

## Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 18 April 2011 at 8.00pm in the Bowls Pavilion

**Present:** RT Summerfield (chair) 7 members of the public and the following Parish Councillors:  
GA Covell JE Coston R Day RJ Farrington SC Humphreys IF May HM Smith RLE Waters  
including the newly elected Michael Perkins  
County Councillor M Williamson, the clerk and assistant clerk

- 1 **Introduction by Chairman** – the chairman extended a warm welcome to the meeting.  
**Apologies for absence** - TA Drummond M Ellwood M Hersom.
- 2 **Introduction of Parish Councillors** – the Parish councillors introduced themselves.  
Roger Day (1979) and Bob Waters (1993), both retiring councillors told the meeting how much they had enjoyed their time on the council.  
Roger especially thanked those members of the community who had worked with him on the following projects over 32 years: Tomkins Mead, Milton Community Centre, sports facilities, tree planting and more recently tree maintenance. Since 1999 some 600 trees have been planted within the village.  
He also thanked the clerk's office.  
The chairman thanked both for their valuable contribution and said that they would be sorely missed.  
He also warmly welcomed Michael Perkins, Council's first ever representative from Chesterton Fen.
- 3 **Minutes** - the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 19 April 2010 were approved and signed as a true record.
- 4 **Chairman's Annual Report** – attached to the minutes.  
The chairman included the following additional points:  
Committees - The chairman highlighted the work done by the various committees and thanked them and their chairmen.  
Telephone box - BT had hoped that the Council would adopt the telephone box but after R Farrington pointed out the BT had an obligation to provide a service the box was repaired.  
Cycle route Milton to Impington – the completion of this route was the responsibility of the company developing the Mereway Farm site.  
Retirement village – because of the economic climate URV intended to withdraw its application and apply for general housing.  
Village View – Tim Hall was in overall charge and was concentrating on the website. Mary-Ann Johnson was the editor.  
  
**Draft accounts 2010/11** - general fund decreased as Council had paid £70,000 towards MCC improvements.
- 5 **Charities' report**  
A total of £2825 was received in rent from tenants who farm on land owned by the Charity.  
The Charity administers 13 Lifeline Alarms for Milton residents and the holders of these alarms provided a total of £465 towards the cost of this facility.  
Donations for the year were as follows:
  - Community Care Scheme administered by the Parish Council - £2000 (2009) and £2000 (2010)
  - Replacement seat at the Cemetery - £350  
Milton Parochial Charities is associated to The Jean Gallagher Trust, who provided the following donations:
  - Over 60's £200
  - Senior Citizens £500
  - Day Centre £700
  - Trolley Bus £600  
A summary of the accounts was received.
- 6 **Milton Action for Youth report**  
"Milton Action for Youth is a charitable organisation (not currently a charity), set up in March 2009 by a group from the Milton Youth and others, to be independent of the Parish Council. It supports additional provision of youth work in the parish, working with the County Council officers and youth team.  
In 2009-10 we received a grant from Awards for All of up to £9011 to support an extra session of youth work each week, specially for a girls club and some targeted courses to encourage teenage girls to attend. In the event the youth work team could not spend all this money on the objectives within the timescale required, and some was returned to Awards for All as you can see below.  
Milton Action for Youth has had 4 meetings through the year and has pursued the idea of joint working with the churches (All Saints', Cambridge Calvary Chapel and Cambridge Methodist Church) in the village to find people and funding to support work with young people in the village more generally from this Summer. Jim Davis from the Children's Society led a Good Childhood Conversation at the youth centre, focusing on teenagers, and there have been some positive ideas from that."  
A summary of the accounts was received.

## **7 Milton Community Centre (MCC) Manager's report**

### **Refurbishment**

After many years of planning, the refurbishment finally started in August 2010 and the builders were on site for a total 6 months. The Community Centre was able to function as normal during this time, with minimal disruption to our users and although the work took longer than expected, the end result has been worth the wait, with only positive comments being received from the many people who use the facilities.

