

MILTON ABBAS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Parish Council held on 10th September 2025
in the READING ROOM, MILTON ABBAS, at 7.30pm

PRESENT

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

Mr S. Driver (Chair)
Mr S. Gould
Mrs J. Jordan
Mr L. Usherwood

IN ATTENDANCE Mrs E. Sellen (Clerk) and 6 members of the general public.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Mrs. Emma Parker (Dorset Councillor)

2. DISPENSATIONS None

3. CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS None

4. OPEN FORUM None

5. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 9th July 2025 had been circulated. It was proposed by SD, seconded by SG, and agreed by those who had attended the previous meeting, that they should be accepted as a true record.

6. MATTERS ARISING

Dorset Council emailed an apology for failing to include the footpaths in the Catherine's Well, despite providing a number of assurances that they would be included. They will now be reviewed during an ad hoc visit from Mr P. Goodland (Dorset Highways) during the week ended 12th September.

The North Area Ward Councillors invited Parish Councillors to meet to discuss the Local Plan ahead of the Consultation deadline. SG and FR will attend and report back to Councillors. Deadline for responses is 13th October. LU reported that he had attended a previous meeting which suggested that 450 new houses in the North Dorset area will be mainly assigned to towns.

Work will commence on Seymour Woodland and Jane's Wood on 6th October. TPR applications are available to review online.

A road closure notice for the second phase of Catherine's Well commencing 11th November has been circulated. (Not 28th October as previously advertised). SG pointed out that the works are scheduled for bin day. The Clerk to enquire whether this could cause issues.

The Clerk has signed and returned an amended Transport Group Constitution. The new constitution has an amended fare of £8 and includes Winterborne Stickland and Dewlish.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

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

The clerk drew attention to the following:

An injury report has been received from a resident and has been forwarded to the Insurance Company.

A resident complaint has been received regarding beech trees adjacent to the Millennium Green. LU will follow up with the resident on Saturday.

Milton Abbas Sports Club AGM is scheduled for 22 September at 7pm in St James Church.

Dorset Council Local Plan consultation period will close on 13th October.

The local transport plan consultation period will close on 13th October.

DAPTC are hosting a “Fresh Start” event for Councillors and clerks, to explore the benefits, challenges and pitfalls of devolving services and assets to town and parish councils on 25th October at a cost of £75 per delegate. Details have been emailed to Councillors, but as yet no one has volunteered to attend.

A road closure for the Dunbury Road starting 25th October from 8am – 1pm has been circulated by email.

Mr M. McAvoy has emailed details of new signage for the Milton Abbas History trail.

8. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCILLOR None

9. REPORTS

ELLIEGRAM/COMMUNICATIONS None

MATCH/JANE’S WOOD/MILLENNIUM GREEN

SD advised that Mr B. Isherwood intends to continue MATCH with the right support. SD also reported that the flint from recent works in Catherine’s Well has been removed from the Millennium Green. Mr R. Gollidge reported that grass seed is required to the Millennium Green. SG agreed to obtain the grass seed and apply it. LU provided an explanation of the works to Jane’s Wood and confirmed that he will be happy to revisit Jane’s Wood following the works if residents have further concerns.

PLAYPARK

SG advised that the Annual Play Park Inspection has been completed and there are a significant number of issues to attend to. He requested support for new signage including contact numbers. Councillors agreed that a total of £100 could be spent without further consultation. A quote for the repair to the Zip Wire was received for £1,775 plus VAT, and the same company will carry out an annual 10 point safety check and service £400 plus VAT. Comparative quotes were difficult to obtain as very few companies offer repairs and servicing. SM suggested that it should be clearly established whether the Parish Council wish to restore the Zip Wire. It was proposed by SG, seconded by SD and unanimously agreed that the

Zip Wire is a very popular feature of the play park and should be repaired and that the 10 point safety check and service should be scheduled for the appropriate dates after the repairs are carried out. SG sought approval to remove the frail wooden fencing adjacent to the skate park. It was unanimously approved. If required, PF will install a post for relocation of the dog waste bin. Two new residents to the village have offered to join the play park committee. SG advised that the bandstand roof timbers are showing signs of woodworm and need some wood preserver. The clerk is seeking quotes and SD offered to help, if the right equipment is available. PF will check in with SG regarding the bolts that require cutting down. SG proposed a one day park closure so that all the weeds can be treated with weed killer. For safety, one hour is probably enough and whoever attends to apply the weedkiller can discourage use of the park for this hour. The Clerk will ensure that Mr C. Lovell (Grounds person) has the required certificates for application of weedkiller in a public area. The closure should be advertised by Elliegram as soon as a suitable time has been identified.

TRANSPORT

The fee has been increased to £8, and the amendment has been amended to include Winterborne Stickland and Dewlish. SG will attend the next meeting on 24th September at 10am.

WELCOME PACK None

CSW None

JUBILEE BENCH

Mrs F. Robinson showed two ornately decorated panels from Ms M. Curtis, which MC has offered for use in the production of a Commemorative Jubilee bench. The panels are not compatible with the donated bench ends, and therefore either two new bench ends are required to fit the panels supplied, or the panels could be displayed as artwork and a bench could be obtained from a supplier (sample bench to be emailed by FR for circulation). The bench can be purchased for £399, and the project could be completed for £450 including a plaque. With MC's consent, the remaining funds could be used to hang the panels as works of art. It was unanimously agreed that the panels are very ornate, and it would be a shame for them to be exposed to the elements and suffer degradation, therefore an indoor setting would be more appropriate. FR advised that following the 2022 Platinum Jubilee celebrations, £211 was left in the Community Fund and it was agreed by the organisers that this balance should be donated towards the Jubilee Bench / Wild Flower garden project. An additional £60 was subsequently identified from ticket sales by the Hambro Arms, and the amount was ultimately rounded up to £280 to be donated to the Parish Council. FR and the Clerk will liaise with Mr M. McAvoy with respect to releasing these funds to the Parish Council.

