

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting
held on Monday 29 April 2024 at 7:30pm in the Bowls Pavilion

Present: HM Smith (Chairman), P Ellwood, D Wildman, J E Coston, A Bradnam, D Owen, L Champion

In attendance: S Corder (Clerk), J Barrett (Deputy Clerk), A Bradnam (as County and District Councillor), J Rippeth and P Bearpark (District Councillors)
One member of the public

1. **Introduction by Chairman and apologies for absence:** The Chairman welcomed everyone present at the meeting.
Apologies: R Farrington (personal)
2. **Introduction of Parish Councillors:** The Chair reported that the council now have 8 members of the 12 needed and made an appeal for new members to apply to be co-opted.
3. **To confirm minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on Monday 24 April 2023**
HMS Proposed to accept the minutes - AB Seconded **AGREED (DO Abstain)**. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting on the 24 April 2023 were approved and signed.
4. **Chairman's Annual Report including draft accounts 2023/24**
HMS thanked the Councillors for all their support this year. A special thanks to Paul Ellwood and John Barrett for pushing through the S106 Arts funded projects.

AB (as Tree Warden) thanked the Councillors for helping with the tree planting and also thanked all of those who helped out with the village litter picks.

Capital Projects and Art Work

Residents may be aware that our public spaces have been brightened up by the addition of new signs and decorative benches. We had ten years to spend £50,000 of Arts contributions from the developers at North Lodge Park, and I'm pleased to say we met the deadline comfortably. The new benches, restored Repton Gate and Village Sign refurbishments and our three new village entry signs completed the work. This is in addition to the war memorial benches, the Bus Stop Art Competitions and exhibition, 4 new decorated bus shelters and village pump display that we achieved in previous years. The wooden gate, which was designed by Humphry Repton in the 18th century, is now hanging as a decoration safely under cover on a wall at the North Lodge Park pavilion.

Milton Community Care Scheme

Our Community Care Warden Tracey Ebbon continues to do a great job looking after the interests of her clients. She supports around 20 older people living in their own homes in the village and their families every weekday. She also puts up information useful to us all on her Facebook page and acts as Community Navigator, a person able to give free advice about what services, funding, clubs and facilities are available in the village to help people get by. Sarah Corder our Clerk, and I provide short-term cover for Tracey as warden, and we have an agency we can call on when extra help is needed. This Mobile Warden Scheme is supported by a grant from South Cambs District Council, and from the Milton Charities and Jean Gallagher Trust.

Milton Trolley Bus

The door-to-door minibus service to Tesco for our elderly and infirm residents runs once a fortnight. The Jean Gallagher Trust helps us to support the service. Dial-a-Ride who provide the service also organise other trips.

Youth

The Council continues to provide funding to support the youth activities run by the Connections Bus Project at Milton Youth Centre for age 11 up. The club moved to a Thursday, 6:30-8pm and we have been pleased to see numbers have grown this year.

Recreation facilities

The Parish Council makes an annual contribution to subsidise running costs of the Milton Community Centre charity which provides for indoor and outdoor sport and recreation. The smaller open spaces are maintained by the Parish Council. These are at Humphries Way, Froment Way, The Rowans, The Oaks/Elms, the Hawthorn Hedge area, Edmund Green (on the corner of The Rowans) and Pond Green (in front of the Waggon and Horses). We also own Tomkins Mead next to Milton Country Park.

Play equipment improvements

We have placed the order to replace worn out play equipment at The Rowans and we expect work on site to begin in May. There will be a new fort on the top of the hill with a scramble net, and a new multiplay unit, with a surface underneath more suitable for disabled children.

Cemetery

The new notice board has now gone up at the cemetery. After a lot of work by our previous Clerk, Jim Daniels, we are expecting the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to put up a plaque recognising our 2 war graves. We achieved the Cambridgeshire Churchyard **Conservation Bronze Award for the work done in the last year to improve the cemetery for wildlife. There are also two new benches there, and a new compost bin, made for us by the Ranger Scouts.**

New trees

This year we planted another six larger trees provided by SCDC on some of our play areas.

Other village maintenance

There is regular work to be done around the village which is organised and overseen by the Maintenance Committee and the Clerk. They direct our grass-cutting and grounds maintenance contractors who do work on our open spaces and the cemetery.

Litter picking

We had another successful litter pick on a warm day in February, when volunteers tackled the litter that had accumulated around the village. We try to organise a community litter pick, normally on the second Sunday of half term, 3 times a year. These litter picks help to clean up the litter hot-spots that our village cleaner Philip Adams does not get to on his regular rounds in the village, particularly near Tesco.

Christmas lights

We bought new lights for the tree on Pond Green this year to complement those on the tree opposite.

Ditches and drains

The ditch through the middle of the village which appears on some old documents as "Milton Brook" has had significant weed clearance in the last year. It is the responsibility of the neighbouring landowners to keep it running, but clearance will need coordinating, otherwise a newly deepened part will just fill up with silt from upstream when it next rains. We called a meeting of all the neighbours in the late summer, and arranged a weekend to have a go at clearing the ditch. South Cambs District Council sent a team to collect up the reeds and weeds pulled out, which filled their covered truck. To deepen it is a huge job, and our likely contractor is advising on what it is feasible for them to do. The County Council is responsible for the bits where it is culverted under roads, and they really need to clear these sections first. We hope to arrange another weekend of action in June, to dig out some places where the ditch is not deep enough. If anyone is interested in helping, please contact me or the Parish Clerk.

Land registry

We are still working to register the land with trees on that we maintain in the middle of Willow Crescent and at Old School Lane, and it is recognised as Parish Council open space.

Planning

We are consulted on all planning applications in the village. Most are uncontentious, but some are quite unneighbourly and we do try to support neighbours objections if they are reasonable. I'd like to thank Rob Farrington for chairing the Planning Committee, and Anna Bradnam our Tree Warden for advising on tree trimming applications.

There are a number of large developments at Fen Road Chesterton that we have opposed and that we are now waiting for the national Planning Inspectorate to rule on after appeals.

We also comment on planning applications near Cambridge North station, which are very high density. 425 flats together with shops, offices and lab space have just received permission from the Secretary of State after an appeal.

Highway and cycleway schemes

Many villagers responded to the consultation on the Waterbeach Greenway, in particular the section down Milton High Street, which is being proposed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership. The Parish Council were disappointed by the GCP's attempts at consultation meetings and we held a presentation before Christmas in the Church, to explain their plans and our objections to them. They are looking through all the responses and will now put forward their revised plan in October.

We have been concerned at the many accidents at the A10 / Humphries Way junction. There is a scheme to add traffic lights here, but it is linked to 300 houses being occupied at Waterbeach New Town so will not be put in very soon.

20 mph in the village

If many more cyclists are using Milton High Street and Cambridge Road as a commuting route, it will be essential to improve cycle safety, particularly near the shops in the centre of the village, where cyclists have to be on the road because of the restricted width available. We have applied to the County Council to get a 20 mph speed limit under their initiative, but we have been told that there are over 200 eligible villages and only 6 to 8 will be granted each year. However if the cycleway does come through the village 20mph will be part of the GCP's plans.

Parking and pedestrian safety

We have had a number of representations from villagers about the increasing amount of parking in The Rowans, and the poor visibility for pedestrians trying to cross The Rowans near Tesco. County Highways have agreed a plan to put longer sections of double-yellow lines there, and the Parish Council will be funding this work. We are also starting to get articulated lorries parking overnight in our residential areas, and are seeking help from the County Council to prevent this.

Mobile Vehicle-Activated Sign (MVAS)

The moveable traffic speed sign has been seen recently in the village. Landbeach and Milton share the sign, and we should see it popping up in the village frequently.

Draft accounts for the year April 2023 to March 2024

These figures have been prepared on an Income and Expenditure basis.

Description	£ Last Year (2022-23) Restated	£ This year (2023-24)
Balances brought forward	499,421	471,196
Annual precept	133,000	133,000
Total other receipts	20,936	32,231
Staff Costs	46,270	51,194
Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0
Total other payments	135,890	183,521
Balances carried forward	471,196	401,712
Total Cash and Short Term Investments	468,640	468,663
Total Fixed Assets and Long Term Investments	207,694	235,589
Total Borrowings	0	0

Finance

The Council requested a precept for 2024-25 the same as recent years at £133,000.

Parish councillors and staff

We currently have 8 councillors out of our maximum of 12. We are pleased that Lawrence Champion joined us a year ago. I would like to thank the team that has been working together this year, and particularly Paul Ellwood who has chaired the Maintenance Committee and pushed forward the Arts projects to completion, together with our Assistant Clerk, John Barrett. Don Wildman has ably chaired the Finance Committee, and Jane Coston as Vice-Chairman keeps us on the right path. Our Clerk has done a sterling job keeping us to our meeting schedule, and ensuring the daily administration and our minutes and records are handled efficiently.

Parish office

The office off Coles Road is open Monday to Thursday, 10am to 3pm. However, if you have an issue that requires direct contact, then please first telephone the Clerk on 01223 861447 or 07853 170646 so that we can arrange a way to help you. Further information is available on our website - <https://www.miltonvillage.org.uk>

Hazel Smith, Chairman - Milton Parish Council

Milton Action for Youth: The balance in the pass-book stands at £76.01

Hazel Smith, Signatory

Councillors will consider how to bring the Youth funds back into the Council accounts as an earmarked balance

5. County Councillor's Report from Anna Bradnam April 2024 (Full report attached to the Agenda on the MPC Website)

The main headings:

As County Councillor for Waterbeach Division, my remit covers Milton, Landbeach, Waterbeach, Chittering, Horningsea, Fen Ditton and Milton Detached, so both banks of the River Cam, the area south of the A14 around Cambridge North station and Fen Road Chesterton

County Council

The composition of the County Council (61 members) is now

Conservatives 22 Liberal Democrats 23

Labour 9 Independent 3

St Neots Independent 1 Non-aligned 3

I have served on the County Planning (Minerals and Waste), Committee, Environment and Green Investment Committee and the Member Steering Group for Waste (disposal). I sit on the Children and

Young People Committee and continue to chair the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee, planning for our Children in Care. I am the County's nominee to the Police and Crime Panel and on the Conservators of the River Cam, which I currently chair. I am also the Council's member on the Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

During 2023/24 – and looking ahead Strategy, Resources and Performance

The budget for 2024/25 has increased from a predicted £16m to more than £23m—largely due to increases in demand for services and inflationary pressure. Cambridgeshire is not alone. The Local Government Association currently reports that councils across the country face an 'inflationary storm' with a predicted £4Billion funding gap over the next two years.

Adults and Health

We have separated Adult Social Care Services from the shared service with Peterborough, which is enabling a closer focus on Cambridgeshire. The need for better Mental Health provision is recognised. Our Director of Public Health Jyoti Atri is standing down and Val Thomas, her Deputy, will step up until a new DPH is appointed.

Children and Young People

Children's Services, with staff previously shared with Peterborough have been teased apart and we have many new officers for Cambridgeshire, who are bringing energy and ideas to the service.

Cambridgeshire County Council will put £3million into the budget for 2024/25 to continue to provide holiday food vouchers for those on free school meals.

A further **£320k will go to children's mental health**, which has worsened following the Covid pandemic. The funding will be used to employ trained specialists to work with schools to design and deliver programmes working with children and young people, teachers and parents with interventions that are known to manage anxiety.

An **additional £12.7m** will be allocated to demand and inflation pressures, including the number of complex cases and the increasing number of children in care placements in Cambridgeshire.

