**MILTON BRYAN PARISH MEETING**

**Minutes of the Milton Bryan Parish Meeting**

**held on Wednesday 1st November 2023**

**in the Village Hall**

Present*:*  12 members of the public, Peter Horrocks – Chairman,

Karen Barker – Clerk, CBC Cllr John Baker

715 **Apologies**:

Apologies were given from Clare Francis and Alan Boyce

716 **Minutes of previous meeting**:

The Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 31st May 2023 were approved and agreed by all those present. The minutes were signed by the Chairman as a true record of events.

717 **Matters Arising**:

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

718 **Reports and Representations:**

718.1 CBC Cllr J Baker gave a report:

* Press Reader Service – allows free access to 100’s of newspapers, comics and magazines. Users can use their library card to gain access to it
* Council Tax – the Councils deficit is being looked at and an increase in council tax is being considered. A consultation on the draft budget will be launched in December/January and the final decision will be made in February 2024
* Tidy Tip – ID is now required to be shown when visiting the local tidy tip as access is only allowed to those residents living in the Central Bedfordshire area
* Highways – the department needs to improve. The road linings in some areas have not been finished and may not be replaced as a form of traffic calming

719 **Open Forum:**

719.1 St Peter’s Church – Church Treasurer Alan White

Mr White was welcomed to the meeting. Mr White said that he is the Church Warden and Secretary/Treasurer. Finances and resources are difficult for the Church at the moment with low attendance and a lack of funding to contribute to the costs of the Rector. The Parish Share, which is the sum of money paid by each parish every year to the diocese to support the local ministry, has not been paid in recent years. The diocese is short of money and unfortunately has now asked the Church to continue to pay the Parish Share for this year and in future years. If this is not paid the Church will not have a Vicar and the Church would have to close. The future of the Village Hall is also affected by the financial challenges as the Diocese own the freehold of the Village Hall and it may be sold by the Diocese if the Church were to close. The PCC want to keep the Church open and ensure the Village Hall continues to run.

The Church may have adequate funds for this year to cover the cost of the Parish Share but need to fundraise for future years. The amount that the Church will need to raise will be in the region of £8,000.

A special meeting with the Archdeacon of Bedford, Mr Dave Middlebrook and the Vicar, Rachel Snow, is scheduled for 17th January 2024 in the Village Hall to discuss the future viability of the Church and implications for the Village Hall. The Chairman agreed to circulate information to the Village to ensure they are aware of the challenges facing the Church with details of the meeting in January and urged everyone who has an interest in this matter to attend.

The Parish Meeting agreed to form a small group to examine the feasibility of various options to avoid the closures.

The Church has applied for a grant from the National Churches Trust towards the tower roof and repairs to the building. There are potentially other grants that can be applied for but this is dependent on whether funds can be raised for the Parish Share as repairs to the Church would be pointless if it were to close. Jed and Craig Gibson were thanked for offering to clear out the Church gutters to try to prevent any further damp problems with the walls.

Mr White was thanked for attending the meeting.

719.2 Village Hall

The Village Hall Committee are looking for a new Chairman and also new Committee members.

720 **Village Matters:**

720.1 Village projects/highways

Residents were asked to report any highways issues to the Clerk. The following were reported:

* Gullys are blocked in the Village
* Road lining has not been completed after the resurfacing works at South End and this could be dangerous

The Chairman to report the items to CBC Cllr Baker.

(**Action Chairman**)

721 **Finance:**

721.1 Accounts to 30th September 2023:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | £ |
| Barclays Current Account | 3,845.30 |
| Barclays Savings Account | 2,347.20 |
| Less unpresented chqs | 182.06 |
| **TOTAL** | 6,010.44 |
|  |  |
| B/F 2022/23 | 4,619.21 |
| Receipts to 30th September 2023 | 2,886.14 |
| Payments to 30th September 2023 | 1,494.91 |
| **TOTAL** | 6,010.44 |

721.2 Other finance matters:

721.2.1 Budget/Precept 2024/25

The Clerk to draw up the budget. The Clerk said that she is not anticipating that the precept will be increased this year and will remain the same as last year.

722 **Planning:**

The Clerk was asked to forward any planning applications received from CBC to

the Village circulation list.

723 **Correspondence:**

The Parish Meeting discussed ways of disseminating information around the

Village more efficiently such as hand delivering the meeting agenda.

724 **Date of next meeting:**

Meetings will be held in February, May and October each year.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 28th February 2024 starting at 7.30pm.

The Meeting closed at 8.30pm

Signed: ……………………………………. (Chairman) Date: ………………………….