

Minutes of Mersham Parish Council
Meeting held on Monday, 23rd May 2024 in the Church room at St John the Baptist Church

Present	Gavin Murphy (Chair) Gill McBarnet Melanie Wells	Peter Hawkins Donna Pearson
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In attendance: Cllr Bartlett and Tracey Block (Clerk).

To be actioned by:

<p>Election of the Chairman and any Vice-Chairman for the Council year 2024-25</p> <p>Cllr McBarnet proposed Cllr Murphy be elected as Chairman, Cllr Wells seconded this. All were in favour.</p> <p>Cllr Murphy took the Chair.</p> <p>Cllr Hawkins proposed Cllr Wells be Vice-Chairman, Cllr Pearson seconded this. All were in favour.</p>	
<p>Completion of the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form</p> <p>Cllr Murphy completed and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office Form as Chairman.</p>	
<p>To receive and approve apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from Cllrs Ross and Stewart. These apologies were approved.</p>	
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
<p>To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 15th April 2024</p> <p>Minutes of the Meeting of Mersham Parish Council on 15th April 2024 were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly.</p>	
<p>To discuss matters arising from previous minutes not covered by the agenda.</p> <p>There were no matters arising to discuss.</p>	
<p>To receive report from Borough Councillor</p> <p>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/</p> <p>In addition, Cllr Bartlett reported that he has a meeting with Roland Mills regarding the EPL001 Solar development. Following the refusal by ABC for the EDF application it was thought those reasons could be used for this application. This will be discussed again at the June meeting as there is a Steering Committee meeting in June too.</p> <p>The Local Plan Task Group are hoping that a public meeting will go ahead for the suggested sites in Wye in the Summer/Autumn and then a site assessment will follow.</p> <p>Cllr Bartlett is hoping that ABC will support the use of Glyphosphate on the High Field to control the thistles on the site.</p> <p>Chief Executive of Ashford Borough Council has released an update saying how well the checks are being processed at the IBF.</p> <p>It was noted that the sewerage works application was refused and this will impact the developer so an appeal is likely.</p> <p>The Kingsford Street truck movements were reported by the Clerk to Cllr Bartlett who has agreed to discuss with Toby Howe.</p> <p>ABC have proposed to plant 26,000 trees on the High Field.</p>	

Cllr Bartlett will investigate whether there is anything that can be done to help the shop.	
Public Session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item There were no members of the public in attendance.	
To confirm eligibility to use the General Power of Competence The meeting was informed that with the Clerk holding a recognised professional qualification (Certificate in Local Council Administration) and the Council meeting the electoral mandate of having at least two-thirds of the council elected, the Parish Council is still eligible to use the General Power of Competence. Resolved – that having met the conditions of eligibility as defined in the Localism Act 2011 and SI 965. The Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012, the council adopts the General Power of Competence from 20 th May 2024 until the next relevant Annual Meeting of the Council. The resolution was correctly proposed and seconded (unanimous).	
To agree representatives on other Committees for 2024/25 Village Hall Representative – Cllr Wells Caretaker Committee Representative - Cllr Murphy KALC Representative – Cllr Pearson Mersham Sports Club – Cllr Stewart	
Presentation of a KALC Community Award A KALC Community Award 2024 was presented to Cllr Wells for her diligence and time spent on the Village Hall. Cllr Wells was thanked for all she has done for the Village Hall.	
To discuss the communication from Terry Mortimer regarding the Code of Conduct The Parish Councillors discussed the communication from Terry Mortimer regarding the Code of Conduct and agreed that training on the Code of Conduct would be ideal. Further training from KALC was also considered to be of use. Councillors are to view the useful training details for KALC via: www.kentalc.gov.uk under the training and events tab.	
Appointment and Scope of the Internal Auditor The meeting was circulated with the Clerk’s recommendations regarding the Internal Auditor for 2024-25. The Parish Council approved that Mrs Lister should be appointed as the Internal Auditor for 2024-25.	
To review the Terms of Reference for the Caretaker Committee The Parish Council reviewed and approved the Terms of Reference for the Caretaker Committee.	
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) A meeting is to be arranged for the HIP. The no pathway sign is to be removed. Cllr Hawkins reported the double yellow lines by the shop and Michael Farleigh said he would undertake a site visit.	
To receive an update on the Village Hall – to include discussion surrounding a working party for the redecoration of the Main Village Hall. The update from Cllr Wells was circulated to the Council. Cllr Murphy reported that the Village Hall has areas that need painting and suggested a working party. Cllr Wells expressed concern as the height of the Hall would require a scaffolding tower and a health and safety assessment would be required.	

