

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL M2/17

1

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

PRESENT:

- Cllrs. Chairman R. Foord (RF)
- P. Murphy (PM)
- R. Leaver (RL)

IN ATTENDANCE: Tracey Charlesworth (Clerk/RFO).

17/17 APOLOGIES: Accepted from:-

- 1.1: Cllrs. F. Foxon (FF) and District Cllr. D. Hughes.

17/18 INTERESTS:

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

17/19 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: (7.30pm to 7.45pm):

- 3.1: None.

17/20 MINUTES:

- 4.1: It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Meeting of Merton Parish Council on 16 January 2017 at 7.30pm: were read, agreed and signed by the Chairman Cllr. RF as a correct record.

17/21 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: Continue to advertise vacancy in parish magazine and on website.
- Cllr. KC has expressed her intentions to resign; Clerk to clarify.

Action: Clerk.

17/21 DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS:

- 6.1: Circulated prior to meeting.
- Proposals for the E-W expressway from Cambridge to London, and the potential new M40 junction: District Cllr. D. Hughes had forwarded a 'Briefing Note: Oxford Milton Keynes Cambridge corridor Interim Report and Expressway February 2017' in which they had considered options but, had taken no decision as yet. He would continue to update the PC.

17/22 VILLAGE HALL:

- 7.1: **Cleaner:** Review of Contract and Job Description: To be followed up with Cllr. KC.
- 7.2: **Meter Reading:** Meter reading to be submitted by Clerk/RFO: Day 58396 – Night 25093 – Total 83490.
- 7.3: **Lighting:** It was **RESOLVED** that all six batteries would be replaced.
- 7.4: **Thames Water:** Noted that as from 1 April 2017 Castle Water will be the water retailer.
- 7.5: **Age UK: Sponsored activities:** A contact for a fitness instructor has been provided.

Action: Clerk.

Action: Clerk/RFO

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF.

17/23 PLAYGROUND/RECREATIONAL AREA:

- 8.1: **Football Clubs (FC):**
- Hiring Agreement: To follow up with Cllr. KC.
- Chairman Ashton Villa: Letters sent as previously agreed with no response to date:
- 8.2: **Allotments:**
- Allotment No: 6 (correction to agenda noted as Allotment No: 3): It was **RESOLVED** to:
- Accept the termination notice as vacant from May 2017;
- To advertise vacancy;
- To review the notification period stated in the Tenancy Agreement. Clerk to add agenda item.

Action: Clerk.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF and Clerk.

- 8.3: **Play Area:**
- Interim Inspection Report: Chairman Cllr. RF carried out inspection (form to be completed for records) and reported that:-
- The repair to the net was holding up; to continue to monitor; to ascertain whether the original piece of rope has been kept in order to see if it can be repaired.
- There are some caps missing from the smaller frame; Clerk advised that the PC had previously purchased some caps.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF.

17/24 URGENT:

- 9.1: **Actions from Previous Meetings:**
- 'Working' actions list: This had proved helpful to the councillors; tasks completed as per minutes.

17/25 PRIORITY:

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

- Website: PDF documents uploaded to site which also includes references to information provided in 'Welcome Pack'.
- Clerk to arrange with Chairman Cllr. RF for training.

Action: Cllr. RF and Clerk/RFO.

2. Accounts for Payment agreed prior to the meeting

- None.

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

	Amount	Cheque No:	Details
Clerk	£171.16	101363	Clerk's Pay/Exp. December 2016.
Thames Water Utilities Ltd	£55.24	101364	Water Supply Period 18.11.16 – 8.2.17
R. Foord - Amazon	£38.98	101365	Reimbursement for purchase of Hard drive through Amazon. Hard drive given to Clerk.
SSE SWALEC	£246.42	D/D	Electricity Supply Period 25.10.16 – 18.1.17: Meter Reading gives a credit of £31.72.
Zurich Insurance	£46.66	Waived	Provision of public and personal accident cover for volunteers (woodland): Payment waived for current year; cost increase to policy for 2017/18.
M.P.C.C.			Contribution to upkeep of churchyard: Clerk to contact treasurer.

4. Receipts Received:

- Village Hall Petty Cash – 2016/17: Update on outstanding FC bookings (*Above 17/23 – 8.1*): None presented due to the absence of the Bookings Clerk.
- Scottish Widows Bank Plc – Interest £1.97.
- Mrs F A Leaver/Replacement cheque/Produce Show Cheque returned 100011 - £200.00.
- Safestyle Windows - K. Crowden/Direct Credit/Safestyle Refund - £200.00.
- C.D.C. – National Non-Domestic Rate 2016 – Authorised reimbursement £151.00.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

5. Receipts Due:

- C.D.C. – Hire of Hall for Election £140.00: Clerk/RFO to follow up.
- Allotment Rents 2016/17: Reminders had been sent for outstanding rent payments: Clerk/RFO to follow up.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

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

- Accept and approve the Bank Reconciliations 1.10.16 to 31.12.16 (St. No: 353): 1.1.17 to 13.1.17 (St. No's: 353/354 and 26): 1.1.17 to 16.2.17 (St. No: 355-

Balance B/fwd	£17,681.18	Balance B/fwd	£14,139.00	Balance B/fwd	£14,139.00
Total Receipts	£ 1,943.89	Total Receipts	£ 871.97	Total Receipts	£ 1,222.97
Total Payments	£ 5,486.07	Total Payments	£ 162.26	Total Payments	£ 408.68
Balance C/fwd	£14,139.00	Balance C/fwd	£14,848.71	Balance C/fwd	£14,953.29

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

Action: Clerk/RFO.

8. Quotes:

- Village Hall – Ramp: Awaiting response from Cllr. FF.
- Church Clock: Update on whether any further work required: C/fwd.
- Playdale: Consider/approve quote for either replacement rope or net: Chairman Cllr. RF to email Cllr. FF for update.

Action: Clerk/RFO.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF.

- Zurich Insurance – Provision of cover for safety equipment purchased for woodland: Zurich can cover the equipment free of charge for this policy year and it will increase the premium by approximately 17p but, the lowest excess on the All Risks section of the policy is £100, should a claim be made for these items: It was **RESOLVED:**

- Not to cover the items.
- Clerk to clarify if volunteers over the age of eighty are covered and if they have to be individually named on the policy.

Action: Clerk.

9. Bank Signatory:

- Consider/approve adding further signatories to the account(s): No further signatories required.

- Barclays Bank Plc. – Update on change of signatory: Barclays had clarified that the Clerk/RFO needs to complete and return the personal details form in order for them to be able to complete the Signing Arrangements.
Action: Clerk/RFO.
- Scottish Widows - Clubs & Associations 7 Day A/c – Interest account - Update on change of signatory: Current signatures are: Clerk/RFO; Cllrs: RF; PM and KC and previous Cllr. J. Whittaker: Pending clarification of Cllr. KC resignation it was **RESOLVED**:
That Cllr. KC and previous Cllr. J. Whittaker be removed from the account leaving three signatures on the account.
Forms to be completed and submitted with no other changes to the account details.
Action: Clerk/RFO.

10.2: **PLANNING:**

1. **New Applications:**

- C.D.C. – Public Protection & Development Management – Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Consultation – Planning Application – Application No: 16/02571/F – Applicant's Name: Mr & Mrs Duncan and Fiona Marshall – Proposal: Single storey front and rear extensions and raised patio area to rear of extension – Location: 3 Forge Close Merton Bicester OX25 2NW – Parishes(s): Merton: No objections or observations.

2. **Decision Notices:**

- C.D.C. – Notice of Decision – Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as Amended) – Planning Application – Application No: 16/02571/F – Applicant's Name: Mr & Mrs Duncan and Fiona Marshall – Proposal: Single storey front and rear extensions and raised patio area to rear of extension – Location: 3 Forge Close Merton Bicester OX25 2NW – Parishes(s): Merton – Permission for Development subject to Conditions – Date of Decision: 15.2.17.
- C.D.C. – Notice of Decision – Town and Country Planning act 1990 (as amended) – 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: Refusal of Permission for Development – Date of Decision: 22.12.17.

3. **Appeal Notice:**

- None.

4. **Withdrawal Notices:**

- C.D.C. – Public Protection & Development Management – Application No: 16/02404/F – Proposal: New Access from Public Highway – Location: The Plough Inn Merton Bicester OX25 2NJ – Notification of withdrawal of planning application.

5. **Planning Issues:**

- None.

17/26 **IMPORTANT:**

- **11.1: 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. **Policies:** It was **RESOLVED** to approve and adopt the following amended documents with annex to Discipline & Grievance Policy:
 - Discipline & Grievance Policy: Following advice through the OALC website; Advice Note 24 Grievances 2016: 'sometimes in a small council this is simply not feasible so it is important that a council facing this sort of difficulty seeks advice and records its rationale for constituting hearing panels. An independent, external investigator can help and an independent appeals panel, drawn from neighbouring parishes or Principal Authority or county association for instance'; advice note to be attached and the above paragraph referred to.
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Sickness absence policy
 - Expenses Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy.
 3. **Auto Pension Enrolment:** Chairman Cllr. RF had carried out extensive research; the PC should have enrolled; based on the amount of earnings the PC is obliged to offer the Clerk the option to contribute to a pension fund; if on low earnings (combined if more than one job) then the PC does not have to contribute. As an employee the PC should have legally registered with HMRC (Clerk/RFO had written in 2011 advising that the Clerk was on low income). Clerk to provide income details; if less the £5,284 per annum then the PC can apply for exemption from PAYE and NI.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF and Clerk/RFO.

• **11.2: ANNUAL REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS:**

- **Effectiveness of Internal Audit:** It was **RESOLVED**:
 - To approve and adopt.
- **Asset Register:** It was **RESOLVED**:
 - To approve and adopt.
- **Risk Assessments:**
 - **Village Hall:** Amendments made as approved at previous meeting.
 - Legionnaires: Having considered advice it was **RESOLVED**:
 - That football teams would be advised to run the showers prior to games.
 - The Risk Assessment for the Village Hall was approved and adopted with the above amendment.
 - PAT Test: Cllr. RL to ask Mr Busby to provide the Clerk with a quote and Cllr. PM to ask if Mr Bell can provide a quote; it was **RESOLVED**:
 - To approve the cheapest quote by email.
 - Cllr. FF to sign up to the next available PAT Testing course as previously agreed.

Action: Cllrs. PM and RL.

• **Parish Council:**

- It was **RESOLVED** to:

- Approve and adopt with amendments as previously agreed.
- Loss of Money through theft or Dishonesty: Look at indemnifying against loss.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF.

- **Play Area:** C/fwd.

Action: Cllr. RF.

- **Woodland/Volunteers:** To look at existing document and consider separate volunteers assessment at a later date. C/fwd.

Action: Cllr. RF.

- **Volunteers:** (see above Woodland/Volunteers).

17/27 ACTION:

- **12.1: Emergency Plan:** C/fwd.

Action: Working Group.

- Community defibrillator: To consider/approve provision of: To look at applying for funding through SSE Electrical when it becomes available again. C/fwd.

Action: Cllr. FF and Clerk/RFO.

- **12.2: Merton Woodland:**

- Woodland Plan: It was **RESOLVED** to:
- Adopt the Woodland Plan.
- Grant Application: No update.
- 'SPARK' Grant Application: The application has been successful but it cannot be awarded to a parish council; awaiting further advice from C.D.C. Sue Marchand with regards to having a separate, constituted, group.
- Consider/approve provision of Insurance for volunteers: See above 17/25 – 3.
- Felling License: Chairman Cllr. RF has advised C. Bottrell that the application is to be made in the PC name.

- **12.3: Proposed Application for a 20mph Limit:** Update on local opinion: To be included in on flier; 'Facebook' page had received twenty positive responses and one negative. Chairman Cllr. RF to contact O.C.C. Highways with regards to the alternative proposal to relocate the 30mph limit.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF.

- **12.4: Network Rail:** Parish Council to consider/approve request for it to join forces with local parish council: Chairman Cllr. RF responded to email request.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF and Cllr. FF.

17/28 ADVICE:

- **13.1: Correspondence/Emails:**

- Email – 19.1.17: O.C.C. – Corporate Services – Interim Chief Executive - We need your view on proposals for government - 'A Fresh Start for Oxfordshire' is Launched Today: Link to be put on website.

Chairman Cllr. RF.

- M.P.C.251(09): 9. The High Sheriff of Oxfordshire – Mrs Sarah Taylor – Chosen theme for my year in office 'the plight of unpaid carers in Oxfordshire': Advised when PC meeting dates are; waiting response.
- M.P.C.251(12): Wadham College Oxford – Green Space at The Butts, Merton, Oxfordshire OX25 2NN – Welcome discussion with Parish Council if of interest: The PC would like more information before engaging in discussions. Clerk to request further information. Cllr. PM to drop copies to the neighbouring houses in The Butts advising that the PC is considering the contents of the letter.

Action: Cllr. PM and Clerk.

- M.P.C.251(13): O.C.C – Communications Team – Corporate Services – Support with displaying posters and leaflets – public awareness of or draft 'ONE Oxfordshire' proposal to change local government in Oxfordshire: Notice board and website.

Action: Chairman Cllr. RF.

17/29 MATTERS FOR REPORT:

- **14.1:** To report on Matters of information or discussion at the next meeting.

- **Matters of Information:**

- None.

- **Matters for further Discussion:**

- DEFRA – Letter regarding Nitrate Pollution Prevention; the PC owns land within a 'vulnerable zone' and should comply: This is with reference to the 'recreational grounds' where there are fruit trees and vegetables grown on the allotment. Cllr. PM to look into further. Clerk to add to next agenda.

Action: Cllr. PM and Clerk.

17/30 DATE and TIME OF NEXT MEETING:

- **15.1:** 20 March 2017: Parish Council Meeting at 7.30pm in Merton Village Hall:

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.10pm.

Draft Minutes subject to Confirmation.