



Millbrook Parish Council

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MILLBROOK ANNUAL PARISH MEETING | 19:00 ON TUESDAY 15TH MAY 2018

- PRESENT:** Cllrs D. Wood (Chair), S. Lewis (Vice Chair), C. Wilton, B. Taggart, R. Meeson, R. Vincent, S. Woffenden, N. Roberts, J. Gibbens
- IN ATTENDANCE:** County Cllr G. Trubody, Clerk R. Hamill, Village Hall Chair C. Watkins, 2 members of the public
- APOLOGIES:** Cllr F. McBain

1. MINUTES OF 2017 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 16TH MAY 2017

It was proposed by Cllr Wood and seconded by Cllr Lewis that the minutes were a true and accurate record. Motion carried unanimously by all members present at the meeting.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2017 - 18

Money

Budget increase for coming year due to grant reduction from £8500.00 to £4000.00 and will continue to reduce until nothing left. On advice we have increased staff time to a full time equivalent between the clerk & deputy clerk, this has pushed up the wages bill but means we have someone in the office every day. We have also increased the budget to cover anticipated improvements to the road system to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety – especially for schoolchildren. We are fortunate to be the largest village in Cornwall with over 1000 households, this means the increase, spread across the village would amount to 50p per week per household.

Flood Defences

Phase 1 of the Environment Agency's flood defence plan for Millbrook was completed last year involving improving the channel for the Mill Brook flowing past the West Street car park, clearing the overflow channels further upstream and installing a new gate to prevent debris entering the culvert to the lake. Phase 2 is almost complete: the installation of a new large diameter pipe to carry the Mill Stream from the graveyard under Millpool Head to meet the Mill Brook at the entry to the culvert. The previous smaller pipe had in the past become blocked allowing surface water to flow down Millpool Head to the centre of the village. Once phase 2 is completed Cormac will begin work to improve the drainage at the top of Hounster Hill; during heavy downpours a manhole cover outside The Byre has through water pressure blown its iron cover off allowing water to cascade down the hill into Dodbrook, where houses in previous years have been flooded. As a [we hope] temporary measure, we have installed a container at this location which contains sandbags, traffic cones, Hi-Viz jackets and tools. I and other councillors have used this facility on several occasions this past winter. If the drainage improvements are seen to work in preventing surface water flooding, we will be able to sell the container and return the money to the council.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Rame Neighbourhood Development Plan devised between Millbrook council and the 4 other parish councils in the peninsula, covering future development across the area for the next 20 years or so, took 6 years and a lot of work to complete. 3 of our councillors were engaged almost continuously. A referendum was held last Spring and the plan approved by 88% of voters. Cornwall Council officially approved the plan on 28th July 2017.

Council Organisation

Following the retirement of Richard Woodley, our long serving clerk who served the council loyally and reliably for more than 14 years, we needed to recruit a replacement and to that end we established a staffing committee, ably chaired by Cllr Taggart, to devise recruiting criteria, advertise the post, conduct interviews and make recommendations. This resulted in the appointment of Ryan Hamill to the post and I am pleased to confirm that after a 6 month probation period and appraisals, his appointment has been made permanent. We were also sorry to say goodbye to Steve and

Anne Creese, Steve as our caretaker and former councillor and his wife Anne who was a councillor for many years; they both contributed hugely to the work of the council and to village life in general. Our former clerk was very experienced and many matters were handled automatically; the appointment of his replacement in post led to a requirement for all procedures and policies to be properly detailed and understood. Accordingly the council has established revised terms of reference and procedures for the planning committee, the finance committee, the staffing committee and the newly established traffic & transport working / advisory group.

Traffic & Transport

As mentioned, we have formed an advisory group to look at and make recommendations to the council concerning pedestrian safety, traffic flow and parking problems. This is an informal group with no delegated powers to take any action and any recommendations it comes up with will be debated and approved or not by the full council. This group has had several meetings, not least with the Cornwall Council Highways Manager for this area who was able to advise on possible options to improve traffic flow, especially at the Tanyard corner where buses and trucks are often held up by drivers parking illegally. Quotations are being arranged for various works before recommendations are made to the full council. For the past two years Millbrook council together with Shevioc and Maker with Rame have contracted with Cornwall Council's Traffic Enforcement Department for additional parking enforcement visits; we undertook to support by paying for the additional time spent by enforcement officers but we also receive a percentage of the parking ticket receipts and this contract has so far been cost neutral. We expect to renew this contract for this year.

Public Spaces

The parish council looks after several public areas on behalf of the village – the lakeside area, the playing fields adjoining including the kiddies' Tractor Park playground and the skateboard park, the Tanyard, the new area of the graveyard, plus the West Street car park, the Stone Pier on the lake and the Lime Kiln (used for storage). It has been council policy for several years now to leave an uncut border of vegetation around the lake during the nesting season; another area has been planted with new shrubs and will soon be fenced off and left uncut to increase the nesting area. The playing field areas have been focused on with alterations to and pathways cut through the bushes under the "Get Millbrook Buzzing" initiative to encourage and support pollinators to flourish: this program has been grant funded so no cost to the village and the funding has also provided information boards explaining the local bird life, trees and the GMB program and two new sign boards: one for the Tanyard, well used by local organisations, and another at the entrance to the lakeside path.

