

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Held on Monday 10th July 2017 in The Clinton Hall

Councillors Present: Steve Papworth (Chair), Tim Horner (Vice Chair), Jill Malcolm, Philip Collins, Chris Laughton and County Councillor Andrew Saywell

Absent: Cllr Nancekevill

Parish Clerk: Zena Tett

Also in attendance: No members of the public were present

BUSINESS TRANSACTED

15. **Welcome:** Cllr Papworth welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the new County Councillor Andrew Saywell.
16. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Scantlebury sent his apologies, however, no reason was given. Cllr Brown gave his apologies after the meeting, his reason was due to illness.
17. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:** held on Monday 8th May 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Horner, seconded by Cllr Collins, all in favour.
18. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllrs Horner and Malcolm – members of the Play Equipment Committee, Cllr Collins - member of the Village Hall Committee and Cllrs Papworth, Laughton and Collins – member of the Churchyard Committee
19. **Public Speaking Time:** None
20. **Matters Arising**
 - 20.1 Play Equipment
 - 20.1.1 Cllr Horner confirmed Phase 1 of the play equipment was complete and being well used. At the next meeting he would like to discuss how often inspections should take place, by this time he would have gathered 2 quotes for review. There was an inspection of the new play equipment immediately after installation which was carried out by The Play Inspection Company Ltd. In the meantime The Playground Committee members will be making visual inspections and logging findings. The new play equipment is now covered on the Parish Council insurance. Cllr Papworth gave his thanks to the Playground Committee.
 - 20.1.2 A final payment of £491.23 was made by the Playground Committee to the Parish Council at the meeting. The spreadsheet, showing all net costs paid by the Playground Committee and grant providers, was reviewed and was deemed to be correct by Councillors present. The Parish Council confirmed they would pay the remaining invoices that had been submitted and reclaim the VAT this was proposed by Cllr

Collins and seconded by Cllr Papworth, all in favour. On a final note, it was recorded that the Clerk would need to contact HMRC regarding the amount of VAT reclaimed on the Kompan Invoice. **Action Clerk**

20.2 Devon Air Ambulance Landing Site

Cllr Papworth confirmed that Cllr Brown had submitted the planning application. Cllr Horner strongly suggested that Parish Council make efforts to fund raise for this project. Later in the meeting, County Councillor Andrew Saywell suggested he may have some funds available.

20.3 River Mere Water Quality

Cllr Collins informed Councillors he had received a reply to his letter and the Water Authority has classified the river as moderate due mainly to phosphates and the clay which was possibly spoiling the salmon breeding/spawning ground. The river is being monitored monthly (during the Summer) by a volunteer from Devon Wildlife, checking insects and invertebrates – if it reaches a certain score, the water authority will carry out a test.

20.4 Planters & Hanging Baskets

Cllr Papworth said only one resident had offered to look after planters/hanging baskets. Councillors suggested the volunteer could look after the planter by the Village Hall and the Parish Council would pay for any plants, Cllr Papworth will approach them. **Action Cllr Papworth**

21. New Items

21.1 Funding for Clinton Hall

Cllr Horner proposed donating £540 per year to the Clinton Hall to cover the costs of the Merton Monthly and the Public Toilet. This was seconded by Cllr Malcolm, all in favour. **Action Clerk**

21.2 Highways Issues

21.2.1 The state of the A386 has been logged with Highways under reference number W171017915. County Councillor Andrew Saywell asked for photographic evidence to be forwarded to him and he would ask that this major road is prioritised. County Councillor Andrew Saywell also suggested copying him in with any Highways issues in case he is able to help.

21.2.2 The 30mph speed sign has been returned, however, the sign is now on permanently. The Clerk to contact Highways. **Action Clerk**

21.2.3 The Clerk was asked to chase the Beaford Road pothole issue. Since this meeting the Clerk has registered this pothole once more with Highways and the number is W171024038.

21.3 Grass Cutting

Cllr Horner suggested keeping a list of volunteers who cut areas of grass (that don't belong to them) around the Village and ensure they are acknowledged each year. **Action Cllr Horner**

21.4 Parking in The Square

Cllr Papworth proposed only private cars that are taxed should be allowed to park in The Square and no overnight sleeping at all. This was seconded by Cllr Horner, all in favour.

21.5 Proposed Development of New Houses at Merton

Clinton Devon Estate attended a meeting with Torridge District Council recently. The Parish Council have been given to understand the Estate must

“tick a few boxes” then re-present their application. The Parish Council have written to the Clinton Devon Estate outlining issues which concern the Village.

21.6 Play Area Lease

The Parish Council had previously agreed to terminate the lease and the money will come back to the Parish Council. The Parish Council will take into consideration the cost of yearly inspections of the remaining old play equipment if it remains on site. The money could be used to tidy the site for which the Playground Committee would be responsible. For discussion at the next meeting of the Council. **Action Clerk**

21.7 Old Play Equipment

The Playground Committee have offered to give a visual inspection of the old equipment. Cllr Horner confirmed they had received a quote from ROSPA, one of the two approved companies by Kompan to maintain the guarantee of the equipment, of £225 plus VAT for the new equipment and £90 plus VAT for the old equipment. Cllr Horner is still awaiting a further quote before a decision can be made. The Playground Committee will be responsible for making the area tidy, however they will need a clearer idea on how to proceed. To be discussed at the next meeting of the Council. Action clerk

22. Planning

22.1 1/0410/2017/FUL

Eastbeare Farmhouse, Merton: proposed extension and alterations to farmhouse.

