

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Merton Parish Council was held on:
Monday 11th July 2016 at 7:30pm in the Clinton Hall

Present: Cllr Horner (Chair), Cllr Papworth, Cllr Collins, Cllr Malcolm, Cllr Laughton, Cllr Brown and Cllr Nancekevill

In attendance: Parish Clerk Zena Tett and D. Cllr Richard Wiseman

A minutes silence was observed in memory of Private G Balch 16683, 9th Bn., Devonshire Regiment, brother of Mr J Balch of Merton, who died on 1st July 1916.

Business to be Transacted Public Participation

- i. **Police Report:** During the period 7th June 2016 to 7th July 2016 Merton and Huish have had one crime: criminal damage to property under £5,000 – vehicle. During the same period, 1 call was received where a log has been generated – 1 call reporting concern for welfare.
- ii. **Public Speaking Time:** No public present.

Formal Business

28. **Apologies:** C. Cllr Andy Boyd, PCSO Sandra Brown
29. **Absent:** Cllr Scantelbury
30. **Minutes from the last meeting:** held on Monday 23rd May 2016 – A minor error in numbering was picked up by the Clerk and a new copy was presented at this meeting. These minutes were agreed and signed as a true record (hard copy filed in Minutes folder). *Proposed by Cllr Collins and seconded by Cllr Malcolm.*
31. **Matters arising from the minutes:**
 - a) Speed sign and community speed check equipment update: Cllr Scantelbury deferred.
 - b) Footpath Pack: Councillors were advised to e-mail the Clerk with any footpaths they wish to have re-opened and they will be put on the next agenda. Councillors also advised that if we became a member of the Parish Path Partnership Scheme, they would maintain all footpaths in the Parish. Cllr Collins raised the question of footpaths being made available for the exercising of dogs, it was noted the Estate was not keen on opening additional footpaths. It was agreed that the Parish Council should ask the Estate on an individual basis of any footpaths residents may wish to be opened.
 - c) Sign Cleaning: Cllr Collins advised the signs in questions now appear to be cleaner – issue closed.
 - d) Children were seen to be using the new football nets and enjoying them. They were purchased cheaper than originally quoted, Cllr Nancekevill to give Clerk details of football club chairman. By way of these Minutes, the Parish Council hereby donate these Football Nets to the Football Club.
Action: Clerk to notify Chairman of Football Club.
 - e) Cllr Malcolm informed the meeting, 60 people (of all ages) attended the patrons' lunch and it was considered a great success. Cllr Collins thanked Cllr Malcolm for organising the event.
32. **Projector:** Cllr Collins notified the meeting the Village Hall projector was non-operational and either repairs or replacement were necessary. Cllr Collins to investigate whether or not the VH Committee are prepared to foot the cost of this at the next meeting.

