

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL M11/16

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MERTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN MERTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30P.M. ON 21 NOVEMBER 2016.

PRESENT:

- Cllrs. Chairman R. Foord (RF)
- R. Leaver (RL)
- K. Crowden (KC).

IN ATTENDANCE: District Cllr. D. Hughes; Mr C. Bottrell (Merton Woodland – Working Party) and Tracey Charlesworth (Clerk/RFO).

16/137 **APOLOGIES:** Accepted from:-

- 1.1: Cllrs. P. Murphy (PM) and F. Foxon (FF).

16/138 **INTERESTS:**

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

The following agenda items were brought forward.

16/139 **DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS:**

- 7.1: Circulated prior to meeting. District Cllr. D. Hughes attended in place of District Cllr. T. Hallchurch. District Cllr. DH agreed to contact Adrian Cordwell with regards to the update he had received for the proposals for the E-W expressway from Cambridge to London, and the potential new M40 junction and with his permission would forward any information on. Clerk was tasked with inviting both District Cllr. DH and TH to the next Parish Council meeting.

Action: Clerk.

District Cllr. DH left the meeting at 8.50pm the Parish Council thanked him for attending.

16/140 **GUEST(S):**

- 6.1: Merton Woodland: C. Bottrell gave a briefing on actions, to date and proposed (Woodland Plan). There had been fifteen responses to the circulated flyer, also published in the parish magazine. The 'Working Party' meets every two weeks on a Sunday, next meeting 27th November, weather permitting; five people met for the first time on Friday and on Sunday, nine people; to address the tasks identified in the plan:-
- The Parish Council had approved by email the purchase of padlocks to ensure the prevention of fly tipping.
- Parish Council to consider the cost of booking Aylesbury Volunteers at a cost of £140.00 per day, to help with hedge laying; before March 2017.
- Chairman Cllr. RF to organise a meeting with Cllr. FF; C. Bottrell and the grass cutting contractors to discuss the cutting of the paths (currently being cut wider than the original five year management plan).
- Parish Council to consider/approve the purchase of items on the 'wish list' presented;
- Parish Council to ensure that 'Health & Safety' applies and Insurance covers volunteer workers; Clerk to confirm if the use of 'Disclaimers' would affect its insurance cover.
- Thinning: Help would be required to thin out the woodland, in accordance with the 'Forestry Commission';
 - Plan to be put in place by Chairman Cllr. RF; Cllr. FF and C. Bottrell.
 - Parish Council to consider/approve if this would be for commercial purposes (could help pay towards the purchase of tools) or a reward for work carried out by volunteers.
 - Parish Council to consider applying for a free 'felling' license.

Action: Clerk.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF and Cllr. FF.

The Parish Council took the opportunity to express its thanks to Mr Bottrell; he left the meeting at 8.20pm.

It was **RESOLVED:-**

- That the Parish Council approved the purchase of the first four items on the 'Wish List' in order to meet Health & Safety; order to be placed; cost to be reimbursed if the order cannot be paid for by cheque.

Action: Cllr. RF.

16/141 **VACANCY FOR A PARISH COUNCILLOR:**

- 5.1: Co-option following resignation of Cllr. P. Whitford: To consider/approve applicant.
- 5.2: Co-option following resignation of Cllr. D. Crawford: To consider/approve applicant.
- No applications received: Vacancy to be advertised in parish magazine and on website.

16/142 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: (7.30pm to 7.45pm):**

- 3.1: None.

16/143 **MINUTES:**

- 4.1: It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of Merton Parish Council on 17 October 2016 at 7.30pm. were read, agreed and signed by the Chairman Cllr. RF as a correct record, with the following amendments:-
- M10/16 – 16/133 – 14.2: Commercial: Delete 'Cllr. RL donates his half to the PC'.
- M10/16 – 16/131 – 12.1 – 4: Receipts Received: Delete 'Mr Hawes - £576.00 – Grass cutting of recreational area'.
- M10/16 – 16/119: amended to read 16/136.

16/144 **VILLAGE HALL:**

- 8.1: **Electrical Work:** Update KiiKii Electrical Ltd. (Williams Electrical): Following a site meeting and confirmation of works it was **RESOLVED:**
- That the account be settled: *see below 16/147 – 11.1 – 3.*

- **8.2: Rubbish:**
- Update of clearance of rubbish from rear of Village Hall: C/fwd
- **8.3: Cleaner:** Review of Contract and Job Description: It was **RESOLVED** that:
- Cllr. KC makes amendments; to be approved by councillors by email.

Action: Cllr. KC and Councillors.

- **8.4: Meter Reading:** Meter reading to be submitted by Clerk/RFO.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

16/145 **PLAYGROUND/RECREATIONAL AREA:**

- **9.1: Football Clubs (FC):**
- Hiring Agreement: Amended agreement to be forwarded to the Chairman Cllr. RF; clarification of matches played at the lower charge is required; upon approval Ashton Villa FC to be asked to sign;.
- Chairman Ashton Villa: Letters sent as previously agreed with no response to date:
- Clerk/RFO to chase outstanding charges.

Action: Councillors and Clerk.

16/146 **URGENT:**

- **10.1: Actions from Previous Meetings:**
- To minute completed and outstanding actions: All actions completed from previous meeting unless reports made, these are minuted against specific agenda items; those outstanding are listed below:-
- **ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING and OUTSTANDING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S):**
- **Clerk/RFO:**
- Financial Regulations: Review with Chairman.
- Meter Readings: Submit.
- Budget 2017/18: Start process.
- Contact Chairman Blackthorn PC.
- **Outstanding:**
- Job Description/Contract: Review: Clerk/RFO to review with Chairman.
- **Chairman Cllr. RF:**
- Clerk/RFO Job Description/Contract: Review with Clerk/RFO.
- Barclays Bank – Complete forms for addition of signature.
- Financial Regulations: Review with Clerk/RFO.
- **Cllr. KC:**
- Cleaner: Review of Contract and Job Description: Make amendments and email to councillors.
- **Outstanding:**
- Village Hall: Changing Room door.
- Barclays Bank – Signatory – to complete and submit forms.
- **Cllr. FF:**
- Church Clock: Contact Baldwin Clocks if need further advice.
- **Outstanding:**
- Network Rail Works:
- Open Meeting report/update: Response from O.C.C. regarding questions.
- Community defibrillator
- **Cllr. PM:**
- **Cllr. RL:**
- Bank Signatures: Check with Barclays if Cllr. RF is a signature and to let Clerk/RFO know.
- **Outstanding:**
- Produce abridged minutes for parish magazine.
- **All Cllrs.**
- Play Area: Interim inspection.
- Village Hall: Separate meeting to discuss future proposals.
- Financial Regulations: Consider new model document.
- FC Hiring Agreement: Review.
- Merton Woodland Plan: Review draft.
- Cleaner: Review of Contract and Job Description: Review amendments made by Cllr. KC and approve by email.
- Emergency Plan: Working Group to meet and review.
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16/147 **PRIORITY:**

- **11.1: FINANCE:**
- 1. **Transparency Code for parish and town councils with a turnover not exceeding £25,000:**
- Website: Due to the urgency of this matter a Memorandum of Agreement: Parish Council Website (Clerk handed in a sealed envelope) had been signed by four councillors to request that Verve Creative Solutions design and build a new website for the Parish Council to meet the statutory requirement under the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities. Due to having a conflict of interest in this matter, Chairman Cllr. RF abstained from participating in the agreement. Clarification required as to how and what financial information needs to be on the website i.e. expenditure of £100.00; information for uploading to be provided in PDF format.
- Action: Cllr. RF and Clerk/RFO.**
- 2. **Accounts for Payment agreed prior to the meeting**
- Safestyle Windows – Deposit - £200.00 – Cheque No: 101341.
- M. R. Cross – Inv. No: 1038 - £132.00 (noted on the agenda exclusive of VAT) – Cheque No: 101342 - Clerk to be advised of any future payments forwarded to payee(s).

Action: Cllrs.

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

Payee	Amount	Cheque No:	Details
Clerk	£167.02	101348	Clerk's Pay/Exp. September 2016.
M. Day/Village Hall Cleaner	£ 0.00		No ticket presented; to be paid half yearly.
M. Day	£98.39	101347	Adopt a Site payment under the 'Adopt a Site Agreement' Jan – June 2016.
Playdale Playgrounds Ltd – Inv. No: 0000022967	£81.62	101345	Play Area – Replacement rope.
Cherwell District Council – Inv. No: 7001089	£48.05	101343	Dog bin emptying – Emptying 1 dog bin @ £1.40 per bin for summer period.
SWALEC – SSE – Statement of Account and Inv.	£141.10	D/d	Paid: Submission of meter reading gives a credit to be carried forward to next invoice.
KiiKii Electrical – Inv. No: 185	£1,068.00	101346	Village Hall electrical works.
BDO LLP – Inv. No: 1552518	£120.00	101344	External Audit
Village Hall expenses	£30.00	Cash	Used for village hall cleaning materials; receipt to be forwarded to Clerk/RFO.

4. Receipts Received:

- C.D.C. –BACS Advice – Adopt A Site Agreement Jan-June £98.39.
- Village Hall Petty Cash – None: Parish Council to look at the possibility of advertising the hall through free websites.
- Thames Water: Refund of £840.95 received.
- Funding for Website: Update on application See 16/147 – 11.1 – 1 above. Decision should be made by 14 November.

5. Receipts Due:

- C.D.C. – Hire of Hall for Election £140.00: Clerk/RFO had sent invoice: Follow up.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

- Safestyle Windows – Deposit to be refunded; unable to carry out work as they class the village hall as commercial building: It was RESOLVED that:
- Provided a like for like quote can be sourced then the PC approved that the work go ahead as planned.

Action: Cllr. KC.

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

- Accept and approve the Bank Reconciliations 1.7.16 to 30.9.16 – 1.10.16 to 14.10.16 and 1.10.16 to 15.11.16 (St. No: 350):- It was noted that the £40.00 cash withdrawn to top up the Petty Cash Float would alter the balance going forward.

Balance B/fwd	£18,163.48	Balance B/fwd	£17,681.18	Balance B/fwd	£16,277.86
Total Receipts	£ 4,905.94	Total Receipts	£ 1,042.14	Total Receipts	£ 1,097.14
Total Payments	£ 5,428.24	Total Payments	£ 2,445.47	Total Payments	£ 2,586.57
Balance C/fwd	£17,641.19	Balance C/fwd	£16,277.86	Balance C/fwd	£16,191.75

7. Precept Comparison/Financial Summary: It was RESOLVED to accept the Precept Comparison/Financial Summary:

Action: Clerk/RFO.

8. Quotes:

- Village Hall – Ramp: C/fwd.
- Church Clock: Update on whether any further work required: C/fwd. The Parish Council took the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Cllr. FF for the work that he had done.
- Playdale: Consider/approve quote for either replacement rope or net: C/fwd.

Action: Cllr. FF.

Action: Cllr. FF.

9. Thames Water Utilities: Refund received. Clerk to remove from agenda.

Action: Clerk.

10. Accounts Year Ending 31 March 2016: Accounts Year Ending 31 March 2016: BDO –

- BDO – External Auditor – Completion of Audit - Consider/approve action: The following issues were raised and action(s) approved:
 - Accounting Statements not approved by 30 June
 - What is the issue?
 - The smaller authority failed to approve Section 2 of the Annual Return (“the accounting statements”) by the deadline of the 30 June, as specified on the Annual Return and stated in Governance and Accountability for Local Councils – The Practitioners’ Guide and implied in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015.
 - Why has this issue been raised?

- This is a breach of proper practices as set out in the Practitioners' Guide 2016. By approving the annual return after the 30 June, the smaller authority prevented the RFO from discharging their obligations under the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 in respect of commencing the period for the exercise of electors' rights. This period must include the first 10 working days of July, meaning that for the 2015/16 annual return, the last possible date for approval was 30 June.
- *What do we recommend you do?*
- The smaller authority must ensure in future years that the accounting statements are signed by the RFO and then reviewed and signed as approved by the smaller authority meeting as a whole, by the latest date in order to comply with the electors' rights dates, which must include the first 10 working days of July.
- **Annual Return Opinion not issued by 30 September:**
- *What is the Issue?*
- The annual return opinion was not issued by the 30 September and therefore the smaller authority were unable to publicise completion by that date:
- *Why has the Issue been raised?*
- The Accounts and Audit Regulations state that the notice of completion of the review must be displayed by 30 September.
- *What do we recommend you do?*
- The deadline was not met due to the electors' rights period not being set in accordance with the regulations and this delayed us giving our opinion. The smaller authority must ensure in future it undertakes the electors' rights period in accordance with the regulations.
- **Inspection period for the exercise of Electors' rights:**
- *What is the Issue?*
- The inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights did not include the first 10 working days of July as specified in the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, which this year is from the 1st to the 14th 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 small authority must ensure that the inspection period for the exercise of electors' rights includes the first 10 working days of July next year in accordance with the regulations in force.
- It was **RESOLVED** that:
- Remedial action would be to review accounts earlier in order to meet deadline; it was noted that this year had been an exception.
- That the Annual Return including certificate was approved and accepted by the Parish Council.
- Date for External Audit: C/fwd.
- Notice of Completion of Audit: Clerk/RFO to scan and email to Chairman Cllr. RF for publication on website, along with Section 1 to 3 of the Annual Return and Cllr. RL to put hard copy on notice board.
Action: Chairman Cllr. RF and Cllr. RL.
- 11. **Bank Signatory:**
- Consider/approve adding further signatories to the account(s).
- Barclays Bank Plc. – Update on change of signatory:
- Chairman Cllr. RF had provided necessary paperwork, upon request a further form had been signed and returned to the bank. Awaiting confirmation that the change has been made; Cllr. RL to follow up.
- Scottish Widows - Clubs & Associations 7 Day A/c – Interest account - Update on change of signatory: No update.
Action: Cllrs. RL and Clerk/RFO.
- 12. **Financial Regulations:** Review of existing regulations to meet the Model updated version 2016 and to approve amendment/addition to accommodate provision of or increase to Petty Cash float. Chairman Cllr. RF and Clerk/RFO to review.
Action: Chairman Cllr. RF and Clerk/RFO.
- 13. **Budget 2017/18:** Draft figure to be emailed to councillors for review: Village Hall 'Bookings Clerk' (Cllr. KC) to provide end of year and forward year budgets.
Action: Clerk/RFO and Cllrs.
- **11.2: PLANNING:**
- 1. **New Applications:**
- Application No: 16/02117/TPO – Applicant's Name: Mr Vic Ashworth – Proposal: T1- Horse Chestnut. Semi mature specimen in the confines of a relatively small space. Reduce and reshape by 2.5-3m Branches to be cut back to suitable branch junctions to maintain form and vigour. Crown lift to 3m pruning branch tips all at suitable junctions - subject to TPO 8/2006 – Location: 1 Pipers Mead Merton Bicester OX25 2AE Merton - Rec/d 2.11.16: The Parish Council raised no objections or observations.
- C.D.C. – Public Protection & Development Management – Town and Country Planning act 1990 – Consultation Planning Application – Application No: 16/02158/F – Applicant's Name: Network Rail – Proposal: Minor works to improve the current temporary access – Location: Land SW of Pump House Adj to Street Through Merton, Merton – Parish(es): Merton – Rec/d 16.11.16 – C/fwd to next meeting – Respond by 7 December 2016 – Emailed Cllrs: Chairman Cllr. RF to review previous documentation regarding access/entrance as potentially dangerous.
- **Decision Notices:**
- None.
- 2. **Appeal Notice:**
- C.D.C. – Public Protection & Development Management – Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Planning Application No: 16/00205/LB – Applicant's Name: Mr Paul Stubbs – Proposal: Replacement of all first floor

windows – Location: 2 Tithe Barn Street Through Merton Merton Bicester Oxfordshire OX25 2NF – Parish(es): Merton – Appeal Decision: APP/C3105/Y/16/3155296 - Planning Inspectorate Decision – Concludes that the appeal decision should fail.

- C.D.C. – Public Protection & Development Management – Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Planning Application No: 16/00206/LB – Applicant's Name: Dr Roy Levers – Proposal: Replace 7 wooden windows with identical double glazed ones – Location: 1 Tithe Barn Merton Bicester Oxfordshire OX25 2NF – Parish(es): Merton – Appeal Decision: APP/C3105/Y/16/3155571 - Planning Inspectorate Decision – Concludes that the appeal decision should fail.
- 3. Withdrawal Notices:**
- None.
- 4. Planning Issues:**
- C.D.C. – Strategic Planning & the Economy – Notification of planning Policy Consultations: Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan (Part 1): Options Consultation – Community Infrastructure Levy 9CIL) Draft Charging schedule Draft Developer contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Consultation period extends from 14 November 2016 to 9 January 2017 - There two parish/town workshops during the consultation period – John Paul centre, Bicester, 7 December 2016 6pm to 8pm and Bodicote House, Bodicote 12 December 2016 6pm to 8pm.

- **11.3: NETWORK RAIL WORKS:**

- Open Meeting report/update: Response from O.C.C. regarding questions.
- Responses to flyer 'Impacts of Network Rail HGV Traffic':
- Consider/approve project for support from project: Result of survey.
- Letter to Chief Executive Network Rail: No update:
- With nothing further to report on the above matters at present; Chairman Cllr. RF to confirm if needs to be on the next agenda.

Action: Cllr. RF and Clerk.

16/148 IMPORTANT:

- **12.1: CLERK/RFO:**
- Job Description/Contract: Review: Clerk and Chairman Cllr. RF propose to meet on 29 November 2016.

Action: All Cllrs. and Clerk/RFO.

16/149 ACTION:

- **13.1: Emergency Plan:**
- Draft to be considered and approved: The 'Working Group' had met; the latest draft is being reviewed by email.
- Community defibrillator: To consider/approve provision of: C/fwd.
- Ongoing Maintenance Plan: *See above 16/140 – 6.1.*
- Grant Application: In hand.

Action: Working Group.

Action: Cllr. FF.

Action: Cllr. FF.

16/150 ADVICE:

- **14.1: Correspondence/Emails:**
- M.P.C249(06): Scottish Widows Bank Plc. – Savings Account decrease in interest rate – Effective from 18 November 2016 – option to close the account without charge until 17 November 2016: It was **RESOLVED** that:
- The Parish Council would not close the account with Scottish Widows Bank Plc.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

16/151 MATTERS FOR REPORT:

- **16.1:** To report on Matters of information or discussion at the next meeting.
- **Matters of Information:**
- None.
- **Matters for further Discussion:**
- None.

16/152 DATE and TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

- **17.1:** 19 December 2016: Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm in Merton Village Hall: Apologies recorded for Cllr. FF.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.45pm.

Draft Minutes subject to Confirmation.

Minutes approved meeting held on 19 December 2016 – Minute Ref: M12/16 – 16/156 – 4.1.