

Merton Parish Council

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Minutes of the Extra-ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 23rd September 2024 at 7:30pm at the Clinton Hall.

Cllrs Present: Neil Littleales (Chair), Gordon McLaughlan (Vice-Chair), Steve Papworth, Rob Nancekivell & Giles Kops.

Also in attendance: Alice Turner (Clerk). No members of the public present.

BUSINESS TRANSACTED

EE1.9.24 Welcome:

The Chair opened meeting and informed the meeting that a recording was being taken to assist in the preparation of the minutes, the recording will be deleted once the Minutes are drafted.

EE2.9.24 Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received from Cllr Lang (no reason given)

Cllr Kops proposed that apologies from Cllr Lang (no reason given) be approved, seconded Cllr Nancekivell. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/044)

EE3.9.24 Minutes of the last meeting – as available on [website](#) (Chair):

Cllrs to consider the Minutes of the meeting held on:

a) 2nd September 2024 – Extra-ordinary Meeting.

Cllr Papworth proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 2nd of September 2024 – Extra-ordinary Meeting be signed as a true and accurate record, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/045)

b) 9th September 2024.

Cllr Littleales proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 9th of September 2024 be signed as a true and accurate record, seconded Cllr Papworth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/046)

EE4.4.24 Co-option Vacancies (Chair)

Reminder that there are currently 2 co-option vacancies and to consider candidates who have completed the required [Co-option form](#) and have been confirmed as eligible prior the Meeting. Noted by Cllrs.

EE5.9.24 Declarations of Interest:

Cllr Littleales declared a prejudicial interest in EE8.9.24 b) as his wife is a candidate for the Clerk/RFO position.

EE6.9.24 Public Speaking Time:

No member of the public present.

EE7.9.24 Confirmation of next meeting date: Monday 11th November 2024 at 7.30pm. - Any change will be on the [Website](#) – Noted.

EE8.9.24 Confidential matters (PART II) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 s1 (2)

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

Cllr Littleales proposed that the Council move to Part II due to the confidential nature of the items to be discussed, seconded Cllr McLaughlan. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/047)

The Clerk confirmed that the audio recording had been stopped.

Cllr Littleales to withdraw from discussion and votes relating to the appointment of a new Clerk/RFO.

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- b) To discuss matters relating to the recruitment of a replacement Clerk and matters relating to the existing Clerks departure – (*Confidential employment matters*).
- c) To discuss matters relating to ongoing drainage works for the Square – (*commercially sensitive*).
- d) The Chair to return the meeting to public session to hear resolutions.

The Clerk resumed the Audio recording of the meeting to capture the resolutions.

Item c: Cllr McLaughlan proposed that in light of new information that the Council seek the advice of their Solicitor relating to this matter and in the meantime only proceed with Clearing the Gullies within the square, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/048)

Item b) Resolutions preceded by * were resolutions which Cllr Littleales withdrew from.

- Cllr Kops proposed that the Council do not rescind the resignation of the existing Clerk, seconded Cllr Papworth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/049)
- Cllr Kops proposed that the Council authorise the Clerk to contact the unsuccessful applicants and inform that they have been unsuccessful as the Council did not think that they would be a good fit with the Council, seconded Littleales. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/049)
- Cllr Kops proposed that the Council approve the appointment of Cllrs Kops, McLaughlan & Papworth as the new HR Committee with Cllr Kops to be appointed as Lead member, seconded Cllr McLaughlan. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/050)
- * Cllr Kops proposed that the Council approve the appointment of Mrs Kerry Littleales as the new Clerk and RFO as of 17th September 2024 to allow for initial training and handover, to be contracted for 17.5 to 26 hours per calendar month with additional overtime to be approved in advance with delegated authority given to a quorum of the HR Committee (via the lead member) to approve overtime as required. The Council also agree to having a rolling review of training with a consolidated review of training needs every 6 months, paying working from home allowance in line with HMRC figures, to agree a starting SCP of 9 with and increase to 10 following the completion of training and an appraisal at 6months, to consider ending probationary period and to agree to conduct an annual appraisal with SCP increase consideration, seconded Cllr Papworth. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/051)
- * Cllr Kops proposed that the Council approve the membership to SLCC for K. Littleales and agree to pay the membership fee of £112 plus the joining fee of £8 along with ongoing membership fees during her tenure as Clerk to enable access to resources and training relevant to her position, McLaughlan. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/052)
- * Cllr Kops proposed that the Council approve delegating the approval of the Contact of Employment for K. Littleales to the HR Committee, seconded Cllr McLaughlan. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/053)
- * Cllr McLaughlan proposed that the Council approve the attendance of K. Littleales on the following training Courses; Clerks Essentials (3parts), Internal Controls & Budgeting, Internal Audits and new Clerks Finance Course and agree to pay the associated costs. Also, that the Council approve the purchase via SLCC of the following books The Clerks Manual (£47.50) and Local Council Administration, 13th edition (£137), seconded Cllr Nancekivell. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/054)
- * Cllr Kops proposed that the Council approve the purchase of a pay as you go SIM card for Council business and approve up to £10 credit to be added, seconded Cllr McLaughlan. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/055)
- Cllr Littleales proposed that the Council delegate authority to himself and Cllr McLaughlan to approve the final salary and expenses payment for the outgoing Clerk (A. Turner) to be paid on the last day of employment to allow for issuing of the P34 paperwork, seconded McLaughlan. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/056)

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- Cllr Littleales proposed that the Council add K. Littleales and Cllr Kops as full signatories with online access and upgrade Cllr Papworth to online banking access, and once this is done to remove A. Turner as a full signatory with online access to the Council Bank Account, seconded Cllr McLaughlan. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/057)
- Cllr McLaughlan proposed that the Council keeps the current accounting system (Excel) with the option to review this in January, seconded Cllr Littleales. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/058)
- Cllr McLaughlan proposed that the Council approve the purchase of Laptop, printer and supporting software up to a cost of £600 for the Clerk to use for Council business, seconded Cllr Kops. All in Favour – Motion Carried. (RR2024/059)

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.25pm.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

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