

# MERTON PARISH COUNCIL M1/18

1

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF MERTON PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN MERTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30P.M. ON 15 JANUARY 2018.

### PRESENT:

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** District Cllr. D. Hughes; Tracey Charlesworth (Clerk/RFO) and Lucy Katz (potential parish councillor).

18/01 **APOLOGIES:** Accepted from:-

- 1.1: L. Cox (parishioner).

18/02 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:**

- 2.1: To elect a Chairman to act for the meeting: It was **RESOLVED** that:
  - Cllr. FF was approved acting Chairman.
- 2.2: To elect a Chairman: It was **RESOLVED** that:-
  - Cllr. AB was elected Chairman; accepted and signed 'Declaration of Acceptance of Office' as Chairman.

18/03 **INTERESTS:**

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

18/04 **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: (7.30pm to 7.45pm):**

- 4.1: Concerns were raised regarding the proposed routes, one of which proposes a potential threat to Merton village, of the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway. It was noted that a Highways Maintenance car has been carrying out explorations on a local level. The Clerk was tasked with emailing an enquiry to the three District and County Councillors and Highways England and copy to CPRE and to look at the FOI request to Highways England (see 18/07).

**Action: Clerk.**

18/05 **GUEST:**

- 5.1: **Manor House Nursing Home:** No formal arrangement had been made. Acting Chairman Cllr. FF would re-contact.

**Action: Cllr. FF.**

18/06 **MINUTES:**

- 6.1: It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of:
  - Merton Parish Council held on 18 December 2017 at 7.30pm were read, agreed and signed by the Chairman Cllr. FF as a correct record with amendments as follows:-
    - 17/138 – 1.1: Delete 'Clerk to Ambrosden' and replace with 'parishioner'
    - 17/143 – 6.1: End para to read 'The three vacancies to be advertised in the parish news and on the 'Facebook' page.
    - 17/145 – 8.1 – 1: Remove Cllr. RF from Action.
    - Comments from Minutes as follows:
      - 17/145 – 8.1 – 3: Clerk overtime; in order to avoid an accumulation of costs to the PC the Clerk was tasked with giving a comparison of hours worked over the last five years in order that the Clerks contractual hours can be reviewed; Clerk to add to agenda.
    - **Publication of 'Draft' Minutes:** It was agreed that draft minutes would no longer be posted on the website or the notice board; rather, the version of the minutes agreed at the following PC meeting would be posted.
    - The Clerk advised that she thought that this was a requirement under the 'Transparency Code; to be confirmed.

**Action: Clerk.**

18/07 **VACANCY/CO-OPTION FOR A PARISH COUNCILLOR:**

- 7.1: Co-option: Lucy Katz was in attendance of the meeting as an interested parishioner and was welcomed to the meeting.
- Resignation of Cllr. R. Foord: C.D.C. notified that there has been no call for a by-election and it can fill the vacancy by co-option.
- The Clerk, as yet, had not been able to gain access to the 'Facebook' page.

**Action: Clerk.**

18/08 **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR(S):**

- Cllr. FF had emailed Cllr. D. Sames again with regards to the '20mph limit' with no response to date.
- Cllr. D. Hughes reported as follows:
  - Oxford to Cambridge Expressway: The decision regarding the 'preferred' route could go on for up to two years; Aylesbury has expressed that it would like it to be its route. He would update the PC following an expected update from an Officer; he requested that any questions/concerns be raised in an email to him. C.D.C. would engage, if it is to be imposed on its area, in terms of what benefits can be gained and to look at any possible counter schemes.

18/09 **PRIORITY:**

- 9.1: **Cleaner:** Review of Contract and Job Description: The document was still under review. There was also a lengthy discussion about how the roles of the Booking Clerk and the cleaner might usefully be changed (indeed, combined) for greater efficiency and less confusion.

- Acting Chairman Cllr. FF agreed to speak with the Bookings Clerk and Cllr. RL agreed to speak with the village hall cleaner. it was **RESOLVED** that:
  - The contract commencement date would be 1 April 2018;
  - That the word 'company' would be replaced with 'Council'.
- Action: Cllr. FF and Cllr. RL.**
- 9.2: Meter Reading:** Meter reading to be submitted by Clerk/RFO: Day 61778 – Night 26166 – Total 87944.  
**Action: Clerk/RFO**
  - 9.3: Emergency Lighting:** C/fwd.

18/10 **PLAYGROUND/RECREATIONAL AREA:**

- 10.1: Football Clubs (FC):**
  - Hiring Agreement: The bookings clerk has received an enquiry from another team.
  - Chairman Ashton Villa: (See below 18/12 – 12.1 - 4).
- Action: Clerk.**
- 10.2: Allotments:**
  - Allotment No: 6: Allotment No: 6: vacancy (May 2017):
  - Allotment No: 1: Vacancy (20.11.17): No applicants to date. Advert to be placed in the 'Parish Matters' and on the website. Clerk to confirm that there is no clause in the Tenancy Agreement that does not allow people from outside the village to apply; if not, Cllr. PM to contact the Clerk to Ambrosden PC.
- Action: Cllr. PM and Clerk.**
- 10.3: Play Area:**
  - Smaller Frame: Update on caps: C/fwd on task list.
  - Interim Inspection Report: Cllrs. FF and PM to carry out.
- Action: Cllrs. FF and PM.**
- Large Multiplay Unit: C/fwd on task list.
- Action: Clerk and PC.**

18/11 **URGENT:**

- 11.1: Actions from Previous Meetings:** Tasks completed as per minutes or c/fwd.

