

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Merton Parish Council was held on:
Tuesday 1st November 2016 at 7:30pm in the Clinton Hall

Councillors Present: Tim Horner (Chair), Steve Papworth (Vice Chair), Jill Malcolm, Philip Collins, Chris Laughton, Bill Brown, Robert Nancekevill

Parish Clerk: Zena Tett

Also in attendance: District Councillor Richard Wiseman

Absent: Councillor Paul Scantlebury

Business to be Transacted

59. **Apologies for Absence:** PCSO Sandra Brown
60. **Welcome:** Councillor Horner welcomed everyone to the meeting.
61. **Minutes of the last meeting:** held on Monday 5th September 2016 were agreed and signed as a true record.
62. **Declarations of Interest:** None
63. **Public Speaking Time:** None present
64. **Matters arising from the last Meeting**
 - a. Village Hedgerow:
 - Cllr Horner has spoken with Adrien Pitts who confirmed he had cut part of the hedgerow and would liaise with the owners of Sunnyside before cutting the remainder.
 - Cllr Collins asked if the footpath was the responsibility of the County Council. The build-up of detritus is a concern and needs cutting back to widen the pavement. Cllr Horner to forward a plan to the Clerk before she writes to DCC asking them to carry out the works. **Action Cllr Horner and Clerk**
 - Cllrs were concerned about the lack of communication with TDC Planning department regarding the recent application for the removal of a hedge and the subsequent removal of that hedge without notifying the Parish Council due to its objections. District Cllr Wiseman said concern had been raised over the lack of communication in the Planning Department – communication is crucial as this department has the most interaction with the public. Clerk to write to TDC stating the Parish Council's disappointment in not being notified. **Action Clerk**

- Cllr Papworth mentioned, on behalf of a parishioner, the hedge outside the old Post Office was protruding considerably and needed reducing. Cllr Horner will liaise with Adrien Pitts. **Action Cllr Horner**

b. Pension Scheme:

- Clerk to send confirmation to Cllrs Papworth and Malcolm stating she does not wish to take part in the Pension Scheme. **Action Clerk**
- Clerk's salary was not raised in accordance with pay scale earlier this year. Clerk to write to TDC and ensure they have the correct information. **Action Clerk**

65. Member Reports

a. District Councillor

- There is Ward money (Community Grant Scheme) still unclaimed.
- TDC have stated there are refugees in Torrington. TDC are looking for sites, locally, for Travellers. If any Parish's know of any suitable locations to inform TDC as it is a legal responsibility of the District Council to provide sites.
- The Local Plan is progressing and will be going out for public consultation soon.
- Still awaiting the Boundary Commission to inform Councils of their decision.
- The Devolution Proposal has been established for approximately 18 months with various local authorities in Devon, Somerset and the National Parks involved. It was progressing slowly but surely, however, the government has just announced they must have an elected Mayor.

b. Cllr Brown asked Cllr Wiseman if he could chase up the road improvements on the A386 by Higher Lodge, near the Estate. Cllr Wiseman advised the meeting to log all road defects on website and leave complaint.

c. Cllr Laughton mentioned the automatic 30mph speed sign on the South side of the Village is faulty. Clerk to write to Highways and ask who is responsible for maintaining it and ask them to make the necessary arrangements to repair the sign. **Action Clerk**

d. Cllr Laughton also asked if Refuse Collection could be mentioned in the next Merton Monthly. Residents are putting their refuse out the night before collection resulting in night animals rummaging and leaving a mess. **Action Cllr Horner**. Cllr Collins asked Cllr Wiseman if a leaflet could be organised and distributed. **Action Cllr Wiseman**

e. Cllr Collins asked if Churchyard Mower and the Merton Monthly Magazine could be put on the next Agenda. **Action Clerk**

f. Cllr Horner has been liaising with the Estate regarding the development and they hope to be able to come back with something more favourable in the New Year as they are currently speaking with a new developer.

g. PCSO Sandra Brown was absent but her report stated during the period 30th September to 31st October Merton and Huish have had three crimes. During the same period the Police have received 9 calls where a log has been generated.

66. Clerks Report

- a. Correspondence: There have been several items of correspondence forwarded by email since the last Clerk's report, most of which were routine newsletters. The Clerk highlighted an email from Devon Highways reference the Town & Parish Conference to be held in Hatherleigh Community Centre on 22nd November 2016. A letter has been

received from TDC confirming the successful TAP Fund application – the Parish can expect funds to be received in the next few weeks. PCSO Sandra Brown forwarded an email asking the Parish if Police attendance would be required at Merton Christmas Fayre and if so to forward dates. Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service sent out a Press Release highlighting the Chimney Fire Safety Week. Devon Rural Housing Partnership forwarded a letter asking for Parish support in publicising Self Build and to raise awareness among those in the community who may have an interest in self-build housing or who have a suitable site – Leaflets have been placed in the Village Hall.

67. Finance

- a. Bank Balance for the Treasurers Account as of 4th October 2016 statement was £3,565.56. During this period 6 cheques were cleared totalling £347.95 and 2 payments were received totalling £1,629.48. There are 4 new cheques which total £382.26 giving the Parish an actual balance of £3,183.30 when these cheques have cleared. The last statement for the Business Bank Account was 9th May 2016 which showed a balance of £16,404.23.

- b. Cheques for Signature:
 - £14.25 – Grass Cutting
 - £99.56 – Maintenance Work
 - £86.44 – Clerks Expenses
 - £182.01 – Grass Cutting and Maintenance

- c. Receipts:
 - Precept – £1,240.48
 - Grass Cutting – £389.00

Final Note: The Clerk was asked to send out a list of meeting dates. **Action Clerk**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:20 pm

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: (Chair)

NAME:

DATE:

Next meeting will be held in The Clinton Hall, Merton on Monday 9th January 2017 at 7:30pm