Cllr Wells will acquire some quotations and the Parish Council will consider a grant towards the repainting of the Hall.		
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 following applications were discussed: PA/2024/0689 PA/2024/0849 PA/2024/0858 PA/2024/0510		
To approve the Standing Orders, Asset Register and Risk Assessment and confirm arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.		
The Parish Council approved the Standing Orders, Asset Register and Risk Assessment and confirmed arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks.		
Review of the Council’s subscriptions to other bodies ie KALC		
The Parish Council reviewed the Council’s subscriptions to other bodies ie KALC		
Financial matters:		
a) To approve the following financial documents:		
i. To receive the end of year accounts for 2023-24		
The end of year accounts were received and approved by the Council.		
ii. To receive the report from the Internal Auditor		
The report from the Internal Auditor was received and approved.		
iii. To approve the Governance Statement 2023/24, section 1 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2024		
The Annual Governance Statement was approved and signed.		
iv. To consider and approve the Accounting Statements 2023/24, section 2 of the AGAR for the year ending 31 March 2024 and the supporting Bank Reconciliation as at 31 st March 2024, the explanation of significant variance. To ensure that the Accounting Statements 2023/24 are signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting.		
The Accounting Statements 2023/24 were considered and approved. The Accounting Statement was signed and dated by Cllr Murphy.		
b) To note the Parish Council’s financial position for the beginning of the new Financial Year.		
The PC noted the £23,552.92 held in the bank account as at 31 st March.		
c) To authorise any payments		
Cheque No:	Payee	Amount
OLT	HMRC	£ 74.00
OLT	S Lister (Internal Audit)	£ 60.00
OLT	Annual Insurance	£ 639.86
OLT	I King (May salary)	£ 148.72
OLT	T Block (May Salary)	£ 310.68
OLT	Fast Hosts	£ 28.78
Any Other Business		
The Clerk had made contact with HS1 regarding the Cut and Cover and a meeting is to be set up with them and Cllr Murphy to discuss options for the potential lease of this piece of land.		

<p>The Shop is causing the parishioners some concern as the current tenants are staying but are finding it difficult to negotiate a decent lease length. Cllr Murphy will visit the landlady and discuss the matter.</p> <p>The Parish Council will register the shop as an Asset of Community Value.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked about a communication that Liz Richardson had sent in January regarding shrubs on Cherry Glebe. The Clerk had responded stating that this was Ashford Borough Council responsibility and that they should be contacted.</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> <table data-bbox="188 488 1197 667"><tr><td>Monday 17th June 2024</td><td>Monday 15th July 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Monday 16th September 2024</td><td>Monday 21st October 2024</td></tr><tr><td>Monday 18th November 2024</td><td>Monday 20th January 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Monday 17th February 2025</td><td>Monday 17th March 2025</td></tr><tr><td>Monday 21st April 2025</td><td>Monday 19th May 2025.</td></tr></table>	Monday 17th June 2024	Monday 15th July 2024	Monday 16th September 2024	Monday 21st October 2024	Monday 18th November 2024	Monday 20th January 2025	Monday 17th February 2025	Monday 17th March 2025	Monday 21st April 2025	Monday 19th May 2025.	
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