

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF MERTON M3/2022

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN MERTON VILLAGE HALL AT 19:30 ON 14 MARCH 2022

PRESENT: David Richardson (Chairman) DR
Martin Smith, Paul Stubbs, R. Gurprashad (Councillors) MS/ PS/RG

IN ATTENDANCE: T. Charlesworth; (Clerk/RFO) TC
County Cllr. Callum Miller. CM

1. APOLOGIES: Accepted from Cllrs. Andrew Yearsley and Wendy Meads (Village Hall Bookings Clerk).
2. PARISH COUNCIL:
 - 2.1. Election of Vice-Chairman: No volunteers.
 - 2.2. Resignation: Cllr. D. Smith: Having advised C.D.C. a Notice of Vacancy has been put on the notice board; it was noted that in accordance with Section 89(3) of the Local Government Act 1972, where the vacancy occurs within six months before the day on which the councillor whose office is vacant would regularly have retired, an election shall not be held under Section 89(1) of the above Act, and the vacancy will be filled at the next ordinary election of councillors on 5 May 2022. The Council may choose to fill the vacancy for the period until that election.
 - 2.3. Vacancies: No applications.
 - 2.4. Election: Parish Council Election May 2022: To consider advertising: C.D.C. – Parish Elections - Should Merton Parish have a contested election in May, the maximum cost to the Parish Council will be: £1125.62 If it is an uncontested election the cost to the parish will be: £100.
 - 2.5. To Receive Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:
 - a) None.
 - 2.6. COVID-19: Government Guidelines: Restrictions lifted.
 - 2.7. Welcome Pack: Ninety percent complete. MS
 - 2.8. Merton Village Neighbourhood Plan: AY/MS
 - a) Joint Neighbourhood Plan: Note that C.D.C. has published recent boundary changes. MS/AY to establish the defined village boundary for Merton Village.
 - 2.9. ICO Registration: Change of entry details completed. TC
 - 2.10. Annual Review of Audit and Governance Documents: To be acted upon before 31 March 2022.
- RESOLVED:**
 - a) Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit: Current document accepted and approved with no amendments.
 - b) Review of Internal Audit: Current document accepted and approved having been updated to include the current date of Letter of Engagement for the Internal Auditor.
 - c) Asset Register: Draft document accepted and approved having confirmed that the new village hall chairs are included and the old noted as destroyed.
 - i. The Clerk was tasked with listing historical removed/sold or destroyed items separately from the current asset register.
 - ii. 'Stock Check' was noted for action to support the insurance document as the village hall and its contents are listed as a whole on the insurance policy.
 - d) Risk Assessments: Allotments; Parish Council; Village Hall; Play Area and Woodland Volunteers; Covid-19: Current document accepted and approved with no amendments.
 - e) Financial Regulations: Current document accepted and approved. Internet banking (see 8.9) to be set up in accordance with these regulation No: 6 - Instructions For The Making Of Payments.
- 2.11. Operation London Bridge: No action. Clerk to remove from agenda. TC
- 2.12. Platinum jubilee celebration. Whilst the jubilee should be celebrated it was proposed to suggest, through 'Facebook', that villagers hold adhoc events if they wish rather than one large organised event; being mindful of the sensitive issue currently in Ukraine.
- 2.13. Spring Clean 2022: To be organised for a Sunday. DR

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:

- 3.1: The Chairman welcomed CM to the meeting:
 - a) Two current consultations were highlighted:
 - The Local Travel and Connectivity Plan: Two days left to comment.
 - Libraries:
 - b) 20mph Limit: The PC confirmed that the application had been submitted; there were no updates from O.C.C.
 - c) District Cllr. T. Hallchurch is stepping down this May.

4. MINUTES:

- 4.1: That 13 December 2021 at 7.30pm: Suggested amendments M2/2022-4.1: It was noted that the minutes were approved on 10 January 2022 – Minute Ref: M1/2022-4.1 with no amendments.

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- 4.2: That the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 10 January 2022 at 7.30pm were accepted and approved to be signed by the Chairman DR. DR
- 4.3: That the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 14 February 2022 at 7.30pm were accepted and approved to be signed by the Chairman DR. DR

5. ASSET MANAGEMENT:

5.1: Recreational Field/Play Area/Allotments:

a) Village Hall:

- i. Air Source Heat Pump: A service engineer has been sourced; payment is due up front.

