

Minutes of Mersham Parish Council
Meeting held on Monday, 17th March 2025 in the Church room at St John the Baptist Church

Present

Gavin Murphy (Chair)	Peter Hawkins
Gill McBarnet	Donna Peason
Stewart Ross	Kenton Stewart
Melanie Wells	

In attendance: Borough Cllr Bartlett and Tracey Block (Clerk).

To be actioned by:

<p>To receive and approve apologies for absence There were no apologies for absence to be received.</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 meetings held on 17th February 2025 Minutes of the Meeting of Mersham Parish Council on 17th February 2025 were approved as a true record and were signed accordingly.</p>	
<p>To discuss matters arising from previous minutes not covered by the agenda. There were no matters arising to be discussed.</p>	
<p>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: The recent Joint Transportation Board meeting discussed the Church Road speeding and poor visibility. Officers are to report on their findings following some investigations they will undertake. The bridge at the Forstal is still in the budget for 2025/26. There is no update yet on the DfT application. The Planning Inspectorate hearings regarding the solar application in Aldington have been attended and they may bring forward conditions regarding screening and a footpath between the villages of Aldington and Mersham. The Local Plan sift has not yet been completed and Cllr Bartlett reported that he has 2 meetings in his diary for July so would look at that sort of time-frame. ABC must sort this out before the abolishment of ABC in 2027/28. The Church Commissioners have put forward all of their land which would mean an additional 8,000 homes. The IBF outcome could be positive for the area as ABC can apply conditions. The A2070 and Hinxhill road closures make a very long trip through to Wye. Neil Baker is going to attend the House of Commons because KCC is no longer approached or able to co-ordinate roadworks.</p>	
<p>Public Session: To receive questions and comments from the public on any agenda item There were no public in attendance.</p>	
<p>To discuss and agree the structure of the Parish Council Cllr Murphy suggested portfolio holders to each area highlighted: Housing and development – Cllr Pearson Highways and Transportation – Cllr Stewart Village amenities and infrastructure – Cllr Wells Environment and sustainability – Cllr McBarnet Community Engagement – Cllrs Hawkins and Stewart Finance and Governance – The Clerk Cllr Murphy will expand the document behind these roles ahead of the next meeting.</p>	

<p>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.</p> <p>This was provided by Cllr Bartlett.</p>																									
<p>To receive an update on Highways issues (to include the Highways Improvement Plan)</p> <p>The Clerk and Cllr Murphy provided an update on the 2 items on the Highways Improvement Plan – pedestrian safety on the A20 and on Church Road.</p>																									
<p>To receive an update on the Village Hall.</p> <p>The update from Cllr Wells was circulated to the Council.</p>																									
<p>To receive an update regarding the Cut and Cover</p> <p>Cllr Murphy has chased Ben Olney at HS1 and this seems to be progressing.</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</p> <p>There were 2 applications to discuss. PA/2025/0263 and PA/2024/2083, the Councillors raised no objections to these applications.</p>																									
<p>Financial matters:</p> <p>a) To note the Parish Council’s financial position.</p> <p>The PC noted the £32,922.94 held in the bank account as at 28th February 2025.</p> <p>b) To authorise any payments</p> <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 (March salary)</td><td>£ 148.72</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>T Block (March Salary)</td><td>£ 326.64</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>Ransley Turf</td><td>£ 180.00</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>Lushland Ltd</td><td>£ 430.00</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>Paul Rodway</td><td>£ 30.60</td></tr><tr><td>OLT</td><td>T Block</td><td>£ 90.66</td></tr></table> <p>The Clerk had circulated a Financial Statement, Budget over Expenditure and Payment Schedules up until 31st March 2025.</p>	Cheque No:	Payee	Amount	OLT	HMRC	£ 77.20	OLT	I King (March salary)	£ 148.72	OLT	T Block (March Salary)	£ 326.64	OLT	Ransley Turf	£ 180.00	OLT	Lushland Ltd	£ 430.00	OLT	Paul Rodway	£ 30.60	OLT	T Block	£ 90.66	
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<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The plans for the VE80 event was discussed. Cllr Hawkins will ask Liz Richardson if she would say something.</p> <p>The railings round the beacon have been repaired. The Clerk is to report the footpath surface.</p> <p>There is a lent lunch being held at the Church on Saturday.</p> <p>Cllr Hawkins asked about the area that needs grass seeding in Cherry Glebe following ducting being installed. This is an ABC issue.</p> <p>Uneven land at rectory Close needs to be reported to Kent Highways.</p> <p>The Caretaker is to communicate directly with the Village Hall Chairman regarding some lavender plants.</p> <p>Signs and verges have been damaged at Quarry View.</p> <p>The barriers at the JPF will be installed shortly.</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 28th April 2025</p> <p>Monday 19th May 2025.</p>																									

The meeting was closed at 8.45pm.