

Merton Parish Council

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Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday 10th January 2022 at 7:30pm at the Clinton Hall, Merton.

Cllrs Present: Steve Papworth (Chair), Brian Stacey, Rob Nancekivell & Giles Kops.

Also in attendance: Alice Turner (Clerk)

No members of the public were in attendance.

BUSINESS TRANSACTED

1.1.22 Welcome:

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed them that the meeting was being recorded by the Clerk to assist in the preparation of the minutes. The recording will be deleted once the draft minutes are published on the Website.

2.1.22 Apologies for absence:

The Clerk reported that she had received apologies from Cllrs Scantlebury & Brown (prior commitment), Cllr Twomey (Family Commitment) and Cllr Lang.

[Cllr Nancekivell proposed that apologies for absence be approved from Cllr Scantlebury \(prior commitment\), Cllr Brown \(prior commitment\), Cllr Twomey \(Family Commitment\) and Cllr Lang, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. \(RR2021/042\)](#)

Apologies from County Cllr Andrew Saywell were also noted.

3.1.22 Minutes of the Last Meeting: [minutes can be found on the website.](#)

Cllrs to consider the approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on the 8th November 2021.

[Cllr Stacey proposed that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2021 be signed as a true and accurate record, seconded Cllr Papworth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. \(RR2021/043\)](#)

4.1.22 Declarations of Interest: None

5.1.22 Public Speaking Time: None

6.1.22 District / County Councillors & Police Reports.

- a) County Cllr Andrew Saywell – [Report in Appendix A.](#)
- b) District Cllr Richard Wiseman - No report received.
- c) Police report - FPCSO Brown - No report received.

7.1.22 Current & New Business:

a) Traffic & Highways Concerns (Chair)

Cllr Papworth reported that there are currently 3 street lights broken which have been reported since November. Cllr Stacey reported that there are still defects in the centre of the road in the village.

b) Drainage Issues with the Square (Cllr Scantlebury/Clerk)

No Update.

c) Update on relocation of Defibrillator to the wall of the Malt Scoop (Chair)

Cllr Papworth reported that the defibrillator has been relocated, and [Cllr Papworth proposed that £85 quote for electrical works, clerk to pay bill when works completed, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. \(RR2021/044\)](#)

d) Update on relocation of the Post Box (Chair)

Cllr Papworth reported that the post box will be relocated to the Square below the flower bed, Cllr Papworth proposed that the Council approve the relocation of the post box to the Square, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2021/045)

e) Discussion on memorial orchard at the Clinton Hall (Chair)

Cllr Papworth gave a verbal update on the history of the memorial orchard, Cllrs discussed and decided to take no further action at this time.

f) Discussion on purchasing Defibrillator & installing outside the Hall (Cllr Kops)

Cllr Kops gave a background on the topic, following discussions Cllr Papworth proposed that the Council accept the donation from the Clinton Hall and purchase a Defibrillator and cabinet to be located outside the Clinton Hall for public use, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2021/046) Clerk to action.

g) Discussion on installation of safety rail on footpath by Garage – Cllr Stacey.

Cllr Stacey requested a safety rail to be installed alongside the road to ensure pedestrian safety, Cllr Papworth agreed to contact the Clinton Estate and see what their views are.

h) Painting of some of the rubbish bins – Cllr Lang – Item deferred to next meeting

i) Discussion on receiving of Council documents by email – Cllr Lang – Item deferred to next meeting

8.1.22 Clerks reports to include:

a) Verbal update on Kompan repairs

Repairs of the swing seat has been completed. The Clerk is still waiting for a quote for remedial works of the other low risk items identified in the report.

b) Update on damaged Bench at top of Beaford Road

Replacement slats have been ordered and will be delivered to the Chair's address, the Clerk is liaising with the Insurance company regards a claim to cover costs.

c) Update on maintenance of the Arch over public right of way between the Square and Grange Lane.

This has been reported to DCC Public Rights of Way team who are looking into the matter.

d) Internal Auditors contract for Year-end 2022 and 2022-2023 financial year.

Cllr Papworth proposed that that as the Council have agreed on the appointment of the Auditor that they delegate authority for the Clerk to sign the contract when received on behalf of the Council, seconded Cllr Nancekivell. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2021/047)

e) Request for Clerk to attend SLCC Practitioners conference 15th to 17th February 2022 and for the Council to pay ¼ of cost which will be £18.75 (£22.50 Inc. VAT)

Cllr Papworth that the Council approve the attendance of the Clerk at the SLCC Practitioners conference on the 15th to 17th February 2022 and for the Council to pay ¼ of cost which will be £18.75 (£22.50 Inc. VAT), seconded Cllr Stacey. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2021/048)

f) Discussion on Guest Speaker for Annual Parish Meeting, Cllrs to also agree on possible date for meeting.

Clerk to book Hall for Monday 11th April for the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllrs to think of guest speakers.

9.1.22 Finance: Clerk to present documents for this item at the Meeting.

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

Cllr Papworth proposed that the financial schedule of payments as presented by the Clerk be approved, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2021/049)

b) Banking Checks for period 08-11-2021 to 10-01-2022.

The Banking Checks were carried out by Cllrs Nancekivell & Kops and all documents were signed.

c) 2nd Draft of the 2022-2023 Budget to be presented, Cllrs to discuss accrual for replacement of Play Equipment.

Cllrs discussed the 2nd draft budget and Cllr Papworth proposed that the Council approve a budget of £13835 for the 2022-2023 financial year and submit a precept request for £13420 for the 2022-2023 financial year, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2021/050)

10.1.22 Cllr reports and Items for future agendas: No items raised.

11.1.22 Confirmation of next meeting date:

The next meeting will be on Monday 14th March 2022 at 7.30pm in the Clinton Hall. The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 11th April 2022 at 7.30pm in the Clinton Hall.

Please note that any changes to the meeting date or venue will be updated on the Website.

12.1.22 Confidential matters (PART II) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2)

a) Resolution required to move the Council into Part II.

Cllr Papworth proposed that the Council move to Part II as the item under discussion contains sensitive employment information, seconded Cllr Stacey. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2021/051)

The Clerk confirmed that the audio recording had been stopped.

b) Clerks Annual Appraisal (Chair) *Contains sensitive employment information.*

c) The Chair returned the meeting to public session to hear resolutions

No Resolutions were made.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.03pm.

Appendix A: Report from County Cllr Saywell.

Covid update

The national picture is one of increasing number of people testing positive. In Devon we are below the national average with 1,254 per 100,000 infections (1,923 for England).

This wave is adopting a similar pattern as previous wave, starting in London then going North East/West then coming down the South West so we will be 2-3 weeks behind the peak of London.

The good thing for us is it gives more time to get people vaccinated! Rates are going up in all Devon Districts and being driven in younger working adults (20-39yrs). The Public Health Team expect to see a rise in school age children now they are back at school so a rise in rates will continue over the coming weeks.

Hospital rates however are only slowly rising with 179 within Devon, and in North Devon currently just 7 patients which has remained fairly stable.

The key public health messages remain the same; **get vaccinated**, lateral flow test regularly, hands face space.

There is now a change in policy if you have no symptoms and test positive via LFT you need to isolate, you do not get a PCR anymore. If you test negative on day 6 and day 7 you no longer need to isolate.

If you have symptoms, then you need to isolate and get a PCR test.

Non Covid Matters

Budget Preparations – The Cabinet has set target budgets for the next financial year. We await the Government's final financial settlement, but there will be an uplift in overall funding for Children's and Adult Social Care services, along with a small increase for Highways, but it is likely to be a tight budget overall. The draft budgets have been worked on over Christmas and will go through the Scrutiny Committees in January before final approval in February.

Torrington Work Hub – The new Work Hub in Torrington is now 'operational' with a soft opening this week with people using the space for the next few weeks to give feedback on what works best and what will need improving. Despite the immediate challenges with Covid, I believe this will be a great asset for the Town and the wider rural area and I am delighted this project has come to fruition.

Free school meal vouchers doubled for Christmas - DCC doubled the value of supermarket vouchers for families with children on free school meals from £15 a week to £30 a week for the Christmas holidays. Families received £60 voucher per child for the two-weeks to help with the additional financial pressures the festive period can bring.

Open Up to Skills initiative launched – A new initiative is being launched to provide training opportunities for people working in Devon's catering, hospitality, leisure, retail and tourism sectors. The "Open Up To Skills" project will support 700 additional training places to improve workforce skills and will also benefit businesses within these sectors as part of Devon County Council's economic recovery response to the coronavirus pandemic. More information online here - ["Open Up To Skills" initiative launched - News \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/news/open-up-to-skills-initiative-launched)

Appreciative Inquiry into Adult Social Care – DCC held a unique event celebrating the Adult Social Care sector when it held a conference that brought together leading national and local figures with care workers and providers to discuss adult social care. The Inquiry is being held to celebrate the incredible work being done by the 30,000 care workers in Devon who support vulnerable people and promote their independence on a daily basis. But it also aims to raise awareness of the acute challenges now faced by the industry, and identify recommendations that will help secure and improve its future, and realise its full potential. I look forward to reading the Inquiry's findings in due course.

Appendix B: Financial Schedule of Payments including Bank Reconciliation.

Pre-authorised payments made since last meeting:

Payment Ref	Amount	Payee	Details	Power	Minutes Ref & RR
PM2022/032	£271.44	Alice Turner	Clerks Salary (Nov 2021)	LGA 1972 S.112	12.5.21 b) RR2021/015
PM2022/037	£271.44	Alice Turner	Clerks Salary (Dec 2021)	LGA 1972 S.112	12.5.21 b) RR2021/015
Total	£542.88				

Payments for authorisation (retrospective approval):

Payment Ref	Amount	Payee	Details	Power	Funding Source
(PM2022/031)	£36.73	Steve Jennings	Grass cutting	Highways Act 1980 S.96	Running Costs/ Grass Cutting
(PM2022/033)	£100.00	Colin Jones Design	Website & Email Hosting fee	LGA 1972 S.11	Admin/IT
(PM2022/034)	£300.00	Kompan Ltd	2 x Quarterly Inspections	LG(MP)A 1976 s.19	EMR "Assets Fund"

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(PM2022/035)	£369.20	Kompan Ltd	Replacement of damaged swing seat	LG(MP)A 1976 s.19	EMR "Assets Fund"
(PM2022/036)	£294.76	Alice Turner	Re-imbursment for new Defibrillator Battery	Public Health Act 1936 s.234	EMR "Defib supplies"
PM2022/038	£100.03	Alice Turner	Clerks Expenses (Dec 2021 & January '22)	LGA 1972 S.111 & S.112	Staff Costs/Office Exp. & Staff Costs/Clerks Costs & Staff Costs/Training
PM2022/039	£16.00	Clinton Hall	Hall hire for January Meeting	LGA 1972 S.111	Admin/Hall Hire
PM2022/040	£111.74	The Plastic Company	Replacement Bench Slats	Parish Councils Act 1957 s.1	Unbudgeted Spending
TOTAL	£1,328.46				

Receipts since last meeting for information:

Payment Ref	Method	Details	Amount
PR2022/011	Bacs	DCC Grass Cutting Contract	£404.00
PR2022/012	Bacs	Parking Permits	£1.00
TOTAL			£405.00

Monies held as Reserves (after payments):

Amount	Details
£1,500.00	Election cost (Earmarked Reserve)
£8,000.00	Square Improvements (Earmarked Reserve)
£750.00	Defibrillator Fund (Earmarked Reserve)
£636.00	TAP Fund (Earmarked Reserve)
£54.37	Defibrillator Supplies (Earmarked Reserve)
£511.00	Assets Fund (Earmarked Reserve)
£100.00	Hall Hire (Earmarked Reserve)
£2,000.00	Precept Contingency
£750.00	General Reserve
£14,301.37	TOTAL

Bank Situation

Bank Total 10/01/2022	£18,058.38
Less Payments pending	£227.77
Plus receipts Received (after Balance date)	£0.00
Less Money held as reserves	£14,301.37
Available Balance	£3,529.24

Bank Reconciliation: 10th January 2022.

	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Balance per bank statement as at 31st March 2021:	£15,479.70	£15,479.70
Less: total of Payments	£6,420.09	£9,059.61

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Plus: total of Receipts	£8,771.00	£17,830.61
Plus: Payments pending	£227.77	£18,058.38
Bank Total as at 10th January 2022		£18,058.38

Cash Book:

Opening Balance 1 April 2021 (box 7 of Accounting statement)	£15,479.70
Add: Receipts in the year to date	£8,771.00
Less: Payments in the year to date	£6,420.09
Closing balance per cash book as at 10th January 2022	£17,830.61

Appendix C: 2022-2023 Budget as Approved.

Income:

INCOME	Draft Budget			
	2021/22 Budget	Actual Income to 30-09-21	Predicted total Year End	2022/23 Draft Budget
Precept	£8,350.00	£8,350.00	£8,350.00	£13,420.00
Parking Permits	£10.00	£14.00	£16.00	£15.00
Other/grants	£300.00	£0.00	£404.00	£400.00
TOTAL	£8,660.00	£8,364.00	£8,770.00	£13,835.00

Expenditure:

	2021/22 Budget	Actual expenditure to 30-09-21	Predicted total Year End	2022/23 Draft Budget
STAFF COSTS	£4,000.00	£1,749.74	£3,915.00	£4,200.00
Clerk Salary & costs	£3,500.00	£1,623.74	£3,500.00	£3,700.00
Office Expenses	£400.00	£92.25	£325.00	£400.00
Training	£100.00	£33.75	£90.00	£100.00
ADMINISTRATION	£905.00	£520.71	£695.28	£905.00
Insurance	£550.00	£499.11	£490.28	£550.00
IT	£155.00	£0.00	£125.00	£155.00
Hall Hire	£100.00	£21.60	£80.00	£100.00
Contingency	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00	£100.00
RUNNING COSTS	£400.00	£214.80	£400.00	£400.00
Grass Cutting & Village Maint.	£400.00	£214.80	£400.00	£400.00
PROFESSIONAL FEES	£310.00	£209.00	£244.00	£310.00
Audit	£200.00	£150.00	£150.00	£200.00
Data Protection Registration	£35.00	£0.00	£35.00	£35.00
Subscriptions/Memberships	£75.00	£59.00	£59.00	£75.00
ASSETS	£1,225.00	£337.25	£2,000.00	£2,200.00
Maintenance	£250.00	£0.00	£250.00	£250.00
Purchases	£500.00	£18.75	£500.00	£500.00
Defibrillator	£350.00	£250.00	£350.00	£450.00
Play Equipment	£125.00	£68.50	£900.00	£1,000.00
GRANTS&DONATIONS	£570.00	£550.00	£567.00	£520.00

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Standing Grants	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00
Poppy Wreath	£20.00	£0.00	£17.00	£20.00
Other Grants/Donations	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£200.00
Reserves	£1,250.00	£1,250.00	£1,250.00	£5,300.00
General	£250.00	£250.00	£250.00	£500.00
EMR Play Equipment Fund	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4,300.00
Precept Contingency	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£1,000.00	£500.00
TOTALS	£8,660.00	£4,831.50	£9,071.28	£13,835.00

Signed as a true record: Steve Papworth

Printed: Cllr. S. Papworth Date: 14th March 2022

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