Thanks must go to the 4 organisations that contributed towards the funding of the refurbishment - Milton Parish Council, WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental), Donarbon and SCDC.

### **Bookings**

These continue very much as in previous years, with the main building being used most of the time during the day and every week day evening. Saturday night bookings continue to be fairly quiet, although it is hoped that these will increase as word spreads about our enhanced facilities.

The Annexe continues to be fully occupied by either Cygnets Pre-School or Kids R Us, Monday to Friday, 7.00am to 6.00pm, with additional groups using the facilities in the evenings and Saturday mornings. Children's birthday parties are held on Saturday afternoons and Sundays, on average 2 or 3 times a month.

The Youth Building hosts the Youth Club on Tuesday evenings and Young Carers use the facilities on Saturday mornings.

### **Maintenance and Improvements**

The following work has been carried out during the last year:

- Annexe kitchen refitted
- Annexe doors and windows outside, re-coated in sadolin
- Pot holes at Sycamores Car Park filled in and the surface levelled with new planning's
- Bowls Club electrics updated and meter relocated

Now that the refurbishment is complete, our attention can be focused on other projects that require some care and attention.

### **Staff**

Besides myself, there are 4 staff members - Linda and Gina who clean and lock up at the Community Centre and Annexe, Ray who keeps Coles Road rec and the Sycamores rec clear of litter and Kevin, who looks after the Youth Building."

RJF commented that users were pleased with the better facilities.

## **8 County Councillor's report**

### **County Council Budget**

There are to be very substantial cuts in the County Council budget from April 2011 onwards, and some of them have already started to bite. For example, the reduction in funding for youth services and the total removal of bus subsidies have been discussed at length, the latter at a well attended open meeting at which both Andy Campbell of Stagecoach and Glenn Edge of the County Council spoke.

Nevertheless, there are many other issues which are bound to become more obvious as time goes on, and we wait to see how, for example, the substantial cuts to funding for adult social care will affect the services delivered to the more vulnerable members of our communities.

### **New County Council Leader**

The ruling Conservative group on the Council have elected Nick Clarke as the new leader of their group and hence new leader of the Council.

I know Nick quite well, having worked with him on a couple of scrutiny reviews, and he is certainly not afraid of asking incisive questions about how the Council does things. He is the member for the division just across the Cam from Milton that includes Horningsea and Fen Ditton. In terms of policy he is a bit of an unknown quantity.

Maybe a clue comes from his former Chairmanship of the local Federation of Small Businesses. He certainly looks at many Council issues from a business perspective and this causes some of the officers concern! It will be interesting how he turns out.

Incidentally, the 196 bus service goes through Horningsea and they will be completely cut off when the subsidies go; I wonder if that will colour his view of the removal of bus subsidies!

### **Milton-Impington Cycleway**

You will know that some of this has now been built, although the remaining section is to be built by the developers of the new industrial units; when this will happen is not known, although they do have a planning obligation to build it.

We have been assured that because of certain details of the cycleway, its construction will not lead to the loss of free school transport from Milton to Impington Village College. This will certainly be the case as long as it is incomplete. In the mean time it seems to be quite well used and certainly provides a much safer route for both cyclists and pedestrians along this fast road.

**Milton Park and Ride lighting**

I received a justifiable complaint from a member of the Parish Council that it was inappropriate in these days of austerity for the lights to continue to blaze all night. I received a number of somewhat unsatisfactory responses from the County Council, but once I got the issue into the Cambridge Evening News, the Council seem to jump into action! If anyone is out and about in the early hours please let me know if you notice any difference; I am assured that the lights will be dimmed during this time.

**Other issues**

As local member for Milton (with Waterbeach and Landbeach) I get involved in many issues that affect our community. I work closely with both of your District Councillors and with your Parish Council, and I am always ready to look into individual issues raised by Milton residents. Please contact me if you need my help.”

Noted that the Park & Ride lighting was still on throughout the night.

Waterbeach Parish Council had been assured that the barracks was not scheduled for development “for the time being”. Any development at this site would have an enormous impact on traffic throughout the local area.