To minute the decision made by Councillors via email to support this application.

22.2 1/0460/2017/FUL

Twit Twoo, Merton: variation of condition 2 to planning application 1/1099/2015/FUL – alterations to garage roof design, additional roof windows, reposition of plant room and fenestration alterations.

To minute the decision made by Councillors via email to make no objection to this application.

22.3 1/0460/2017/FUL

Twit Twoo, Merton: variation of condition 2 to planning application 1/1099/2015/FUL – alterations to garage roof design, additional roof windows, reposition of plant room and fenestration alterations.

To minute the decision made by TDC to grant this application.

22.4 Planning Application Responses

For clarification, if comments are made on any application then they must be worthwhile/valid planning reasons or of a material consideration otherwise the comment will not carry any weight. If the Council Supports or Objects to an application, it must give a reason. However, if the Council has no objection or does not wish to respond, then no reason needs to be given. If any Councillors disagree on a response to be made on an application, then a meeting will be held for further discussion. After further discussion, Cllr Horner said all Councillors had a duty to respond and comment on planning applications circulated by email.

23. District and County Councillor Reports

23.1 District Councillor Richard Wiseman

Not present

23.2 County Councillor Andrew Saywell

County Councillor Andrew Saywell thanked the parish council for allowing him to attend and said he was deeply honoured to be the new County Councillor for Merton and thanked those who voted for him. He explained that roads were his number one priority and his initial dealing with Highways Officers proved them to be more cooperative and communicative than his previous dealings with them. Secondly, the state of the NHS and the review of the acute services, his initial findings are very positive. Thirdly, education and funding for the schools. Last of all, the regeneration of Torrington. He was appalled by the empty shops and the closing of the last bank recently. He is concerned the town centre will decline even further. He promises to be open and accessible and is looking forward to working with the Parish Council and supporting the community in Merton.

24. Clerks Report

24.1 Correspondence

The correspondence below was reviewed/noted:

- i. CPRE "Our Outdoors" Competition 2017
- ii. Wendy Askew – thank you letter for dealing with potholes in Meadow Vale
- iii. Public Consultation on Proposals for Improvement South Molton to Bideford Leaflet
- iv. TDC – Consideration of potential housing sites to deliver accommodation for travellers – PC have not identified any sites.
- v. TDC – TAP Fund 2017/18 – Cllr Collins suggested doing something for youths in the area and link with Petrockstowe, Peters Marland and Huish. **Action Cllr Collins**

24.3 Register of Interests

The Clerk received Register of Interests from Cllrs, Horner, Laughton and Malcolm, however, Cllrs Nancekevill, Brown and Scantlebury are still outstanding. **Action Cllrs Nancekevill, Brown and Scantlebury**

24.4 External Audit

The Clerk has been fielding questions from Grant Thornton and they appear to be satisfied with the answers provided.

24.5 Community First Insurance

Councillors discussed the new premium in light of the altered policy due to the new play equipment and Cllr Collins proposed the three year agreement. This was seconded by Cllr Malcolm, all in favour. The Clerk to ensure the Play Equipment is added to the Asset Register. **Action Clerk**

25. Councillors' Reports and Items for Future Agenda

25.1 Cllr Collins

Has been approached about the overgrown hedge outside Sunnyside. Also, a resident mentioned a gate had been left open and the cattle escaped. Cllr Horner said he would contact the Footpath Warden about putting in a new kissing gate. **Action Cllr Horner**

25.2 Cllr Papworth

He has been checking the Defibrillator and carried out monthly reporting.

26. Finance

26.1 The following payments were approved, proposed by Cllr Collins, seconded by Cllr Laughton, all in favour. **Action Clerk**

i.	Kompan	£42,904.79
ii.	Churchyard Committee	£400.00
iii.	Steve Raine: Internal Audit	£100.00
iv.	Steve Jennings: Maintenance	£63.58
v.	Steve Jennings: Maintenance	£138.53
vi.	J&J Sharp: hire of equipment	£361.62
vii.	Clerks Expenses	£97.28
viii.	Community First: Insurance	£691.75
ix.	Jag Signs	78.00
x.	The Play Inspection Company: post inspection	£438.00
xi.	Planning Application TDC	TBC
xii.	JJ Sharpe	£140.76

13.2 Review of the Bank Balance

The balance in the Current Account as of 15th June 2017 was £46,492.61. Payments due to be paid out of the account amount to £45,273.55. There is a cheque from the Playground Committee for the sum of £491.23 giving the account a total balance of £1,710.29 when these transactions have gone through.

27. Date of Next Meeting – the date of the next meeting of the Council was agreed as 11th September 2017 at 7:30pm in the Village Hall, Merton.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9:20pm

SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD: (Chair)

NAME:DATE: