

# MERTON PARISH COUNCIL M10/17

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## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MERTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN MERTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30P.M. ON 20 NOVEMBER 2017.

### PRESENT:

- Vice Chairman: F. Foxon (FF): Approved acting Chairman.
- Cllrs. P. Murphy (PM)
- A. Bradley (AB)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** District Cllr. D. Hughes; Tracey Charlesworth (Clerk/RFO) and one member of the public.

17/121 **APOLOGIES:** Accepted from:-

- 1.1: County Cllr. D. Sames.

17/122 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:**

- 2.1: To elect a Chairman to act for the meeting: It was **RESOLVED** that:  
Vice Chairman: F. Foxon (FF) was approved acting Chairman.
- 2.2: To elect a Chairman: Upon election and acceptance to sign 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office': Vice Chairman Cllr. FF would continue to act as Chairman until a 'Chairman' is elected.

17/123 **INTERESTS:**

- 3.1: None.
- Register of Members Interests: No updates.

17/124 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: (7.30pm to 7.45pm):**

- 4.1: Chairman Cllr. FF welcomed the Clerk to Ambrosden PC; who, as a villager of Merton, was in attendance with a view to considering becoming a councillor; the Chairman Cllr. FF welcomed her to raise any questions during the meeting.

17/125 **MINUTES:**

- 5.1: It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of:  
Merton Parish Council held on 18 September 2017 at 7.30pm were read, agreed and signed by the Chairman Cllr. FF as a correct record.
- Meetings scheduled for 16 October 2017 postponed due to illness and 6 November 2017 cancelled as it would not have been quorate.

17/126 **VACANCY FOR A PARISH COUNCILLOR:**

- 6.1: Co-option following resignation of Cllr. D. Crawford: To consider/approve applicant:
- Resignation of Cllr. K. Crowden: With no response to the letter it was agreed that the Clerk would follow up.
- Resignation of Cllr. R. Foord: C.D.C. notified and the Vacancy Notice published on the notice board and website.
- Vacancies to be advertised on website and parish news.

**Action: Cllr. FF and Clerk.**

17/127 **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR(S):** District Cllr. D. Hughes reported:-

- The new Chief Executive is making positive changes.
- Housing: A provision of four thousand extra homes has been made in the plan due to the Oxfordshire Housing Need to avoid it being enforced and there being no choice on location.
- that C.D.C. has a generic website that can be utilised by the Parish Council if necessary.

17/128 **VILLAGE HALL:**

- 8.1: **Cleaner:** Review of Contract and Job Description: Clerk to follow up with R. Foord.  
**Action: Clerk.**
- 8.2: **Meter Reading:** Meter reading to be submitted by Clerk/RFO: Day 60489 – Night 25881 – Total 86371.  
**Action: Clerk/RFO**
- 8.3: **Emergency Lighting:** C/fwd.  
**Action: Cllr. FF.**
- 8.4: **General Lighting:** Four bulbs to be purchased for the main hall lights and four LED bayonets for the toilet area.  
**Action: Cllr. FF.**

17/129 **PLAYGROUND/RECREATIONAL AREA:**

- 9.1: **Football Clubs (FC):**  
Hiring Agreement: To follow up with R. Foord.  
Chairman Ashton Villa: No Update: To follow up with R. Foord.  
**Action: Clerk.**
- 9.2: **Allotments:**  
Allotment No: 6: vacancy (May 2017): Clerk to follow up re-advertisement of vacancy in parish magazine and on 'Facebook' with R. Foord and to establish if the Clerk can have access to the 'Facebook' page for future advertising.  
Allotment No: 1: It was **RESOLVED:**  
To accept the notification of cancellation of allotment.  
Clerk to advertise of vacancies through the website and 'Facebook' if access can be gained.  
**Action: Clerk.**
- 9.3: **Play Area:**  
Smaller Frame: Update on caps: C/fwd on task list.  
Interim Inspection Report: C/fwd on task list.

- Large Multiplay Unit: C/fwd on task list.

Action: Clerk and PC.

17/130 URGENT:

- **10.1: Actions from Previous Meetings:** Tasks completed as per minutes or to be c/fwd as above.

17/131 PRIORITY:

- **11.1: FINANCE:**

1. **Transparency Code for parish and town councils with a turnover not exceeding £25,000:**

- Website: Continued to update.

Action: Cllr. RF and Clerk/RFO.

2. **Accounts for Payment agreed prior to the meeting**

- Clerk's Pay/Expenses August 2017: (Pay Increase backdated to 1.4.17 £.93 per hr) - £165.92.
- Grass cutting – Inv. No's: 2001 - £384.00 (grass cutting of recreational area and play area 13.9.17 and 28.9.17) – 2002 - £132.00 (Grass cutting of woodland area 27.9.17) – Total £516.
- BDO LLP – Audit for the year ended 31 March 2017 – Inv. No: 1656426 - £120.00.
- Zurich Insurance – Renewal 11.10.17 - The premium (including IPT @ 12%) for the coming year will be: £ 871.30 – Long Term Agreement.

3. **Accounts for Payment: It was RESOLVED to approve the following payments:-**

	Amount	Cheque No:	Details
SSE Swalec	£69.94	D/D	Electricity Supply – Period 19.7.17 – 16.10.17
Clerk	£328.68	101406	Clerk's Pay/Exp. Sept/Oct 2017. It was <b>RESOLVED</b> to approve and adopt the proposed NALC and SLCC Salary Scale to apply from 1 April 2017.
M. R. Cross	£324.00	101404	Grass Cutting/Recreational/Play Areas/Woodland/Inv. No's: 2012/2013.
Blackthorn Parish Council	£18.00	101407	SLCC Training (Data Protection Regulations Webinar - January) Shared with Blackthorn £36.
Cherwell District Council/ Inv. No: 7004229.	£48.05	101405	Dog Bin Emptying 1.10.17-31.3.18

Action: Clerk/RFO.

4. **Receipts Received:**

- C.D.C. – Direct Credit – Precept £4,058.00.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

5. **Receipts Due:**

- Allotment: Outstanding rents: Clerk/RFO to follow up.
- Village Hall Petty Cash – June/July/August/Sept/Oct 2017 - Update on outstanding FC bookings: No update see above 17/129 – 9.1. Clerk/RFO to continue to try and contact bookings clerk with regards to income on the village hall and clarify 'Facebook' advert for fitness classes on a Monday evening.
- Allotment: Outstanding rents update.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

6. **Bank Reconciliation (attached):** It was **RESOLVED** to:

- Accept and approve the Bank Reconciliations 1.7.17 to 30.9.17 (Issue Date 13 Oct 2017) and 1.10.17 – 13.10.17 (Issue Date: 13.10.17)

Balance B/fwd	£15,774.15	Balance B/fwd	£14,081.74
Total Receipts	£ 4107.99	Total Receipts	£ 0.07
Total Payments	£ 5,770.40	Total Payments	£ 1,673.22
Balance C/fwd	£14,081.74	Balance C/fwd	£12,408.59

7. **Precept Comparison/Financial Summary:** It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Precept Comparison/Financial Summary: Clerk/RFO tasked with:

- Readdressing the financial summary; preparing a more 'user friendly' financial report/bank reconciliation.
- Processing a VAT Claim for prior years and submitting to HMRC.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

8. **Quotes:**

- Church Clock: Update on whether any further work required: No update.
- Multiplay Unit: Consider/approve quote for either replacement rope or net: (See above 17/129 – 9.3).

Action: Cllr. FF.

Action: Cllr. FF.

- Electricity Supplier: Contract due for renewal on 30 November 2017: New quotes required for 2017/18: Having considered three quotes it was **RESOLVED** that:-
- The Parish Council would remain with SSE Swalec.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

9. **Bank Signatory:**

- Scottish Widows - Clubs & Associations 7 Day A/c – Interest account – Follow confirmation of Cllr. KC position the PC to make arrangements for change of signatory.

- Barclays Bank Ltd: Cllr. The Parish Council had received written clarification from Barclays Bank Plc that the request for change of signatories had been processed: Following confirmation of Cllr. KC position the PC to make arrangements either/or both her and R. Foord to be removed as a signatories.

**Action: Clerk/FO.**

10. **End of Year Accounts 31 March 2017:**

- BDO – External Auditor - Completion of Audit:
- **Issues Arising:** *The following issues have resulted in the annual return being qualified. They indicate either a breach of proper practices or legislation and they require the smaller authority to take immediate action to rectify these issues:-*
- **Electors rights period during the year:**
- **What is the issue?**
- *The inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights which occurred during the year did not include the first 10 working days of July as specified in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, which for last year was from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016.*
- **Why has this issue been raised?**
- *The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 para 15(b) state that the inspection period for the exercise of electors rights must include the first 10 working days of July. The smaller authority has not complied with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.*
- **What do we recommend you do?**
- *The smaller authority must ensure that the inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights includes the first 10 working days of July when undertaking the electors rights period.*
- *Further guidance on this matter can be obtained from the following source(s):*
- *Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.*
- *The Parish Council understands that in answering 'Yes' to Section 1 – Statement 4 of the Annual Governance Statement 2016/17 that it should of answered 'no' as it did not comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 as it did not include the first 10 working days of July when undertaking the electors rights period, which for last year was from the 1st to the 14th July 2016; it has complied for the End of Year Audit 2017/18; this has resulted in the annual return being qualified.*
- **RESOLVED** that:-
- *Future action would be to, comply with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 when undertaking the electors rights period.*
- *The Annual Return including the certificate from BDO LLP is approved and accepted by the Parish Council.*
- *The Notice of Conclusion of audit and Sections 1 to 3 of the Annual Return; Issues Arising from the audit; to be published on the notice board and website for at least 14 days and made available for public access for not less than 5 years.*

11. **End of Year Accounts 31 March 2018:** Arrow Accounting – Email – Internal Audit 2017-18 – Letter of Engagement and Checklist – It was **RESOLVED** to:

- Accept and approve the Letter of Engagement for End of Year Accounts 31 March 2018: Signed by the Chairman FF and Clerk/RFO.

**Action: Clerk/RFO.**

12. **Budget 2018/19:** Parish Council to start the budgeting process: Clerk/RFO to prepare draft budget for consideration at the next meeting: It was **RESOLVED** that:

- The ring fenced fund for the provision of a burial ground is no longer required.
- **10.2: PLANNING:**
- 1. **New Applications:**
- None.
- 2. **Decision Notices:**
- None.
- 3. **Appeal Notice:**
- C.D.C. – Planning Enforcement Team - Planning Inspectorate APP/C3105/D/17/3180657: 8 Otmoor View, OX25 2NL – Appeal Dismissed.
- 4. **Withdrawal Notices:**
- None.
- 5. **Planning Issues:**
- None.

17/132 **IMPORTANT:**

- **12.1: CLERK/RFO:**
- 1. **Job Description/Contract:** Approval and signing C/fwd subject to auto-pension enrolment and policies as listed in contract/description (*below*):
- The Clerk would contact the Clerk to Caversfield Parish Council for support in her role and was asked to consider if further training would be of benefit.
- 2. **Auto Pension Enrolment:** Clerk to follow up with R. Foord.
- **12.2: ANNUAL REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS:**
- **Risk Assessments:**
- **Play Area:** To look at previous review discussion regards sign: Clerk to resend email. C/fwd.