MILTON ABBAS SPORTS CLUB

TI had attended the meeting on Monday. Two Caravan Club meets had raised some money for the Club. Mr C. Henderson has resigned from the club. There will be an AGM in September to reform the Committee.

EMERGENCY PLAN None

REPORTS FROM OTHER PC OFFICERS

FR will email the Clerk some amendments for the Street Fair page on the Parish Council website.

10. PLANNING

Decisions

P/FUL/2024/06472 Little Westwood – Erection 1 no detached dwelling, garage, access and parking - granted

P/MPO/2024/07274 Long Ash Farm – Discharge planning conditions in S106 - Granted

P/FUL/2025/03515 Bagber Farm access to Bagber Farm Cottages – Retain farm track - granted

P/PABA/2025/03605 Hill Dairy, Hewish Farm – Erect agricultural building – Prior approval not required

Applications

P/FUL/2025/04431 Chalk Stone, 1A Catherine's Well – Retain storage building and formation of hardened forecourt. SD had observed neighbours support on the planning portal. FR suggested that the works have already been carried out. It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Council have no further comments.

P/LBC/2025/05068 Damer Cottage, 41 Milton Abbas – Re-thatch using water reed in place of wheat straw. IB advised that due to a poor harvest water reed is all that is available. It was agreed that there should not be a significant visual impact and therefore there were no comments.

General Planning Concerns

TI noted that Little Westwood had solar panels, and he asked whether there were documented planning regulations regarding solar panels in conservation areas. PF advised that the pavement kerbs have broken away and water running down the hill is spilling over onto the pavement, concealing the potholes. The Clerk was asked to raise the issue with the Highways officer.

11. HIGHWAYS & RISK REGISTER CONCERNS

SD advised that the water issues outside Pond Head have been raised with Wessex Water. IB added that the debris washed down to the area by the Old Vicarage might add to existing issues. It has been suggested that drainage channels have collapsed. The Clerk to ask Dorset Highways to see if the road can be swept to clear the debris. SG offered to liaise with Mr. P. Goodland.

TI reported that the fence at the former Milton Arms restricts the view of traffic proceeding into the village down Dorchester Hill to traffic leaving Chescombe Lane and wondered whether it was something that the Clerk should discuss with Winterborne Whitechurch Parish Council. Councillors confirmed that Winterborne Whitechurch residents have raised this with Dorset Council, and it is believed that the height of the fence has been reduced.

SD asked the Clerk to obtain an update on the subsistence to the road towards the Abbey.

SM reported that around the cemetery end of Wilsons Wood, a large tree has fallen causing an obstruction to the footpaths. LU will review the Parish Council maps to see if the tree is on PC land or not.

12. HAMBRO ARMS COMMUNITY ASSET REGISTRATION

Following the recent closure of the Hambro Arms, FR had suggested to Councillors that the Hambro Arms should be listed as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). It doesn't prevent the owner from changing the use, but there is an obligation to involve the Parish Council in the change of use application. It was proposed by SD and unanimously agreed that the draft application circulated by email should be reviewed and feedback sent to the clerk prior to the weekend, so that the application can be finalised and submitted to Dorset Council during the week commencing 15th September. FR offered to review the draft application and suggested that the clerk should also review a similar application submitted by Winterborne Stickland PC for The Crown.

Mr J. Watson (Headteacher, Milton Abbey School) advised that the school are keen to lend their support to any move to retain the Pub in the village, as it improves their appeal to potential employees and broadens the social opportunities open to pupils and their families.

Councillors confirmed that many residents have expressed concern about the current closure of the pub. There was a discussion regarding community ventures and what could be done to encourage a new buyer interested in continuing to run the business as a pub and restaurant. It was proposed that SG would lead the formation of a Steering Committee to investigate the potential for a community based venture in the absence of a private venture.

13. PLAY PARK INSPECTION REPORT

The Play Park Inspection Report had been circulated by email. Most urgent issues have been considered as part of the play park report. Works will continue as agreed and further points will be reviewed during future meetings.

14. 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	£ 67,017.76
Playpark A/c	£ 8,610.74

The following cheques were authorised:

Current Account

Hugo Fox Emails	DD 20/7	£20.99
Hugo Fox Website July 2025	DD 25/7	£11.99
Mrs E. Sellen Clerk's Salary July 2025	1480	£406.32
Mrs E. Sellen Clerk's Expenses July 2025	1481	£749.01
Lloyds Bank Charges 10062025-09072025	DD 5/8	£4.25

Hugo Fox Emails	DD 20/8	£20.99
Hugo Fox Website August 2025	DD 25/8	£11.99
Mrs E. Sellen Clerk's Salary August 2025	1482	£406.32
Mrs E. Sellen Clerk's Expenses August 2025	1483	£231.95
Lloyds Bank Charges 10072025-09082025	DD 5/9	£4.25
Playpark Account		
Lloyds Bank Charges 10062025-09072025	DD 5/8	£4.25
Lloyds Bank Charges 10072025-09082025	DD 5/9	£4.25
The Play Inspection Company Aug 2025	166	£288.00

15. CHAIRMAN'S URGENT BUSINESS

SD reported that following an informal meeting of the Councillors in August, an asset maintenance schedule is being compiled and will be shared online.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Councillors were reminded that the next meeting would take place on 12th November 2025 and, there being no further business, the meeting closed at 8:51pm.

Signed:

(Presiding Chairman)

Date: