

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 28 April 2008 at 7.30pm in the Bowls Pavilion

Present: JE Coston (chair) PS Badley RH Chapman R Day M Ellwood RJ Farrington B Jefferson
IF May HM Smith RT Summerfield RLE Waters
The clerk SJ Daniels, County Councillor M Williamson and 14 members of the public

Minute 55/4-08

1 Introduction of Parish Councillors – the Councillors introduced themselves.

2 Apologies for absence – G Covell TA Drummond SC Humphreys C Brunt.

3 Minutes - the minutes of the APM of 2007 were approved and signed as a true record.

4 Park & Ride – Presentation by Alistair Frost Cambridgeshire County Council. AF summarised the progress. He expected the opening to be in October. Works to sign foot / cycle routes through the village and realignment of radii at certain junctions eg Winship Road would take place during the summer. CCC would look at possibly installing double yellow lines – Butt Lane being a possibility.

In response to questions:

Apologies that the CCTV on the Jane Coston bridge was not in place. Cameras were being made.

Resurfacing of A10 – work would be organised to minimise disruption and to “tie in” with the Park & ride works.

Butt Lane traffic lights were now old technology. He would ask the traffic engineers to look at the settings of the lights at the A10/A14 interchange. Advice suggests that there are more accidents at part-time traffic lights.

30mph temporary speed limit on A10 was in place as works were being carried out to ditches along side the A10. The Park & ride had been designed to minimise noise and light pollution.

Park & Ride and Landfill Site would work closely together to avoid conflict of interest – eg mud on road from landfill.

Technology at Cowley Road junction for cyclist / pedestrians was faulty. Unit had been sent back to manufacturers.

Central government funding was assured as the planning process had been put in place in time to meet government deadlines.

Nothing was in place for the installation of traffic lights on the Milton slip road on to the A10 / A14 interchange. There was regular monitoring of accidents.

Thanks to A Frost for attending.

5 Chairman’s report and Draft Accounts – the chairman presented her report together with the draft accounts - (attached).

6 Charities report - Barry Jefferson presented his report - (attached).

7 County Councillor’s report – Michael Williamson presented his report – (attached).

8 District Councillors’ report – the district councillors presented their report – (attached).

CCC had no powers to force AWA to improve the sewage works unless AWA put in a planning application to extend the works.

9 Question and Answer Session

Mereham – the proposal by the developers to remove the Jane Coston bridge and replace it with a bridge for buses was a serious proposal.

Bus stop - apparently all the citi2 stops were request stops. The clerk would ask Stagecoach to make the Waggon & Horses stop going south an obligatory stop. [Passengers could not see along the High Street from the shelter]. In addition he would ask Stagecoach to stop on the concrete lay-by.

Plastic recycling – kerbside collection due to start in October.

Parish Plan – there had been about 900 returns - 55%. Initial analysis showed that sewage smell, traffic and recycling to be important issues. Majority of respondents seemed to enjoy living in Milton. After analysis of all the data the steering group in conjunction with the Parish Council would work out an action plan – by Christmas. Thanks to the steering group for their hard work.

Tomkins Mead – an agreement had been signed with Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust to manage Tomkins Mead along the same lines as with SCDC previously.

The chairman thanked all for attending. The meeting ended at 9.00pm.

Chairman.....Date.....

Milton Parish Council Annual Report 2007/08 Chairman's Report

The parish Council has had a busy year last year and are set to have another busy year this year.

Each year we assess how much money we need to provide services and this year we had a total income of £134, 806 which was made up of rates, rent, fees, grants and interest.

We provided a grant as we do each year to subsidise the cost of providing community facilities. This includes our new Youth Centre, the two recreation grounds, other sports provision and associated buildings. These are all excellent facilities and are managed on our behalf by the Milton Community Centre charity.

We have a number of Committees; Finance and Staffing, Maintenance, Community Care, Youth, Planning and Community Minibus. We also have a number of ad hoc groups that look at specific issues. In addition some of our parish councillors also represent us in a specific role such as Country Park rep.

The Finance & staffing committee manages the finances which is a major responsibility and includes items such as checking insurances and managing risk.

The Maintenance Committee has a large number of roles. It manages the cemetery, the allotments, the play areas and has general responsibility for overseeing the work of our village cleaner and the maintenance contractors who cut the grass etc.

The Community Care group oversee the work of our Community Care Warden and her assistant. There are a number of elderly residents who find this provision invaluable.

The Community Mini Bus Committee manage the use of the village mini bus which is in regular use.

The Youth Committee oversee the youth work in the village and the youth clubs that are held in the new Youth Building on a regular basis.

Planning Committee have had a very interesting year with planning applications such as the application for extending the years the landfill can operate to looking at plans for buildings on the Science Park (which incidentally is currently also part of Milton). The Planning Committee can only look at the plans and make recommendations to South Cambs. District Council who are the planning authority for the area. A developer is also currently talking to us about building a retirement village of around 100 homes on the site adjoining Milton Hall.

The Parish Council has also been involved in discussions about Mereham (a developer is hoping to build a new village called Mereham near Wilburton) and we were represented at the inquiry in the autumn.

We have also been promised for this year; we have made representations to Cambridgeshire County Council about the working on getting double yellow lines at the bottom of the cycle bridge and cctv; both of which have now been problems of not having traffic lights on the Milton access onto to the A14/A10 interchange and have pressed the County Council to make a whole range of highways and footpath related improvements and repairs and we have represented the village views on issues relating to the new Park and Ride that is being built in Butt Lane. We also successfully pressed for the area of land near the A14 to be cleared and tidied up.

Recently we have been writing to the sewage works asking for a meeting to discuss the problems of the smell which had subsided during the past 2 years but now seems to be becoming a problem again.

We supported the application from Impington Village College for a grant from South Cambs. District Council and we helped local residents by holding a stock of South Cambs. Bus Pass forms at the parish office when residents were having difficulty getting them. We also voiced the concerns of local residents when South Cambs. were threatening to close the Country Park and tried to help resolve the problems. South Cambs. have now passed the responsibility for the park to the Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust.

Unfortunately we also had a problem with South Cambs. District Council during the last year when we became most concerned that they were not responding to our letters and emails which resulted in us complaining about them and we now seem to have resolved the issues.

There is a boundary review at the moment which is likely to suggest that areas of land that are currently within the boundary of Milton be transferred to the City and visa versa. We are being consulted and have suggested that the A14 is the natural boundary of the village.

We also dealt with a problem of encroachment onto parish land and are currently working on various ideas to try to provide more land in the village for village sports teams to play. Currently some of our groups such as Colts Football have to use the facilities in other villages.

We continue to provide a mini bus to Tesco once a fortnight for the frail and elderly and once again put up Christmas lights with the help of volunteers. We also organised as usual the Remembrance Day Ceremony which was well attended.

We have also supported and funded the Parish Plan Group and will be looking at their findings in the near future.

During the last year our village cleaner, Robin Adams retired and we thanked him for all his work over 16 years. We also welcomed our new councillor Terrie Drummond.

We are in an area where there are many pressures for development and are therefore a very busy council but we are very lucky to have such a good team working on behalf of the village. I would especially like to thank everyone for all their hard work during the past year and would like to include in that thanks, the Community Centre Management Committee and all the staff.

Chairman, Milton Parish Council

Accounts can be found on the web <http://www.miltonvillage.org.uk/mpc/> under FINANCES.

Milton Charities Report

The Milton Charities have continued actively working in the community supporting individuals, groups and village projects where needed providing they come within the criteria laid down by the scheme approved by The Charity Commission.

Milton Parochial Charity receives rents from land owned in Milton and Chittering together with interest from investments. During the last financial year (Jan – Dec 2007) income from Land Rents, Investment income, and miscellaneous (Wayleave payment and donations), totalled **£3271.00**

Expenditure for the same period Cambridge City Council monitoring charges), Land agents fees, donations and running costs amounted to **£1783.80**

The excess of income over expenditure was **£1487.20** giving Milton Parochial Charities a balance in its current account of **£7792.95** at 31st December 2007, after Bank Reconciliation.

This shows a healthy increase over the same period last year but is due mainly to back rent being forthcoming following the completion of a Land Tenancy agreement for the new land in Milton Fen as mentioned in last year's report.

The number of lifeline alarms for use by residents in the village is still fifteen. Fourteen of these alarms are currently deployed plus one additional alarm which is held for emergencies. The Charity continues to work very closely with Tracey Ebbon the village warden, and the local surgery, who keeps us in touch with any possible requirements for people living in the village.

In 2007 Milton Parochial Charities donated **£1000** towards the Community Care Scheme and **£500** towards the refurbishment of the War Memorial, so far this year the Charity has donated a further **£1500** towards the Community Care Scheme.

During the same period the Jean Gallagher Trust made grants totalling **£2400**.

Milton Charities

April 2008

County Councillor's report to Milton APM April 28th, 2008

During the last year, I have dealt with a number of matters that affect Milton and that are within my remit as County Councillor. Here are just a few

Traffic

Now that the major roadworks have finished at the A10-A14 roundabout and at Cowley Road, my impression is that things have settled down. However, I do get reports of some problems and would like more information if they do exist. I suspect many of them are caused by rat-running from the north, but information would be welcomed.

