



MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: M Parker

Clerk/RFO: Vicky Turner



Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held remotely on 5th January 2021

Present: Cllrs Parker, Hyde, De Grey, Mouser and Wesley-Smith; Clerk and 4 members of the public

1.0 Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting.

2.0 Apologies for Absence – All present

3.0 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest in items on the agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation - Cllr Mouser declared an interest in Item 4.2 and 8.1.2. **NOTED.**

4.0 Minutes of Previous Meeting

4.1 To Approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th September 2020

The Minutes were read for accuracy and unanimously **AGREED** as a true and accurate record of events. To be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

4.2 To consider matters arising from the minutes of previous meetings not considered on this Agenda (for information only)

Home Farm Lane - It was confirmed that the owner of the property identified as potentially contravening planning conditions had been advised to complete remedial work; Cllrs **NOTED** that final works had not been undertaken as at deadline of 31.12.2020. Clerk to make contact to politely remind.

5.0 Public Session – No public comments made

6.0 Finance

6.1 Invoices Paid Since Last Meeting – All **NOTED** and **AGREED**

Cheque No	Amount	Details
Cheque No 100265	£260.51	Clerk's Salary for Quarter Sept-Nov and agreed overtime
Cheque No 100266	£ 54.00	HMRC – Tax Liability of Clerk
Cheque No 100264	£ 60.00	D Rogers – Grass Cutting
Cheque No 100263	£120.00	D Rogers – Grass Cutting

6.2 Receipts since Last Meeting at the time of issuing the Agenda - **NOTED**

ACCOUNT	SOURCE	AMOUNT
Savers Account	Interest	£0.27
Community Account	Precept Payment	£1100.00
Village Hall Project	Easy Fundraising	Nil

6.3 Bank Account Balances at 28th December 2020 - **NOTED**

Savers Account	1638.18
Community Account	3231.11
Village Hall Project	2752.11

6.4 To receive the Quarterly Bank Reconciliation, Income/Expenditure against Budget Report - **NOTED**



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- 6.5 To review decision for retention or removal of earmark funds (1K) for a defibrillator from Budget 2021/22

Cllr De Grey confirmed that to undertake the project with 'Community Heartbeat', estimated costings would include a purchase price of £1375.00 with provisional running costs of £135-£165.00 per annum. Electricity to power the device would be free for 7 years and there would be a charge of £200 for installation plus any additional training costs. Potentially installing the device in the old telephone box was discussed; Cllr De Grey to research potential Planning implications as the box is Listed, and report back at the next meeting. Cllrs **AGREED** to maintain the £1000 ear-marked funding in the 2021/22 Budget and progress the project subject to Cllr De Grey confirming final details.

- 6.6 To confirm receipt of donations to date of £312.16 and consider conversion of funds
These were **NOTED** as additional resources to cover expenses exceeding the £10000.00 earmark. Given agreement to retain the project in the Budget, no further action is necessary at present.

- 6.7 To agree Budget 2021/22 (previously circulated) subject to decision of 7.8 above
Subject to inclusion of the £1000 earmarked funding for the defibrillator project, the Budget for 2021/22 was unanimously **AGREED**.

- 6.8 As per Clerk's recommendation given at November 2020 meeting, it was unanimously **AGREED** to retain the Parish Precept at £2,200 – Clerk to request.

7.0 Planning

- 7.1 To receive and consider any new Planning Applications – None to **NOTE**

- 7.2 To receive and consider results of planning applications

- 7.2.1 3PL/2020/1083 Peddar's Barn, Home Farm Lane, Merton – Erection of porch/ pergola over front door – **APPROVED – NOTED**

8.0 Flooding and Highways matters

- 8.1 To receive and consider any issues relating to flooding in Merton

- 8.1.1 Flooding in Crows Lane, Merton

The Chairman confirmed he had received a complaint from a parishioner about flooding in this area; he confirmed he had spoken to residents whose private ditches may be exacerbating the problem. Where flooding affects public land, this has been reported to Norfolk County Highways Department for further investigation. Cllr De Grey to investigate any potential issues on land owned by Merton Hall Estate.

- 8.1.2 Flooding in Home Farm Lane, Merton

Persistent and prolific flooding in this area continues; the Chairman confirmed that he had undertaken two site visits and spoken with the owner of one of the ditches that appears to be exacerbating the issue; this resident has agreed to clear any potential blockage asap and the Chairman confirmed he has supplied contact details of contractors that can assist in this work. Cllr De Grey confirmed that pipework under their responsibility would be flushed once any potential blockages in the waterways have been removed.

Cllrs **NOTED** that they did not have assigned Powers or Duties to enforce landowners to take remedial action with drains/ditches on private property but would mediate and liaise where appropriate to help alleviate ongoing flooding risk on Home Lane and other areas affected in Merton. It was **AGREED** that Cllr Mouser would undertake a site visit of areas affected, accompanied by a parishioner with extensive background knowledge on drainage systems in the village – Cllr Mouser to circulate a report to Cllrs upon completion and Clerk to add formal report to next Agenda. It was also **AGREED** that Cllr Wesley-Smith would research LA asset maps to confirm ownership of specific areas



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to circulate to Cllrs for their consideration. Any flooding incidents, along with photographic evidence, to be submitted to the Clerk in the interim.

8.2 To receive and consider any Highways matters

The Clerk has written to Breckland regarding ditches adjacent to The Green under their jurisdiction; these have now been cleared; some clarification as to ownership to be ascertained for the remainder of the homes in this area to instigate further LA intervention if appropriate. Clerk to Contact Breckland again.

9.0 Post Box Closure

9.1 To receive any update on continuing closure of mailbox adjacent to Merton Hall

Cllr De Grey confirmed that the box still remains closed; Cllr De Grey, Cllr Hyde and the Clerk have all reported the issue to the Post Office to date; Cllr De Grey to pass national reporting number to the Chairman for him to pursue.

10.0 Village Hall Update

No further update available – COVID-19 restrictions prevent further investigations and consultation for the time-being. **NOTED.**

11.0 Safeguarding

11.2 To review and adopt Merton PC's Safeguarding Policy (previously circulated)

The Policy was unanimously **AGREED** for adoption and review in January 2022.

12.0 Dissemination of Communications

12.2 To review and consider cascading information to Cllrs and agree a formula

Cllrs debated the high levels of incoming mail to the Clerking inbox; it was **AGREED** that the Clerk should share all information to Cllrs relevant to undertaking their role as Member and any ensuing communication would be copied to all Cllrs. Clerk to share all mail and Cllrs will filter as appropriate.

13.0 To receive and consider correspondence of note since the last meeting

Email with Newsletter and Crime Stats from Norfolk Police; Emails regarding Stanta Live-Firing Schedules; Official Briefings on Coronavirus (COVID 19) from Breckland District Council, NCF and NCC; COVID 19 Guidance from NALC; correspondence from parishioner regarding potential contravention of planning enforcement; newsletter from Wayland Partnership; CENSUS announcement – March 2021. NCC Library Services. Written and pictorial evidence of flooding in Merton from residents. **NOTED.**

14.0 To consider any issues raised that the Chairman considers to be urgent

Bus Shelter - The Clerk confirmed that the parishioner who had voluntarily cleaned the bus shelter for many years had expressed the wish to stand-down. Cllrs expressed their thanks to the resident for their service. Clerk to advertise in the forthcoming editions of 'The Waylander' for someone to undertake this role 2/3 times per year. If a volunteer can't be found, Cllr Mouser offered to incorporate in the litter picks. **NOTED.**

15.0 To consider and agree date and time of next ordinary Parish Council Meeting –

Tuesday 30th March 2021, 6pm - via Zoom

With no further matters arising, the meeting closed at 19.05.