

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting was held in the Clinton Hall on Monday 1st September 2014 at 8pm.

Apologies were received from Councillors Collins and Scantlebury.

Present were Councillors Horner (chair), Papworth, Down, Malcolm, Nancekivell, the clerk Mrs Wendy Askew and 9 parishioners. Councillor Brown joined the meeting at 8.10pm.

Councillor Horner welcomed everyone to the meeting.

31. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7th July were signed as a true record having been previously circulated. Proposed by Councillor Malcolm, seconded by Councillor Papworth and agreed by all.

32. Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda. The clerk stated that although some people seemed to want another training session for the defibrillator, no names had been passed to her so another training session has not been arranged.

33. Public Speaking; Councillor Horner invited the parishioners to speak.

Mr John Chandler stated that he had heard from SW Water that there is no funding to extend the sewerage system in the 2015-2020 budget.

Mr Tony Hunt asked what the views of the village were concerning putting up such a big development. He suggested that it was 50% oversubscribed and a smaller development would be better. He pointed out that there was no rear vehicle access and that an access at the top of the site would be ideal.

Councillor Horner replied that everyone on the Parish Council is in agreement that there should be a second entrance.

Mr Tony Hunt said there are a lot of OAPs and people on fixed incomes in the village who can't contribute to the facilities.

Councillor Horner stated that people can work from home profitably so a mix of houses is essential.

Councillor Brown stated there had been a request for more housing. Many are happy for the development. With WIFI and better transport links than other neighbouring villages Merton also has great facilities for people to use.

Councillor Horner said the size of the development is down to the CDE and the developers.

Councillor Horner pointed out that this site is the preferred site. That the field opposite the Malt Scoop is to be kept as a green field. Other plots down by the school was another option but this site at the back of the Malt Scoop was the easiest to develop at this time.

Councillor Malcolm pointed out that young people who previously lived in the village would like to come back to live and would buy these houses.

Councillor Brown said people would like to buy these houses rather than rent.

Mr Chandler said the site is in the wrong place.

Councillor Horner re-iterated that this was the preferred site of the CDE.

Mr Hunt said that the Rosehill site would be a more appropriate site for young families.

Councillor Horner stated that Rosehill was more appropriate for older people as it is nearer the hall which could be used for older people and their activities.

Mr Hunt asked why the developers had decided on 33 houses.

Councillor Horner replied that this was CDE choice. He stated that CDE could walk away from this development and there would be no houses for 20 years or more.

Mr Hunt agreed that some development was needed but not 33 houses.

Mrs Hunt asked about the parking in the development as there might be an overflow of cars.

Councillor Horner said he presumed that TDC will look at the development and decide if there is adequate parking. Parking is stated as 1.9 parking spaces per house.

Mr Kevin Stacey asked if there were any specific sizes for the parking areas to take into account the size of the vehicles.

Councillor Brown said there would be concern about the size of the garages and it wouldn't be appropriate for cars to be spilling out on to the main road.

Councillor Horner thought the parking would be standard size spaces.

Mr Stacey asked if there were any thoughts about putting a caveat into the development stating that families should buy these houses.

Mr Hunt stated that it could end up being all old people buying these properties.

Councillor Horner stated that there are no proposals to put restrictions on who buys them. He stated that up to 30% of the houses would be affordable either to rent or buy. The Parish Council have asked for less affordable houses and the equivalent money put into work units. The Parish Council has asked for affordable houses for sale for local needs. There was a query on shared ownership.

Mr Chandler suggests if CDE say this is the option then was it a question that all had to agree taking it back to feudal days.

Councillor Horner stated that on a personal level he had always had a good relationship with the CDE and felt that the village were lucky to only have one benevolent landowner to deal with.

The minutes for the planning meeting held on 26th August 2014 were read out and will be included with the minutes of this meeting.

This part of the meeting closed and 6 parishioners left the meeting at 8.40pm.

34. District Councillor speaking. There was none as District Councillor Collins was not present.

35. Broadband was discussed and the councillors were informed of the correspondence going to and forth with Geoffrey Cox MP, BT, and others and the Parish Council. Councillor Papworth said that the Beaford exchange is now under consideration for upgrading. Geoffrey Cox has been asking BT for information but BT won't divulge how much it will cost to upgrade. The money comes through the Devon and Somerset connect funds. Councillor Malcolm asked how BT would cope with 33 more houses as it had been a problem getting connected for those at Coldstream Gardens. Councillor Papworth stated that the capacity would increase with cable and fibre optic input. BT will need to add new numbers.

The Councillors were asked to get results from parishioners re broadband speeds for the survey.

36. TAP fund. It was agreed to put this on the agenda for the next meeting to get Councillor Collins views from the other parishes.

The remaining 3 parishioners left the meeting at 8.50pm

37. Code of Conduct. The inappropriate comments made by a Councillor at the meeting on 7th July had caused offence to a parishioner who had e mailed a complaint. This was discussed and agreed that this was not acceptable and would need to be dealt with at the time. It was agreed to reply to the parishioner apologising for any offence this had caused and that it had been addressed at this meeting.

It was decided to discuss the changes to the Code of Conduct when all Councillors are present. Put on agenda for next meeting.

38. Tarka Trail; Councillor Nancekivell pointed out that with a new development there would be a greater need to have a link to the Tarka Trail. It was agreed to write to the CDE stating that it was the Parish Councils' wish to have a link to the Tarka Trail and that the Councillors would welcome any suggestions for potential routes. The path could be classed as a permissive path which would be controlled by the CDE. This was proposed by Councillor Brown, seconded by Councillor Nancekivell and agreed by all.

It was also agreed to write to the Clay works to see if there is any way to establish a link to the Tarka Trail through their land which is not now being used.

39. Salt Store; the clerk was asked to contact TDC to find out where to obtain the salt for the winter. It was preferred that it should be bagged this time. A working party of councillors would check the stores of salt around the village.

40. Chapter 8 training; It was decided to leave this as it would appear it is more appropriate for those working on the roads etc.

41. A letter has been received from Mr and Mrs Madders who are leaving the area. They have been tending the flower bed at the top of the square. It was agreed to ask Steve Jennings if he will look after it as part of his handyman role. Mr John Luxton is also giving up the flower bed at the entrance to the hall. A letter of thanks will be sent to these people.

42. A cheque was signed for Gist and Son for the granite top and lettering etc for the sun dial.

43. Items for the next agenda will be the Tarka Trail and update on the planning application for 33 houses.

The next meeting date will be Monday 13th October at 7.30pm. There being no further business to discuss the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

To be included in the minutes as an amendment requested by Mr Tony Hunt who spoke to Adrian Pitts before the meeting held on the 1st September and Mr Hunt said this at the meeting but it was not included in the minutes.

- Mr Tony Hunt said Adrian Pitts said he wasn't personally in favour of the development.

This amendment has been added before approval of the minutes