We are fortunate to have good local primary schools. Milton Church of England Primary School, received an Ofsted rating of Good in January 2024.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

The cost of provision for children with SEND has escalated and was expected to grow to over £90 M by 2025/26. However the government has awarded Cambridgeshire £49M, under the 'safety valve' process, which will be used to create 463 new special school places, with a further £11.3M in capital funding to support new SEND provision on mainstream school sites. Cambridgeshire has historically received less funding per child for education than other areas, whilst having a high proportion of SEND.

Communities, Social Mobility and Inclusion Committee (COSMIC)

During 2023/24 this committee has overseen the Household Support Fund which supports people experiencing immediate financial hardship to pay for food, fuel bills or other essential items.

The Committee has approved an additional £150,000 to Cambridge Housing Society to deliver the Cambridgeshire Local Assistance Scheme, which supports Cambridgeshire residents facing financial difficulties. [Cambridgeshire Local Assistance Scheme - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

The council has also allocated £400,000 to Citizens Advice to deliver income maximisation across Cambridgeshire.

Libraries – are increasingly being recognised and supported as information hubs and meeting places.

Environment and Green Investment

The Council is seeking to reduce its carbon footprint to net zero by 2030. £1.831million of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme funding has been secured by the Council to support decarbonisation of CCC buildings and maintained schools for 2024/25.

Waste Operations – The Council is responsible for disposal of waste. We are monitoring cross-border Household Recycling Centre (HRC) access arrangements with neighbouring counties to avoid having to re-introduce bookings. If cross-border use is agreed, bookings will not be needed

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Regulations 2013 DEFRA put out a consultation document to seek views on reforms to the regulations.

County Planning, Minerals & Waste (CPMW):

The planning application for the new primary school at the Waterbeach New Town was withdrawn from the agenda of Planning Committee on 20 March 2024, at the request of the applicant.

East West Rail (EWR): Further engagement with landowners commenced on 12 March 2024.

Fens Reservoir: Anglian Water and Cambridge Water are to consult on proposals for two new strategic reservoirs for the East of England region. One reservoir is to be located in the Fens and statutory consultation will start in May 2024, and run for eight weeks.

Cambridge Water Wastewater Treatment Plant Relocation - The Planning Inspectorate (PINs) has been taking evidence from stakeholders at a series of hearings under the Development Consent Order programme, and is close to completion

Trees The Council persuaded National Highways to review the success of its tree-planting scheme along the new A14 route. They felled 400,000, replanted 800,000 but some 600,000 have died. Around 125,000 were to be replanted during 2023, many more of which seem to have survived.

Highways and Transport

The condition of Cambridgeshire's roads and pavements remains a serious challenge and the lack of central government funding is a source of frustration. The A14/A10 interchange, which had become dangerous, was resurfaced before Christmas 2024. Footways are being resurfaced – sometimes in unexpected locations.

Civil Parking Enforcement has been introduced in South Cambridgeshire, which should help villages tackle problem parking.

Greater Cambridge Partnership

Thirty new electric, zero emission **buses** are reducing pollution on Cambridgeshire roads.

GCP - Milton Road – the works to prioritise buses and active travel are progressing and aim to complete in early 2025.

GCP – Waterbeach Greenway - The public consultation on the alignment close to residents and through Milton has raised many objections. We await a revised proposal in October 2024.

Mereway - the U&C upgrade has made this byway a much easier and safer route for pedestrians, cycles and equestrians in all weathers. The section through Landbeach is safer for all non-motorised users and will link to the A10 bridge to Waterbeach in due course.

East West Rail – it seems EWR have confirmed their preference for the southern route, which is good, as the northern route would have cut swathes through Landbeach and Milton.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA)

The Combined Authority Improvement programme, supported by external support and an Independent Improvement Board has encouraged a much more positive working arrangement at the CPCA.

Buses Following the reduction in service by Stagecoach in September 2023, I have lobbied the Mayor to support reinstatement of the 'through villages' route of the service 9 bus between Littleport and Cambridge. At the beginning of 2024 we were advised that the service would drop to just four journeys a day in each direction. Since then the Mayor has increased his precept and has tendered for an additional operator A2B to provide the missing services.