RESOLVED:

- To accept and approve service and payment up front of £162.00 in order to resolve leak. PS
- ii. Recycling Site: Awaiting response from C.D.C. regarding change of details. TC/MS
- iii. Village Hall Cleaner:
 - Contract and job description ongoing. TC/DR
 - Following a complaint about the mess left by a hirer; the deposit was withheld in accordance with the hiring agreement and used to encourage some village children to clear up the mess on the field; the PC considered this a good initiative.
 - PC to review having a notice i.e., 'Please take your mess away'. TC
- iv. Removal of old chairs and football posts: Trying to find someone to take them away.

b) Play Area:

RESOLVED:

- To engage RoSPA to carry out annual inspection; Clerk to organise. TC

c) Allotments

i. Tenancy Agreement:

RESOLVED:

- Further to item No: 7 on the Agreement; to add an addendum to the new agreement explaining the regulations with regards to the use of Nitrates. MS/TC
- In line with item No: 5d of the Agreement the Parish Council gives permission to allotment holder to trim back the trees behind Plots '5' and '6'. TC

- d) Recycling Site: Clerk awaiting confirmation from C.D.C. with regards to changing details. TC.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

6.1: Parish Matters/Merton Facebook Page:

- a) To consider/approve matters for Publication: To confirm who will maintain the 'Facebook' page.
- Request for Bookcase.
 - Dog Bins: Reminder as to where they are situated in the village.
- b) Parish Matters: It was noted that the publication has ceased.

7. COMMUNITY:

7.1: Planning Applications: None.

7.2: Decision Notices: None.

7.3: Planning Matters: None.

7.4: Traffic Calming: Report from 'Working Group':

DR/TC

- a) 20mph Limit Application: 20mph Limit Application: See 3.1-b. To confirm; the current quote for the installation of SID's does not include the cost of the installation of poles to support the devices; advice from County Cllr. C. Miller was to hold over until O.C.C. confirm what they are offering as this may reduce any costs to the PC. A further Traffic Calming Group meeting is proposed.

7.5: Bus Stop Light: Land Registry Search:

MS

- a) Light/Solar array and LED fixture: To be reviewed as an option dependent on the outcome of searches.
- b) Roof Tiles/Painting: It was noted that a couple of roof tiles need replacing and the bus shelter could do with painting.

RESOLVED:

- That the cost of £17.00 be met by MS and reimbursed by the PC in order to carry out further research into the Land Registry. MS

- c) Book Library: A request to be put on 'Facebook' for a small, closable, bookcase. MS

7.6: Defibrillator:

- a) Light Pollution: In order to try and minimise this, the PC would look at fitting a lower wattage bulb. PS

7.7: Signage on A41: No update: Clerk tasked with removing from agenda. TC

8. FINANCE:

8.1: Receipts: -

- a) Petty cash and Bookings: TC/DR
- January/February 2022: £680.00 (£655.00 cash/£25.00 cheque) to be banked. DR/TC

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8.2: Account for Payment Prior to the Meeting:

- a) 101629 – Good Energy – 05-07-21 to 30-12-21 for Village Hall - £31.76.

8.3: Accounts for Payment:

RESOLVED:

- That the following accounts were carried forward:
 - a) Village Hall Cleaner – 9.12.21-13.1.2022 - £85.00 – Purchases £13.95 - £98.95 – Cheque No: 101630.
 - b) O.A.L.C. – Annual Membership Inv. No: M00194/2022/4 - £150.00 – Cheque No: 101631.
 - c) Clerks Pay/Exp. January/February 2022: To include salary award for 2021-22 - £356.93 (£28.50 April 2021-January 2022 back pay) – Cheque No: 101632.
 - d) Information Commissioner - £40.00 – Cheque No: 101633.
 - e) M. Smith – Reimbursement – Amazon – Purchase of animal ultrasonic repellent - £21.98 – Amazon – Purchase repellent spray - £6.99 – The Lightbulb Company (UK) Ltd – Purchase light unit - £6.48 – Cheque No: 101633 (It was noted that the VAT cannot be reclaimed as invoices are not in the PC name).

RESOLVED:

- That the following account was carried forward. TC
 - a) CFO - Community First Oxfordshire Membership Subscription 2022-23.
 - b) Goal Posts: As these have not yet been ordered following the previous decision; it was further decided that the proposal to purchase new goal posts would be reviewed at the Annual Meeting of the Parishioners of Merton in May. TC

8.4: Quotes:

- a) Laptop: Clerk to pass on information to DR who will review any recommendations alongside possible reconditioned options. TC/DR
- b) Electrical Check and Safety Alarms: PS to attend an on-site meeting to review the report and requirements. PS
- c) Merton Woodland:
 - New Fence: No quotation received; c/fwd

8.7: Spending under COMF Parishes Fund: Progress Form to be completed.

- i. COVID-19 Notice Board: Clerk was tasked with checking that the blue notice boards, currently out of stock, are going to be restocked. TC

8.8: Training: None.

8.9: Banking:

- a) Unity Trust: Once all details are received from councillors; Clerk/RFO to complete application form. TC

8.10: Financial Reports and Bank Reconciliation: Were accepted and approved:

Bank Reconciliation 1.10.2021-31.3.2022 (Up to 16.2.2022)

Balance B/fwd	£22,255.46
Add Total Receipts	£ 290.00
Less Total Payments	£ 1,492.94
Balance C/fwd	£21,052.52

8.11: End of Year Accounts 31 March 2021: Ongoing.

- a) Action from Audit:
 - i. Review of Risk Assessment: MS/TC
 - ii. Payroll Controls: C/fwd. TC
 - iii. Asset Controls: Deed and Titles: C/fwd. TC
 - iv. Reserves: To provide detail: C/fwd.
 - v. Pension Regulator: C/fwd.
 - vi. County Archives: C/fwd. TC/AII

8.12: Scribe Accounts: Meeting to be rearranged. TC/DR

9. GENERAL

9.1: The Clerks Contract and Job Description: Review: C/fwd. DR

9.2: Correspondence for Action: The lists of correspondence presented M.P.C. 308/309 (January/February 2022) were considered as part of the agenda.

- b) MPC309(04): O.C.C. - Annual Emergency Planning Unit Town and Parish Survey 2022.
- c) MPC309(08): C.D.C. - Parish Briefing on 24 February 2022 at 5pm to update clerks on the 5 May 2022 elections.
- d) MPC309(09): C.D.C. - Members' Allowances - Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.
- e) MPC309(10): C.D.C. - 22/23 Parish Precept Requirement Confirmation.
- f) MPC309(12): John Harris – Walking England - Article for your local newsletter.
- g) MPC309(13): Healthy Place Shaping - Survey for Healthy Bicester Stakeholders.
- h) MPC309(15): OALC Pay negotiations and employment training - Rec/d 10.2.2022.
- i) MPC309(16): OxPCF CAMHS Survey – Rec/d 10.2.2022.
- j) MPC309(17): Your invitation to the Healthy Bicester stakeholder meeting - Wednesday 9 March.
- k) MPC309(18): OALC - NALC/SLCC Civility and Respect Project – Rec/d 11.2.2022.
- l) MPC309(20): OALC New - Chairs Q&A sessions starting 2nd March 2022.
- m) MPC309(23): C.D.C. - Cherwell District Council Waste Service.

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- n) MPC309(24): Healthwatch Oxfordshire has sent you a message.
 - o) MPC309(25): Please Reply - Healthy Bicester Stakeholder Meeting invitation and agenda - Wednesday 9 March at 9am - Rec/d 17.2.2022.
 - p) MPC309(26): C.D.C. - Parish Briefing on 24 February has had to be CANCELLED. Unfortunately this has not been a suitable date. I have re-scheduled the meeting for Friday 11 March at 5pm.
 - q) MPC309(28): FW: update from Yvonne – C.D.C./OCC update.
 - r) MPC309(29): Update: Project Gigabit Public Review.
 - s) MPC309(31): C.F.O. - Briefing for halls about the lifting of the Covid Plan B restrictions tomorrow.
 - t) MPC309(33): C.D.C. - Vacancy Notice - Merton February.doc
 - u) MPC309(34): OALC - OALC February Update for member councils.
 - v) MPC309(35): CFO - No longer a requirement to check in to halls using the QR Code.
 - w) MPC309(36): C.D.C. - Cherwell Parish Bulletin 28 February 2022.
 - x) MPC310(01): ABCD and Active Listening for Town and Parish Councils – Free workshops.
 - y) MPC310(04): Healthwatch Oxfordshire has sent you a message – Rec/d 3.3.2022.
 - z) MPC310(06): Zurich Insurance - Merton Parish Council, your Account Manager is changing
- 9.3: Matters for Further Information or Discussion:
- a) Matters for Further Information: None.
 - b) Matters for Further Discussion:
 - i. It was noticed that there was no evidence of the council's PI insurance displayed in the hall. This needs to be shown to demonstrate compliance with legal requirements and provides an easy way of checking when the premium is due.
 - ii. A checklist for locking up the hall is to be appended to all future agenda as previously agreed. TC
10. NEXT MEETING:
- 10.1: Merton Parish Council meeting to be held on 11 April 2022 at 19.30 in the Village Hall in line with Government guidelines.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 21:16.

Draft Minutes subject to confirmation: M4/2022 – 4.1.

Approved and Signed by the Presiding Chairman: Cllr. D. Richardson

Date: 11 April 2022