

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting of Merton Parish Council was held on:
Tuesday 9th January 2017 at 7:30pm in the Clinton Hall

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

Parish Clerk: Zena Tett

Also in attendance: 1 member of the public and PCSO Sandra Brown

Absent: Paul Scantlebury

Business to be Transacted

68. **Apologies for Absence:** District Councillor Richard Wiseman
69. **Welcome:** Councillor Horner welcomed everyone to the meeting.
70. **Minutes of the last meeting:** held on Monday 1st November 2016 were amended; item 65b. wording changed to "A386 by Higher Lodge, near the Estate and the numbering has been updated. They were then agreed and signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Collins, seconded by Cllr Papworth and all agreed.
71. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllrs Horner and Malcolm have an interest in item 74.b. as they are both on the Play Equipment Committee.
72. **Public Speaking Time:** PCSO Sandra Brown reported that during the period 9th December 2016 to 9th January 2017, Merton and Huish have had one crime: theft from a motor vehicle. During the same period the Police have received 5 calls where a log has been generated. After delivering her report, she left the meeting.
73. **Matters arising from the last Meeting**
 - a. Village Hedgerow:
 - Cllr Horner advised Councillors all hedges that needed attention had been cut and proposes to use his discretionary budget to ensure small Highways maintenance issues are carried out in a timely manner. This was agreed by all.
 - The public are continuing to place refuse bags out earlier than necessary, resulting in pest issues – the request for bags not to be put out early has been well publicised and Councillors will continue to monitor the situation.
 - b. The Clerk has spoken with Highways who have confirmed they are responsible for the automatic 30mph speed sign on the South side of the Village which is faulty. Enquiry reference number ENQ16952161.
74. **New items**

a. Malt Scoop Notice Board

- The condition of the notice board was discussed and will be monitored.

b. Play Equipment

- It has been noted by the Chairman that item 53. of the September Minutes had been incorrectly voted upon due to Councillors failing to declare an interest. The Clerk has therefore requested Councillors to “re-decide” the matter in order to mitigate this issue. After some discussion, Councillors Horner and Malcolm left the room.

Item 53 of the September Minutes

After much discussion it was proposed that the Parish Council applied, with the support of the Play Equipment Committee, to the Lottery Fund for new play equipment to be located on the top car park. If successful, the Parish Council would own this equipment and be responsible for maintaining and insuring the new play equipment as a public facility for the parish. This recommendation was proposed by Cllr Collins and seconded by Cllr Horner, all in favour.

Item 53 of the September Minutes was proposed by Cllr Brown, seconded by Cllr Papworth. The proposal was passed by 4 to 1. Further discussion resulted in Cllr Laughton proposing the Play Equipment Committee arrange a public consultation meeting to allow the public to view the plans, this was seconded by Cllr Papworth and all were in favour. **Action Cllrs Horner and Malcolm**

- Cllr Horner requested £2,010 from Parish Council funds to enable them to seek a grant from Devon Waste Management for a further £16,000 towards play equipment. Cllr Collins proposed, seconded by Cllr Papworth. The proposal was passed by 4 to 1. **Action Cllrs Horner and Malcolm**

c. Snow Warden Report

- Cllr Brown confirmed salt bins are now full, however, Clerk to write to DCC and ask for further salt in bags to be delivered and distributed around the village. **Action Clerk**

d. Churchyard Mower

- Cllr Collins has applied for a Community New Homes grant – more information will be available at the next meeting. **Action Clerk**

e. Merton Monthly Magazine

- Several residents and Councillors have expressed an interest in resurrecting the Village Magazine and hopefully there will be an issue in March. **Action Cllr Collins**

f. Lengthsman Works

- The build-up of detritus has been a concern and the Clerk has logged this with Highways ENQ 17964694 and a Highways Officer will be visiting Merton to assess. It has been noted Limers Lane and Merton Mill up to Balls Corner and up to the Village are in need of attention. For information, if a member of the public wishes to report a problem with Highways they may visit <https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/> or email csc.roads@devon.gov.uk **Action Clerk**

75. Member Reports

- a. Cllr Papworth
 - Expressed his disappointment with BT as they assured him he would be notified when he would be able to receive Super Fast Broadband and he wasn't. The Clerk has sent a letter of thanks to Geoffrey Cox MP for his support in Merton's application for Broadband.
- b. Cllr Malcolm
 - Is looking into costs of flood lights on the football field for the Air Ambulance. Cllr Collins mentioned the Football Club have asked for flood lights to enable them to train during the winter months.
- c. Cllr Laughton
 - Has put a light on the Defibrillator – it has been set on auto but needs sunlight to keep it charged and the battery will need replacing periodically.
- d. Cllr Brown
 - Is concerned with Stagecoach and their rural, highly subsidised service and changing their bus schedule to what seems a highly inefficient and inconvenient service for local communities. Cllr Brown will write to local authorities to determine whether anything can be done to ease the situation. **Action Cllr Brown & Clerk**
- e. Cllr Nancekevell
 - A new sign saying "Unsuitable for heavy vehicles" should be put on the old Beaford Road – an application should be made to Highways. **Action Clerk**
- f. Cllr Collins
 - The sign opposite Towell Lane needs to be reported as it is broken and a potential hazard. **Action Clerk**
 - Has deposited files, related to the Village Hall in the filing cabinet which include copies of deeds.
 - Would like Defibrillator to be put on the next Agenda. **Action Clerk**

76. 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 several items of correspondence:
 - DCC Flood Risk Management Team: looking to collate information regarding locations that have been affected.
 - DCC have developed a series of community flood resilience training modules if anyone wishes to attend.
 - A briefing note from TDC which was prepared to provide an update on the progress of the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan.
 - Information on the Highway Community Enhancement Fund.
 - Notification from Highways: temporary prohibition of through traffic and parking (road from Langham Cross to New Bridge, Dolton) from Monday 9th January 2017 to Wednesday 11th January 2017.
 - Finally, the grass cutting contract has been renewed.

77. Finance

- a. Bank Balance for the Treasurers Account as of 10th November 2016 statement was £3,361.56. During this period 3 cheques were cleared totalling £204.00, no payments were received. There are 2 new cheques which total £90.84 giving the Parish an actual balance of £3,270.72 when these cheques have cleared. The Bank Balance for the Business Bank Account as of 9th November 2016 was £16,408.37. During this period there were no receipts, however, an amount of £2.07 interest had been added.
- b. Cheques for Signature:
- £50.84 – Clerks Expenses
 - £40.00 – Steve Jennings – General Maintenance Work
- c. Receipts:
- None
- d. Budget:
- The 2017/18 Budget was approved and Councillors agreed to increase the precept to £4,900.00 – proposed by Cllr Horner, seconded by Cllr Papworth, all in favour.
Action Clerk

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:45 pm

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD:

..... (Chair)

NAME: **DATE:**

<p>Next meeting will be held in The Clinton Hall, Merton on Monday 13th March 2017 at 7:30pm</p>
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