

# Milton Damerel Parish Council Minutes

## **Of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023 in Milton Damerel Parish Hall commencing at 19**

Present: Councillors Stephen Moyses Chair, Richard Piper Vice- Chair, Gareth Piper, Teresa Walters, Jim Richardson and Peter Bromley also present were District Councillor Ken James, Lorraine Buttery- Clerk residents Bob Sage, Gary & Karen Flack

1. Apologies were received from: District Councillors Kit Hepple.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
  - a) Register of Interest: Councillors are reminded of the need to update their register of interests. *None were declared.*
  - b) To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature. *None were declared*
  - c) To declare any disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda and their nature. *None were declared*
3. **Chair's announcements:**

Councillor Stephen Moyses commented that he would like to wish good luck to both candidates for tomorrow's Election. He welcomed all to the meeting and said it was good to see Councillor Morrish.
4. **Public Comments**

Resident Gary Flack commented on the speed of traffic, most drivers do not keep to the 40mph, the stretch of road near Sanders Garage is particularly bad, some drivers totally ignore the speed limit and come dangerously close to people whilst walking their children to catch the school, is it possible to request a 30mph on this stretch of the road? The Clerk was requested to enquire with the highways department. Peter Buckpitt asked what the position was regarding the removal of Knotweed, it is very bad in hedgerows, Councillor Morrish replied that resources were not available for the removal, even in hedgerows along the highway it is the obligation of the land owners to remove it. Councillor James said the best way to deal with it is to cut it in the Autumn and poor weedkiller down into the stems.
5. The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> October 2023 which had been circulated by email, they were then unanimously approved as a true record of the meeting, they were duly signed by the Chair Councillor Stephen Moyses.
6. **Reports by Local and District Councillors**

District Councillor Ken James reported that he had recently been to London for a meeting with the chief executive of the 'Levelling up fund', Torridge has obtained funding from the government, to help with employment, getting the youth to obtain more qualifications, a company in North Devon to produce prescription drugs and other plans that are in the pipeline. The consultation for the Strategic Plan has been extended until the 21<sup>st</sup> November.

Devon County Councillor James Morrish stated that being a DCC Councillor was a lot different than he had Expected. I have been working very hard to keep the 'Link Project' open as it is threatened with closure by D.C.C. It is a valuable drop-in center for anyone with mental health issues.

The state of the roads continues to be of great concern, although better in some places we do seem to be the poor relative when it comes to financing, there are concerns in rural areas that DCC seem to be abandoning some roads. Councillor Peter Bromley commented that it seems all resources go to maintaining A & B roads is it a policy to deregulate some of the more rural roads? How often does DCC inspect roads? Councillor Morrish said that under the freedom of information this information can be obtained.
7. **Matters Arising**
  - 1) Permanent Memorial this had now been erected and was consecrated in a small ceremony on the 4<sup>th</sup> November, a few residents attended grateful thanks go to District Councillor Kit Hepple who made The purchase of the figure possible
  - 2) Sign – shop cross – this had now been repaired
  - 3) New Councillor, the election is tomorrow (16<sup>th</sup>) the counting will be done after 10pm at the hall.
  - 4) Facebook Administrator, at this present time the face book page has been paused, which was very disappointing as a forthcoming event could not be advertised, Robert Stennet as administrator has stepped down. County Councillor James Morrish commented that it was both dangerous and strange what had been happening, Community face book pages are usually run for the good of the

Community also an advertising platform for forthcoming events being run for the residents, obviously this has not been the case recently, with protocols being broken.

5) Defibrillator cabinet, almost enough grant money has now been promised to replace the cabinet, thanks go to Devon County Councillor James Morrish and District Councillor Kit Hepple for their support, Councillor James commented that he might still have some grant money available and would email the clerk.

**8. Planning Applications**

*None received*

**9. Planning decisions**

1) 1/0841/2023/FUL

Proposal: Change of use of land from agricultural to residential and erection of ancillary building

Location: Land at Upper Ley Barn, Milton Damerel, Holsworthy, Devon

*The above application was granted permission*

**Planning Appeals**

*None received*

**10. Financial Matters**

a) It was unanimously agreed to sign cheques for: i) Clerk's salary £287.43

ii) R.A.W. Piper £59.40 two Councillors duly signed.

b) financial report to date, the bank balance of £3893.27 was supported by the current bank statement and bank reconciliation. Ring fenced funds of £103.02 STiT fund, £174.65 P3 funds, £135.40 balance of TDC grant, and £900 balance of DAAT grant, the remaining balance of £2470.20 being PC general funds.

c) EDF Balance is £90.68 in credit

d) The grant applications for the financial year 2024-2025 were to be discussed at a later date due to the uncertainty of the Parish Council funds due to the expected election costs.

e) The draft budget was discussed, the budget to include the expected election cost of between 3 and 5 thousand pounds pushes the precept request up by 100%, last year the precept was £4750 and the Request this year will be £10,900. There is no guarantee that Torridge will pay this amount.

Councillor Gareth Piper remarked that he thought we were going to try and claim enough to cover This election and another if it came up, the Clerk commented that this would push the claim up by Another 3-4 thousand, which would undoubtedly be denied, Councillor James agree that this would Be the case. The final Budget will be agreed at the December meeting.

**11. Correspondence as below and as available at the time of the meeting**

All correspondence received by email have been forwarded to Councillors. No issues raised

Received by post: Letter from Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Cox Q.C., M.P.

The contents of the above were discussed, the forms regarding the appeal for signatures to improve Rural roads had been circulated to Lizzies Larder and Sanders Garage; the Clerk will collect them in January to send to Sir Geoffrey's office, the questions regarding the levelling up fund was also discussed with Councillor James stating that decisions regarding this have to have a material objective and had already been suggested by full committee.

12. 1) The Chair Councillor Moyse stated that he was very upset by the way the Parish Council was Portrayed by Mr R Stennet on the Community face book page, with the accusations of bullying favouritism and not acting democratically, this was upheld by Councillor Jim Richardson who was also very concerned with the remarks. The Chair Councillor Stephen Moyse asked the clerk to email Mr Stennet asking for an apology either in person or by email, as what was said was totally wrong and unacceptable.

County Councillor James Morrish and District Councillor Ken James wholeheartedly support Milton Damerel Parish Council, they were very surprised with the actions and comments that had been purported over the last few months.

2) It was reported that the Milton Damerel sign on the edge of the village was broken and the sign in the layby, the Clerk will report both.

No further business was recorded and the meeting closed at 8.55pm

