

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF MERTON M2/2021

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD VIRTUALLY in line with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 AT 19:30 ON 8 FEBRUARY 2021

PRESENT: Tony Bradley (Chairman) AB
Steve Kelly, Martin Smith, Gemma Allen (Councillors) SK/MS/GA
IN ATTENDANCE: T. Charlesworth; (Clerk/RFO). TC

1. APOLOGIES: P. Stubbs absent with no apologies recorded.
2. PARISH COUNCIL:
 - 2.1. Notice of Resignation: C.D.C. had been notified and the Vacancy Notice is being published for the fourteen day period as required.
 - 2.2. Vacancy: No application.
 - 2.3. To Receive Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: None declared.
 - 2.4. COVID-19: Government Guidelines: Monitored.
 - a) Play Area: Remains open.
 - b) Village Hall: Remains closed.
 - 2.5. Emergency Plan: Review: GA to follow up with JC. GA/JC
 - a) Welcome Pack: Will be reviewed as part of the Emergency Plan.
 - 2.6. Merton Village Neighbourhood Plan: Information circulated – C/fwd to next meeting. ALL
3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None.
4. MINUTES: **RESOLVED:**
 - 4.1: That the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 January 2021 were approved to be signed by the Chairman at the next face to face meeting. AB
5. ASSET MANAGEMENT:
 - 5.1: Recreational Field/Play Area/Allotments:
 - a) Oxford Cavaliers Rugby League Club:
 - i. Village Hall Proposals: The Club has more or less been guaranteed the twenty thousand pound grant from Sport England on the basis that the PC can match fund; funding is available up to 50% from C.D.C. applications to be made in the new financial year, further research into funding required (applications to be based on the successful prospectus) and any balances raised through possible fund raising. GA/SK/AB/PS
 - b) Play Area: Update on order:
 - i. Repairs: Due to commence week beginning the 1 March 2021; weather permitting.
 - ii. New Equipment: Installation to commence the week beginning 8 March 2021; weather permitting.
 - iii. Play Area to be shut off by a steel gate whilst works are carried out.
 - iv. Skip: To be delivered and stood on the hard standing.
 - v. Village Hall: Access granted for storage and use of toilets; the village hall is COVID secure. GA
 - c) Football: Nothing to report. AB
6. COMMUNICATIONS
 - 6.1: Parish Matters: **RESOLVED**
 - To publish the following matters:
 - Parish Council vacancies to include an insight into being a councillor and reasons why the PC needs support.
 - Traffic Calming: Tear out questionnaire based on updated proposals.
 - Dog Bins: Awareness on responsibilities and siting of dog bins.
 - Bus Service: Link to the 'Stagecoach' website timetable providing a temporary bus service to the JR; SK to contact stagecoach regarding their extending the service beyond the initial trial period. SK
 - A Trivia or 'Did You Know' article. GA
7. COMMUNITY:
 - 7.1: Planning Applications:
 - a) Application No.: 21/00133/F
Proposal: Single storey rear extension
Location: 7 Page Turner Court, Merton Road, Ambrosden, OX25 2LR
Parish(es): Ambrosden
Expected Decision Level: Delegated
Comments by 22 February 2021.
RESOLVED:

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF MERTON M2/2021

- That the PC made no objections or comments. TC
 - 7.2: Decision Notices:
 - a) Application No.: 20/03249/F
Proposal: Alterations to improve fenestration/natural lighting and escape door
Location: Merton Grounds Farm, Langford Lane, Merton, OX25 2NS
Parish(es): Merton
Permission for Development Subject To Conditions
 - 7.3: Planning Matters:
 - a) Merton Nursing Home: No update. GA
 - 7.4: Traffic Calming: Report from 'Working Group':
 - a) Proposal for a survey of traffic: MS reported as follows:
 - Despite plans to hold a meeting one had still not taken place.
 - RESOLVED**
 - That with the support of the PC that MS would work with S. Ward in moving this forward; AB would contact Cllr. D. Sames then communicate with MS in order that options and up to date quotes can be sourced; they would help facilitate a questionnaire for the parish magazine based on findings. MS/SW
 - b) Insurance cover for Signs/Risk Assessment: C/fwd.
 - c) 'Speed Traffic Monitor': There had been no response from Islip PC. TC
- 7.5: Dog Fouling: Update on stickers: With no response from C.D.C. the PC would investigate alternatives. AB
- 7.6: Bus Stop Light: Pending. AB/MS
- 7.7: Notice Board: Proposed local project: Maintenance works to be carried out once the weather improves. AB
- 8: FINANCE:
 - 8.1: Receipts: -
 - a) Petty cash and Bookings:
 - February 2021: Hall hire income £0.00.
 - a) HMRC – VAT refund £837.94.
 - 8.2: Account for Payment Prior to the Meeting: None.
 - 8.3: Accounts for Payment:
RESOLVED:
 - That the following accounts were approved for payment:
 - a) Clerks Pay/Exp. January 2021: £162.29 (Time sheet for December had been amended and accepted) – Cheque No: 101577.
 - That the following accounts be held over until invoices presented.
 - b) Pest Control - £475.00: Work completed, payment approved on receipt of invoice as per quote.
 - c) Trimming the brambles etc. from the footpaths in the woodland - £360.00 plus VAT: Works had not been carried out yet due to weather conditions.
 - d) Memory Storage: The Clerk had sourced professional advice due to the continual problems being experienced with the laptop; the problem is not one of storage space but, the budget processor which is only recommended for light work and as a result the computer is forever playing catch-up; the RAM space provided could be upgraded but, the cost would have to be taken into consideration: **RESOLVED**
 - That the PC felt that the machine was no longer 'fit for purpose'; along with the problems being experienced and the time and stress this was causing; the Clerk was having to facilitate virtual meetings with her own laptop as the PC model does not have camera/microphone facilities.
 - Not to purchase memory storage.
 - Clerk/RFO to obtain recommendations for a new laptop and quotes to be considered at the next meeting.
 - Clerk/RFO to present the proposals to Blackthorn PC as the current laptop is jointly owned.
- 8.4: Bank Signatories: Barclays have requested that the new signatories complete and return a 'Personal Details' form. TC
AB/MS/JC/GA
- a) Action whilst change of signatories is pending: Based on advice from OALC:
RESOLVED
 - That with currently only one councillor as signatory, although not legal to have a retired councillor signing cheques, in order for the council to continue to function and the Clerk's wages to be paid; the PC approves retired councillor L. Katz to continue to sign cheques following a meeting at which payments have been approved; whilst the PC endeavours to get the signatories changed as soon as possible.
- 8.5: Financial Reports and Bank Reconciliation: Presented and accepted:
RESOLVED
 - That the £56.00 remaining in the old Village Hall Fund be moved back to General Funds. AB/TC
- 8.6: Internal Auditor: The PC has been advised that due to ill health the current Internal Auditor has had to withdraw his services; leaving the PC little time to appoint in time for the End of Year accounts. The Clerk is waiting for a response from a fellow Clerk that carries out PC internal audit and will advise the PC when a response is received. TC
- 8.7: Quotes: To be considered/approved:
 - a) Grass Cutting: The contractor proposed a £10.00 increase to both the recreational area and woodland area per cut.

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF MERTON M2/2021

RESOLVED:

- To accept and approve the proposed increases; the current contractor provided good value and is very accommodating. AB/TC

9: GENERAL

9.1: The Clerks Contract and Job Description: Review: AB and Clerk to arrange to discuss. AB/TC

9.2: Correspondence for Action: The lists of correspondence presented M.P.C. 297 (Jan 2021) were considered as matters not otherwise covered by the agenda; with no further actions.

- Chairs on offer from the Sobel Education Centre at the Churchill Hospital: To be followed up. AB

9.3: Matters for Further Information or Discussion:

a) Matters for Further Information:

i. Community Policing Kidlington is carrying out on the spot checks for COVID .regulations.

b) Matters for Further Discussion:

i. Financial Documents: Annual Review for next meeting; documents to be circulated. Agenda

10. NEXT MEETING:

10.1. 8 March 2021 at 7.30pm: The meeting will be held virtually in line with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus)(Flexibility of Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.

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

Draft Minutes subject to confirmation:

Approved and Signed by the Presiding Chairman

Date