

Minutes of Mersham Parish Council
Meeting held on Monday, 20th January 2025 in the Church room at St John the Baptist Church

Present	Gavin Murphy (Chair) Gill McBarnet Kenton Stewart	Peter Hawkins Donna Pearson Melanie Wells
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In attendance: Tessa O’Sullivan, Borough Cllr Bartlett and Tracey Block (Clerk).

To be actioned by:

To receive and approve apologies for absence No apologies had been received.	
To receive declarations of interest (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests). The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. Cllr Wells noted a personal interest in the Inland Border facility as a family member works on the site and a personal interest in the Village Hall.	
To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 18th November 2024 Minutes of the Meeting of Mersham Parish Council on 18 th November 2024 were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly.	
Housing needs survey update Tessa O’Sullivan spoke about the Local Housing Needs Survey. The results of the survey highlighted that there is a need for 25 properties as well as open market smaller properties for older residents. Now that the need has been identified and the Church Commissioners are happy with this, English Rural Housing will begin negotiations with Church Commissioner’s who will make an option agreement and Heads of Terms and look at the site layout. Mike Borden from ABC would have been present this evening but he is unable to attend due to ill-health. The PC is to release the results to the community. The Villager, website and social media will be used. Tessa is to send some wording over the Clerk to use.	TB
To discuss matters arising from previous minutes not covered by the agenda. The Christmas tree lighting was very impressive, Cllr Stewart was thanked for organising the tree and organising the switch on, this was a great event and boosted community spirit.	
To receive report from Borough Councillor A detailed report had been circulated; a copy can be found on the website: http://www.mershampc.org.uk/community/mersham-parish-council-18392/borough-cllr-reports/ Cllr Bartlett reported that: Stagecoach is withdrawing the No. 10 service due to the lack of use. The latest consultation for the IBF plans took place last week. Cllr Bartlett highlighted the lack of the S106 agreement signing. He felt positive about long term assurance of the High Field including the planting and viewing corridor. The traffic operating strategy needs to be worked on, along with litter, further archaeological surveys and the animal checks. The planting on the A2070 link road was not planted. This is owned by Highways England, and is an important gateway site to Ashford and needs planting up. The Clerk asked Cllr Bartlett whether he foresees the devolution of powers affecting Parish Councils. He believes that the opportunity presented by devolution could be transformative and is a positive opportunity.	
Public Session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item There were no members of public in attendance.	
To receive any update regarding the creation of a green buffer zone in High Field/IBF. To include planting	

delays to the green buffer zone near Highfield Lane. This was provided by Cllr Bartlett.																							
To receive an update on Highways issues (to include the Highways Improvement Plan) A Highways Improvement Plan meeting is set for 18/2. Cllr Stewart reported that The Street has been resurfaced.																							
To receive an update on the Village Hall. The update from Cllr Wells was circulated to the Council. There was a discussion surrounding Wi-Fi. The car park is not well lit, this will be discussed at the Village Hall meeting.																							
To receive an update regarding the Cut and Cover Cllr Murphy has chased Ben Olney at HS1 and this seems to be progressing. There are some internal consultations required and then Mr Olney will arrange for some Heads of Agreement to be drawn up.																							
Planning matters: to authorise a response to any application(s) and to note any recent planning decisions by Ashford Borough Council or any correspondence on planning matters The Councillors are to view the outstanding applications and provide a response. It was agreed that a no objection response would be submitted for PA/2024/1768.		All																					
Financial matters: a) To note the Parish Council’s financial position. The PC noted the £34,439.12 held in the bank account as at 31 st December 2024. b) To authorise any payments <table><tr><td>Cheque No:</td><td>Payee</td><td>Amount</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>HMRC</td><td>£ 77.20</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>I King (January salary)</td><td>£ 148.72</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>T Block (January Salary)</td><td>£ 323.64</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>HugoFox</td><td>£ 143.86</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>JRB Enterprise</td><td>£ 111.06</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>Mazars</td><td>£ 300.00</td></tr></table> The Clerk had circulated a Financial Statement, Budget over Expenditure and Payment Schedules up until 31 st January.		Cheque No:	Payee	Amount	OLT	HMRC	£ 77.20	OLT	I King (January salary)	£ 148.72	OLT	T Block (January Salary)	£ 323.64	OLT	HugoFox	£ 143.86	OLT	JRB Enterprise	£ 111.06	OLT	Mazars	£ 300.00	
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Any Other Business The person providing the electrics for the Christmas tree will be provided with £20. Bench repairs have been approved for the bench opposite The Farriers. Cllr Hawkins thanked the Caretaker for the hedge reduction. There are some ruts in Rectory Close, the Clerk is to ask the Caretaker to make these good. The posts in the Street that belong to Lady Brabourne’s house need repair, the Clerk will report this to Knight Frank.		TB TB																					
Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council. <div>Monday 17th February 2025 Monday 21st April 2025</div> <div>Monday 17th March 2025 Monday 19th May 2025.</div>																							