THE PARISH COUNCIL OF MERTON M6/2026

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN MERTON VILLAGE HALL AT 7:30PM ON 8 JUNE 2026

PRESENT: D. Marshall (Chair)
Martin Smith and L. Wainwright. (Councillors)

IN ATTENDANCE: Clerk: Tracey Charlesworth
Village Hall Bookings Clerk/Cleaner.
3 Representatives for Manor House Nursing Home.
District Cllr. Timothy Faltermeyer

1. APOLOGIES:
RESOLVED:
   - To accept apologies from Cllr. R. Gurprashad and two parishioners.

2. PARISH COUNCIL ELECTION MAY 2026:
   1. DPI Registration: To be completed by newly elected councillors and submitted to C.D.C. by Monday 8 June 2026: Three completed DPI Registrations submitted to C.D.C., final to be submitted following amendment.

3. DECLARATION OF INTEREST: To receive declarations of interest from councillors in relation to matters on the agenda and in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct: None received.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Nothing raised.

5. MANOR HOUSE URSING HOME: Guest Architects – Proposals for redevelopment: An in depth presentation for a purpose built replacement care home was made by the architects on behalf of the developer. Pre-application meetings have been held with the District Council planning officer and English Heritage, once feedback is received it is hoped that a planning application will be submitted by late August. They would like to keep communications open with the Parish Council and will plan a public consultation with the village.

6. MINUTES:
   1. To confirm the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 11 May 2026 at 8:27pm previously circulated and taken as read:

RESOLVED:
   - That the draft minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11 May 2026 at 8:27pm were accepted and approved and signed by the Chair Cllr. Duncan Marshall.

7. REPORTS:
   a. Chair's Report: Matters on the agenda.
   b. Clerk's Report: Matters on the agenda.

8. COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR(S):
   1. County Councillor's written report was taken as read and noted.
   2. District Councillor: Newly elected District Cllr. T. Faltermeyer reported as follows:
      a. He is a member of the Scrutiny Committee giving him the ability to represent the whole of the ward.
      b. Future reports will focus on local information.
      c. He invited the Parish Council to contact him with any issues.
      d. He agreed to talk to the planning officer dealing with the proposals for the Manor House Nursing Home and would look at the possibility of S106 Agreements that would be a gain for Merton.

9. PARISH COUNCIL GOVERNANCE:
   1. Risk Assessment: Rolling review: Ongoing.
      a. Village Hall Risk Assessment: To consider report from Risk Assessor: Clerk to accept the quote approved at the last meeting and advise that Cllr. L. Wainwright would be the contact

for arranging dates.

2. Asset Register: Review addition of new Cricket Bat Willows and Pneumatic Strips:

RESOLVED:

- That the amount of remaining Cricket Bat Willows needs to be adjusted to 34 remaining trees times the value that the recent trees were sold at; this is based on the original 42 trees being planted some twenty years ago and must all be near maturity. The 25 new Cricket Bat Willows will be listed at a zero value currently, this will be readjusted as they near maturity.
- That the second set of Pneumatic Strips be added at the purchase price.
- That the new Community Notice Board also needs to be added at the purchase price.
- That the amended document to be reviewed and approved at next meeting.

3. Insurance Policy:

RESOLVED:

- That the cost of adding the following to the Insurance Policy be established for approval at the next meeting:

a. The addition of 1 x RoadPod VT Plus inc RC/Field Kit & Cradle (pneumatic speed Strips)
b. The addition of the Community Notice Board.

4. Pension Regulator: Letter to Clerk offering the ability to opt in or out to be sent.
5. GDPR Documents: To consider/approve review of recommended documents by Internal Auditor for adoption: Documents to be sourced and circulated for consideration at next meeting.