County Council Budget for 2024/25 – a summary

- Invest £57 million to sustain children's and adult social care services.
- Real Living Wage, which has increased to £12ph outside London, to take account of the Government uplift of the legally enforceable Living Wage, being paid by adult care providers.
- Prioritise £3m to continue to provide holiday food vouchers for all children eligible for free school meals, despite the government support being likely to end in the next financial year.
- Invest £2.2m to deliver other anti-poverty initiatives – such as support to make sure that vulnerable people are claiming all the welfare benefits that they are entitled to.
- Put £1.3m into delivering more accessible libraries to support vulnerable communities.
- Prioritise investment of £23m into making highways, footpaths, and cycleways safer – on top of a recently announced government allocation of £2.3m. This will be to deliver improvements which both repair and prevent potholes, deliver improved drainage schemes, and reinstate cycleway maintenance and weed clearance.
- Put additional funding into schemes for people experiencing mental health issues to prevent them reaching crisis, particularly focussing on younger people.
- The proposals include an increase of council tax by 4.99%, the maximum permitted by Government before a public referendum is needed – with a total of 2% of this increase dedicated to adult social care services across the county, and £17.6m of identified additional savings – from areas such as:
 - moving to LED streetlights which are set to deliver £1m in energy savings each year.
 - £1.5m across the next three years from rationalising the council's office accommodation.
 - Balanced budget for 2024/25 through a mix of savings, use of one-off reserves, and the generation of additional income including a council tax rise for the coming year to 4.99% comprising 2.99% Council Tax and 2% Adults social care.
 - This would see band D properties in the county paying an additional £76 per year, although more than half (64%) of county lives in homes rated band C or below and would see rises of between £50 and £70 per year.

6. District Councillors' Report from Anna Bradnam, Judith Rippeth and Paul Bearpark April 2024 (Full report attached to the Agenda on the MPC Webpage)

This report covers the last 12 months of activity by District Councillors Anna Bradnam, Judith Rippeth and Paul Bearpark and the Liberal Democrat-led District Council.

2024/25 Budget In February, we steered through our budget for the 2024/25 financial year, which encompasses a diverse array of initiatives aimed at enhancing the well-being of our residents. South Cambridgeshire District Council stands on firm financial ground – a rarity among local authorities,

Council Tax and Council Tax Support

The increase in Council Tax by the District Council translates to a mere 42p per month for a band D household, a rise that trails behind inflationary pressures. Inflation, currently standing at 4.1%, albeit lower than recent peaks, remains alarmingly high. Consequently, the Council finds itself grappling with a tangible budget squeeze in real terms.

Council's Business Plan for 2024/2025

The Council's 2024/25 Business Plan has four areas of focus:

1. Nurturing Local Enterprises and Economies:
2. Ensuring Accessible Housing:
3. Prioritizing Environmental Sustainability:
4. Embracing Modernization and Care:

In conclusion, our 2024/25 Business Plan reflects our unwavering dedication to building a thriving, sustainable future for South Cambridgeshire. Through collaborative efforts and bold initiatives, we're shaping a community where every individual has the opportunity to flourish.

Cambridge 2050

Since Michael Gove's unveiling of 'Cambridge 2040' in July 2023, the government's target has been unclear. Initial projections of 250,000 homes by 2040 have been scaled back to 150,000 by 2050.

Four-day week trial

Since January 2023, the Council embarked on a trial of a desk-based four-day workweek, initially for three months. Following an independent evaluation of performance data in May 2023, Cabinet extended the trial by an additional year, concluding in March 2024. Simultaneously, a three-month trial for waste crews was initiated in response to complexities in reorganizing bin collection routes across Greater Cambridge.

