

**MERRIOTT PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the monthly PARISH COUNCIL meeting held**  
**JANUARY 7<sup>TH</sup> 2013**

**OPEN SESSION:** 6 members of the public were present.

Mr R Gilkes expressed his appreciation of the Merriott Messenger.

Mrs Hayden commented that during the Christmas holidays children had done a lot of damage to the damp surface of the football pitches, especially some bikes deliberately skidded in muddy goal mouth areas; it was AGREED that this item be put on the February Parish Council agenda to remedy, and ACTION Clerk to remind groundsman to tell children to cycle on paths. Mr Lawrence of Merriott Youth Football Club thanked the Parish Council for providing safe storage of goals.

Mr I Hall reported that he had attended the Area West meeting at which the planning application for the new doctors' surgery and housing had been decided. *(addendum: Comment was made that there was no representative from Merriott Parish Council present.)* Mr A Wallis regretted that neither he nor Mr Bending had been able to attend due to work commitments. Mr Maxwell and Mrs A Lawrence were there but neither considered themselves able to speak for the Parish Council. Mr Hall said that SSDC has agreed that the Section 106 money arising from the development will go towards sport and youth in Merriott and will be given to the Parish Council.

Mr Hall asked the Parish Council to consider repairing the path to the Cemetery; he had spoken to a Churchwarden who feels that the Parochial Church Council will favour this.

Mr Hall asked for the Parish Council to consider joining the campaign to introduce 20 mph speed limits to vehicles in built-up areas to reduce the number or severity of accidents.

Mr Davies, the applicant for planning permission at Pye Corner, was permitted to address the meeting when that item was considered.

Mr K Self, CCTV contractor, was permitted to address the meeting when that item was considered.

Meeting commenced at 19.20 hours.

**PRESENT:** Mr A Wallis (Chairman), Mr S Bending, Mr G Merrick, Mr B Norton, Mrs S Sumpter, Mr I Noble, Mrs A Lawrence, Mr P Maxwell (arrived from South Petherton at 7.50 p.m. during the meeting)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Miss J Vale (Acting Clerk)

**1.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** there were none.

**2.CODE OF CONDUCT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

The Chairman asked members for declarations of interest.

**2013/001** Cllr S Bending declared a personal interest in item 9, new Pavilion, due to his children's involvement with sports there.

**2013/002** Cllr Merrick declared a personal interest in item 9, new pavilion, due to members of his family being involved with sports there.

Dispensation has already been granted to Councillors to permit discussion on the Parish's budget and annual precept (Item 7 below)

**3.MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**2013/003** The minutes of the MONTHLY PARISH COUNCIL meeting held on December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012 were unanimously accepted and RESOLVED to be a correct record.

**4.MATTERS ARISING**

**There were no matters arising**

**2013/004** The following ACTION points from previous meetings were reviewed.

**2009/314 point 10** Lowering of kerbs at Manor House & Careford Lodge – matter resting with County Councillor/ working party. ONGOING

**2011/173, 2011/283** Cllr Maxwell to pursue the conservation of the bollards at Evergreen path. The Clerk awaits a copy of a form from Cllr Maxwell (re English Heritage).

**2011/274** Churchyard Headstones requiring upkeep. The Chairman has received a letter from the PCC to say that contractors have been appointed and estimates received (letter passed to Clerk). The letter asks for financial support from the Parish Council. **Mrs A Lawrence declared a prejudicial interest in the matter as an ex-officio member of the PCC and refrained from discussion or voting on the matter. 2013/005** It was proposed by Mr S Bending, seconded by Mr I Norton and RESOLVED (with Mrs Lawrence abstaining) that the Parish Council make a grant of £675.00 to the PCC through its Section 137 powers, to improve the safety and appearance of the churchyard and out of respect for former Merriott residents.

**2011/321 point2** – Letter to Co-op HQ re: lorries and parking. SENT 11/10. ACTION; Acting Clerk to write again to the Co-op to remind the delivery lorries of their one-way route around the village.

**2011/363, 2012/119** site meeting required to look at noticeboard and cctv recorder location at Village Hall - ONGOING

**2012/221 Tree at burial Ground to be moved;** in discussion with Mr Gilkes, it was AGREED that a site meeting of Parish Council working party and members of the Parochial Church Council is required to progress the matter. ACTION Clerk to write to Churchwarden.

2012/313 Clerk to check on £335 planning fee; ongoing

2012/317 Draft budget for 2013-4- on agenda for this meeting

2012/292 Recreation Ground security improvements; on agenda for this meeting.

2012/320c Working group to be set up to look into fund-raising for new pavilion; AGREED that this should be Cllrs I Noble and Mrs S Sumpter. Completed.

2012/321 Notice in Messenger asking for Speedwatch volunteers; there had been a small response to the previous notice. Mrs A Lawrence will put another notice in the FEBRUARY Messenger.

2012/328 Lengthsman to repair roof of lock-up; Cllr Wallis reported that this has been done . Completed.

2012/331 Cllr A Lawrence to obtain from Cllr P Maxwell some plastic footpath waymarker discs; ONGOING

2012/345 Clerk to confirm existence of account for purchase of red diesel; the Clerk reported that she has done this and contacted the Groundsman who has responded. Completed.

ACTION Clerk to inform Groundsman about purchase of petrol. **2013/006** ACTION Cllr A Wallis to arrange for servicing of Husqvarna machinery and setting of gang mower blades.

2012/291 completion of grant application form to Yarlinton Homes – progressing, see minutes below.

2012/352 Report on reserve funds; provided by Clerk for this meeting. Completed.

2012/353 Report on Local Choices event; ongoing, report from County Council officer awaited.

2012/356 offer of tree from Waitrose; awaiting response from Waitrose. Ongoing.

2012/357A Lengthsman to be instructed to buy rods; completed.

## **5. Report from District Councillor**

2013/007 Approval of development at Moorlands Farm; Cllr P Maxwell reported that he is seeking clarification about the beginning of work on the new surgery, but it must start before the end of March 2013. He believes that the Parish Council will receive £45,000 in Section 106 monies to benefit sport and youth in Merriott. ACTION Cllr Maxwell to seek clarification as to when the money will be passed to the Parish Council, as it affects ongoing and potential grant applications that the Parish Council wishes to make.

## **6. Report from County Councillor**

2013/008 Bus Services; Cllr Maxwell reported that there is to be a meeting at County Hall to discuss further cuts in bus subsidies. He and another councilor will be holding a press

conference next week to highlight the problems that bus service cuts cause to rural communities.

Flooding; the County Council is to become the county's lead authority on flooding and is setting up a Scrutiny panel to look into issues arising.

Water in Furrington Lane; the correspondence between Clerk and Highways Manager about actions was noted and the Clerk read points from the Highways Manager's letter, but the water has returned to the site to some extent.

Highways; Cllr G Merrick and others informed Cllr Maxwell that they are very concerned about the lack of action by Highways to clear gullies and ditches on a regular basis.

County Council meeting venues; Cllr Mrs A Lawrence reported to Cllr Maxwell that at the recent Area West meeting, which was held at a hotel, she had seen members of the public taking alcoholic drinks into the meeting, which she believed to contravene the rules on meetings of local government bodies. She also asked how much it cost the District Council to hire a commercial venue such as a hotel. Cllr Maxwell responded that there are few venues within Area West that are large enough to host District Council meetings, so the Council has a limited choice. Information on the costs would be available to her from the Clerk to the committee concerned on enquiry.

## 7.FINANCE

**2013/009** The following Invoices received in December were presented for payment.

Name of Payee	Invoice details	Amount	Budget Line	Approval	Cheque Number
Jessica Vale	Clerk Hours 28 hrs x £10.198 Travel miles 58 Office Allowance Tap key (for noticeboard) Postage stamps	<b>£285.54 less PAYE</b> <b>£57.20 = £228.34</b> ..... <b>£26.10</b> ..... <b>£20.00</b> ..... <b>£3.32 plus</b> <b>£0.66 VAT=£3.98</b> <b>8 x 50p= £4.00</b> <b>Total: £282.42</b>	Clerk	Yes	<b>002</b>
Tithe Barn	December	£16.00	Hall Rent	Yes	<b>002</b>
South Petherton Lengthsman Scheme	Request received for additional support in 2011/2012	Requested £1000		Not at present; awaiting financial statement from administrator	
Perry Print	December colour edition and Lynash Nurseries flyer*	<b>£417.80</b>	Messenger	Yes	<b>002</b>
Martin Rowswell	Dec 25 hrs @ £6.50  Petrol	<b>£162.50 less PAYE</b> <b>£32.60 =£129.90</b>  <b>Total: £</b>	Groundsman	Yes	<b>002</b>
David Ogilvie Lengthsman	Drain rods, plastic shovel, sundries. 2 litres teak oil	<b>£76.25 plus £15.25</b> <b>VAT = £91.50</b> <b>£15.40 plus £3.08</b> <b>VAT = £18.48</b> <b>Total £109.98</b>	Lengthsman	Yes	<b>002</b>

It was proposed by Cllr S Bending, seconded by Mrs A Lawrence and **RESOLVED** that the above invoices should be paid except for the request from the administrator of the Lengthsman scheme, pending further action.

**2013/010** The following deposit was made in December

**\*2013/011 invoice** raised on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012 to Lynash Nursery for £62.80 which forms part of this cost; awaiting payment.

**2013/012 Council Tax Support measures;** recent correspondence concerning the effects of changes by central government were discussed. It is not clear whether the amount lost in the precept will be made up by the District Council. ACTION 1; Clerk to reduce the length of draft letter to Merriott residents to 1 paragraph and obtain Chairman's approval in time for submission to Messenger editor by 12<sup>th</sup> January 2013. Letter also to go on Merriott website. ACTION 2; Clerk to arrange for S Bending and A Wallis to meet with SSDC Finance Manager on 24<sup>th</sup> January to discuss alteration to precept caused by new measure.

**2013/013 2013-14 Parish Council Budget.** Likely needs besides the new Pavilion were discussed. The amount of the loan for the construction of the new Pavilion could be reduced depending on the amount of grant funding obtained, although a timetable for this is not yet clear. It was pointed out that the construction of new homes in the village will increase the Council Tax base. It was AGREED that the Parish Council should hold an extraordinary meeting after the 24<sup>th</sup> January; ACTION the Clerk to book the Tithe Barn preferably for the evening of the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013.

**2013/014 Quarterly bank reconciliation and statement of reserved funds;** the Clerk explained that although the statement of reserved funds had been provided for the meeting, due to postal arrangements in the Clerk's absence she had not been able to draw up the Bank Reconciliation. It was AGREED that the Clerk should present the reconciliation at the next available meeting.

#### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND PLANNING MATTERS**

**2013/015** The following Planning Applications were received in December:

- (1) Application 12/04377/FUL and 12/04378/LBC Alterations and conversion of existing cow byre and shed into ancillary accommodation and car port at Bow Mill; S Bending reported that, due to the timing of the response deadline, it had not been possible to hold a Council meeting. A copy of the consultation notice had been sent to the Merriott website. He and Cllr A Wallis had made a site visit and recommended approval of the application as it would lead to the improvement of the buildings with very little intervention to the setting.
- (2) Application 12/04747/FUL Old Farm, Pye Corner, Merriott Road; erection of replacement timber building for general use in connection with haulage contractor's vehicle depot (part retrospective); S Bending reported that the buildings currently on the site are in poor condition and basic. Cllr Wallis reported that a neighbour had contacted him verbally objecting to the application, but to date the District Council did not seem to have received any objections from anyone. The applicant was invited to address the meeting and said that the site is screened by a hedge and has been used as a transport depot for a many years.
- (3) Application no. 12/04717/FUL 30 Manor Drive; erection of 2-storey side extension to dwellinghouse. S Bending introduced the plans with the comment that they are very similar to other extensions in the vicinity. It was noted that the plans include extra hard standing to the front of the property which would allow for more car parking in line with there being an additional bedroom.

It was proposed by S Bending, seconded by G Merrick and AGREED that APPROVAL of all plans was RECOMMENDED

#### **2013/16 Determination of applications for Planning Permission.**

The following items were NOTED;

- (1) Application no. 12/03989/FUL Erection of sports pavilion at Merriott Recreation Ground for Merriott Parish Council – permitted; structure will be subject to Building Regulations.

- (2) Application no. 12/02126/FUL erection of doctors' surgery and pharmacy, conversion of farm units to 12 residential units and erection of garages at Moorlands Farm, Moorlands Road; permitted with conditions
- (3) Application no. 12/03892/FUL installation of solar farm and infrastructure at North Perrott Fruit Farm; permitted with conditions.
- (4) Application no. 12/04318/FUL erection of front and rear porches Beech House, Nut Tree Farm, Lower Street; permitted with conditions.
- (5) Application no. 12/04350/FUL erection of summerhouse in rear garden at Beech House, Nut Tree Farm, Lower Street; permitted.
- (6) Application no. 12/04045/REM (11/00513/OUT refers) erection of 3 dwellinghouses on land to rear of Lukesfield, Church Street; permitted with conditions on landscaping, advance agreement with Highways of works to access, and obscure glass in bathroom side windows. Cllr Wallis has spoken to District Councillor for the ward to express again the Parish Council's concerns at this permission.
- (7) Application 12/04665/TCA ; to fell cypress tree at 67B Lower Street – conservation area; permitted. Cllr Mrs Sumpter added that the tree is situated by Osborne Close.

## **9. RECREATION GROUND**

**2013/17 Changing Room project;** the Chairman reported that he has spoken to the project architect who confirms that several expressions of interest in building the Pavilion have been received. ACTION; the Clerk to ask architect to draw up a detailed specification for the Parish Council to consider.