10. ASSET MANAGEMENT:
    1. Recreational Field/Play Area/Allotments:
        a. Recreational Area:
            i. Bookings Update:
                - Campers/Caravanners due this weekend; to request that rubbish be taken home once bins are full.
                - Uggy's Pizza: No further complaints received regarding the volume of music.
            ii. Goal Posts: Launton FC have finished their season so will look to fit over the summer.
            iii. RoSPA/Playsafety Inspection: To note notification of play are inspection in July; there is an initial set fee to inspect up to five play items, there is an additional fee of £4.00 per item over five - Parish Council, Town Council or Community Council - £83.00 + VAT per play area.
            iv. Fire Assembly Sign in the park: Delivery noted.
        b. Village Hall:
            i. Village Hall Bookings:
                - Bookings for a private Martial Arts session continue.
                - 'Jazz' in the Village: It was proposed that the Church would make a good venue; Cllr. L. Wainwright would make contact.
        c. Merton Woodland:
            i. Cricket Bat Willows:
                - Ownership and Proceeds Query: The Parish Council have reviewed historical minutes and there is currently nothing to suggest that all of the Cricket Bat Willows were not the Parish Councils or evidence that supports claims.

11. COMMUNICATIONS:
    1. Merton PC Facebook Page:
        a. To consider matters for publication: The following approved for publication:-
            i. Cherwell/Oxfordshire Bulletins: Matters published.
            ii. A poster requesting volunteers would be put in the new Community Notice Board.

12. COMMUNITY:
    1. Planning Applications: To consider all recent applications received from Cherwell District Council detailed below and any other planning applications submitted and published on the CDC planning portal between the agenda being published and the meeting:
        a. None noted.
    2. Decision Notices: To consider all recent notices received from Cherwell District Council detailed below and any other planning notices submitted and published on the CDC planning portal between the agenda being published and the meeting: The following noted:-
        a. None noted.

3. Withdrawal Notices:
   a. None noted.
4. Planning Matters:
   a. O.C.C. - Kidlington and Surrounding Villages Movement & Place Plan - Parish and Town Engagement Feedback: No feedback; It was noted that there is consideration for Rural Areas.
   b. O.C.C. - Important consultation on a local Oxfordshire policy for community benefit contributions and community shared ownership: To review.
5. Traffic Calming:
   a. VAS Equipment: To approve siting of second set of Pneumatic Speed Strips: Following a Traffic Calming Working Group meeting the Parish Council considered its recommendations:

RESOLVED:

- That the second set of Pneumatic Speed Strips would be sited between The Butts and the Church.

   b. 40mph buffer zone: No update.
6. Footpaths:
   a. Footpath to Fencott: No update.
7. Film Club: No update.
8. Telephone Kiosk: To consider advice with regards to permission to re-site nearer to the bus stop: No advice sought yet.
9. O.C.C. FixMyStreet Super User – Would the parish council be interested in having a councillor or local resident volunteer as a FixMyStreet Super User? The Clerk had forwarded the information to the interested parishioner.
10. Bus Shelter Timetable: Published in the new community notice board.
11. Neighbourhood Safety: To be followed up with the parishioner that requested that this be considered by the Parish Council as not in attendance.
12. Spruce Up Your Signs: To note confirmation of Insurance cover if the volunteers are acting on behalf of the Parish Council and to approve completion of Risk Assessment:

RESOLVED:

- That volunteers would be acting on behalf of the Parish Council.
- That the Parish Council is able to confirm risk assessing the activities based on the Risk Assessment template provided.
- Arrangements to be made for loan of equipment.

13. Bulbs/Seed Planting: To consider/approve: To reconsider during planting season.
14. Notice Board: The new Community Notice Board has been fitted in the Bus Shelter: There are four sets of keys, one to held by the Chair, one councillor and two volunteers from the parish; GDPR: permission for the Parish Council to hold their details as key holders and to publish their contact details to be sourced.

13. FINANCE:
    1. Quotes:
       a. Drainage Survey: Further quotes to be obtained: Noted that the drains have been rodded, an issue needs to be revisited.
       b. Village Hall Patio Area: To consider quotes: To be revisited once the earmarked reserves have been reviewed and it has been confirmed that nothing has arisen from the Risk Assessment that needs addressing first.
       c. Woodland: To approve spend of £52.00 on two posts.

    RESOLVED:

    - To approve the spend; cost to be covered by Woodland Fund.
    - To approve reimbursement on provision of a receipt/invoice.

    2. Receipts: To record and approve any receipts received listed on receipts and payments schedule: The following receipts recorded as received:-
       a. Village Hall/Recreational: To confirm income from Village Hall Bookings Clerk.
          i. Hall Hire- # 70- £75.00
          ii. Hall Hire # 72- £75.00
          - To verify the £160.00 cash presented at the last meeting was £150.00 above: Verified plus £25.00 cash #76 Hall Hire – Total £175.00 cash to bank.
          iii. C.D.C. - Remittance Advice – Ref. No: 30058179 - £250.00 – Hall Hire Elections 2026.
          iv. Allotment Rent – Plots 7 & 8 - £32.00.

v. Hall/Recreational Hire - #71 - £60.00.
vi. Hall/Recreational Hire - #73 - £49.00 (Caravanners)
vii. Hall Hire - #74 - £55.00.
viii. Allotment Rent – Plot 1 & 2 - £32.00
ix. Allotment Rent – Plot 3 - £15.00

3. Accounts Paid Prior to the Meeting: The following payments were verified:-
   a. Salary May 2026 - £ 273.80 Gross plus Overtime 2025/2026: £1,403.23 – Total Gross £1,677.03: To be verified: Power to spend under LGA1972 s112 (1)(2): Verified.
   b. HMRC – Payment April 2026 – Outstanding Amount.
   c. HMRC – Payment May 2026.
   d. Unity Trust Bank Plc – St. No: 060 – Charges £7.00 – 1.4.2026-30.4.2026 – Payment to be debited from account 31.5.2025.
   e. Castle Water Ltd – Inv. No: 10010070082 - £47.86 – Water Supply Period 1.4.2026-30.4.2026.
4. Accounts for Payment:

RESOLVED:

   a. To approve the following for payment; to be set up with Unity Trust online banking:-
   b. Salary - June 2026 - £ 273.80 Gross: To be approved for payment at the end of June: Power to spend under LGA1972 s112 (1)(2).
   c. Expenses:
      i. Expenses May 2026 - £1.60 - plus Home Working Allowance £26.00: Power to spend under LG (Financial Provisions) Act 1963 s5

      Total Exp £27.60
   a. C. Newton – Village Hall Cleaner - Inv. No: 05 – £40.49 (Incl. £10.49 Mats) /Period 1-31 May 2026: Not presented prior to meeting.
   b. M.R. & J.S. Cross – Inv. No's: 413 - £624.00 (Grass Cutting Recreational Area 5/19.5.2026) – 414 - £205.20 (Grass Cutting Woodland 19.5.2026) – Total £829.20.
   c. SLCC – Annual Membership Renewal – Inv. No: MEM259156-2- £79.00 (Shared with Blackthorn PC – Total £158.00)
5. Funding/Grants: To consider/approve applications:
   a. O.C.C. - County Council – Laura Gordon – Councillor Priority Fund: Application for Village Hall Development had been successful a grant of £1,000.00 expected.
   b. O.C.C. - community Transport grants 2026-27: Applications invited: To consider application: Not applicable.
6. Training: Consider/approve any training opportunities offered by OALC, NALC and SLCC:
   a. Breakthrough Communications – Data Protection Part 3: Clerk attended 27 April 2026.
   b. Unlock the Power of the Big Yellow Book — Your Local Council Bible!: Clerk attended on 6 May 2026.
7. Good Energy: Electricity prices are increasing from 1st November: Review tariff:
   a. Clear Solutions – Your OALC partnership – National Council Energy Scheme:

RESOLVED:

   - To approve the switch from Good Energy to Yu Energy (based on price comparison provided by Clear Solution) for a period of 36 months; saving approximately £1,000.00 per annum based on current quote; an up-to-date quote to be requested to ensure figures are correct.
8. Financial Reports and Bank Reconciliation:
   a. Budget Comparison: 1.5.2026 – 31.3.2027 up to 8.6.2026: Presented prior to the meeting, accepted and approved, noted that there were no anomalies as beginning of the year.
   b. Bank Reconciliation presented prior to the meeting, accepted and approved.
      i. 1.1.2026 – 31.3.2027 (Unity Trust St. No: 060 31.5.2026):

Balance B/fwd:	£39,872.88
Add Receipts:	£12,123.00
Less Payments:	£ 8,746.64
Total C/fwd:	£45,249.04

9. Financial Controls Checks: Financial Controls Check presented and signed by Financial Controller; RFO signed, Minute reference to be completed.
10. Banking:
    a. Review Bank Signatories: Update on removal of signatories: Confirmed that Cllrs. D. Richardson and P. Stubbs have been removed as signatories on the Unity Trust Bank Account.

11. Payroll: HMRC:
    a. PAYE:
        i. Submissions update: Complete.
12. Funds/Reserves: Review:

RESOLVED:

- To vire funds/earmarked reserves as follows:
- Woodland Fund: To retain a balance of £2,000.00
- Village Hall Fund: To increase the balance to £12,000.00.
- Traffic Calming Fund: To retain a balance of £2,000.00
- Special Project Reserve: To increase the balance to £7,149.81
- Neighbourhood Plan Fund: To retain the current balance £1,600.00
- To create a Church Fund Reserve: £1,000.00
- Donation to Village Hall Fund £496.00 to remain ring-fenced for purpose.
  Total Balance of Reserves maintained at £26,245.81.
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13. Account Year Ending 31 March 2026:
    a. Internal Audit: To consider interim /final report 2025/2026 and any action: The Internal Audit reports were considered and recommendations noted.
    b. End of Year Accounts: To be accepted and approved.

RESOLVED:

- That the End of Year Accounts were approved and signed.

    c. To confirm receipts or payments over £25,000 and therefore, the PC cannot Certify itself Exempt; Completion of AGAR 3 required.

RESOVLED:

- That the End of Year Accounts confirmed that the receipts £35,591.00 or payments £34,365.00 are over £25,000 and therefore, the Parish Council cannot Certify itself Exempt and Completion of AGAR 3 is required.

    d. Internal Audit Report: To receive and note completion of the Annual Internal Report by Internal Auditor with no 'no' answers requiring an explanation.
    e. Annual Governance Statement (Section 1): To be approved along with Explanation of 'No' response(s) if required: The Annual Governance Statements (Section 1) No's: 1-10 were read and answered:

RESOLVED:

- That the Parish Council answered 'yes' to Statement No's: 1-8 and 10 and N/A to Statement No: 9.

    f. Accounting Statements (Section 2): To be approved.

RESOLVED:

- That The Accounting Statement (Section 2) as presented and signed by the RFO on 5 June 2026 was approved.
    i. Following approval the Chair and the Clerk signed the Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements; minute references to be completed.

    g. Exercise of Public Rights: Date set by the RFO to be noted: The Exercise of Public Rights will be published on 30 June 2026 – Commencing on Wednesday 1 July 2026 and ending on Tuesday 11 August 2026; for 30 consecutive working days including the first ten working days of July.
    h. Required documents to be sent to the External Auditor by 30 June 2026.
    i. Publication: Documents as required by the Audit and Transparency Codes to be published before 1 July 2026.

14. EMPLOYMENT:
    1. Clerk's Contract and Job Description: Review comments to be forwarded to Chairman.
        a. Health & Safety: Consider lawful requirement: C/fwd.
        b. Annual Appraisal: Recommended by Internal Auditor: To be considered.

15. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS/TRAINING: To confirm or approve attendance at meetings or training provided by NALC, SLCC, C.D.C. and OALC:
    1. C.D.C. _ Invitation to Cherwell Parish Liaison Meeting - 10 June - The event will be at CDC's town-centre offices in Banbury. Parking at Castle Quay is free from 6pm, so we're starting at 6.10pm: Cllr. L. Wainwright to attend: Noted that the meeting had been postponed.

16. GENERAL
    1. Correspondence: Comments to be considered and any matters for the next agenda not already considered as part of this agenda: None noted.

17. Matters for Further Information or Discussion:
    1. Matters for Further Information: None.
    2. Matters for Further Discussion:
        a. Church Clock: Review service.
        b. MPCC – Contribution.

18. NEXT MEETING: To confirm:
    1. Parish Council meeting to be held on 13 July 2026 at 7:30pm in Merton Village Hall.

There being no other business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9:50pm.

Draft Minutes subject to confirmation:

Minute Ref: *M7/2026-6.1 – Approved with the addition of 3.1: Co-Option.*

Approved and Signed by the Presiding Chairman: *D. Marshall*

Date: 13 July 2026**.**