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## **MERTON PARISH COUNCIL.**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Held on Monday 8th July 2019 in the Clinton Hall, Merton at 7:30pm.**

**Parish Councillors Present:** Steve Papworth, Bill Brown, Jill Malcolm, Brian Stacey, Rob Nancekivell & Nigel Lang.

**Parish Clerk:** Alice Turner

**Also in attendance:** County Cllr Andrew Saywell, District Cllr David Hurley and PCSO Sandra Brown

## **BUSINESS TRANSACTED**

### **1.7.19 Welcome and address: Cllr Papworth welcomed everyone to the meeting.**

#### **2.7.19 Apologies for absence:**

Apologies were received from Cllr Twomey (holiday) and from District Cllr Wiseman.

Cllr Stacey proposed that the absence of Cllr Twomey be approved, seconded Cllr Nancekivell, All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/053)

#### **3.7.19 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

To consider the approval of the Minutes of the Extra-ordinary meeting held 20<sup>th</sup> May 2019. (RR2019/054)

Cllr Brown proposed that the minutes of the Extra-ordinary meeting held on 20th May 2019 be signed as a correct record, seconded Cllr Stacey, , All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/054)

#### **4.7.19 Declarations of Interest:**

Cllr Stacey declared a personal interest (family connection) in agenda item 9.7.19 (a) (DOI/001)

### **5.7.19 Public Speaking Time – No Members of the public addressed the council.**

#### **6.7.19 District and County Councillor Reports.**

##### **County Cllr Saywell:**

Sarah Campbell has been appointed as the Neighbourhood Highways Officer to cover for Darryl Jager while he is on secondment.

Cllr Saywell requested that highways issues are reported via the website

([www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/](http://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/report-a-problem/)) or via phone (0345 155 1004).

Darryl Jager as part of the “doing what matters” project is looking at how Highways currently operate capital work schemes and are identifying whether there are too many procedures and systems in place that are both slowing down the process and making it more expensive. The work has been focused in West Devon however they will soon start studying Great Torrington and I am hopeful a rural Parish in Torrington Rural will also be selected.

Cllr Saywell reported that the Devon and Somerset Fire and rescue service consultation is currently underway, there is no threat to the Torrington and Hatherleigh stations although Appledore is recommended for closure. Cllr Saywell asked that when the council have discussed the matter that he be sent a copy of the response.

Cllrs raised queries on the proposed yellow lines at top of village, Cllr Saywell responded that they have not yet been formally advertised but he hopes that they will be after the summer.

### **PCSO Sandra Brown**

1 crime of violence without injury in period 8.6.19 – 7.7.19.

| Offence                 | Recorded Crime<br>08/06/2019 to<br>07/07/2019 | Recorded Crime<br>08/06/2018 to<br>07/07/2018 | Recorded Crime %<br>Difference |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Violence without Injury | 1                                             | 0                                             | -                              |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>1</b>                                      | <b>0</b>                                      | <b>-</b>                       |

Incidents reported for this period as follows:

| Incident Closing Category | Incidents -<br>08/06/2019 to<br>07/07/2019 | Incidents -<br>08/06/2018 to<br>07/07/2018 | Incidents %<br>Difference |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Anti Social Behaviour     | 1                                          | 0                                          | -                         |
| Crime Recorded            | 1                                          | 0                                          | -                         |
| Public Safety             | 4                                          | 1                                          | 300.0%                    |
| Transport                 | 1                                          | 0                                          | -                         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>7</b>                                   | <b>1</b>                                   | <b>600.0%</b>             |

PCSO Brown informed Cllrs that if people don't report crimes the Police cannot investigate by sending out rural officers. The following website gives advice on how best to report different crimes [www.police.uk/information-and-advice/reporting-crime](http://www.police.uk/information-and-advice/reporting-crime). PCSO Brown left the meeting.

### **District Cllr. Hurley**

Electoral register forms will be sent out this month and should be completed and returned as soon as possible.

Electric car points: TDC have installed electric car charging points at Riverbank House, Bideford, South Street car park in Great Torrington and other locations.

Starling's petition under the long bridge at Bideford 7500 people have signed to ban New Year's Eve fireworks to prevent starlings being startled and flying out and being injured. 3 options have been suggested but more discussions to occur before any decision is made.

Climate change: TDC considered a pledge to make council carbon neutral by 2020, motion was supported. Recycling is up from 41% to 51%. The Government target is 50% by 2020.