**2013/18 Funding Strategy;** Cllr Mrs Sumpter reported that she is completing and submitting the grant application form to Yarlinton. A very helpful officer in the District Council has made comments on this and on the grant application process for the District Council's own grants scheme. ACTION Mrs Sumpter and Cllr I Noble to arrange to meet this officer. The Clerk has had some response to letters sent out to some local groups asking whether they would be likely to hire the hall once available, so that the Council can get an indication of levels of local support and potential income to offset running costs; ACTION Clerk to send to Mrs Sumpter the letter and responses. Mrs Sumpter has looked into other potential grant sources. Parish Councillors expressed their appreciation to Mrs Sumpter for the work done so far.

**2013/19 Recreation Ground security upgrade;** Cllr I Noble reported on progress and introduced the preferred contractor for the scheme, who was present at the meeting. Councillors discussed the proposed equipment and saw a demonstration of images to inform them of image quality. A site meeting is to be arranged in conjunction with the Village Hall committee to position the recording equipment. It was NOTED for future reference that the Council's insurers will need to be informed when the system is installed and working, and that money needs to be set aside in the annual budget for servicing.

It was proposed by I Noble, seconded by S Bending and RESOLVED to accept the contractor's estimate of £3,450.00 for equipment and installation costs. The Parish Council will be responsible for purchasing some extra equipment at a cost of about £60.00. The Chairman thanked Cllr Noble for his work in completing the project and the contractor for giving such a helpful presentation.

## **10.HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS**

**2013/20 Wet weather and highways :** Councillors reported several issues with high water levels, most notably flooding of the footpath beside Mr Norton's land at Boozer Pit, flooding of Garstone Lane CH19/36. It was pointed out to the County Councillor that Highways are meant to be repairing the storm drain opposite Pitt Farmhouse at Boozer Pit.

## **11.TRANSFER OF EGWOOD TO PARISHES**

**2013/21** Cllr Wallis reported that the lead Councillor for the parishes, Peter Little of Lopen, has received a draft contract from the County Council's legal team. A meeting of representatives of all the parishes concerned will be arranged.



## **12.LENGTHSMAN SCHEME**

**2013/022** Cllr Wallis reported that he has been in correspondence with the outgoing administrator of the South Petherton Lengthsman scheme, Sharon Blake, over her request for a contribution to the scheme's funds which she believes to be owing from 2011-2, when the Scheme was threatened by cuts in funding from other sources, which eventually were not cut. He has asked the administrator to provide accounts for the scheme to justify asking for the contribution, but these have so far not been produced. Cllr Maxwell informed the Parish Council that the new financial administrator for the scheme will be Steve Doble.

**2013/023** The Lengthsman was off sick for part of December, but has cleared numerous drains.

**2013/024 Work for January;** He is requested to 1.cut away the buddleia in the road at Townsend Corner, 2. Fix the street name plate at Osborne Close. 3. Apply teak oil to benches. 4. Clear more drains as required. Cllr Wallis said that he expects to attend a scheme meeting soon, and will ask for more drain rods for the lengthsman.

## **13.CORRESPONDENCE FOR ACTION**

**2013/025** A list of mail and e-mail correspondence in December was circulated for members' information. The contents were NOTED. There were no further matters of significance above what had already been discussed on the agenda. Cllr Mrs A Lawrence has suggested that information on Somerset Waste Partnership's Green Routine 20-13 campaign be forwarded to various local groups.

## **14.VILLAGE FLOODING PLAN**

**2013/026 Emergency Plan;** The Clerk had updated some of the information contained in the body of the Emergency Plan created in 2010, but had not altered any of the Appendices, especially since the personal details contained therein should be regarded as confidential. There is plenty of grit/salt at various places around the village in case of ice or snow, but there is no local known supply of sandbags; it was agreed that at present these can only be obtained from the County or District Council when the need arises. It was AGREED that Mrs A Lawrence and Mr G Merrick should progress the updating of the emergency plan, with a view to also promoting it through the village website. Also ACTION the Clerk to find any more relevant information about village flood plans to pass to Mrs Lawrence and Mr Merrick.

**2013/27 Flood Resilience Community Pathfinder Scheme;** no further action to be taken on this for the time being, but the Clerk to send to SSDC's Civil Contingencies Manager information about recent incidents in Merriott and areas of concern raised by Councillors. ACTION

## **15A.ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – extraordinary meeting 28<sup>th</sup> January.**

- Precept set for 2013-4 – report from Cllr Maxwell on timing of receipt of Section 106 monies to assist with budget for Changing Room project
- Quarterly bank reconciliation for October – December 2012

## **15B.ITEMS FOR FEBRUARY MEETING.**

- Remedy damage to pitch surfaces at Recreation Ground caused by casual (not sports) play
- Update to village emergency plan
- Bird boxes for trees in Recreation Ground

Meeting concluded at 21.50hrs.

**NEXT MEETING: February 4<sup>th</sup> 2013 19.00hrs Merriott Tithe Barn.**