
Milton Ernest Parish Council

Draft Minutes of the Meeting Held on 15 January 2026

Time: 20.00

Present: Cllrs Goldwin (Vice-Chair, in the Chair), Dipple, Lane, Sizer

Apologies: Cllr Ross (Chair)

In Attendance: 9 residents and Borough Cllr Towler

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

2. Public Open Session

- A resident asked whether deductions from driver car insurance could be used to fund the reinstatement of the ANPR cameras.
- A resident asked about the camera on Thurleigh Road whether it was ever going to work? who will be replacing it? Cllr Towler asked the Clerk to email him re the camera to see if it can be claimed off insurance.
- A resident queried a planning matter and asked whether the deadline could be extended beyond **28 February 2026** proposed housing development known as site 518.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting (13 November 2025)

The minutes were approved with one amendment: the reference to Bedfordia was corrected to confirm the information came from the **Bedfordia website**, not a planning submission.

4. Clerk's Report

- **Riverside View bins:** Discussion re the bins. A resident confirmed that the ownership is also uncertain regarding Riverside View Playground and there had been several emails going back and forth between Cllr Ross and Richard Brighton of Bedford

Council. Cllr Goldwin mentioned she would mention to Cllr Ross to ask for a meeting with Richard Brighton to get a final agreement in place.

- **New PC email addresses:** To run in parallel with current emails, with full transition planned for April. Clerk reminded councillors that private email use may make private email accounts subject to FOI requests.

5. Correspondence

- **Riverside View waste bin:** Still not being collected; noted earlier in Public Session.
- **Trees on Thurleigh Road:** Trees planted on Marsh Lane (not Thurleigh Road) and Cllr Goldwin and Cllr Lane knows of person responsible and will give the Clerk details to follow up with the BPHA.

6. Finance

Payments Approved

- Cllr Goldwin – Christmas Tree Lighting supplies: **£30**
- Cllr Ross – Bench fixing materials & dog mess spray: **£96.92**
- Cllr Sizer – Mulled wine for Christmas event: **£32.50**
- Payroll bureau (Q4): **£75**
- Payroll (Clerk & Litter Picker): November & December
- Warners (3 invoices): **£1,800**
- Ionos: **£4.20** (twice)
- Christmas Tree: **£1,728**
- Village Hall: **£84**
- HMRC PAYE: **£196.40**

Budget & Grants

- Budget variance report noted.
- **Church grant request 2025/26:** £1,250 plus £250 for Villager Magazine.
- It was agreed to discuss and review the Clock & Ground Maintenance of the Church Grant during the February meeting.
- **Good Neighbour Scheme 2025/26:** £250 approved.

Asset Register

- Updated: land valued at **£5,000** (previously had been recorded at £7,000, which included solicitor fees).
- New benches added.
- Thanks were recorded to Pam and Alan for their work.
- Clerk recommended a replacement-value review for insurance purposes.
- Asset Register to be added to the website.

Precept 2026/27

- Precept set at **£18,000-** (submitted to BBC 29/1/26).
 - Precept file amended to include Good Neighbour Grant and updated Christmas Tree cost (£1,488).
 - Christmas Tree lights contract extended with existing supplier for three years at fixed **£1,488 + VAT per year**.
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7. Village Welfare

- **Radwell Road bench:** Has been well received; thanks to the Garden Centre.
 - **Defibrillator:** New unit commissioned. Training to be held on **2 February, 7.30–9.30pm**; no booking required.
 - **Village Magazine:** January Parish Council article approved and submitted.
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8. Police Matters

- Report of vehicle “keying” in Butterfield Court; incident had not been reported to police. Reminder criminality in the village may be being under-reported.
 - Report of assault and injury at Twinwoods.
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9. Reports from Working Groups

- **Finance Working Group:** Met on 8th December 2025 to review the proposed budget.
- **Biodiversity Plan:** Received an update - Cllr Sizer and Rachel Atkinson met and have nearly finalised it and will hopefully be ready to be circulated ahead of the February meeting.

- **Environmental Volunteer Group:** Thanks recorded.
 - **Neighbourhood Development Plan:**
 - Current plan valid until 26 November 2026.
 - The 2040 plan from the BBC (Bedford Borough Council) is planned to be available by 2029.
 - Traffic survey and Housing Needs Survey required.
 - Village questionnaire is proposed.
 - **Events Committee:** Quiz Night on 19 February 2026 to raise funds for new playing field equipment.
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10. Parish Events

- **Defibrillator Training:** Monday 2 February 2026
 - **Quiz Night:** Thursday 19 February 2026
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11. Planning Matters

Applications Considered

- **23/02615/MAF – Major Full & Change of Use (Appeal)**
Change of use of an agricultural building to **B2 Industrial** and **B8 Storage**, with external alterations and access/junction improvements.
 - Council expressed concern that B2 classification could permit a wide range of industrial uses.
 - Parish Council does **not support** industrial usage.

Other Planning Issues

- **Maltings bin storage:** Issue raised by neighbouring property. Council to contact Alistair Wren (BBC Enforcement).

Decisions by Borough Council

- None noted.
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12. Borough Councillor Report – Cllr Towler

- Reported on a **£55m borrowing request** from Central Government to support finances until planned Universal Studios Theme Park revenues begin flowing from 2031.
 - Key financial pressures: **Children's Services, Adult Services, Temporary Housing.**
 - Speed camera data to be shared for the last three months; cameras operational since November 2025.
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13. Parish Council Updates

- **Highways:** Speeding on Radwell Road; cameras have been working since November 25. The data has been requested and will be sent to Cllr Goldwin by hopefully the next meeting.
 - **Litter Picker Contract:** Deferred to February HR session during PC meeting.
 - **Councillor Recruitment:** No co-option applications have been received.
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14. Short Public Open Session

- Housing in flood-risk areas raised as an issue for the revised NDP.
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15. Closed Session

Not held. Clerk probation review and Litter Picker contract deferred to February.

Future Agenda Items

- Biodiversity Plan
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Meeting closed: 20.58

Clerk: Saqhib Ali

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