



MERTON PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Louise Hyde Vice Chairman: Stephen Mouser



Minutes of the meeting of Merton Parish Council held Tuesday 30th March 2021

Present: Cllrs Hyde (Chair), Wesley-Smith, Mouser, and De Grey; District Cllrs Suggitt, Eagle and 7 members of the public

1.0 Chairman's Opening Remarks – Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2.0 Apologies for Absence - None

3.0 Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of interest in items on the Agenda and to consider any requests for dispensation. Cllr De Grey made everyone aware of interest in the flooding issues regarding clearing of ditches item 9.1 and 9.2. Noted

4.0 Minutes of Previous Meeting

4.1 To Approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 5th January 2021

The minutes were unanimously agreed as true and accurate record of events.

To be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

4.2 To Approve the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 19th January 2021

The minutes were unanimously agreed as true and accurate record of events.

To be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

4.3 To Approve the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 9th February 2021

The minutes were unanimously agreed as true and accurate record of events.

To be signed by the Chairman at a later date.

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

None

5.0 Public Session – The Chairman advised public to be allowed to speak during items 9.1 and 9.2 to avoid duplication. No public comments made.

6.0 Finance

6.1 Invoices Paid Since Last Meeting – All noted and agreed.,

Cheque No	Amount	Details
Cheque No 100267	£557.43	Clerk's Salary for Quarter Dec – Feb 19 th expenses and agreed overtime
Cheque No 100268	£121.00	HMRC – Tax Liability of Clerk
Cheque No 100269	£117.00	NALC – Chairmanship Training – LH and SM



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6.2 Receipts since Last Meeting at the time of issuing the Agenda – All noted and agreed.

ACCOUNT	SOURCE	AMOUNT
Savers Account	Interest	To be confirmed at next meeting
Community Account	Precept	Nil
Village Hall Project	Easy Fundraising	Nil

6.3 Bank Account Balances at 23rd March 2021 – Balances corrected as previously miskeyed, Noted.

Savers Account	£1683.18
Community Account	£1642.17 (includes unpresented chq no 100269 for £117)
Village Hall Project	£3231.11

6.4 To receive the Quarterly Bank Reconciliation to 23.03.2021, Income/Expenditure against Budget Report - Noted

7.0 Review of Asset Register

7.1 To review the Asset Register - The value of the chairs to be reviewed and Cllr Eagle agreed to help with valuation. Also agreed to look at village bus shelter sum along side the insurance renewal which is due soon.

8.0 Planning

8.1 To receive and consider any new Planning Applications – None to note.

8.2 To receive and consider results of planning applications – 3PL/2021/0022/F - Change of use of land from equestrian to residential amenity land at Grove Farm - **APPROVED** - Noted

9.0 Flooding and Highways matters

9.1 To receive and consider any issues relating to flooding in Merton – Cllr De Grey advised that she had noticed that the water table had started to go down and her cellar had stopped flooding. Advised that the landowner had been chased regarding agreed work but still no real idea of when this might happen. Cllr De Grey will attempt to clear the ditch with tracked digger which has now been fixed. Cllr Wesley-Smith pushed on the fact that nothing had happened since issues first came about in December 2020. A member of the public explained the situation with the culvert in the village and asked Cllr De Grey to dig the ditch much deeper. Cllr De Grey agreed to ask her team to take a further look but is unsure that ditch can be dug any deeper. Another member of the public advised the issue may be that the ditch needs to be graded in the middle where the levels are not quite as required. Also suggested to use food dye to track where water is flowing to help identify issues. Another member of the public raised concerns about the lack of urgency to get done what was agreed at previous meetings. Cllr Wesley-Smith advised the landowner had been chased up on at least 9 occasions and still no concrete date for works to be carried out. Cllr Eagle advised the liability still sits with the land owner and if a flood was to occur any insurance company would look to recover costs from responsible parties. It could be an option to do the work and then claim back the costs, you

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would need to give due notice to the landowner before taking this route. It was agreed to send a further letter to the landowner and someone else pointing out the legal position and try to persuade them to action as soon as possible. A member of the public then raised the issues at Tottington Terrace and the dispute about ownership of the ditch. The ditch is silted up and needs more than just the leaves removing. Agreed to contact an additional person to try and move things forward. The same situation exists on the other side of the road. Flagship housing will also have a part to play depending on liability. Cllr Suggitt suggested she could send email and see if a combined effort could be negotiated between all parties. Cllr Eagle then suggested that pulling all resources together and sharing the cost is a possible solution compared with each owner doing small bits separately.

9.2 To receive and consider any Highways matters – Cllr Hyde advised that a meeting had been had with someone from Highways to push for potholes and verges to be repaired. The verges will have to wait for better weather later in the year but they have assured us it is to be looked at. A member of the parish has sent a letter asking if a one-way system or speed humps could be considered. Cllr Eagle advised this is very difficult with the layout of roads in Merton, he does have some wheelie bin stickers to try and slow traffic down. A member of the public raised concerns about the number of passing places created by excess traffic.

9.3 To receive and consider any Breckland District Council matters – As above regarding ditch ownership.

10.0 Post Box Closure

10.1 To receive any update on continuing closure of mailbox adjacent to Merton Hall – Cllr De Grey advised still closed but has chased up with no success, Cllr Hyde agreed to contact again as she has been given a new number to phone.

11.0 **Village Hall Update** – Agreed to board up all the windows as orange fencing is ineffective. Cllr Wesley-Smith to draw up a notice to warn cars parked at owner's risk.

12.0 Defibrillator

12.1 To receive report from Cllr De Grey on defibrillator final costings – Agreed to delay decision till next year as funds are not in place at present.

12.2 To consider and agree purchase of defibrillator and potential siting – Agreed to delay decision till next year as funds are not in place at present.

13.0 To agree a date for the Annual Meeting of the Parish and the Annual Parish Council Meeting

13.1 To consider and agree holding the Annual Meeting of the Parish at 6.00pm and the Annual Parish Council Meeting on Tuesday 4th May at 6.30pm via Zoom – **please note these meeting dates supersede that previously advertised as 18th May 2021.**

This was agreed and noted.

14.0 To appoint an Internal Auditor for Financial Year 2020-21

14.1 To consider re-appointing Max Bergin to perform Internal Audit for 2020-21 –

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Agreed and noted.

14.2 To agree the fee of £30 for remote audit or £55 for physical audit – dependant on contemporaneous restrictions – agreed and noted.

15.0 Parish Councillor Vacancy – No interest at present time.

16.0 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 parishioners regarding temporary road closure and subsequent damage to verges and residual mud. Noted.

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

No further matters were raised.

18.0 To consider and agree date and time of next meetings – Annual Parish Council Meeting
– Tuesday 4th May 2021 at 6.30pm and Ordinary Parish Council Meeting - 7th September 2021, 6pm – **Medium to be confirmed**

19.0 To consider the passing of a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by s.100 of the Local Government Act 1972) that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for item 16 onwards on the grounds that it could involve the likely disclosure of private and confidential information.

20.0 To confirm appointment of new Clerk/RFO

20.1 To confirm and formally agree contractual terms of new Clerk/RFO – Agreed and noted.

With no further matters arising the meeting closed at 19.06