

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Merton Parish Council was held in the Clinton Hall on Monday 6th July 2015 at 8p.m.

Apologies were received from Councillors Brown and Nancekivell and PCSO Sandra Brown.

Present were Councillor Horner (chair), Councillors Papworth, Laughton, Scantlebury, Malcolm and Collins, District Councillor Wiseman the clerk Mrs Wendy Askew and 1 parishioner.

22. The minutes were signed as a true record having been previously circulated. This was proposed by Councillor Malcolm, seconded by Councillor Collins and agreed by all.

23. Matters arising not on the agenda.

a) A letter had been received from Mrs Jane Eades following on from her previous complaint concerning the dumping/storage of white goods at a plot in Grange Lane. It appears that these items have still not been moved. After much discussion it was decided to contact CDE as landlords to see if they could help with the matter. This was proposed by Councillor Malcolm seconded by Councillor Collins and agreed by all.

24. Public Speaking time; Mr Kevin Stacey expressed his disappointment that the Councillors had not approached his father direct concerning the garden hedge which had become overgrown. It was addressed via the CDE. Councillor Horner apologised for this and stated that he had actually since seen Mr Brian Stacey. Mr Kevin Stacey then left the meeting

25. District Councillor Wiseman addressed the meeting. Stating the concerns about the South Molton Recycling company going into administration but it is hoped it will soon be resolved with a new company and the service will resume soon.

Broadband is going out to tender again as BT have been unable to complete the target.

The North Devon Crematorium is being refurbished and a new larger chapel is being built.

The car parks around the Torridge District are being refurbished. Councillor Collins pointed out that some of the car parks don't take modern coinage. This needs to be checked. District Councillor Wiseman will investigate.

Councillor Horner asked if he could check on the green wheelie bins again as some residents to the Lower East side could not be provided with green bins because the lorry couldn't go down the road to Beaford even though the other refuse lorry does. It appears some residents who have green wheelie bins take them up to the A386 for collection. District Councillor Wiseman agreed to take this back to TDC.

He also told the meeting that he has been appointed Lead for Community.

26. Footpaths; It was agreed to write to the footpaths dept. and request a pack to apply for more footpaths.

27. Speed Limits; The clerk reported that she had not yet received any reply from the request to address the speeding problem in the village with suggestions for traffic calming measures.

28. Spending Plans for the Parish Council reserve funds. After much discussion, Councillor Collins proposed some should be spent on getting the cobbles by the walls in the square re-done. This was seconded by Councillor Scantlebury and agreed by majority with Councillor Horner abstaining. Councillor Horner will approach Devon Buildings to get someone who is able to do this. Councillor Scantlebury asked that the reserve funds should be spent and he wanted that minuted.

A suggestion was made to pay off the remainder of the Defibrillator cost. Councillor Collins proposed this was done, seconded by Councillor Scantlebury and agreed by all. Councillor Papworth reported that the defibrillator has been checked and is now in full working order.

29. Grass cutting – The clerk had e mailed DCC highways to find out when the verges will be cut. It was reported that they had not got back to her with details yet despite following it up with another e mail. She will contact them again. The Council would like to know when the verges are being cut so that they could maybe cut some of the verges in between. This will be done for safety purposes at entrances to bye roads and estates.

It was also noted that the verge at the bottom entrance of Meadow Vale is not getting cut. The clerk will find out who is responsible for this piece of land as it appears it may not be the Housing Associations' responsibility.

It was decided to put an article in the MM thanking all those in the village who keep parts of the verges cut and tidied and maybe encourage others to do so.

30. Jubilee Copse. Councillor Scantlebury suggested putting up more bird boxes and seat in this area. It was decided to ask the wildlife group if they could help with the bird boxes.

31. Village Hall and Charity Commissioners Councillor Collins firstly stated that the Clinton Hall accounts can now be viewed on the Charity Commissioners website. It was decided that the Parish Council should have a hard copy of the accounts for their records. The clerk asked if the Parish Council could have a copy of the hall insurance, this has been asked for on numerous occasions over the years but still not received. Councillor Collins as chair of the Hall Committee will get this done.

Councillor Collins also discussed an issue which has arisen with a member of the committee also being a paid employee. The Committee has sought advice from the Charity Commissions to make an exception to this. Councillor Collins asked for the Parish Council to support this. He proposed that the Parish Council approve this, there was no seconder and therefore it was not voted on. The Councillors were not prepared to agree to this as there were concerns this could set a precedent which could escalate in future. Councillor Collins wanted it noted that this matter had been brought to the Council's attention.

32. Welcome Pack the clerk brought some ideas for items to be included in a welcome pack for those moving into the area. It was also suggested putting it on the website. Councillor Malcolm agreed to put a pack together. It was also decided that Councillors notify Councillor Malcolm of anyone moving in around the area they live in so that they may obtain a pack and visit the new residents to welcome them.

33. Clerks salary and hours. Since this was put on the agenda the clerk Mrs Wendy Askew has tendered her resignation due to retirement after 45 years as clerk. It was agreed an advert should be put into the MM and neighbouring village newsletters. It was also suggested e

mailing clerks of local Parish Councils. Councillor Papworth will draft an advert. Councillors Horner, Papworth and Laughton will check the applications. All applications to be addressed to the chair Councillor

Horner. Hours and salary to be agreed.

34. TAP fund. Petrockstowe Parish Council have asked if they could apply for the Tap funding from TDC this year. This was proposed by Councillor Collins seconded by Councillor Malcolm and unanimously agreed by all.

35. A report of crime in the parish was received from PCSO Brown stating that there had been 3 calls logged from 6/6/2015 – 6/7/2015. 2 were for domestic incidents and 1 concern for welfare.

36. An email had been received from South West Ambulance Service re providing defibrillator awareness training. It was decided to accept and suggested a Monday in September at 8pm.

37. A letter had been received from the Merton Meal and Market asking for funding to purchase 3 flag banners stating “Market Here Today” to be put up each Thursday morning and taken down after the market had closed. The cost was £300. It was proposed by Councillor Scantlebury, seconded by Councillor Laughton and all agreed not to fund this believing the Merton Meal and Market was a commercial enterprise.

38. Councillor Horner gave a vote of thanks to the clerk for her contribution to the Parish Council over the past 45 years all agreed.

39. Items for the next Parish Council meeting. It was decided that Councillors should contact the clerk a month before the next meeting with items to be included on the agenda. This would give everyone a chance to decide what will be included. Of course should anything urgent arise this will be considered nearer the date of the meeting.

40. The next meeting date will be Monday 7th September at 8.0pm.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm