

Minutes of Mersham Parish Council
Meeting held on Monday, 21st March 2022 in the Church room at St John the Baptist Church

Present

Geoffrey Fletcher (Chair)
 Peter Turley

Stewart Ross
 Melanie Wells

In attendance: 2 members of the public, Cllr Bartlett and Tracey Block (Clerk)

To be actioned by:

<p>To receive and approve apologies for absence. Apologies had been received from Cllrs Hawkin and Murphy.</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. 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 meeting held on 21st February 2022 Minutes of the Meeting of Mersham Parish Council on 21st February 2022 were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly.</p>	
<p>East Stour Valley – Campaign to Save Aldington presentation from Jonathan Tennant and Derek Burles The Campaign to Save Aldington was formed to save Aldington from excessive blight in the East Stour Valley.</p> <p>There are currently 2 schemes, EDF Renewables site and the Stone Street Green Solar, Evolution Power site. Aldington already has 50 acres of ground solar. The common element between Mersham and Aldington is the East Stour Valley.</p> <p>The Campaign’s objective is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve a significant reduction Impact • Achieve both mitigation and compensation for the village • Achieve preservation of the East Stour Valley <p>The key issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • location and social costs • first solar farm is some distance from the village and the second EDF site is also in the same area <p>Cllr Fletcher noted that the planning inquiry inspector said that no further linked developments should be made to the local supply.</p> <p>The Evolution Power plan Covers a total area of 700 acres that is more than one acre per household and equivalent to 460 football pitches. The EDF plan is under 50 megawatts and is, therefore, decided as a planning application by Ashford Borough Council however the evolution power plan is a 100 Watt application and will be decided by a DCO meaning Ashford Borough Council are simply a consultee.</p> <p>Evolution Power appeared to be difficult to communicate with.</p> <p>The developer will have access to powers of compulsory acquisition plus local people might never be sure who they are dealing with.</p> <p>If approved, Mersham stands to lose views as do Aldington.</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the green long concept and creation of cycle paths Ashford borough council is supportive of the green corridor concept.</p> <p>Councillor Turley asked whether Historic England have been engaged with.</p> <p>The campaign plans to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have dialogue with villages and supporters • have ongoing meetings with landowners 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be the liaison with local communities • develop relationships with the media • meet with Evolution Power • respond to the submission from EDF once received • meet with villagers to guide a response to the EDF application <p>Cllr Bartlett suggested involving Damian Green who does not support the battery solution for solar.</p> <p>The campaign hopes to expand to include Mersham and aims to get some editorial to the Villager and to the Village Alliance.</p> <p>Messrs Tennant and Burles were thanked for attending and were asked to contact the Parish Council via the Clerk.</p>	
<p>To discuss matters arising from previous minutes not covered by the agenda.</p> <p>The Clerk had received confirmation that the telephone kiosk could be adopted by the Parish Council. The Clerk will complete the contract and also contact ABC about electricity supply to a defibrillator.</p> <p>Cllr Turley reported that the Sports Club are facing a cost of £500,000 to bring the acquired land up to standard. The club currently has £465,000 and is looking to find an additional £35,000.</p>	TB
<p>Public session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item.</p> <p>There were no questions or comments from the public.</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>Cllr Bartlett has been working on reinstating the G line bus service.</p> <p>Cllr Ross asked if there was any progress on the barn with a blue tarpaulin. discussions are ongoing repair is required and possibly needs scaffolding. Cllr Turley is to discuss this with Mr Simmonds.</p> <p>Cllr Bartlett has agreed to provide a grant to the social club for a new barbecue.</p>	PT
<p>To consider and discuss possibilities for the piece of land behind the shop</p> <p>A plan of the land in question was circulated to all councillors. Some of the properties would be disproportionately benefited in from purchase of this land should it be turned into parking. The Parish Council had expected some input from a resident this input is awaited.</p>	
<p>To receive a report on the planning training offered by the borough Council</p> <p>The notes of the training session had been circulated to all. The Clerk thought of particular interest were the material considerations given when viewing a planning application. These can be seen at: https://www.ashford.gov.uk/planning-and-development/planning-applications/making-planning-applications/material-planning-considerations/</p>	
<p>To receive an update regarding the creation of a green buffer zone in Highfield</p> <p>Archaeological excavations are being undertaken on Highfield. The Clerk was asked to contact Daniel Fryd to find out a timetable for events and when the final design will be available.</p> <p>it was noted that some trees had blown over at the Highfield site during the storm it would appear they had no support.</p>	TB
<p>To discuss the current situation at the inland Border facility</p> <p>The DfT have made an alteration to the SDO in order that they can house 2 additional water containers at the end of Kingsford Street, this is to be stored water in case of a fire on the IBF site.</p> <p>Cllr Fletcher reported that the lights are still an issue.</p>	
<p>To receive an update on Highways Issues (Including the Highways Improvement Plan)</p> <p>Cllr Turley reported that the plans had been circulated for the Improvements. These improvements are as described previously at cost of a little over £12,000. The Parish Council agreed this expenditure as the issues raised have been consistent and the Parish Council has pursued all other avenues available.</p>	

<p>To agree the response to the Land Mapping Questionnaire. The Clerk had circulated a draught response to the Land Mapping Commission Questionnaire. The response was approved by all whether it was noted that Cllr Bartlett is to respond to the Clerk with a comment regarding heritage assets. The Clerk is to submit the response.</p>		TB																		
<p>To receive an update regarding the Village Hall Cllr Wells provided an update on the Village Hall. A copy is kept on file.</p>																				
<p>To discuss the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations/Queen's Green Canopy Project The events committee had met and Cllr Wells had attended this. There will be a celebration on 2/6 from 3pm at Mersham Sports Club and the beacon will be lit at 9.45pm. The Parish Council authorised the expenditure of up to £250, receipts will be required to support the funds.</p>																				
<p>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 Planning Applications requiring a response were:</p>																				
22/00186/AS	<i>2 Bower Cottages, 1 - 2 Chestnut Cottages and Chestnut Villa, The Street, Mersham, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6NG</i>	Planning application for off-road parking provision and erection of fencing and gate to the rear of No 2 Bower Cottage and Nos 1-2 Chestnut Cottages and Chestnut Villa, The Street, Mersham, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6NG. Proposed oil tanks																		
The Parish Council considered that off-street parking is a positive but concerns are raised about the access which must be designed to mitigate any danger to other road users.		TB																		
22/00317	<i>Chelwood, Mersham, Ashford, TN25 7HU</i>	Proposed erection of a ICF block framed garage with playroom/office above. Timber clad to look like a barn with tiled roof.																		
The Parish Council raised no objection to this application		TB																		
<p>Financial matters:</p> <p>a) To note the Parish Council's financial position. The financial position was noted as at 28th February 2022</p> <p>b) To authorise any payments</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Cheque No:</th> <th>Payee</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>502182</td> <td>HMRC</td> <td>£ 49.60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>502183</td> <td>I King (March salary)</td> <td>£ 124.14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>502184</td> <td>T Block (March salary)</td> <td>£ 466.42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>502185</td> <td>T Block expenses</td> <td>£ 136.38</td> </tr> <tr> <td>502186</td> <td>T Gardener Ltd</td> <td>£ 900.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>A copy of the budget v expenditure was distributed to all Councillors.</p>		Cheque No:	Payee	Amount	502182	HMRC	£ 49.60	502183	I King (March salary)	£ 124.14	502184	T Block (March salary)	£ 466.42	502185	T Block expenses	£ 136.38	502186	T Gardener Ltd	£ 900.00	
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<p>Any Other Business (for information purposes only): There had been tree damage at the JPF. Paul had cordoned off the area but Cllr Turley felt that there was a danger to the public. It was then removed at a cost of £150.</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> <p>Monday 11th April 2022 – apologies received from Cllr Ross. Monday 16th May 2022 at 7pm – APM, Clerk to invite others to talk.</p>		All																		
<p>The meeting closed at 9.25pm</p>																				