### **7.7.19 Council Policies: to consider the approval and ratification of the following Policies:**

- MPC 008 Equality & Diversity Policy V.1.0
- MPC 009 Anti-fraud & Corruption Policy V.1.0
- MPC 010 Confidential Reporting Policy V.1.0
- MPC 011 Press and Media Policy V.1.0
- MPC 012 Risk Management Policy V.1.0

Cllr Papworth proposed that version 1.0 of policies MPC 008, MPC 009, MPC 010, MPC 011 and MPC 012 be approved and ratified with immediate effect, seconded Cllr Malcolm. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/055)

### **8.7.19 Matters Arising From the May Meetings:**

a) Asset register – Cllrs were happy with asset inspection delegation and requested that the noticeboard at Post Office and cabinet for defibrillator outside post office be added to the list – **ACTION: Clerk to update asset register.**

b) High-speed Broadband Failure – Cllr Papworth reported that the matter seems to have been resolved. The council agree to close the matter.

c) Clinton Hall Property Valuation – The clerk reported that the report has been circulated to Cllrs.

- d) Village Notice Board – Cllr Papworth reported that the noticeboard at the post office has been installed. Cllrs agreed defer the decision on the noticeboard for the square until landscaping works have been completed.
- e) Freedom of Merton – update on cabinet for vase – Cllr Papworth reported that he will look in to a cabinet for the vase and bring his findings to the next meeting for consideration.
- f) External Audit – update on correspondence & exercise of public rights – The Clerk reported that she received correspondence from the external auditor asking if we wished to be exempt from audit as our turnover was below the threshold. Unfortunately the short deadline for response did not allow for a meeting to be called and held and as such the external audit will take place. The clerk also reminded the meeting that the Exercise of Public rights ends Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July.

### **9.7.19 New Items**

- a) Grass Cutting of verge above Clinton gardens – Cllr Papworth gave a brief background on the grass cutting on the verge above Back Lane. Cllrs discussed the Life on the Verge guidance from DCC but agreed that it is not suitable on a visibility splay. **Cllr Brown proposed that the verge above Back Lane be cut, seconded Cllr Nancekivell, 4 in favour 1 against 1 abstain – Motion Carried (RR2019/056)**
- b) Neighbourhood Plan  
Cllrs discussed the idea of a Neighbourhood plan, and looked at a draft Neighbourhood Plan from another Parish that the Clerk had sourced. Cllrs decided that they didn't wish to progress with a Neighbourhood Plan at this point.
- c) Request for funding new sign from the Merton Playground Chairperson £43.20 – The Clerk reported that she had received a request from the Chair of the Playground committee for the Parish Council to pay for the new sign for the playground. **Cllr Papworth proposed that the council pay the £43.20 for the new playground sign, seconded Cllr Nancekivell. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/057)**
- d) Grange Farm – The Chair informed the meeting of a prospective planning application at Grange Farm. The proposed plan is to convert 4 barns into 4 properties and other outbuildings which could be converted under class Q resulting in 7 new potential properties on the site. Planning application to be submitted in the next few weeks.
- e) Airband – A broadband service provider whose service has recently gone live in Merton, are requesting a public meeting facilitated by the council. Cllrs discussed the matter and decided to ask them to attend the September meeting and give a 15/20 minute presentation and up to 15 minute Q+A at chair's discretion – **ACTION: Clerk to liaise with Airband and set this up.**

### **10.7.19 Clerks reports:**

- a) Update on Payroll arrangements. The Clerk reported that she has now taken over payroll services for Merton from TDC and is waiting on the final paperwork from HMRC for the system to go live.
- b) Approval of Clerks hours – The Clerk reported that the additional hours which the Council approved in May were not paid by TDC and as a result have been added to hours sheet PM2020/017 for payment. **Cllr Malcolm proposed that the hours on PM2020/017 be approved for payment, seconded Cllr Stacey. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/058)**  
**Cllr Malcolm proposed that the hours on PM2020/020 be approved for payment by post dated cheque for the 9<sup>th</sup> August 2019, seconded Cllr Lang. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/059)**
- c) Banking update – The Clerk reported that she has 2 mandate forms for existing signatories to sign the first will add her as a signatory, set up access for internet banking, change the correspondence address for the Council to the Clerks address and remove former Cllrs Horner and Collins as signatories. The second form will add Cllrs Lang, Stacey and Twomey as

signatories. It has been done as 2 forms to speed up the clerk's access to bank statements in light of the absence of Cllr Twomey.

d) Play equipment lease. The Clerk and Chair updated on the current situation with the surrender of the play equipment lease between TDC and the Council. The solicitor has asked for the Clinton hall conveyance document and Deed of Trust as well as any documentation which highlights ownership of the land in question. **ACTION: Clerk to check ownership with Land Registry. Chair to see if he has a copy of the documents the solicitor requested.**

e) TDC Play Strategy Audit – Cllrs discussed this and requested that the Clerk respond.

f) Register of Gifts – Clerk asked Cllrs to complete the register of gifts and return to her for submission to TDC monitoring officer.

g) GDPR Cllr Check list – Clerk asked Cllrs to complete the GDPR Cllr checklist and return to her.

h) North Devon Records office – The Clerk reported that she had circulated a request for funding for the continuation of North Devon records office. The Clerk advised that no decision was required at this meeting but it would need to be decided by November in order to be considered in the budget and precept discussion.

Cllrs decided to leave the matter until the Clerk has had chance to sort through the councils archive and see how much documentation will be send to the records office.

i) DALC Budget and precept course Tuesday 8th October £40 + VAT – Consider approving Clerks attendance.

Cllr Papworth proposed that the Clerks attendance on the DALC budget and precept course on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October be approved but that Winkleigh Parish Council be contacted and asked if they would be willing to pay half as the Clerk is a member of their Council, seconded Cllr Malcolm. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/060) **ACTION: Clerk to Contact Winkleigh Parish Council Clerk and ask that funding request be considered.**

j) Devon & Somerset Fire Rescue service - Service Delivery Operating Model- consultation will run for 12 weeks starting 1<sup>st</sup> July -20<sup>th</sup> September Clerk informed Cllr that it would be on the September agenda for consideration.

#### **11.7.19 Cllr reports and Items for future agendas:**

Cllr Brown requested that the printing/paperwork for meetings be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Stacey requested that concerns over a footpath with chained gate be added to the next agenda.

#### **12.7.19 Finance:**

a) To approve financial schedule of payments as presented by the Clerk at the meeting.

The Clerk presented the to the Council (appendix A) Cllr Papworth proposed that the financial schedule as presented be approved, seconded Cllr Malcolm. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2019/061)

#### **13.7.19 Confirmation of next meeting date:**

The next meeting of the council will be on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019 at 7.30pm.

#### **14.7.19 Confidential matters (PART II) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1(2)**

Cllr Malcolm proposed that the meeting be moved to Part II, seconded Cllr Brown. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/062) **County and District Cllrs left the meeting.**

a) To consider quotes obtained for the following:

1. Installation of 2 new benches and removal of old.
2. Hire of plant and driver to remove roots in flowerbed in the Square.

The Chair returned the meeting to pubic session (Part I)

b) Resolutions for items a) 1 & 2

Cllr Brown proposed that the Clerk be given the discretion to approve a quote up to the value of £500 for the installation of the 2 new benches and removal of old ones, once she has received a written quote and is happy that the contractor holds the relevant insurance cover, seconded Cllr Lang. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/063)

Cllr Brown proposed that the Clerk be given the discretion to approve a quote up to the value of £200 for the hire of plant and driver to remove roots in flowerbed in the Square, with the soil to be left on site and the roots to be removed from site by mutual agreement of Cllr Nancekivell once she has received a written quote and is happy that the contractor holds the relevant insurance cover, seconded Cllr Lang. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2019/064)

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.45 pm

**Signed as a true record:....*S. Papworth*..... (Chair)**

**Name: Cllr S Papworth      Date:09-09-2019**

**Original signed minutes retained by the Clerk.**

**APPENDIX A:**

**Pre-authorised payments made since last meeting**

| Payment Ref  | Amount          | Payee                    | Details                                             | Power          | Expenditure approval Minutes Ref & RR |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| PM2020/013   | £400.00         | Merton Churchyard Fund   | Grant to help with maintenance                      | LGA 1972 S.137 | 9.5.19 c)<br>(RR2019/032)             |
| PM2020/014   | £250.00         | Clinton Hall Committee   | Grant to help with cost of producing Merton Monthly | LGA 1972 S.137 | 9.5.19 c)<br>(RR2019/033)             |
| PM2020/015   | £477.46         | Came & Company Insurance | Annual Insurance Cover                              | LGA 1972 S.111 | E5.5.19<br>(RR2019/050)               |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>£1127.46</b> |                          |                                                     |                |                                       |

**Payments for authorisation:**

| Payment Ref  | Amount         | Payee          | Details                                                  | Power                  |
|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| PM2020/016   | £83.69         | Alice Turner   | Clerks Expenses May & June                               | LGA 1972 S.112         |
| PM2020/017   | £366.60        | Alice Turner   | Clerks Salary 27.5.19 – 30.06.19 & Overtime              | LGA 1972 S.112         |
| PM2020/018   | £155.32        | Steve Jennings | Grass Cutting                                            | Highways Act 1980 S.96 |
| PM2020/019   | £48            | DALC           | Contracts & procurements Course - Clerk                  | LGA 1972 S.111         |
| PM2020/020   | £280.20        | Alice Turner   | Clerks Salary 1.7.19 - 4.8.19 & Overtime approved 8.7.19 | LGA 1972 S.112         |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>£933.81</b> |                |                                                          |                        |

**Virment between budget headings for approval:**

| Amount  | FROM      | TO                     |
|---------|-----------|------------------------|
| £323.54 | Insurance | Unbudgeted Expenditure |

**Monies held as Reserves:**

| Amount         | Details                   |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| £1,500         | Election costs            |
| £10,000        | Square Improvements       |
| £250           | Defibrillator replacement |
| £636           | TAP Fund                  |
| £70            | TDC Expenses              |
| <b>£12,456</b> | <b>TOTAL</b>              |