33. **Village Entrances:** Cllr Horner advised the meeting that Mark Phillips drew up some plans, some years ago, on ideas of how the Village Entrance could look. Cllr Horner has spoken with the Estate and they have advised they will not allow us to do this. Cllr Horner proposed the Parish Council continues with Mark's plan on a smaller scale. There was a unanimous decision to move forward with this idea. *Action Cllr Horner to obtain prices* – Proposed by Cllr Collins and seconded by Cllr Horner. It was also noted Mrs Wendy Askew had done an excellent job on the planting of the tyres and should be thanked for her efforts.
34. **Village Developments:** Cllr Brown asked whether the Village Plan should be updated. D. Cllr Wiseman advised the new local plan has superseded any old plans that were previously on place. Item closed.
35. **TAP Funding:** There are monies available from the TAP Fund. Suggestions for the funding were new play equipment or a big notice board in the square. The Fund amount must be shared with other Parishes in order to make a claim. Cllr Collins proposed we pair up with Petrockstowe once more and use joint funding for Merton play equipment, seconded by Cllr Brown – all in favour.
36. **Churchyard Grant:** Cllr Collins advised the meeting that the Parish Council allocated £400 to the churchyard last year and suggested these were sufficient funds. Contributions from burials has been suggested but Cllr Collins did not think this would be forthcoming. Cllr Horner proposed we pay a churchyard grant of £400 every year and this item should be put on the AGM agenda. If the churchyard want the amount increased then the churchyard committee should request the change. Seconded by Cllr Malcolm – all in favour.
37. **Mileage expenses for Councillors attending training courses:** Cllr Papworth mentioned the lack of policy for Councillors and the Clerk attending training courses to enable them to reclaim mileage expenses and parking fees etc. Cllr Collins proposed that mileage for any agreed courses, training or other Council duties should be allowed plus parking fees, provided solely for that use. 45p per mile is the national allowable figure, seconded by Cllr Nancekevill – all in favour.
38. **General Grass Cutting:**
- a) Cllr Papworth advised the Parish Council has taken over the cutting, with an agreed sum of £398. As a result, Steve Jennings has now been asked to cut the grass twice a month.
 - b) The Parish Council has received excellent feedback on how well maintained the village now looks, however, there are other areas within the village that are being questioned as to who should cut them. Cllr Horner has approached appropriate parishioners asking them if they will maintain various areas within the Parish on an annual basis – agreed to do it this year. It was decided that if these areas show further neglect, the Council would ask Steve Jennings to cut them.
 - c) Highways have been contacted by the Clerk regarding the bollards in Clinton gardens.
 - d) There is a tree, near the entrance to Clinton Gardens, overhanging the highway which is in danger of obstructing the line of sight for vehicles. *Action Cllr Horner to speak with Paul Hipkin regarding cutting it back.*
 - e) Cllr Horner asked if the area of grass by the entrance to Clinton Gardens should be left to grow or cut back. After much discussion, it was decided that Cllr Nancekevill will roll the area around the entrance. Long term measures could mean obtaining some stone/chippings which would result in keeping the land drier. *Action Cllr Nancekevill to speak to Graham Askew.*
 - f) The grass near the Malt Scoop hasn't been cut for 2 years. Cllr Collins was asked if the VH could take on the area of grass on the other side of the fence against the road. *Action Cllr Collins confirmed he would bring this up at the next Village Hall meeting.*
 - g) Cllr Collins mentioned brambles overhanging the footpath from the hedge on pavement from School to Saw Mills. *Action Cllr Horner will contact the Estate.*
39. **District Councillor Speaking Time:** D. Cllr Richard Wiseman apologised for his absence at recent meetings.
- a) He confirmed the Local Plan has finally been submitted but not approved as yet. The most controversial issue was wind generation and he confirmed that the policy would state that wind generation would only be permitted if supported by a neighbourhood plan.
 - b) The District Councillor also confirmed the Devolution Plan is going forward.

- c) Community Grants was mentioned. He advised that only 1 group had approached him to date for money. Up to £10,000 of the original pot of £232,000 may be applied for. Closing date for smaller ward grants would be 24 months. This would mean £20,000 could be available over a two year period. Funding may be apportioned and points are awarded, i.e. joint funding or building in the parish. The aim is 50 points or more, all information may be found on the website. To be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.
- d) D. Cllr Wiseman also advised the meeting that he attended a recent presentation regarding the Link Road. DCC was given £600,000 to give a first stage feasibility study resulting in a booklet which shows the new plans and confirmed this is now moving into the consultation. He did confirm, however, that there would be no dual carriageway but that the road between South Molton and Bideford would be widened with 3 additional roundabouts, work starts 2020. Enquiries may be made on the website.

40. **County Councillor Speaking Time:** C. Cllr Andy Boyd was not present. Our condolences on the recent passing of his wife.

41. **Planning:** There were no planning applications. Cllr Horner spoke to Leigh Ricks in the hopes of gleaning some news on the development of 2 new bungalows on Beaford Road, however, nothing could be confirmed.

42. **Finance:**

- a) Cheque No. 275 : Payee Steve Jennings for maintenance£101.84
- b) Cheque No. 276 : Payee Mrs Horner for Queens Birthday Celebrations £65.65
- c) Cheque No. 277 : Payee Steve Raine for Audit £100.00
- d) Cheque No. 278 : Payee Cllr Brown for Goal Posts £132.00

43. **Correspondence:** The Clerk had distributed 27 items of correspondence by e-mail since the May meeting. She highlighted a letter from Geoffrey Cox MP advising the Parish Council that Laurent Boon, Manager from the Next Generation Access Programme was going to contact the Parish to arrange a visit to discuss the issues the Parish has had with the broadband access. To date, no contact has been made. *Action Clerk to contact Laurent Boon.* There were two further e-mails regarding play equipment and these were passed to Cllr Malcolm.

44. **Items for next agenda:**

Cllr Papworth asked for Village Planters and Hanging Baskets to be put on the February agenda.

45. **Next meeting date:** Monday 5th September 7:30pm

With no more business, the meeting was declared closed at 8.40pm

Chairman

Date