welcome any parishioners to 'pop' in at any time and have a coffee with us. The Holiday club continues taking place about 6 times a year. Usually we get about 15-20 young people and they seem to enjoy these events. We have only a very small fund but charge very little, we would not wish to put the 'subs' up so run on a shoe string

g) **Milton Damerel Neighbourhood Watch** report was given by Mike Jackson on behalf of Roger Copp who sent his apologies. NHW continues to exist across the Parish and currently has a household membership of 96, which when compared to twelve months ago is an increase of 6%. Remarkably, this is at odds with membership numbers over the whole of Holsworthy and its rural parishes where membership is actually down about 4% and across the whole of Torridge, down about 7%. The falling numbers overall are because membership seems to track the crime figures for traditional crimes, such as burglaries etc., and these have been falling for the past 18 months. This is quite logical as when you think about it, and NHW would not be needed if there was absolutely no crime. Our numbers are increasing because Milton Damerel seems to have a very high turnover of residents with new people moving in who are joining.

As we are still a very low crime area in Milton Damerel, even compared to some of our near neighbour villages we are basically a messaging service. Apart from the page in the Parish Newsletter, for which we are very grateful, those people who wish, can get a weekly Torridge wide emailed newsletter, and Torridge NHW has very recently gone live with its own web site which is basically going to be an information library.

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

The PCC, congregation and supporters of the Church thank the PC for their annual Grant. The funding goes much of the way to cover the costs associated with the maintenance of the Churchyard, its boundaries and the public footpath. It contributes to the cost of fuel for Private trimmers and other machines brought by supporters. Any remainder goes towards servicing costs to prolong the life of the 2 mowers the Church owns. I would add, most of the grant money ends up being spent locally, at local business, a double benefit for the same funds. The ongoing maintenance of the churchyard and footpath shows a strong community spirit to keep these public spaces in a good state of repair and the grant provides a level of recognition from the PC to all the church supporters for the work they undertake. Thank you to them and the PC.

i) Milton Damerel Ladies Skittles Team

Milton Damerel Ladies Skittles team was formed 50 years ago being one of the original teams in Holsworthy Ladies Skittles League also formed 50 years ago The team has two sub teams the "A" and "B", the teams are currently in Division 2 where over the years have had many successes. We understand that we missed promotion to Division 1 by only 1pin/point.

The team is self funded by members subs and donations (e.g. raffle prizes each home match) the funds are used to pay rent for The Parish Hall and also pay towards replacement of skittles and balls.

5. The Guest speaker Sallie McKay-Roper, Community Champion from the Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue gave a very informative talk regarding 'Fire Safety' in the home. She stressed the importance of every home having Smoke alarms fitted. Too many people are still dying in house fires; the main cause of death is smoke inhalation. Pensioners and the disabled are particularly vulnerable. There are various types of 'alarms' the new types are sealed and have a 10 year battery life.

There are now alarms specifically designed for the hard of hearing and although expensive are invaluable to those who would not normally hear their alarms, a demonstration of the alarm can be arranged through Mark Saunders please contact him through Bideford Fire HQ for a free home visit. Advice is available regarding all types of alarms, fire blankets and extinguishers.

The age for the supply of 'free' alarms is now down from 65 years to 55years. Sallie stressed that if you know of any vulnerable Parishioners' especially single or widowed people who might not have any family to contact the department to enable them to Contact them.

7. Any other matters: there were none

The Chairman thanked the speaker for her very interesting presentation and closed the Annual Parish Meeting at 8 30pm.

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