

Minutes of Mersham Parish Council
Meeting held on Monday, 21st October 2024 in the Church room at St John the Baptist Church

Present	Gavin Murphy (Chair) Gill McBarnet Kenton Stewart	Peter Hawkins Stewart Ross
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In attendance: Borough Cllr Bartlett and Tracey Block (Clerk).

To be actioned by:

To receive and approve apologies for absence Apologies had been received from Cllrs Pearson and Wells.	
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. There were no declarations of interest.	
To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 16th September 2024 Minutes of the Meeting of Mersham Parish Council on 16 th September 2024 were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly.	
To discuss matters arising from previous minutes not covered by the agenda. There were no matters arising to be discussed.	
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: He had attended the DfT presentation on Saturday. He spoke to those in attendance explaining that there needs to be an unambiguous embargo on developing the High Field and was told that there would be a 30 year commitment to not develop this site. There was an apology that the Biodiversity Gain had only been applied to the IBF and no calculation had been provided for the field, there should have been some gain following the nitrates that had been used by the farmer previously. The soil being placed on the field will have capped the nitrates falling in to the watercourse. A landscape management plan is to be put in place. The applicant seems to be engaged and listening, lighting and the height of the lights is being considered. When the planning application is submitted, we should be ready to respond. He had attended a meeting with KCC regarding the IBF site and they are very interested in the ragwort, thistle and goats rue. KCC are also interested in understanding the archaeology of the site, the IBF was rich in archaeology and it is expected that the field will also be interesting. The viewing corridor was planted up several times and this planting did not survive. More planting has been promised. The traffic issues surrounding J10a is a KCC issue and is part of the KCC Traffic Plan and is part of their strategic traffic assessment. It was suggested that the PC could contact Neil Baker, the portfolio holder for KCC. Ashford Market is returning to the town centre from 2 nd November. There was a discussion about the cinema.	
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 covered by Cllr Bartlett in his report.	

To receive an update on Highways issues (to include the Highways Improvement Plan) The Parish Council is awaiting further discussion with Kent Highways.																			
To note the registering of the shop as an Asset of Community Value. The shop has been registered as an Asset of Community Value. Cllr Murphy wrote to the shop owner offering a discussion but has not received any response. The shop is reported to be closing in December.																			
To receive an update on the Village Hall. The update from Cllr Wells was circulated to the Council. A discussion ensued regarding the parking issues at the Village Hall. Cllr Murphy said that he would contact Wye Village Hall to see what they do as their car park is used by residents, the school etc.																			
To receive an update regarding the Cut and Cover Cllr Murphy will follow this up with Ben Olney at HS1.																			
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 A planning application had been received: PA/2024/1820. The PC will respond to this application.																			
To discuss and decide forward plan for email and website .gov.uk address The Parish Council discussed the law change with regard to Parish Councils requiring gov.uk website and email addresses. The PC agreed to stay with HugoFox and register a gov.uk domain. Resolved: The Clerk will pursue the registering of gov.uk website domain and email address via HugoFox.																			
Financial matters: a) To note the Parish Council’s financial position. The PC noted the £41,504.69 held in the bank account as at 30 th September 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>£ 73.80</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>I King (September salary)</td><td>£ 148.72</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>T Block (September Salary)</td><td>£ 325.88</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>Village Caretaker Account</td><td>£ 4,804.80</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>T Block (expenses)</td><td>£ 70.35</td></tr></table> The Clerk had circulated a Financial Statement, Budget over Expenditure and Payment Schedules up until 21 st October.	Cheque No:	Payee	Amount	OLT	HMRC	£ 73.80	OLT	I King (September salary)	£ 148.72	OLT	T Block (September Salary)	£ 325.88	OLT	Village Caretaker Account	£ 4,804.80	OLT	T Block (expenses)	£ 70.35	
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Any Other Business The Councillors discussed the creation of a Community Resilience Plan. It was decided that this would be difficult to update and has GDPR issues. The water leaks on The Street were discussed, they have been reported, the Clerk agreed to also report but this is in hand with South East Water and the PC has no power to progress the leak with South East Water. Parking on double yellow lines at the school was reported, this should be addressed with Parking Enforcement at Ashford Borough Council. The Clerk was asked if the Village Caretaker could wipe the defibrillator case as it is dusty. The defibrillator signs are with Cllr Stewart, he is to pass these to Cllr Hawkins. The bollards have been received by Cllr Stewart, he will arrange installation of these. The Christmas tree switch on is planned for 7 th December. More lights are required. Cllr Murphy reported that he had attended the Parish Forum.																			

<p>CLlr Murphy would like to follow up on: Grant availability, creating a calendar of events and look into a walking group.</p>	
<p>Determining the time and place of ordinary meetings of the Council up to and including the next annual meeting of the Council.</p> <div> <div> Monday 18th November 2024 Monday 17th February 2025 Monday 21st April 2025 </div> <div> Monday 20th January 2025 Monday 17th March 2025 Monday 19th May 2025. </div> </div>	