**Action: Cllr. FF and Clerk.**

17/133 **ACTION:**

- **13.1: Emergency Plan:**
- Update on 'Public Access' document for website and flyer: Once complete a PDF version is to be uploaded to the website; Cllr. FF to advertise through a leaflet drop; he would also advertise the 'website' on the 'Facebook page'. It

was noted that Cllr. FF had attended the OCC Community Emergency Plans & Resilience Workshops on 9 November 2017 at Kidlington.

**Action: Cllr. FF.**

- Community defibrillator: To consider/approve provision of: Update on application to the SSE Resilience Fund: Cllr. FF to follow up with R. Foord.

**Action: Chairman Cllr. FF.**

- **13.2: Merton Woodland:** Invoice to be presented at the next meeting for a replacement spring on the gate and a combination padlock and chain (to prevent access to the figure of eight by riders); reimbursement to be made to Cllr. FF from the Woodland Fund.

**Action: Clerk.**

- Merton Woodland Community Group:

- Constitution and agreement between PC and MWCG: To be considered/approved: Cllr. FF to look at previous suggestions for the document
- It was noted that the Hazel fences are now complete.
- Thames Water (previous owners of the site) has agreed to carry out the works to provide a dam in order to retain the footpath; funding no longer required from the PC.
- Woodland 'Public Access' notice: Draft document 'Merton Woodland Paths and Rides' was approved; would be published on website; a 'Pedestrians only' notice would also be put on the gate.

**Action: Chairman Cllr. FF.**

- **13.3: Proposed Application for a 20mph Limit:**

- Based on the email received from County Cllr. Dan Sames it was **RESOLVED** that:
- The Parish Council could not make a financial commitment of £2,500 to £3,000 towards the legal costs when, 20mph limits will generally only be considered where the speed of traffic already complies to the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile appropriate for that limit.
- O.C.C. Repositioning of 30mph limit: Cllr. PM to follow up with County Cllr. D. Sames.

**Action: Cllr. PM.**

- **13.4: Network Rail:** No update.

**Action: Cllr. FF.**

- **13.5: House Numbering through Merton Village:**

- Advice from C.D.C: Awaiting guidance; to be followed up.
- Draft Letter: C/fwd pending the above.
- Proposals. House numbering pending the above.
- Street Names: C.D.C. has advised that its budget would cover the cost of providing street names. It was **RESOLVED** that:-
- Three signs for 'Main Street' would be requested; one for each end of the village and one for the middle.

**Action: AB.**

- **13.6: TTRO (T5204) Road Closure at Ambrosden, Merton Road:** Work completed and the road reopened. Clerk to remove from agenda.

**Action: Clerk.**

17/134 **ADVICE:**

- **14.1: Correspondence/Emails:**
- **M.P.C.258 (02):** C.D.C. – Email - Fwd: Affordable Housing in Cherwell District Council: No response.
- **M.P.C.259(05):** C.D.C. – Peer Challenge – Invitation to participate in a focus group, led by a one of the Peer Challenge team, at Cherwell District Council on Tuesday 14 November from 15:30-17:00: No members attended.
- **M.P.C.259(07):** Piddington Parish Council – Asking if interested in meeting with other local parishes to discuss concerns – Rec/d by Email 13.11.17: Cllr. FF had responded.

17/135 **MARKETING:** None.

17/136 **MATTERS FOR REPORT:**

- **15.1:** To report on Matters of information or discussion at the next meeting.
- **Matters of Information:**
- None.
- **Matters for further Discussion:**
- Clerk to ask C.D.C. with regards to the play area bin.

**Action: Clerk.**

- Manor House Nursing Home: The new owners have approached the Parish Council with regards to doing a presentation to the village through a Parish Council meeting; arrangements to be made and parishioners notified

**Action: Cllr. FF.**

17/137 **DATE and TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**

- **15.1:** Monday 18 December 2017 held at 7.30pm in Merton Village Hall: The main purpose of the meeting to focus on the budget; general items on the agenda to be carried forward until January 2018.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.30pm..

**Draft Minutes subject to Confirmation.**