

MILTON ABBAS PARISH COUNCIL

DRAFT Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th May 2025
in the READING ROOM, MILTON ABBAS, following the APCM

PRESENT

Mr I. Baker (Vice Chair)
Mr P. Ford
Mr T. Ives
Mr S. Martin

Mr S. Driver (Chair)
Mr S. Gould
Mrs J. Jordan
Ms D. Wyatt

IN ATTENDANCE Mrs E. Sellen (Clerk), Mrs Emma Parker (Dorset Councillor)
and 6 members of the general public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE None

2. DISPENSATIONS None

3. CHAIRMANS ADDRESS

SD acknowledged Mr T. Khandwala's resignation as previously reported in the Chairman's Report during the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

4. OPEN FORUM

The following points were raised:

SD introduced Mr J. Hawkins from Bagber Farm. JH attended to clarify matters surrounding a recent planning application, subsequent enforcement action by Dorset Council Planning Team, and a report in the Milborne Reporter. JH explained that he was one of four remaining tenant farmers in the parish and his family have been farming at Bagber Farm since 1946. A business opportunity has arisen which includes creating a water reservoir to grow food, which will require a 4m wide track in the field. EP asked whether JH intended to submit a retrospective planning application as per the enforcement notice. JH confirmed that he will be submitting a new full planning application to cover the access works (the reservoir is covered by agricultural permitted development). JH advised that he was furious when he returned from holiday to learn that rubbish had been dumped on the track and the individual responsible has since been fired. He introduced Scott who has been employed to fill the vacancy and manage the project. JH wants residents to continue to enjoy legal access to walk the footpaths and bridleways and has communicated directly with his neighbours and the 5 other landowners who require access using the track. SD thanked JH for attending to clarify these matters.

Mrs F. Robinson requested an update on the Jane's Wood trees and a brief resume of the recent activity was discussed.

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2025 had been circulated. It was proposed by SM, seconded by IB, and agreed by those who had attended the previous meeting, that they should be accepted as a true record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Dorset Council have confirmed that lower Catherine's Well works will be carried out 28-29th August 2025. Date for works to the higher Catherine's Well is yet to be confirmed. Pavement repairs will be included.

The Clerk had ascertained that pre-application advice from Dorset Council would cost about £1,830 to include a site visit, but will require drawings for the planning officer to comment on.

FR requested the Street Fair information to be updated on the Parish Council website. The Clerk requested a copy of the updates by email.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence had been circulated by email or was available on the table.

The clerk drew attention to the following:

Mr D. Judd (resident, qualified arborist of 16 yrs) had emailed observations relating to the pruning of the trees in the orchard. He confirmed that he'd be happy to help volunteers and meet onsite to discuss ongoing maintenance. The Clerk has replied to accept his offer of assistance.

Mr L. Hughes has resigned as a representative for Milton Abbas Parish Council on the Emily Falkner Trust. Mr P. Earley requested a replacement volunteer to attend two meetings per year (28th July & 11th August 2025). See APCM.

A resident had requested recommendations for tree experts. The Clerk was unable to make a recommendation but had supplied contact information acquired during recent activities.

Miss C. Eastment confirmed that Winterborne Stickland will help to fund the PlusBus service, but Dewlish are still deliberating. CE has requested that PlusBus advise of their potential intention to extend the service to Milborne St Andrew, Winterborne Whitechurch and Clenston, as it would be unfair if these communities do not also contribute.

A resident email advised that large amounts of drinks cans, sandwich packs and other litter is being discarded along the road to Delcombe, and enquiring whether there is any formal litter picking arrangement. The Clerk responded to confirm that it would be added to the agenda.

The Play Park inspection has been scheduled for 25th August.

8. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLOR

EP advised that various grants are available for organisations and charities and that they should have been emailed to parish councils by DAPTC.

9. REPORTS

HOMEWATCH None

MATCH/JANE'S WOOD

SD will contact Mr B. Isherwood to see if he wished to share any news.
TI requested an update on the DMMO T491 relating to the track to Milton Abbey School from Catherine's Well. SG asked EP to help progress the application. The Clerk will email correspondence to EP.

PLAYPARK

SG confirmed that the skatepark equipment has been made safe, benches have been pressure washed and treated. Most of the tree works have been carried out. RG advised that some additional strimming round trees is needed and some grass seed is required for the Millennium Green. SG confirmed that he will reseed in September when the rain is anticipated to water the seed. FR asked whether the bowing and rotten bench timbers would be replaced and whether the boules area would be included. The Clerk will follow up with Mr Lovell for an update.

TRANSPORT

SG had attended a meeting for the PlusBus and reported that the service is running well. It is anticipated that the annual contribution will be reduced next year due to the additional villages involved.

WELCOME PACK

TI advised of a new resident in Catherine's Well and requested a pack to be delivered.

CSW

JJ advised no change – additional volunteers are still required. JJ will submit a new Bulletin article.

MILLENNIUM GREEN TRUST As above (Playpark)

JUBILEE BENCH

FR advised that two bench ends have been sourced and she will contact Ms M. Curtis to see whether the carved seat and back are still available. FR recapped the history of the bench and the intention to create a "Wild Flower Garden" and acknowledged that maintenance would inevitably fall to the Parish Council, but stressed that this would not be a large area but a small border of flowers. Due to the season, this will be arranged for 2026.

MILTON ABBAS SPORTS CLUB

The Sports Club sent their thanks to the Parish Council and confirmed that the toilet facility is now functional.

EMERGENCY PLAN

This will be explained as part of the Annual Parish Meeting on 21st May.

REPORTS FROM OTHER PC OFFICERS None

10. PLANNING

Decisions

P/FUL/2024/07210 Old Stable Long Ash Farm – Continue to use the barn as a dwelling with associated garden and parking areas. Erect boundary wall – Granted.

Applications None

General Planning Concerns None

11. REVIEW HIGHWAYS & RISK REGISTER CONCERNS

SD recapped on Highways reports that works are scheduled, however this item will be retained on the agenda until the Parish Council are happy that the concerns have been addressed.

12. COUNCILLOR VACANCY

The vacancy arising from the resignation of TK on 7th May has been advertised. If there is no call for an election, the Parish Council should co-opt a new member. Applications for co-option are welcome and more information can be found on the Parish Council website.

13. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Mrs J. Witherden had emailed. There is still no formal announcement regarding potential grants for 2025 and therefore unless the Parish Council are prepared to fund the NP from reserves, any planning should be postponed until following the news from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

In the meantime, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act has introduced Neighbourhood Priority Statements (NPS) which are a simpler, more focused way for communities to influence the Local Plan concentrating on essential infrastructure, design and location of new housing and areas unsuitable for growth.

14. TREE WORKS

SD confirmed that the Parish Council are keen to make a decision, however the information and costs supplied have been widely varying and apparently incomparable. Mr Lawrence Usherwood (resident, arboricultural consultant) has offered to review the quotes and make a recommendation to the Parish Council and it was unanimously agreed that his recommendation should be reviewed prior to the next meeting so that a quote can be accepted.

15. LITTER PICKING

The resident email was discussed and it was acknowledged that there is a clear pattern of littering in the parish. PF offered to lead a volunteer session. The Parish Council will endeavour to supply any equipment required.

16. STREET FAIR CAR PARKING / METAL DETECTORISTS / FLINT HARVESTING

The Clerk outlined a suggestion to allow a local company to harvest the flint from Parish Council owned land behind Middleton Row, in exchange for the field being mown for the Street Fair car parking, and restoration following the flint harvest. An additional feature could be to facilitate a Detectorist event in conjunction with the History Group, after the Street Fair and before the restoration of the field. SG and SM offered to liaise with appropriate groups as required.

17. AUDIT

The internal audit has been scheduled for 23rd May, after which the Internal Audit Report and Annual Return will have to be received at an extraordinary meeting in June, prior to being submitted to the external auditor (SBO) by 30th June.

18. FINANCE

The receipts and payments spreadsheet, latest bank statements and list of cheques for payment had been circulated by email and was available at the meeting.

Balances:

Current A/c	£53,569.45
Playpark A/c	£11,383.54

The following cheques were authorised:

Current Account

Lloyds Bank Charges 10012025-09022025	DD 8/3	£5.85
Hugo Fox Website March 2025	DD 25/3	£11.99
Mrs E. Sellen Clerk's Salary March 2025	1464	£397.86
Mrs E. Sellen Clerk's Expenses March 2025	1465	£40.24
Reading Room Hire	1466	£120.00
Lloyds Bank Charges 10022025-09032025	DD 5/4	£5.05
Hugo Fox Website April 2025	DD 25/4	£11.99
Mrs E. Sellen Clerk's Salary April 2025	1467	£406.32
Mrs E. Sellen Clerk's Expenses April 2025	1468	£25.09
Lloyds Bank Charges 10032025-09042025	DD 5/5	£4.25

Playpark Account

Lloyds Bank Charges 10012025-09022025	DD 8/3	£4.25
Lloyds Bank Charges 10022025-09032025	DD 5/4	£4.65
Charles Tibbey Skate Park Repairs	0164	£1,780.00
Lloyds Bank Charges 10032025-09042025	DD 5/5	£4.25

19. CHAIRMAN'S URGENT BUSINESS None

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Councillors were reminded that the next meeting would take place on 9th July 2025 and, there being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:25pm.

Signed:

(Presiding Chairman)

Date: