

Merton Parish Council

www.mertondevon.com / 01837 83484 / clerk.mertonparishcouncildevon@gmail.com

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

Cllrs Present: Steve Papworth (Chair), Bill Brown, Laura Twomey, Brian Stacey, Nigel Lang & Giles Kops.

Also in attendance: Alice Turner (Clerk) District Cllr Wiseman & County Cllr Saywell. No members of the public attended.

BUSINESS TRANSACTED

1.10.22 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.

2.10.22 Apologies for absence:

Resolution to approve apologies (with reasons) made to the Clerk prior to the meeting.

Apologies were received from Cllr Scantlebury (prior commitment). **Cllr Stacey proposed that apologies from Cllr Scantlebury (prior commitment) be approved, seconded Cllr Twomey. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2022/027)**

Apologies were also received from PFCSO Brown.

3.10.22 Minutes of the Last Meeting & Discussion on content of future Minutes (Chair): Minutes can be found on the website.

Cllrs to consider the approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2022.

Cllr Papworth proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2022 be signed as a true and accurate record, seconded Cllr Stacey. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2022/028)

Discussion on the content of future Minutes of meetings (Chair)

Cllr Papworth gave an overview of the matter asking that more content be added to the minutes to show the nature of discussions for example “there was a robust discussion” or “opinions varied”. The Clerk agreed to include more detail in Minutes going forward.

4.10.22 Declarations of Interest:

7.10.22 a) Cllr Brown declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in this item as the applicant.

5.10.22 Public Speaking Time: No members of the public present.

6.10.22 District / County Councillors & Police Reports.

a) County Cllr Andrew Saywell

County Cllr Saywell gave a report on the situation of the subsidized Stagecoach bus routes and the subsequent retendering process by DCC. The new service is due to commence soon with similar timetables and capacity.

A new speed survey has taken place on A386 and a Cllr Saywell gave a summary of the findings showing that the average speeds were on the high side but not high enough to see major change.

County Cllr Saywell reported that a interim Chief executive is now in place until the end of February to oversee the Budget, recruitment of a permanent Chief Executive is underway with appointment hopefully at the end of November with them taking over the post at the end of March or early April.

DCC has reduced the projected Budget overspend from £40m to £18m with further reduction expected by reviewing the way services are provided in both Children's and Adults services.

~Minutes of meeting held 10-10-2022 ~ Initialled as a correct record: S.P

Cllr Stacey raised a concern from a parishioner regarding a disabled by outside their home.
Cllr Saywell gave advice on how to proceed.

b) District Cllr Richard Wiseman

District Cllr Wiseman reported Proclamation Ceremony at TDC.

He updated on the Cost of Living Grants that are available from TDC more information can be found on the website (<https://torridge.gov.uk/costoflivinghelp>)

Cllr Wiseman report on Levelling Up grants and the 5-year housing land supply.

Cllr Wiseman reported that there has been an increased demand for housing for the homeless.

Cllr Wiseman have an overview as to how the budget can be balanced in the next financial year, areas including additional relief for Village Halls on rates, car park charges and leisure facilities.

c) Police report - PFC SO Brown – the report only showed 1 Transport incident, the full report can be viewed online.

7.10.22 Planning:

a) 1/0934/2022/FUL Partial demolition of existing building and erection of dwelling and outbuilding at Barometer World, Merton. Deadline 21/10/22.

Visit <https://publicaccess.torridge.gov.uk/online-applications/> and enter the application number to view documents.

Cllr Brown left the room due to a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in the item.

Cllrs discussed the application and felt that the application was not contentious and **Cllr Papworth proposed that the Council respond that they have no objection to this application, seconded Cllr Lang. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2022/029)**

Cllr Brown returned to the room.

The Clerk reported that application 1/0859/2022/FUL had been received, Cllrs to review the documents and let the Chair and Clerk know if they wish to call an extra-ordinary meeting.

8.10.22 Council Documents & Policies

Cllrs to consider/review the following policies as found of the Policy page of the website:

MPC 005 Complaints & Grievances Procedure V1.0 R3

MPC 006 Data Retention & Disposal Policy V1.0 R3

Cllr Lang proposed that the Council approve and ratify with immediate effect MPC 005

Complaints & Grievances Procedure V1.0 R3 and MPC 006 Data Retention & Disposal Policy V1.0 R3, seconded Cllr Stacey. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2022/030)

9.10.22 Current & New Business:

a) Traffic & Highways Concerns (Chair)

No new items raised.

b) Drainage Issues with the Square (Cllr Scantlebury/Cllr Nancekivell) – Deferred.

c) Discussion regarding request from Jubilee Committee regarding covered seating area in play area (Chair)

Cllr Papworth reported that the item is awaiting a programme of maintenance and associated works. Cllr Papworth reported that there is a S.106 agreement on the development which may affect the project.

d) Update on installation of safety rail on footpath by Garage – Cllr Stacey/Chair.

No further information received. The Clerk had circulated the map of the Conservation Area.

e) Update on relocation of Noticeboard to The Square Bus stop – Cllrs Lang & Papworth – Deferred.

- f) **Discussions on a large Christmas tree in the square for Christmas (Cllr Brown)**
Cllrs discussed the matter and the idea of solar powered lights was raised, and it was suggested that the existing tree be decorated rather than bringing in an additional tree and Cllr Brown agreed to bring costings to the next meeting. **Action – Cllr Brown.**
- g) **Update on siting of Post Box in the Square (Chair)**
Cllr Papworth reported that he is waiting for Royal Mail engineering department to get back in contact with him. He will continue to follow up on this matter.
- h) **Discussion on request for contribution to the Merton Monthly printing (Cllr Kops)**
Cllr Kops reported that 100 copies are printed with 3 copies going to the Pub and 15 to the Hall, it is believed that 90 copies are used/delivered.
Print costs are down to about £35/month and about £200 is received in advertising Cllr Kops asked for £100 to be donated to the Hall to help with the print costs.
Cllrs raised their opinions on the subject, which varied and
[Cllr Papworth proposed that a £100 donation be made this year to be reviewed this time next year, seconded Cllr Lang. All in Favour – Motion Carried \(RR2022/031\)](#)
Power: LGA 1972 S.142 Funding Source: Admin/Contingency.
- i) **Discussion and approval of purchase of Poppy Wreath(s) (Chair)**
[Cllr Papworth proposed that the Clerk be authorised to purchase a poppy wreath at a cost of £20, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried \(RR2022/032\)](#)
Power to spend LGA 1972 S.137 (Expenditure in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure). Budget: Grants/Poppy wreath.
Cllrs agreed to reuse the wreath and make a donation to RBL.
- j) **Retrospective approval for attendance at DALC AGM & Conference on Wednesday 5th October 2022 at Exeter Racecourse. (Chair/Clerk)**
[Cllr Papworth proposed that the Council retrospectively approve the Clerks attendance at the DALC AGM & Conference on Wednesday 5th October 2022 at Exeter Racecourse, sharing the cost \(£35+vat\) and cost of mileage with the Clerk other 5 Councils, seconded Cllr Twomey. All in Favour – Motion Carried \(RR2022/033\)](#)
- k) **Update on Defibrillator for outside the Hall (Cllr Kops)**
Cllr Kops reported that the Hall are waiting for an electrician to install the heated cabinet, this is expected to be soon.

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

- a) **To approve financial schedule as presented by the Clerk.**
Cllrs received the [financial schedule including bank reconciliation which can be found in Appendix A.](#)
Cllr Papworth reported that the re-imbursement to the Churchyard committee was for the Council grass cutting and paid by them in error.
[Cllr Twomey proposed that the financial schedule including bank reconciliation be approved, seconded Cllr Brown. All in Favour – Motion Carried \(RR2022/034\)](#)
- b) **Banking Checks for period 11-07-2022 to 09-09-2022.**
The Banking Checks were carried out by Cllrs Stacey and Twomey and all documents were signed.
- c) **To receive 2nd Quarter Budget Report 2022-2023 ([Appendix B](#)).**
Cllrs reviewed the 2nd Quarter Budget Report 2022-2023 and noted that there were no areas of concerns at this time.

11.10.22 Cllr reports and Items for future agendas:

Cllr Kops asked for funding request for the Hall for the Silver anniversary celebrations to be added to the next agenda.

Cllr Papworth asked that the Council revisit the Emergency Plan.

~Minutes of meeting held 10-10-2022 ~ Initialled as a correct record: S.P

12.10.22 Confirmation of next meeting date:

The next meeting will be on Monday 14th November 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.

13.10.22 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 due to the sensitive items to be discussed that the Council move to Part II, seconded Cllr Stacey. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2022/035)

The Clerk reported that the Audio recording had been stopped,

b) Discussion on proposed revision of Clerks Hours and Contract (Chair) *Contains sensitive employment information.*

c) Parishioner correspondence – to discuss correspondence received from Parishioners. *(contains information restricted by GDPR).*

d) The Chair returned the meeting to public session to hear resolutions.

Cllr Papworth proposed that the Council approve the revised Contract as discussed reflected the revised working hours to 4-6 hours per week at the Clerks discretion, seconded Cllr Stacey. All in Favour – Motion Carried (RR2022/036)

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting.

Appendix A: Financial Schedule and Bank Reconciliation.

Pre-authorised payments made since last meeting:

Payment Ref	Amount	Payee	Details	Power	Mins Ref & RR
PM23/021	£233.86	Alice Turner	Salary (July 2022)	LGA 1972 S.112	12.5.21 b) RR2021/015
PM23/022	£212.60	Alice Turner	Salary (August 2022)	LGA 1972 S.112	12.5.21 b) RR2021/015
Total	£446.46				

Payments for authorisation (retrospective approval):

Payment Ref	Amount	Payee	Details	Power	Funding Source
(PM23/023)	£113.38	Merton Churchyard Fund	Re-imbursment of S. Jennings Invoice for Grass Cutting	Highways Act 1980 S.96	R.C/Grass cutting
(PM23/024)	£150.00	Kompan	Inspection of Play area	LG(MP)A 1976 s.19	Assets/Play area
PM23/025	£109.36	Alice Turner	Expenses (Aug, Sept & Oct 2022)	LGA 1972 S.111 & S.112	SC/costs & SC/Office exp.
TOTAL	£372.74				

Monies held as Reserves (after payments):

Amount	Details
£1,500.00	Election cost (Earmarked Reserve)
£8,000.00	Square Improvements (Earmarked Reserve)
£2,305.62	Defibrillator Fund (Earmarked Reserve)
£636.00	TAP Fund (Earmarked Reserve)
£238.30	Defibrillator Supplies (Earmarked Reserve)

~Minutes of meeting held 10-10-2022 ~ Initialled as a correct record: S.P

£667.88	Assets Fund (Earmarked Reserve)
£100.00	Hall Hire (Earmarked Reserve)
£2,500.00	Precept Contingency
£1,250.00	General Reserve
£4,300.00	Play Equipment Fund (Earmarked Reserve)
£328.64	Staff Costs & Training (Earmarked Reserve)
£21,826.44	TOTAL

Bank Situation

Bank Total 10/10/2022	£26,081.28
Less Payments pending	£109.36
Plus receipts Received (if after Bank date)	£0.00
Less Money held as reserves	£21,826.44
Available Balance	£4,145.48

Bank Reconciliation: 10th October 2022.

Bank Reconciliation:

	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Balance per bank statement as at 31st March 2022:	£18,429.23	£18,429.23
Less: total of Payments	£6,187.59	£12,241.64
Plus: total of Receipts	£13,730.28	£25,971.92
Plus: Payments pending	£109.36	£26,081.28
Bank Total as of 10-10-2022:		£26,081.28

Cash Book:

Opening Balance 1 April 2022 (box 7 of Accounting statement)	£18,429.23
Add: Receipts in the year to date	£13,730.28
Less: Payments in the year to date	£6,078.23
Closing balance per cash book as of 10th October 2022	£26,081.28

Appendix B: 2nd Quarter Budget Report.

Income:

Heading	2022/23 Budget	Actual Income 30-09-22	Difference
Precept	£13,420.00	13420.00	0.00
Parking Permits	£15.00	0.00	-15.00
Other/grants	£400.00	0.00	-400.00
TOTAL	13835.00	13420.00	-415.00

Expenditure:

Heading	2022/23 Budget	Actual expenditure to 30-09-2022	Difference	Over/Under/On Budget
STAFF COSTS	£4,200.00	£1,215.22	£2,984.78	Under
Salary (& costs)	£3,700.00	£1,063.03	£2,636.97	Under
Office Expenses	£400.00	£135.19	£264.81	Under
Training	£100.00	£17.00	£83.00	Under
ADMIN	£960.90	£634.70	£326.20	Under
Insurance	£605.90	£605.90	£0.00	On

~Minutes of meeting held 10-10-2022 ~ Initialled as a correct record: S.P

IT	£155.00	£0.00	£155.00	Under
Hall Hire	£100.00	£28.80	£71.20	Under
Contingency	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00	Under
RUNNING COSTS	£400.00	£160.24	£239.76	Under
Grass Cutting & Maint.	£400.00	£160.24	£239.76	Under
PROF. FEES	£254.10	£119.00	£135.10	Under
Audit	£144.10	£55.00	£89.10	Under
ICO	£35.00	£0.00	£35.00	Under
Subs	£75.00	£64.00	£11.00	Under
ASSETS	£2,200.00	£544.33	£1,655.67	Under
Maintenance	£250.00	£86.00	£164.00	Under
Purchases	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00	Under
Defibrillator	£450.00	£250.00	£200.00	Under
Play Equipment	£1,000.00	£208.33	£791.67	Under
GRANTS/DONATIONS	£520.00	£500.00	£20.00	Under
Standing Grants	£300.00	£300.00	£0.00	ON
Poppy Wreath	£20.00	£0.00	£20.00	Under
Other Grants/Donations	£200.00	£200.00	£0.00	ON
Reserves	£5,300.00	£5,300.00	£0.00	ON
General	£500.00	£500.00	£0.00	ON
EMR Play Equipment Fund	£4,300.00	£4,300.00	£0.00	ON
Precept Contingency	£500.00	£500.00	£0.00	ON
TOTALS	£13,835.00	£8,473.49	£5,361.51	Under

R.F.O Comment: No concerns at this time.

Prepared by Alice Turner R.F.O

Signed: Steve Papworth Date: 14th November 2022

~Minutes of meeting held 10-10-2022 ~ Initialled as a correct record: S.P