

# MERTON PARISH COUNCIL M9/16

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MERTON PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD IN MERTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30P.M.  
ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2016.

## PRESENT:

- Chairman Cllr. P. Whitford (PW)
- Cllrs. P. Murphy (PM)
- R. Leaver (RL)
- F. Foxon (FF)
- K. Crowden (KC).

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Tracey Charlesworth (Clerk/RFO).

## 16/105 APOLOGIES:

- 1.1: None.

## 16/106 INTERESTS:

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

## 16/107 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: (7.30pm to 7.45pm):

- 3.1: None.

## 16/108 MINUTES:

- 4.1: It was **RESOLVED** that the following minutes were read, agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record
- Annual Parish Council meeting held on 16 May 2016 at 7.30pm –
- Annual Meeting of the Parishioners of Merton held on 16 May 2016 at 7pm –
- Meeting of Merton Parish Council on 18 July 2016 at 7.30pm: It was noted that in the absence of the Clerk, Cllr. D. Crawford took notes; and the meeting was not formally minuted. In consequence, they are based on the notes and recollections of those present. As such, it provides an approximate record of the discussions that took place, but should not be taken as a complete and accurate account.
- Extraordinary Meeting of Merton Parish Council on 22 August 2016 at 6.30pm.

Chairman Cllr. PW addressed the members present then tendered his resignation, with immediate effect, as Chairman and councillor of Merton Parish Council; to be put in writing to the Parish Council. He left the meeting at 7.40pm.

**Action: Clerk.**

It was **RESOLVED** that: as there currently was no Vice Chairman that Cllr. FF would act as Chairman.

## 16/109 VACANCY FOR A PARISH COUNCILLOR:

- 5.1: Resignation of Cllr. D. Crawford: C.D.C. has given permission for the Parish Council to fill the vacancy by co-option.
- 5.2: Co-option following resignation of Cllr. J. Whittaker: To consider/approve applicant.
- No applications to consider.

16/110 **DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS:** Circulated prior to meeting.

## 16/111 VILLAGE HALL:

- 7.1: **Electrical Work:** Having checked the invoice against the original list of priority works it was noted that the work to 'Move fused spurs higher in WC at £60' was not listed on the invoice. It was **RESOLVED** to:
  - Defer payment until an on-site meeting can be arranged to discuss.

**Action: Clerk/RFO.**
- 7.2: **Thames Water Utilities Ltd:** The meter had been upgraded; the engineer had left a card with an old and a new reading which starts at zero. It was **RESOLVED** to:
  - Defer payment until the Clerk/RFO had followed up the query raised by the Parish Council regarding previous invoices with the assigned 'Case Officer'.

**Action: Clerk/RFO.**
- 7.3: **Store Room:** To consider/approve attendance from 'Straw Bailed': Clerk to remove from agenda.

**Action: Clerk.**
- 7.4: **Honorary Caretaker:** Following further consideration it was **RESOLVED** not to accept the offer as a caretaker is not currently required.
- 7.5: **Rubbish:**
  - Update of clearance of rubbish from rear of Village Hall: Cllr. KC reported that the recycling site would not take the fridges as they are regarded as 'commercial' rubbish. Acting Chairman Cllr. FF to make further enquiries.

**Action: Cllr. FF.**

## 16/112 PLAYGROUND/RECREATIONAL AREA:

- 8.1: **Football Clubs (FC):**
- Hiring Agreement: It is understood that the Saturday team has folded. It is not clear when the Sunday team is playing as they are not collecting keys from or returning them to the bookings clerk as requested; there is also an outstanding hire charge for the village hall.
- Chairman Ashton Villa: There had been no response to the letter sent to the Chairman of Ashton Villa FC: The Clerk was tasked with writing to the Chairman Ashton Villa (cc N. Jacobs) stating the conditions under which the team can continue to play: - contracts signed; any arrears paid; keys collected and returned before and after matches and hire charges paid up front (Draft to be confirmed by email).

**Action: Clerk.**

- **8.2: Play Area Inspections:**
- Climbing Frame: Broken rope supports: Update on order confirmation; if delivery of one rope is correct then consider/approve action for two further broken rope supports: Delivery of one rope had been confirmed. Clerk/RFO had requested a quote for a full net; a price comparison would have to be considered.

**Action: Clerk/RFO.**

16/113 **URGENT:**

- **9.1: 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:**
- Church Clock: Quotes Ongoing: Contact Baldwin Clocks.
- Follow up letter Ashton Villa.
- Play Area; Interim Inspection: Email approved checklist to councillors; follow up quote for full net.
- Village Hall – Electrical Work: To arrange on-site meeting with KiiKii Electricals.
- Thames Water: Follow up query.
- Store Room: Remove from agenda.
- Grass Cutting: Advise M. R. Cross of successful tender for 2017/18.
- Agenda Item: Website – consider items for publication.
- Banking: Barclays Bank – Signatory – complete and submit forms.
- Insurance – Quotes: Obtain from Zurich Insurance – email to councillors.
- Financial Regulations: Amend and email along with new Model 2016.
- **Outstanding:**
- Job Description/Contract: Review: Clerk/RFO to review both documents and track any changes; to email to all councillors for review.
- **Cllr. KC:**
- Village Hall – Changing Room Door: To obtain quote.
- Barclays Bank – Signatory – complete and submit forms.
- **Outstanding:**
- **Cllr. FF:**
- Rubbish: To make further enquiries regarding disposal of 'commercial' fridges.
- Village Hall Flooring: To speak to 'Carpet Traders': Cllr. FF to contact Millside Builders.
- Grass Cutting: Woodland and Recreational areas – cuts to end of season.
- Website: Speak to D. Crawford.
- Barclays Bank – Signatory – complete and submit forms.
- **Outstanding:**
- Network Rail Works:
- Open Meeting report/update: Response from O.C.C. regarding questions.
- Emergency Plan:
- Community defibrillator
- **Cllr. PM:**
- O.C.C. – Oxfordshire Comet Transport Service: Cllr. PM to review.
- **Cllr. RL:**
- Publish and circulate copy of document from Islip Medical Practice.
- **Outstanding:**
- Produce abridged minutes for parish magazine
- **All Cllrs.**
- Play Area: Interim inspection.
- Village Hall: Separate meeting to discuss future proposals.
- Insurance: Consider/approve quote.
- Financial Regulations: Consider new model document.
- **9.2: Grass Cutting Contract:**
- **Merton Woodland:** M. R. Cross had carried out works to get the woodland cut; one more cut was required before the end of the season. Cllrs. FF and PM had cut back the 'Cricket Bat Willows' and removed the sleeves from the young trees. It was **RESOLVED:-**
- M. R. Cross to carry out one more cut at the Woodland before the end of the season.
- Mr Holmes to complete the seasons cutting for the play area
- Mr Hawes to complete the seasons cutting for the recreational/football ground; if this was not possible then M. R. Cross to be asked. A. Crowden and D. Crowden to advise when the grass needs cutting; Cllr. KC would then advise Cllr. RL; to contact contractor.
- Not to take up the offer from the football club to get S. Holmes to cut the football pitch.
- To approve the tender provided by M. R. Cross for the 2017/18 season; Clerk to advise that the tender was successful.

**Action: Cllrs. RL and FF and Clerk.**

16.114 **PRIORITY:**

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

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- Website: Having set the website up D. Crawford has advised that he does not wish to continue with the work and is happy to pass on information. C/fwd to next meeting. **RESOLVED** to:
- Have a continued agenda item to discuss what information needs adding to the website once established.

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

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

- M. R. Cross – Inv. No: 1024 - £2,400.00 (Grass cutting).

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

Payee	Amount	Cheque No:	Details
T. Charlesworth	£156.25	101332	Clerk's Pay/Exp. July 2016 and any overtime contributable to 2015/16: Overtime c/fwd.
M. Day/Village Hall Cleaner/12 July to September 2016	£ 0.00		No ticket presented.
Cash – Petty Cash Float	£40.00	101333	See below 16/114 – 10.1 – 13.
T. Charlesworth	£100.00	101319	NALC/SLCC - 2014 - 2016 NATIONAL SALARY AWARD: A non-consolidated (one off) payment for employees on SCPs 5 - 49 in December 2014 and employees on SCPs 26 - 49 in April 2015: Withheld by Cllr. RL (previously agreed); required an understanding of what the payment was for: The cheque has now been passed onto the Clerk/RFO for banking; the Clerk/RFO, as advised by S.L.C.C., informed the PC that the cheque had been unlawfully withheld; acting 'Ultra Vires'.
Blackthorn Parish Council	£44.00	101334	Being half of the full payment (£96.28) paid by Blackthorn Parish Council to Cover Insurance Services.
Blackthorn Parish Council	£48.14	101335	Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) – Membership Renewal 2016/17: Being half of the full payment (£88.00) paid by Blackthorn Parish Council.
Arrow Accounting – Inv. No: P208	£270.00	101331	Internal Audit Year Ending 31.3.16.
S. Holmes	£0.00		Grass cutting/strimming of playground area: No invoice presented.
Thames Water Utilities Ltd - 11 May – 8 August 2016	£288.46		See 16/111 – 7.2 above.
Playdale Playgrounds Ltd – Inv. No: 0000022967	£81.62		See 16/112 – 8.2 above.
CFO – PAT Testing Workshop - £65.00 plus VAT			<b>RESOLVED</b> that Cllr. FF attends the workshop. Clerk to book place; arrange for payment once confirmed.
Came & Company			Insurance Renewal: See below 16/10.1 – 8.

4. **Receipts Received:**

- Village Hall Petty Cash – June 2016: £100.00 cash verified by Cllr. FF.
- Cherwell District Council – Precept part payment - £4002.50.
- HM Revenue & Custom – VAT reclaimed - £662.83.
- Scottish Power – Refund - £428.75.
- SSE SWALEC – following submission of meter reading a credit of £460.67 refunded through direct debit.

5. **Receipts Due:**

- None.

**Action: Clerk/RFO.**

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

- Accept and approve the Bank Reconciliation 1.4.16 to 30.6.16 (St. No: 345/346); 1.7.16 to 15.7.16 (St. No: 345/346 – Scottish Widows No: 24); 1.7.16 to 15.8.16 (St. No: 347)

Balance B/fwd	£14,358.18	Balance B/fwd	£18,163.48
Total Receipts	£ 5,316.85	Total Receipts	£ 903.44
Total Payments	£ 1,511.55	Total Payments	£ 4,279.45
Balance C/fwd	£18,163.48	Balance C/fwd	£14,787.48

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

**Action: Clerk/RFO.**

8. **Quotes:**

- Village Hall – Changing Room Door and repairs to Main Entrance Lock: Cllr. KC to obtain quote for replacement back door including changing hinges to swing the opposite way or the provision of a hook to hold door open.  
**Action: Cllr. KC.**
  - Village Hall – Ramp: C/fwd.  
**Action: Councillors.**
  - Church Clock: Clerk tasked with responding to the email from C. Baldwin confirming that access to the roof can be obtained over the dial and attaching photos provided by Cllr. FF.  
**Action: Cllr. FF and Clerk.**
  - Grass Cutting – Merton Woodland - Consider/approve quote for the rest of the season: *See above 16/113 – 9.2.*
  - Came & Company: Insurance Renewal due 11 October 2016: Came & Company had provided three quotes; having considered the recommended quote provided by Hiscox the Clerk/RFO was tasked with querying certain elements of the schedule and obtaining a further quote from Zurich Insurance. Given the timescale it was **RESOLVED** that:-
    - the quotes would have to be reconsidered by email;
    - The quote from Hiscox was provisionally approved dependent on the quote provided by Zurich Insurance;
    - Final approval through email and the decision to be formally minuted at the next meeting.
    - To arrange payment.**Action: Councillors and Clerk/RFO.**
9. **Thames Water Utilities:** *See 16/111 – 7.2 above.*
10. **Accounts Year Ending 31 March 2016:**
- Arrow Accounting – Internal Audit Report – Consider/approve any action from report:
  - Accounting Statements – Annual Return Section J – Findings: Correct accounting basis used and reconciled to the cash book – Recommendations: Recommend that the Financial Statements are approved by the Council before the 30<sup>th</sup> June each year: This had been due to exceptional circumstances as previously minuted; to meet future deadlines..
  - BDO – External Auditor – Completion of Audit - Consider/approve action: Not received.  
**Action: Clerk/RFO.**
11. **Bank Signatory:**
- Consider/approve adding further signatories to the account(s).
  - Barclays Bank Plc. – Update on change of signatory: Further to minute Ref: M8/16 – 16/102 – 8.1 – 6: It was **RESOLVED** that:
  - Cllr. FF would be added as a signatory on Barclays Bank Plc. Forms to be completed and submitted to Barclays.
  - Scottish Widows - Clubs & Associations 7 Day A/c – Interest account - Update on change of signatory: No update.  
**Action: Cllrs. KC and FF.**
12. **Financial Regulations:** Review of existing regulations to meet the Model updated version 2016 and to accommodate provision of or increase to Petty Cash float: *See No: 16/114 – 10.1 - 13 below:* It was **RESOLVED** to:-
- Amend the Financial Regulations to include the addition of 6.23 to reflect the decision below. To be approved at next meeting.
  - To review the existing regulations to meet the Model updated version 2016. Clerk tasked with email regulations, existing and Model version for consideration.  
**Action: Clerk/RFO.**
13. **Petty Cash Float:** Consider/approve provision of or increase to existing petty cash float: O.A.L.C. had advised the Clerk that the RFO (Responsible Financial Officer) should be the person responsible for holding a petty cash float, if required, to pay for the purchase of stamps; cleaning materials for the village hall etc., the village hall cleaner can be paid in cash but it would be better practice to pay by cheque; if cash then it would be recommend that an invoice is produced and signed and payments must be minuted. If the Bookings Clerk is holding a petty cash float on behalf of the PC accurate records should be kept i.e., receipt book; all money taken should be banked intact; income over fifty pounds should be collected by the RFO and banked regularly. It was **RESOLVED** to:
- Continue to have the petty cash float held by the Village Hall Bookings Clerk on behalf of the PC and to continue to maintain accurate records i.e., receipt book; all money taken to be banked intact and banked regularly by the RFO; any activities to be minuted;
  - To increase the existing ten pound float to fifty pounds; Cllr. FF requested that the following statement be minuted “he pledged to indemnify the PC should the fifty pound float go missing”.
  - To amend the Financial Regulations *above 16/114 – 10.1 - 12;*
  - Pay the Village Hall cleaner by cheque on a half yearly basis as requested.
14. **Budget 2017/18:** To start process: Noted.  
**Action: Clerk/RFO and signatories.**
- **10.2: PLANNING:**
    1. **New Applications:**
      - None.
    2. **Decision Notices:**
      - None.
    3. **Appeal Notice:**
      - C.D.C. – Public Protection & Development Management – Appellant’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 Reference: APP/C3105/Y/16/3155571 – Appeal Start Date 31 August 2016 – Further comments to Planning Inspectorate by 5 October 2016: The PC had no objections or observations and supported the application.
    4. **Withdrawal Notices:**
      - None.
    5. **Planning Issues:**
      - None.
  - **10.3: 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.

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

16/115 **IMPORTANT:**

- **11.1: CLERK/RFO:**
- Job Description/Contract: Review: C/fwd.
- Pension Enrolment: Clerk to remove from agenda.

**Action: All Cllrs. and Clerk/RFO.**

16/116 **ACTION:**

- **12.1: Emergency Plan:**
- Draft to be considered and approved: Cllr. FF provided members present with a draft document to be reviewed and considered at next PC meeting.
- Community defibrillator: To consider/approve provision of: C/fwd.

**Action: Cllr. FF.**

- **12.2: Merton Woodland:**

- Ongoing Maintenance Plan: Possible presence of 'Ash Die Back'; the Woodland has a lot of Ash trees and with major stands of Ash there is the possibility that the disease, if confirmed, could cause large gaps in the woodland. Cllr. FF has tried, without success, to send photographs to the Forestry Commission and is awaiting a call and has also spoken to C.D.C. Options:-
- given the current size would it be feasible to inter plant with different saplings
- Grants (available through Natural England via the Forestry Commission): Cllr. FF has initiated enquiries.

**Action: Cllr. FF**

16/117 **ADVICE:**

- **13.1: Correspondence/Emails:**  
M.P.C.249(02): C.D.C. – Local Enforcement Plan – Electronic Version available  
[www.cherwell.gov.uk/planningenforcement](http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/planningenforcement): No comment noted.  
M.P.C.249(03): O.C.C. – Oxfordshire Comet Transport Service: Cllr. PM to review.

**Action: Cllr. PM.**

16/118 **MATTERS FOR REPORT:**

- **14.1:** To report on Matters of information or discussion at the next meeting.
- **Matters of Information:**
- Health Issues: as the nominated councillor; Cllr. PM requested that the document provided by Islip Medical Practice be published. Cllr. RL agreed to deliver copies with the Parish Magazine.

**Action: Cllr. RL.**

16/119 **DATE and TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**

- 17 October 2016: Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm in Merton Village Hall.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.40pm.

***Draft Minutes subject to Confirmation.***