18/12 **PRIORITY:**

- 12.1: FINANCE:**
- 1. **Accounts for Payment agreed prior to the meeting**
  - Grass Cutting – Inv. No: 2026 - £168.00 (grass cutting Merton Woodland – mow the outer rides plus figure of eight full width and grass area known as the flower meadow).
  - Village Hall Cleaner - £100.00 – June – Dec 2017.
- 2. **Accounts for Payment:** It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following payments:-

	Amount	Cheque No:	Details
Clerk	£167.09	101413	Clerk's Pay/Exp. Nov 2017.

**Action: Clerk/RFO.**

- 3. **Receipts Received:**
  - HMRC – VAT repayment - £511.06.
  - Allotment Rent – Allotment No: 3 - £20.00 2016/17 and 2017/18.

**Action: Clerk/RFO.**
- 4. **Receipts Due:**
  - Village Hall Petty Cash – December 2017: Clerk had arranged to collect but, the Bookings Clerk cancelled at the last minute (See 18/09 – 9.1 above).
  - Allotment: Outstanding rents: Further reminder letters written for Allotment numbers five, nine and ten, to be delivered by hand.

**Action: Cllr. RL.**

  - Village Hall- Update on outstanding:-
  - FC bookings: Clerk/RFO to prepare and email account details and diary dates to councillors and contact details to Cllr. RL as previously agreed.

**Action: Clerk/RFO and Cllr. RL.**
- 5. **Bank Reconciliation (attached):** It was **RESOLVED** to:
  - Accept and approve the Bank Reconciliations and 1.10.17 – 15.12.17 (Issue Date: 18.12.17) and 1.1.18 – 15.1.18 (Issue Date 18.12.17).

Balance B/fwd	£ 14,081.74	Balance B/fwd	£ 11,381.00
Total Receipts	£ 533.07	Total Receipts	£ 511.13
Total Payments	£ 3,233.81	Total Payments	£ 268.00
Balance C/fwd	£ 11,381.00	Balance C/fwd	£ 11,624.13

- 7. **Precept Comparison/Financial Report/VAT Claim:** It was **RESOLVED** to accept the Precept Comparison/Financial Report: VAT (see item 3 above).  
**Action: Clerk/RFO.**
- 8. **Quotes:**

- Church Clock: Update on whether any further work required: C/fwd.  
**Action: Cllr. FF and PM.**
- Multiplay Unit: Consider/approve quote for either replacement rope or net: C/fwd.  
**Action: Cllr. FF.**
- 9. **Bank Signatory:**
  - Scottish Widows - Clubs & Associations 7 Day A/c – Interest account - Update on removal of signatories: It was **RESOLVED** that:
    - Kay Crowden, Rachel Foord and John Whittaker are removed as signatories on the account; form completed with details.
    - Acting Chairman Cllr. FF to get the form signed by each individual.
    - Chairman Cllr. AB is added as a new signatory on the account. This was completed and signed.  
**Action: Cllr. FF.**
  - Barclays Bank Plc: Update on removal of signatories: It was **RESOLVED** that:
    - The mandate given to Barclays Bank PLC (the Bank) 1 be amended to remove Kay Crowden and Rachel Foord named in Section 3 so they no longer act as an authorised person; signed by the Acting Chairman and one councillor. Clerk/RFO to submit to Barclays.  
**Action: Clerk/RFO.**
- 10. **Budget 2018/19:** As previously agreed, the Clerk/RFO and Cllr. AB had met to discuss the draft budget in more detail; Cllr. AB summarized the budget and advised that an allowance of £1,600 had been made for the village hall fund (an increase of £100 discussed at the previous meeting) and £800 allowed for the parish council election. It was proposed that the PC approaches Ambrosden Parish Council to discuss a possible contribution to the Woodland; that the grass cutting arrangements for the recreational area are reviewed in the early spring due to the current lack of use. It was **RESOLVED** that:
  - The PC approved and accepted the budget for 2018/19.
  - Cllr. PM approaches Ambrosden Parish Council to discuss a possible contribution to the Woodland.  
**Action: Cllr. PM.**

**Cllr. RL left the meeting at 9.40pm**

- 11. **Precept 2018/19:** Based on the budget figures it was **RESOLVED** that:
  - The Parish Council precept requirement for 2018/19 would be £8,329.00; Clerk/RFO to submit to C.D.C.  
**Action: Clerk/RFO.**
- 12. **Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (S.A.A.A.)** – Notification of external auditors appointments for the 2017-18 financial year: As the Parish Council has opted-in to the central procurement process an external auditor has been appointed for the five year period commencing with the financial year 2017/18, Moore Stephens for the Oxfordshire area. There are various changes to the legislation taking effect from 2017/18, most noticeably the potential for authorities where the higher of income or expenditure for the year was £25,000 or less, to declare themselves as 'exempt' from a limited assurance review by an external auditor if they meet certain qualifying criteria. However, all authorities, even if they declare themselves 'exempt', will still need to fully complete and publish an annual return and must still have a named appointed auditor to deal with questions or objections from local electors. The Annual Return will now be known as 'Annual Governance and Accountability Return' (sent electronically) and will need to be completed in accordance with 'proper practices' and published in accordance with the applicable Transparency Codes. Scale of fees noted.
  - **12.2: PLANNING:**
    1. **New Applications:**
      - None.
    2. **Decision Notices:**
      - C.D.C. – Notice of Decision – Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – Application No: 17/02275/F – Applicant's Name: Mr & Mrs Foxon – Proposal: Single storey rear extension – Location: The Old Vicarage, Merton, Bicester, OX25 2NF – Parish(es): Merton – PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS – Date of Decision: 10 January 2018 – Rec/d 12.1.18 – C/fwd to next meeting – Emailed.
      - C.D.C. – Notice of Decision – Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – Application No: 17/02254/F – Applicant's Name: Weston Wood Shoot – Proposal: steel frame building for rearing of game birds – Location: Brashfield, Merton, Bicester, OX25 2NF – Parish(es): Merton - PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS – Date of Decision: 9 January 2018 – Rec/d 12.1.18
    3. **Appeal Notice:**
      - None.
    4. **Withdrawal Notices:**
      - None.
    5. **Planning Issues:**
      - None.
- 18/13 **IMPORTANT:**
  - **13.1: CLERK/RFO:**
    1. **Job Description/Contract:** Approval and signing C/fwd subject to auto-pension enrolment and policies as listed in contract/description (*below*):
    2. **Auto Pension Enrolment:** With no response from previous Cllr. RF the Clerk had worked through some of the paperwork; Chairman Cllr. AB to have a look at.  
**Action: Chairman Cllr. AB.**
  - **13.2: ANNUAL REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS:**
    - **Risk Assessments:**
      - **Play Area:** To look at previous review discussion regards sign: Clerk resent and tasked with resending email again. C/fwd.  
**Action: Cllr. FF and Clerk.**

- 18/14 **ACTION:**
- **14.1: Emergency Plan:**
    - Update on 'Public Access' document for website and flyer: Cllr. FF to meet with R. Foord to discuss uploading to the website and 'Facebook'. **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.**
  - **14.2: Merton Woodland:** Merton Woodland Community Group:
    - Constitution and agreement between PC and MWCG: To be considered/approved: Having amended the document to include previous suggestions it was **RESOLVED** that:-
    - The Constitution and agreement between the PC and MWCG was accepted and approved.
    - Woodland 'Public Access' notice: To be published on website; a 'Pedestrians only' notice would also be put on the gate; the notice had also been circulated amongst local riders and would be published in the local post office at Ambrosden.
    - The above items to be removed from the agenda; a general Merton Woodland update would be kept on the agenda:
    - It was reported that the Blackthorn hedge had been laid and the dam had been completed by Thames Water (update and thank you to be published in the Parish Matters); to be grass seeded in March. **Action: Chairman Cllr. FF and Clerk.**
  - **14.3: Proposed Repositioning of 30mph limit:** Cllr. FF to follow up with Cllr. D. Sames and Cllr. AB to raise with C.D.C. whilst discussing House Numbering. **Action: Cllrs. FF and AB.**
  - **14.4: Network Rail:** No update. Clerk tasked with removing from agenda. **Action: Clerk.**
  - **14.5: 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. **Action: AB.**
  - **14.6: Islip Parish Council:**
    - Proposed shared purchase of speed camera system: Clerk to remove from agenda. **Action: Clerk.**
- 18/15 **ADVICE:**
- **15.1: Correspondence/Emails:**
  - **M.P.C.260 (02) HMRC** – Important changes – updating older IT systems – If claims are made using VAT126 it will affect you!: Noted.
- 18/16 **MARKETING:** None.
- 18/17 **MATTERS FOR REPORT:**
- **17.1: To report on Matters of information or discussion at the next meeting.**
  - **Matters of Information:**
    - Clerk to add agenda item 'Matters for Parish News': As matters for this month's addition of the Parish News will be missed, a flyer would be distributed with the magazine advertising vacancies and allotments. **Action: Cllr. FF and Clerk.**
  - **Matters for further Discussion:**
  - None.
- 18/18 **DATE and TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**
- **18.1:** Monday 19 February 2018 held at 7.30pm in Merton Village Hall:

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.25pm.

**Draft Minutes subject to Confirmation.**

**Minutes approved at Parish Council Meeting held on 16 April 2018 – Minute Ref: M4/18 – 18/56 – 4.1.**