**9 District Councillors’ reports** (attached to minutes)

Noted that the recent citi2 bus survey showed approximately 150 bus users on a Friday evening. HMS concluded her report by thanking all for their support.

**10 Question and Answer Session**

Blue bins – the scheme makes some money from selling the recycled materials. The plastic and cans recycling covers some of its costs. Clean paper is getting a very good price. Income goes into a general fund. A cardboard recycling scheme for businesses and schools was now being discussed.

Country Park – M Woolhouse was pleased with the quality and content of the environment and the opportunities afforded to members of the public. He was confident that the Country Park would continue to be in existence for the next 5 years and 10 years after that.

Bus service – could another company take over a route from Stagecoach? One problem – the tickets eg mega rider could not be used ‘across the board’.

Guided Bus – the dispute would probably end up in court.

Rowing Lake – M Woolhouse explained that SCDC were drafting the S106 Agreement which when signed would allow the planning process to start. The S106 obligated developers, in this case the Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust, to provide improvements to the infrastructure eg traffic lights at the Slap-Up junction, and a cycle lane from that junction into Waterbeach. MW expected work to start within a year of the legal and planning issues being resolved.

Country Park – M Woolhouse was pleased with the quality and content of the environment and the opportunities afforded to members of the public. He was confident that the Country Park would continue to be in existence for a few years at least.

The chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting at 9.05pm.

Signed.....

Date.....

**MILTON PARISH COUNCIL**  
**CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11**

**A WORD OF THANKS**

First of all, I would like to thank our parish councillors for all the time and effort they devote to their duties. I would like to remind you that they do this on a completely voluntary basis. I believe every councillor is concerned for the well-being of the parish and has the best interests of the village at heart. Four of our longest standing councillors will be stepping down this year: Phil Badley, Roger Day, Barry Jefferson and Bob Waters. (Bob and Roger are pictured here with me clearing a ditch in the village.) Together, these four councillors represent a staggering 67 years of service to Milton. I would like to thank them for all their hard work and dedicated service on behalf of the village. I am happy to report that other volunteers have stepped forward to join the council, and I look forward to working with them in the coming year. I would also like to thank previous chairman Rob Chapman, who was a parish councillor for over seven years and chairman for 18 months. Thanks as well to the Charities and the Community Centre Management Committee and staff for all their support during the year, and to our local bobby PC Phil Shulver and Community Support Officer PCSO John Mason. Finally, I would like to thank Jane Coston for all her work on the Village View magazine over the last nearly twenty years. Jane has stepped down as editor and Tim Hall, a village resident with 23 years of publishing experience, has taken over the reins of the village magazine and set up a terrific new website ([www.mvv.org.uk](http://www.mvv.org.uk)) with up-to-date news and information about Milton. I encourage you all to visit it.

**RENEWAL OF QUALITY STATUS**

I am happy to report that Milton Parish Council has been re-accredited as a Quality Parish Council. To be recognised as quality the parish council had to pass tests to show it went above and beyond the service offered by a standard parish council. The standard of the council's annual reports, communication with the public, accounts and ethical framework were among the categories assessed.

**ANNUAL PRECEPT**

We have set our parish precept this year at £125,000. The actual increase for a Band D house is £2 per year (from £70 to £72), an increase of 2.85%. In the current economic climate, we believe this represents great value for money as Milton is an extremely active parish and provides a number of vital services for village residents.

**MILTON COMMUNITY CENTRE (MCC)**

Refurbishment of the Community Centre is now complete and I think you will agree that it is a much needed improvement to the site. Many thanks to all who had a hand in the successful refurbishment, including Chairman Rob Farrington, Committee Member Colin Nunn and Manager Andy Gray. Why not make the most of this valuable resource which is right on our front doorstep by taking a class, joining a club or deciding to work off some extra pounds with the many sports activities available. You can also hire out the hall for special events. Remember, it is YOUR Community Centre, so why not use it? You can call Andy on 862763 or view a timetable of activities on the parish council website ([www.miltonvillage.org.uk](http://www.miltonvillage.org.uk)).

**COMMUNITY CARE**

Our Community Care scheme remains very active. This year, we received grants from Milton Charities as well as South Cambs District and Cambridgeshire County Councils. The scheme provides vital services for Milton residents. Our clerk, Jim Daniels, is very proud of this scheme and believes it is one of the largest in South Cambridgeshire. Community Care Warden Tracey Ebbon and her assistant Linda Harding are doing excellent work and I commend them on their service and dedication.

We have registered the scheme with Localgiving.com, which enables philanthropic giving to local charities and community groups in the UK. You can read more about the scheme and make a donation if you wish to at: [www.LocalGiving.com/MiltonCommunityCareScheme](http://www.LocalGiving.com/MiltonCommunityCareScheme)

**YOUTH**

The parish council continues to provide financial support to the youth club. Milton Action for Youth, a charitable organisation which was set up in March 2009, supports additional provision of youth work in the parish, working with the County Council officers and youth team. It helps oversee the youth work in the village and activities which are held in the Milton Youth Centre adjacent to The Sycamores Recreation ground. Thanks to all for their valuable work with the youth of the village.

**RECREATION LAND**

Your parish council has been very active pursuing our longer term goal of securing additional recreation land for the village. We continue negotiations to purchase College of West Anglia land adjacent to Ely Road opposite the college campus. As Milton's sports clubs are very active and are expanding all the time, the acquisition of more recreation land is a high priority. It is important to keep in mind that all land deals involve quite sensitive negotiations and the end results are often unpredictable, particularly considering the current economic climate.

**PARISH CLERK'S OFFICE & WELCOME PACKS**

I would like to thank our parish clerk, Jim Daniels, and his assistant, David Geasor, for all their hard work throughout the year. Thanks as well to our village cleaner, Philip Adams. As a reminder, the Clerk's Office has produced Welcome Packs for new residents, so if you know of anyone who has moved into the village recently please send them along to the Parish Office to pick one

up. I also recommend that residents visit our parish council website ([www.miltonvillage.org.uk](http://www.miltonvillage.org.uk)) for more information about the village, including a virtual parish notice board with up-to-date local events.

### **BUS CUTS**

The recently proposed changes to both the Citi2 and No 9 bus services are of major concern for the village. Your parish council hosted a public meeting where residents expressed their views to both Stagecoach and Cambridgeshire County Council officials. As a result of the meeting, Stagecoach has agreed to run one late night bus service, but cuts to the other evening and Sunday services will still have a large impact on many village residents. A petition organised by District Councillor Hazel Smith has been signed by 320 people. It is clear from your reaction that residents care greatly about this issue and we will continue to emphasise the need for our buses.

### **OTHER ISSUES**

I am happy to report that the improvements have been completed on the Winship Road/Cambridge Road junction (pictured here), a project which your parish council successfully lobbied for after it had been cancelled by the County Council. Following representations by your parish council, Milton Country Park and local business owners, double yellow lines have been installed on the Crane Industrial Estate. Work has also started on the Milton to Impington cycle route. I would like to remind you that the Environmental Group, led by Hazel Smith, organises numerous litter picks throughout the year. They are usually held on a Sunday and are advertised on the parish notice boards. I encourage all residents to lend a hand to help keep our village looking its best. Hazel also continues to dialogue with the Tesco store manager to deal with litter and other issues that come up throughout the year.

### **CONCLUSION**

Finally, I would like to say something about the current economic climate. Due to the financial challenges facing local government, we are experiencing an ever-expanding work-load in the parish office due to increased requests from both district and county councils. I believe this is a trend which will continue in the future. However, on the bright side, these challenging times have also sparked at least one positive response: a local resident from Butt Lane has donated a sum of money to be used for the benefit of the youth in the village. In coming weeks we will advertise for youth-related clubs in the village to submit bids for a share of this generous gift. I believe this shows the true spirit of Milton at its best.

**Richard Summerfield, Chairman Milton Parish Council**

### ***District Councillors Report – April 2011 – Hazel Smith***

#### **Environmental Health**

This year I have been shadowing the Environmental Health portfolio, which has continued to be interesting.

The introduction of the new **blue bins** for recycling went well in October and residents are now recycling more than before, with more people participating. Most areas of South Cambs have blue bins – it is reported as 100% but Traveller areas like Chesterton Fen (in our patch just south of the A14) are left out. We are promised that they will be encouraged to recycle through some small bring banks being set up on Chesterton Fen Road in the next few months.

The next step is to remove the recycling bring banks for those materials like glass, cans and tetrapaks, that are now collected at the kerbside. In their place at the Tesco Recycling Centre we are expecting to have a 'media' recycling bank for CDs, DVDs old videos, tapes and books. These South Cambs bring banks will also be taken away from the Milton Country Park car park.

There are problems with shredded paper littering the streets after blue bins are collected, and people are now told to put the shreddings into an old envelope to stop them blowing about in the wind.

The work to clean up the **Hauxton agrochemical works** site seems to be going well, with much less odour over the winter months. They expect to complete the clean-up in the autumn this year, and the whole site will be monitored for 6 months before being assessed to judge if it is fit for developing as a housing area.

#### **Gypsy and Traveller planning**

Chesterton Fen is the largest area of Traveller plots in South Cambs. Most pitches have full planning permission, and there are just 2 areas with 3-year temporary planning permission at Sandy Park and West View. These comprise around 28 and 17 individual pitches respectively. Their planning permissions both come to an end at the end of April 2011. They are both on the list of sites suggested for Travellers to live in in the South Cambs Gypsy and Traveller Development Plan Document which has been through 2 rounds of consultations but has now been stalled for about 18 months.

The lack of a completed Plan Document does leave the Council area vulnerable to unauthorised encampments, as the Council needs to show that it has a strategy to provide enough legal plots for local Traveller families when it turns down planning applications for more. The Council has just agreed to 2 new temporary planning staff to get this document under way again.

#### **Other work on Chesterton Fen**

There are quite a few different council departments doing targeted work on Chesterton Fen, many of them parts of the City Council or County, and we have started having a liaison meeting to keep everyone informed. We now have a new Parish Councillor who lives there.

4 years ago, I organised a petition to Anglian Water for a **mains sewage connection** to the Travellers area of Chesterton Fen Road, as outflows have caused lots of environmental problems down there beside the River Cam. In January 2010 the request was turned down and I submitted an appeal to the Environment Agency. The appeal for a sewage connection to Fen Road, Chesterton is due to be decided in late April or early May. Even if the decision is favourable the work will still not be done until at least 2015. In the meantime, the environmental problems continue: the ditch at Grassy Corner is extremely smelly, and neither the District Council nor

the Environment Agency has found an answer to this. There was a meeting at Cambourne this morning with all the interested parties. [late news?]

The litter problem from fly-tipping at the transformer site near the A14 has been improved recently. About a dozen young people serving community service sentences worked there for a week, and cleared up a lot of the mess right along the road.

Back to the village of Milton:

### **Planning**

The Section 106 legal agreement that needs to be agreed and signed before the **Rowing Lake** planning permission can be issued, is awaiting attention at the SCDC legal dept, but should soon be agreed.

There have been 2 applications to build a house between the first semi-detached house, and the flats (Lea Court) near the Post Office in Coles Road. I opposed both of these and they have been turned down by South Cambs and also by an inspector at appeal.

The other application of note is the Retirement Village behind Milton Hall. This site has permission for 101 houses (including North Lodge) but we now expect an application for general needs housing on the site, which we expect to include 40% or 32 affordable houses. The existing permission also includes recreation land to be used by village clubs, or a cash alternative to put towards sports pitches elsewhere.

The concrete batching plant at Cambridge Road beside the cycle bridge is causing a nuisance: planning conditions are being breached and planning enforcement officers are in contact with the operators of the site.

### **North Lodge**

This listed building beside Milton Hall was to be brought back from near-dereliction as part of the retirement village plans. After an order from the SCDC conservation department, some necessary repairs have been carried out to stop it deteriorating more.

### **Milton Country Park**

The Cambridge Sport Lakes Trust is running the park on a long lease from South Cambs, and now that the Visitor Centre has plenty of space for Café Diem and some offices, it is beginning to stand on its own feet financially. I was pleased to be able to take a part in opening the 'My Big Fat Gypsy Festival' at the Park last year. There were some misgivings about this becoming an annual event as it could easily grow too big for the limited space available on the Park, especially if lots of Travellers incorporated it into their journey home from the Appleby horse fair the previous weekend, as some did last year. It may be staged again as an occasional event at the Park, but not this year. The programme for summer events in the Park is now available.

### **SCDC budget**

The budget-setting meeting at Cambourne was nothing like the ones at the City Council and County Council, both of which were the subject of large and vociferous protests at the cuts being introduced. We had just 2 people in the public gallery. South Cambs had to cut so much 7 years ago when we were first capped by the government, that there is little left to cut into. The council is good at holding back on recruitment when cuts need to be made, but of course this leads to officers covering for absent colleagues, and poorer service in some departments. The planning service has really suffered in the last year. There are far fewer and smaller grants available for village needs now, and the Community department has ceased to exist, rolled into the New Communities department, which spends developer contributions from major housing developments on community infrastructure. The specialist Climate Change officer has had to take on general duties in New Communities, and his part-time assistant left at Christmas and has only just now been replaced.

### **Environmental Group**

This group was formed as part of the follow-up to the Milton Parish Plan. We organise litter picks and have done specific projects with the help of the Sustainable Parish Energy Partnership, an initiative from the South Cambs Climate Change officers. We acquired 15 energy monitors, which have now been lent out to pupils through Milton School. The teacher in charge wrote, "The energy monitors have been very well received. The School Council have been returning permission slips from their parents and collecting them. Those who have set them up and are gathering information are very excited about what they are discovering."

### **Housing**

You may have read that the Council has to give up over half of the rents from its Council Houses to central government. This is due to a notional 'Housing Debt' owed to the government for historic funding of council houses by councils who have retained ownership of their own Council Housing. At the moment, South Cambs is a debt free council but this 'notional debt' means that the Government is insisting that we take on £205.5m of this housing debt in April 2012 – South Cambs will take on the most debt per house of any council in the UK.

Currently the government takes over 55% - £11m - of council house rents each year. When we take on the debt we get to keep not only this rent but also 100% of the sale price of council houses (should anyone ever buy one again!) where currently the Government takes 75%. We also would use the rent that currently goes to the Government to fund the debt loan, over about 30 years. There is a big risk that interest rates might rise during that period, so a fixed rate would be preferred.

### **Bus cuts**

My petition against the bus cuts now has over 334 signatures on it. When I presented it to the County Council cabinet in March, I argued there that the cut to the number 9 bus to Milton in the evening should be postponed at least for a year so that the impact of completely removing Milton's Citi 2 could be taken into account. The number 9 to Milton might not need a subsidy if it were the only bus in the evening. But the County Council were not prepared to change their plans.

I have been helping Anna Bradnam, who has been organising a survey on a couple of evenings to look at the usage of the buses which have been cut by both Stagecoach and the County Council.

On Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April there were 154 people using buses within Milton which would not be running 2 weeks later. We talked to many people waiting at the Tesco bus stops, and there were a lot of interesting stories of journeys to work which will now not be possible.

**It is just not true that the cut to the evening services will impact on leisure travel only**, as Andy Campbell stated at the public

meeting. We will write up what we have found and submit a report to the County and Stagecoach, and to Tesco's who are very much affected by the cuts.

I have learnt that some other parish councils are considering whether to pay a subsidy for the buses to continue, out of their own funds.

**Tesco meeting** - Tesco: there is a new manager now in place. I plan to meet with him in the next few weeks.