The work on the Butt Lane P&R site does not seem to be causing much disruption although the 30mph limit on the A10 is widely ignored. I shall keep an eye on the situation, especially when they start to construct the junctions.

Cambridge Sport Lakes

This is what I said last year:

Most of you will know that this was given planning permission by South Cambridge-shire District Council, but with quite strict provisos as regards traffic management. The main entrance is off Car Dyke Road and traffic will turn in at the Slap Up.

The Slap Up junction was recently adjudged one of the most dangerous in Cambridge-shire by the County Council Traffic engineers. However, there was insufficient money in the County budget to do anything about it. I am working hard to try to get the developers of the Sports Lakes to contribute funds to improvements to this junction in just the same way as my predecessor, Jane Coston, succeeded in getting a contribution from the Bannold Road development in Waterbeach to improve Denny End. I cannot guarantee success, but I shall do my best.

I don't think the situation has changed although draft planning conditions do include a term that no event that involves more than 100 vehicles can take place until traffic signals are installed at the Slap Up junction. Progress on this is extremely slow and it is not at all clear to me when any sort of progress will be seen.

Of course, the long term future of Milton Country Park is dependent upon the Cambridge Sports Lakes going ahead and so we need to keep a close watch on the situation.

Major developments

We are still waiting for the Minister's decision on Mereham. I, together with Hazel Smith and Jane Coston, spoke at the planning enquiry and our remarks can be read on the web-site. I very much hope that such a ridiculous scheme will be thrown out and that the developer will have to pay the costs of the Councils.

The Minister rejected the proposals for the Waterbeach eco-town. She fulfilled her commitment not to accept recycled schemes. Hopefully this scheme is dead for now, but developers do have a habit of coming back again and again!

Milton Sewage works

It seems that these are not to be relocated. I am shortly going to have a meeting with County Council Officers to find out just what can be done about the 'Pong'. Initial response seems to be that it is an Environment Agency problem and that the Council can only do something if an application is made to extend the facilities. However, when I know more I shall report back to the Parish Council and involve them in the discussions.

Free travel to school

A number of residents have raised this matter with me following the proposed withdrawal of free transport from Oakington and Girton to Impington. The issue is that Milton lies less than three miles from Impington Village College and free travel is only provided in such a case if the route is unsafe.

I generally support the County policy, which is in fact more generous than the government requires, but I would want to make sure that, is any sort of cycle path were put alongside Butt Lane then this would not be used as an excuse to remove free transport.

Other matters

There are lots of other matters that I discuss with your Parish Council on a regular basis. I try to help where I can but the very difficult budget situation in the County Council often makes it very hard to get things done. Please let me know if there are other issues I should look at.

Michael Williamson

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DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2008

Cllr Hazel Smith -

I thought I would start by giving you a few numbers about the District Council's finances.

Everyone pays their Council Tax to South Cambs, but the majority of that money actually goes to the County Council, with other proportions going to the police, fire brigade and parish council. The District Council gets about 8% of it, or £5.8m in total from Council Tax, and £7.5m directly from Central Government. So next year the total revenue budget is £13.3m

LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Recently the Government has brought in Local Strategic Partnerships, which is another way of giving Government money into a district area – and it is a lot of money. It has introduced more of a culture of bidding for money and meeting targets in order to get more money. £1.2m is coming into this district through the LSP in the next year and a bit, and it will be spent on projects, which council officers have to write bids for.

The people on the LSP Board are representatives of the councils and PCT and business in the area; very few of them are elected. Each year the LSP for this area will get a grant, which depends on meeting targets that were set the year before. This seems to be increasingly the way the Government wants to dictate the priorities for local councils.

PLANNING

Personally, a lot of my time at the Council this year has been to do with planning. Here in Milton we have several large projects which are being progressed. Jane has talked about the retirement village near Milton Hall. The guided bus track being built across Milton Road beyond the Science Park does not affect us too much here, but once buses are using it there will be yet another set of traffic lights on Milton Road on the way in to Cambridge.

The Rowing Lake is still making progress in the background. Richard has more to say about this. In the mean time Fen Road has only been patched up – there is no money to resurface it properly, and the County has suggested a sign 'Not suitable for motor vehicles' as they cannot afford to rebuild the surface.

I spent a lot of time during the Autumn at the Mereham planning inquiry, at which Jane (Parish Council chairman), Michael (our County Councillor) and I all spoke. The report of the inspector is supposed to go to the minister in June, and she should then make a decision by the 9th September whether or not to allow Mereham to be built. You may remember their plans include demolishing the Jane Coston cycle bridge to put up a bridge which would also take buses across the A14.

Another plan which appeared again recently was the new town at Waterbeach: this time the developers tried to get it on the list of 'eco-towns' that the Government is proposing, and it did not get past the first stage. However we know that the developers are serious and 'Denny St Francis' may well appear again as a proposal in the future.

I am a member of the Joint Development Control Committee that considers planning applications for those big developments, which will be partly inside Cambridge City and partly in South Cambs. Arbury Park which we see going up beside the A14 is just the first of many big sites which surround the city. Trumpington Meadows, the old Monsanto site between Trumpington and the M11, already has permission for 1,200 houses.

The NIAB site from Huntingdon Road to Histon Road and probably extending to the A14 eventually is the nearest of these to us. It is still not clear what will happen at the Chesterton Sidings site beyond Cowley Road, except that the Sewage Works is now not expected to be moved away. The University Farm site in NW Cambridge between Huntingdon Road and Madingley Road is expected to take 2,500 houses plus student accommodation as well. Clay Farm and the Showground site, just across the railway from Addenbrooke's will soon be coming to the Joint Development Control Committee with plans for 2,300 houses, and the Bell School site plans for 320 houses will follow soon after. The 10,000 houses or so on Cambridge Airport is due to start later, but preliminary plans are already in place.

And this is all in addition to the new town of Northstowe (another 10,000 houses) which is expected to come to a different Development Control Committee in the next month or so.

The councils' aim is for these to be self-sufficient communities, not just housing estates, and to have good community facilities and local shops. A lot of the new houses will have solar panels and other micro-generation features, and grey-water recycling to make them suitable for the 21st century. The developments will have high density near bus stops, and frequent buses to make them as eco-friendly as possible.

In the meantime the Council has been evaluating how Arbury Park has developed as a community in its early days, to learn lessons, and there do seem to be a lot of lessons to learn.

Because Milton Ward also includes Fen Road, Chesterton, which is the area of travellers sites between the river and the railway, on the other side of the A14, I have been attending meetings of the Old Chesterton Residents Association, and liaising also with the travellers there, in particular campaigning for a foul sewer to be laid into that area.

LITTER AND POLICE

Cllr Richard Summerfield and I have both been attending the police neighbourhood panel meetings which cover all of the Histon Division, which also includes Cottenham, Oakington, Histon and Impington and across to Waterbeach. You will be glad to hear that crime in Milton is in general lower than in other villages, and improved on last year.

We were surprised to be targeted with an Action Week on crime, disorder and litter, before Easter, and we made the most of it with a local litter-picking initiative, which cleared up some of the long-standing accumulations of litter.

RECYCLING

I have also been shadowing the Housing and Environmental Services portfolio this year, and I can report that plastics, the same ones we can take to the Tesco recycling centre at the moment, will be collected from the kerbside starting in October. We will all be given another recycling box to put them in. This has been an expensive scheme to bring in, but it seems to be what people want. Supermarket managers across the area have been frustrated with the rubbish that has accumulated since they allowed plastic recycling to be added to their recycling centres, and they are keen to see the plastic bring-banks replaced by kerbside collections of plastics.

Cllr Richard Summerfield –

CAMBRIDGE SPORT LAKES SECTION 106 AGREEMENT

A considerable amount of work has been done recently with the applicants CSLT (Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust), in order to further amend the 15th draft of the S106 agreement so as to address various concerns raised. These mainly related to the participation of the County Council, the need for the local consultation forum, and the obligation upon them for the provision of access infrastructure (including a substantial bridge) to facilitate the Council's future discharge of its award drain maintenance duties (especially in the vicinity of the proposed new 'canal' linking the lake to the River Cam, which would have the effect of obstructing the Council's existing access).

Dealing with each in turn:

County participation

On the basis of the representations of CSLT as to the stage their negotiations had reached with the County Council (who own a major proportion of the site), the draft agreement has been revised such that the County is no longer shown as a party. However, it is essential the agreement is entered into by whoever does have the necessary owner's interest in the land and CSLT will not be able to legally complete the agreement until the land is legally vested in the trust. I gather discussions between the trust and the County continue, as the County are not necessarily supportive of this approach.

Consultation forum

The starting point of CSLT was that they did not wish for the consultation arrangements (relating to major events, significant technical problems, environmental amenity issues, and public access rights) to have the potential for impeding their ability to act / react quickly in the event of some occurrence needing a swift response for technical or operational reasons. The trust consequently suggested that there should be a requirement upon the forum to respond within 12 hours of being consulted but we rejected this as being wholly unrealistic. A second proposal was that the consultation would occur 'if practicable' and, again, this was rejected on the basis that would be far too subjective/open to differing or convenient interpretations. However, we have now arrived at a form of wording that requires full consultation (as originally provided) 'save in case of emergency'. This has a far narrower and better-understood meaning that will only allow the consultation process to be circumvented in the most exceptional of circumstances.

The category of major events for this purpose has also been further qualified as being those of 'national/international' stature.

Award drain maintenance

The concern of the trust here was that they were being required to provide an 'additional' bridge over the canal and a further crossing over the drain that is to be siphoned under the canal so as to facilitate maintenance. This had to be to a specification capable of allowing passage of the machinery involved in these operations and the resulting cost was thought unacceptable. After significant negotiation involving the Council's Drainage Manager, a defined access route has been settled that uses the River Cam tow-path bridge, and envisages some relatively minor design changes to the siphon feature to provide either a bridged crossing or an engineered ford at stream bed level. These suggestions largely mitigate the costs burden on the trust but preserve the certainty required by the Council as to future access arrangements given the strategic importance of the award drains in this location. The arrangements agreed between the Council and the applicant do require the co-operation of the County and/or Conservators of the River Cam (as the tow-path element is outside the control of the trust)

There have been some detailed drafting changes to reflect the other ownership interests and also to avoid unnecessary duplications with the proposed planning conditions (for example, the requirements for plans for special events management, traffic routing, and ecology issues are all to be the subject of enforceable planning conditions and will be omitted from the S106 agreement) but the above points are likely to be the most contentious changes.

The next step will be to circulate a reworked version of draft 15 and this will be to all interested parties, including the County and local stakeholders. The reasons for the various changes will also be explained and this process will hopefully involve a further meeting of local district/parish members, which I have been demanding.

BOUNDARY REVIEW

Jane has already mentioned this in her report. The review is being considered by the Electoral Arrangements Committee, of which I am a member, and the proposals were considered at a meeting of the Committee on the 16 April to which all interested Parish Councils were invited to attend and speak. Hazel and Jane supported me at this meeting and it soon became apparent that we were all unhappy at the way these proposals were being pushed through without proper consultation. The outcome of the meeting was that a decision be deferred whilst proper consultation was carried out with effected residents. Unfortunately SCDC would not agree to undertake this consultation and it has been left to the Parish Councils to do it.

As Jane said in her report we feel that the A14 is the natural boundary between the City and South Cambs. Our residents most affected by this proposal live in Fen Road Chesterton. The only vehicular access they have is through the City and apart from refuse collection they look to the City for all their other major services such as education and healthcare. I understand that the City Council agrees with our view that the boundary should be the A14 so we will need to consult with residents and if they agree I will continue to press for the A14 as our boundary.

HOUSING FUTURES

SCDC has decided to develop a proposal during 2008 for the transfer of the ownership and management of its homes to a new housing association landlord. This detailed proposal will then be sent to every tenant and they will be asked to vote on the matter. The transfer will only go ahead if the majority of those who vote are in favour.

A number of tenants and councillors are running a campaign against the transfer. However in making their decision the tenants should bear in mind that because of the high proportion of capital receipts and rents the Government take the Council is running out of money needed to keep the housing stock up to modern standards.

COUNTRY PARK

After a very long drawn out selection process and legal negotiations the Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust finally leased the Park and took over the management as from 1 April 2008. They have plans for enlarging the Visitors Centre but were unsuccessful in a Lottery bid for the funds to do this work. We should wish them luck in their fund raising for this project as income generation from an enlarged Visitors Centre is essential in the bid to make the Park self funding.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

I reported at the APM last year that SCDC had been the subject to an inspection by the Audit Commission. They recently carried out a re-inspection to check on what improvements have been made over the last year. They reported back to us in March to say that good progress had been made but that there was still a long way to go. One area, which they said remained weak, was engagement with residents through Parish Councils. A statement which I sure Jane and Jim would agree with!

SEWAGE WORKS

Although the recent smells may be mentioned by others I would like to report that I have been pressing the SCDC Environmental Health Officers to arrange a meeting with the management at the sewage works. In previous years when the smells have been a problem we only got action when they had to account to us across the table.

FINALLY

I am sure that Hazel joins me in thanking Michael Williamson, Jim Daniels, Jane Coston and all the Parish Council for the excellent working relationship we have with them in looking after your interests.