

MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

A meeting was held in the Clinton Hall on Thursday 19th March 2009 at 7.30pm
Apologies: Councillors Collins, Down and Scantlebury

Present; Councillor Horner (chair), Councillors Laughton, Nancekivell, Sharpe, Phillips, Mrs Wendy Askew (clerk) and one parishioner Mr Gavin Smart.

Minutes: The minutes were signed as a true record having been previously circulated.

Matters Arising:

90. Bus Stop; A letter had been received from PC Rowlands at Torrington stating the legal side of the buses stopping in this area. It was also reported that the Service Bus drivers have been instructed not to stop anywhere other than the recognised bus stops at the square and these instructions will become effective immediately.

91. Tarka Trail; Councillor Nancekivell is arranging a meeting with Mr John Wilding of the Clinton Devon Estate.

92. Square; Mr David Lock has cleaned up the silt at the bottom of the square and declined to issue an invoice. The clerk has thanked Mr Lock for this. Councillor Phillips has met with a contractor to obtain a quote for the work in the square. Unfortunately the quote was incomplete. Councillor Phillips will arrange another meeting and obtain written quotes on all items to be addressed. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

92. Website; The website domain has been purchased and an invoice has been received for £141.90. The website will now be designed as soon as possible.

93. Public Speaking Time: Mr Smart from Great Potheridge spoke on the connections of General Monck to the village and the suggestion to give the Freedom of the Village to the Coldstream Guards, the regiment associated with General Monck. Councillor Nancekivell proposed giving agreement for this to be investigated by the Monck Committee; this was seconded by Councillor Phillips and all agreed. Mr Smart is already in correspondence with Lord Clifford on this matter. The regiment is being deployed to Afghanistan soon but should be back again by June/July 2010 which would be an appropriate time to have this event.

94. Mr Smart also touched on the idea of having a trained First Responder team in the village. This team would be made up of trained first aid parishioners who volunteer to act on an emergency call within the parish area before an ambulance arrives. This would be purely voluntary and further information will be sought. If anyone is interested names could be passed to the clerk in the first instance. It was proposed by Councillor Horner and seconded by Councillor Nancekivell and all agreed this should be pursued.

95. Village Entrances: A letter has been received from Mr Philip Collins on behalf of the Monck Committee seeking permission to have General Monck's connections put onto signs at the Village entrances. This would have no cost to the Parish Council. Designs would be drawn up and brought to the next meetings. It was also suggested all councillors bring along photos and designs that they would like at the entrance to the village. A letter was received from the Clinton School thanking the Parish Council for including the children in the ideas for designs but declining the offer at this time due to pressure of school work during the next term.

96. General Monck Statue: A letter was received from Mr Phillip Collins on behalf of the Monck Committee seeking permission to erect a monument in the village to commemorate the 400th anniversary of General Monck's birth. The monument would be made of a piece of

granite sourced from Great Potheridge and fixed on a plinth. Suggested sites were in the flower bed at the top of the square or on ground near the school. A plaque would be fixed to the monument. This will be discussed at the next meeting. The councillors requested a sketch to scale for the flower bed site. The unveiling would be on 5th December 2009.

97. Grants: The grants for local organisations could not be discussed as awaiting letter of dispensation from Solicitor at Torridge District Council.

98. Parish Plan Review: Items discussed were the notice board/ footpath map for the square. It was decided to get some prices for this. The next item was the welcome pack for new residents. The clerk has put together a pack of information for those moving into the parish. It is hoped that parishioners will contact the clerk and inform her of any new residents so that they may receive the information pack.

There was also the suggestion of a Youth Group in the village. A Group has already been formed to include Merton with other parishes. Mr Smart volunteered to organise some activities for the youth. Further details will be available later.

99. A letter was received from Torridge District Council asking for help in identifying sites for affordable housing. This was discussed and suitable sites had already been identified. It was decided to pass these on to Torridge District Council.

100. A questionnaire was received from Torridge District Council requesting information on open spaces, sports and recreational facilities. The clerk will complete and return this.

101. Emergency Plan: It was decided due to recent adverse weather that the emergency plan should be updated. If anyone has any skills or equipment which could be used during any emergency from weather to accidents etc could they please contact the clerk before the next meeting? All these details will be compiled in a folder for use should any emergency happen within the village.

102. Councillor Sharpe reported that the grant application had been made for the cooker in the Clinton Hall kitchen and the committee were awaiting the outcome from Torridge District Council's next grant meeting.

103. Code of Conduct; Councillor Laughton asked for clarification on the Code of Conduct prejudicial interests. The clerk would contact the legal department of the Devon Association of Parish Councils.

104. There were two cheques signed for the website domain and printer cartridges and supplies.

The next meeting will be on Thursday 7th May at 7.30pm which will be the AGM followed by an ordinary council meeting. Everyone was thanked for attending. The meeting closed at 8.50pm.