Warm Hubs and Cost of Living Support

From October 2022 to March 2023, the council funded Warm Hubs across South Cambridgeshire to provide heating spaces for residents during winter, with nearly 10,000 attendances recorded. This initiative transitioned into Community Hubs. The council also provided training for professionals and volunteers on available cost of living support resources in early 2024.

Waterbeach Greenway and Waterbeach-Cambridge Transport Scheme

The feedback from the Greenway consultation will be considered at the October 2024 meeting of the GCP Assembly and a recommendation provided to the GCP Board in November.

Housing and Development

The council secured funding for additional refugee and temporary accommodation homes to increase its social housing stock. Both City and District councils maintained a 5-year housing land supply over 2023-2028. Right-to-buy receipts were allowed to be retained for two years to aid building replacement homes. The government announced plans called 'Cambridge 2040' impacting development in the area.

Environmental Initiatives

Community groups received grants for eco-friendly projects like installing solar panels and energy-efficient lighting. The council offered grants to install public EV chargers at community buildings. Six free trees were provided annually to parish councils for planting projects. With the support of Anna, Judith and Paul a numbers of schemes were successful in obtaining funding for low carbon initiatives that also save money.

Other News

A program was launched allowing the council to replace some five-day waste collection routes with four-day routes.

The council's grants program provided funding to over a dozen voluntary/community support organizations working on issues like mental health, disability transport, and poverty.

7. Milton Community Centre Report April 2024

Bookings: The Main Community Centre building is now in use 7 days a week and used by over 55 groups over the course of an average week. We have a good spread of activities for all age groups at the centre from exercise classes and activities to Community Cafes over the course of the week.

We have seen an increase in bookings for children's parties in the Main Hall and Annexe but continue to see low demand for adult parties.

The Annexe is still used by Kids R Us Monday to Friday during term time for wrap around care and as a holiday club out of school term times. At weekends it is used for dance and drama on a Saturday morning and children's parties Saturday afternoons and Sundays.

The Youth Building is used by Eddies Artworks throughout the year Monday to Friday and by Youth Club on a Thursday.

North Lodge is used by Milton Colts Football, Milton Cricket Club, Inland Water Ways and has been used for children's parties.

Maintenance and Improvements: In addition to day-to-day and scheduled maintenance the following work has been carried out during the last year:

- The lights on the 5 aside court have been replaced with LED lights.
- The lights at the Youth Building, the Lounge, Room 1 and 2, the toilets and the corridors at the Main Community Centre have been replaced with LED lights
- The lights in the car parks at Coles Road and the Sycamores have been replaced with LED lights.
- The Main Hall walls have been painted
- The high-level guttering at the main Community Centre has been cleared.
- The drains in the car park at the Community Centre have been cleared
- We have started a program to replace chairs at the Community Centre as several were damaged or faulty.
- Sycamores car park has been topped up with plannings and rolled to remove pot holes
- Significant tree work had been completed at Coles Road and the Sycamores.
- A new bench has been installed at North Lodge Pavilion.
- Heaters have been installed in the toilets at the Bowls Pavilion.
- The Spiders Web climber at Coles Road has been replaced.

Crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour: Over the past year we have seen a significant increase in quad bikes and motorbikes causing significant damage to the recreational spaces and football pitches across the 3 sites and intimidating other site users. This has been reported to the police on 9 separate occasions by the Community Centre with no response or clear action taken.

We continue to have numerous issues with dog owners allowing their dog to foul the recreation spaces and car park and not clear up. We have increased signage and sought support from Environmental Health however no progress has been made to date.

We continue to see evidence of high levels of recreational drug use at the Sycamores Recreation Ground and occasionally at Coles Road.

Other issues: Parking at Coles Road for the Country Park has increased and we now have people parking here to walk or cycle to the science park or car share for the rest of their journey into Cambridge.

Staff: Andy is the only full-time employee supported by 3 part time members of staff, Kevin, Rob and Philip, who share some of the key holder duties.

8. Question and Answer Session

None

Meeting closed: 8:32pm

Signed.....Date.....