The Mediterranean plants in the Tanyard, donated and planted by a resident, have matured and make a grand display, looked after by our VET's volunteer group. The Tanyard has become increasingly popular for outdoor markets and concerts – it is a real asset to the centre of the village. We have given permission for a series of 6 Sunday afternoon live music performances during the summer holidays organised by Millbrook folk club, and following two well attended concerts in the Tanyard last year by the Rame Male Voice Choir, they will again be giving two concerts in the Tanyard this year, one in the Summer and another in the run up to Christmas.

As I mentioned, we are responsible for the West Street public car park. We have also been negotiating, for years with Cornwall Council to take over the green area alongside the car park with the kiddies' playground. We understand that Cornwall Council has no budget for repairs to outdoor equipment, therefore if any of the playground equipment needs repair at present it would simply be scrapped; for this reason and to improve this area as a leisure facility for the village we are keen to conclude negotiations. One development here is proceeding: the Peninsula Trust is building some work units in the back yard of its property. As part of this development it is laying a public footpath which will connect the car park & leisure area through the boundary wall to Millpool Head opposite the Tanyard, which will improve access to our areas and encourage more sensible parking. The council will then be responsible for the upkeep of the footpath.

Community Fund

As part of the negotiation for planning approval for the Mendennick Solar Farm, the company running it offered a community fund for local projects, which was negotiated successfully by our former clerk Richard Woodley and is providing £30,000.00 in three tranches of £10,000.00. We have received the first two tranches with the final £10,000.00 due this October. The parish council is under the terms of reference not able to apply for any grants; however we hold the money on behalf of the fund and our finance committee members assess the grant applications. It has been a real pleasure to assist with 18 grants over the last two years ranging from support for an extension to the scout hall to a new dock for the Millbrook Model Boat Club. Anyone interested in the details can obtain them from the clerk. We expect to invite applications for grants from the next tranche later this year.

Signage

A small improvement but we continue to liaise with Cornwall Highways for replacement street signs. New signs look clean and smart and encourage civic pride – new signs have been erected in Dodbrook, Blindwell Hill, Maker Lane, with a new one on its way for King Street. At the request of residents of Radford Lane who had experienced problems with

wide vehicles at the narrow entrance, we erected 6 signs at the entrance to the feeder lanes which seem to have been effective in discouraging wide vehicles from using the route. Car park direction signs are also going up.

General

We continue to monitor flood defence progress, we were actively involved with the Peninsula Trust in arranging the temporary Post Office facility and kept an eye on the situation with the doctor's surgery.

Thanks to Council, staff, volunteers and in particular the VET's, Caroline Tapsell who stood down as organiser after 4 years and Cllr Lewis who has taken over.

3. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

The Clerk echoed the Chairman's statement on council money and gave a brief update on its financial position at the end of the 2017 – 18 financial year. In summary, the council continues to steadily grow its long-term reserves in pursuit of its £100,000 target. This past [financial] year it grew reserves by approximately £10,000, from £65,000 to £75,000.

4. COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT FOR 2017 – 18

County Cllr George Trubody spoke about the neighbourhood plan and its ground-breaking nature, stating that it had already delivered benefits to not only in Millbrook, but across the Rame Peninsula. Cllr Trubody went on to talk about the Rame Peninsula cluster group, made up of all the parishes around the area, and the successful Service Level Agreement trial with Cornwall Council to tackle illegal parking and dog fouling. He added that although the dog fouling enforcement element was a pilot that is not yet due to be rolled out permanently, the parking enforcement agreement will continue this year.

Cllr Trubody then advised the council of further reductions to Cornwall Council's budget. He stated that the government grant Cornwall Council receives will be reduced to £87 million. For context, he said that in 2009 the grant was approximately £404 million and by 2020/21 it is expected to be reduced further to approximately £57 million. Cllr Trubody advised the council to be prudent in planning for further services being devolved and the potential capping of parish council precepts.

Cllr Wilton picked up on a point raised regarding business rates on the public toilets and advised the council that parish councils *can* be exempted.

5. PUBLIC FORUM

A member of the public pointed to the fact that as so few members of the public had turned out for the Annual Parish Meeting, the council must be doing a good job. She went on to add that all members of the council in their positions must be doing a brilliant job. She went on to say that the lake is looking lovely, the VETs are working well and long may it go on.

C. Watkins updated the council on the various projects the Village Hall Committee had been undertaking:

- the website, which she stated should go live in July
- various policies have been created and updated and work on them is ongoing
- the new cooker has been installed in the downstairs kitchen and she thanked the Mendennick Solar Fund Committee for their support in the purchase of that equipment
- a new noticeboard installed at the back of the village hall on New Street
- the Attic Room had now been carpeted which she stated would hopefully help increase utilisation

She summarised by stating that room bookings were generally going well, Millbrook Movies was being relatively well attended and the committee would hold its AGM on 14th June.

Mr R Bews echoed the sentiments of the previous member of the public and highlighted that he had congratulated the council at last year's meeting on the enhancements to the village, which in his opinion was down to the Chairman's leadership. Mr Bews however reiterated that in his opinion the council had still not brought about any material improvement to pedestrian safety and traffic flow. Mr Bews again expressed his concern at not knowing exactly what the money which had been included in the council's 2018/19 budget for traffic & transport improvements was to be used for. He then stated that he would be willing to devote some time to the council's traffic & transport working group, citing his experience and knowledge in relation to such matters. Mr Bews and various members of the council then discussed a proposed Cornwall Council initiative aimed at funding highways projects. The Chairman asked Mr Bews to send details to the Clerk if he had something that he wished to put to the Traffic & Transport Working Group.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 19:42.