

**Minutes of Mersham with Sevington Parish Council Meeting held in  
the Church Room, St John The Baptist Church, Mersham on Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

<b>Present</b>	Geoffrey Fletcher (Chair)	Colin Kibble
	Gavin Murphy	Rob Hansen
	Jan Oakley-Hills	Michael Smithers
	Peter Turley	Lee Whitehead

In attendance: Cllr Gerald White and Tracey Block (Clerk)

To be actioned by

The meeting started at 7.30pm	
Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Paul Bartlett.	
<b>Declaration of interest in items on the agenda</b> There were no declarations of interest.	
<b>Minutes</b> of the Meeting on 21 <sup>st</sup> September 2015 were approved as a true record and signed accordingly.	
<b>Matters Arising from the Minutes</b> The Clerk updated the meeting with regard to the litter bin in North Sevington, Ashford Borough Council have responded saying, “We are currently collating the data collected from the borough wide litter / dog bin survey so will hopefully be able to give you an answer soon.”	
<b>Public Session</b> There were no members of the public present.	
<b>Borough Councillors</b> Cllr White was welcomed to the meeting. A background to Cllr White’s history was provided. Since being elected on to Ashford Borough Council Cllr White is on the Audit Committee only. The meeting was updated on the Borough Council’s purchasing of properties in Ashford. The Borough Council need to become commercially minded and raise finances to assist with funding. As cuts are happening in Central Government pressure is placed on Borough Councils to raise finances in other ways. Ashford is to take 250 Syrians over the next 6 years, before they arrive, locations are being considered as to where they would be best placed, allowing for school places, jobs and housing. 900 jobs are to be created in Ashford from business expanding and a further 5,000 jobs could be created if larger businesses who have expressed an interest in re-locating come to Ashford. There was some discussions about the infrastructure of the road network being able to cope with the extra vehicles the new jobs would bring. Cllr White agreed that a need for a resolution to Operation Stack is required. Cllr Murphy said that he would like to see the funding Ashford Borough Council are looking into to be approached on a greater community base, drawing on the example of the community funding The Farriers Arms.  Cllr Bartlett had sent an updated map (circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting) of the highlighted development sites. Albeit very informal the sites highlighted for development have had decisions made. A copy of the map is to be kept on file.	
<b>Report from Community Warden</b> There was no report from the Community Warden or the PCSO.	
<b>To consider the Co-option of a New Councillor</b> Henrietta is very keen to be a Councillor and will be at the next meeting. Copies of the declaration of interest form and register of interest form are to be given to Henrietta Sawdon for completion prior to the	GF

meeting.

**Planning Matters:**

A list of Planning Applications was circulated as Appendix A with the agenda, those requiring a response were:

Reference: 15/01288  
Address: Mercedes Benz of Ashford, Monument Way, Sevington, Ashford, TN24 0HB  
Proposal: Replacement of external signage for car dealership & forecourt with 6 no. internally illuminated signs, 4 no. flag poles and 6 no. non-illuminated signs

The Parish Council raises no objection to this application

Reference: 15/00490  
Address: Phase 1, Waterbrook Park, Waterbrook Avenue, Sevington, Kent  
Proposal: Discharge of condition 3

The Parish Council raises no objection to this application

Reference: 15/01269  
Address: Park View, Kingsford Street, Mersham, Ashford, Kent, TN25 6PE  
Proposal: Erection of a part single/part two storey rear extension

The Parish Council raises no objection to this application

Reference: 15/01357  
Address: Chequer Tree Farm Cottage, Mersham, Ashford, TN25 7HN  
Proposal: Alterations to conservatory roof and insertion of two dormer windows to the rear elevation roofslope

The Parish Council raises no objection to this application

Reference: 15/01350  
Address: Pattison, Cheesemans Green Lane, Sevington, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0LL  
Proposal: Erection of a two-storey side extension

The Parish Council raises no objection to this application

**Financial Matters**

**a. To note the Parish Council's financial position.**

The Financial Statement was circulated.

A budget against expenditure was also circulated

The following payments were authorised as having been paid since the last meeting:

Cheque	Payee's Name	Reason for payment	Amount	Notes
501692	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance	August 2014 Invoice for grass cutting	£280.00	Inc. £46.67 VAT

The balance at bank is £29,673.12

**b. To authorise any payments including the Clerk's Salary, Salaries for Messers King and Branson.**

The following payments were authorised:

Cheque	Payee's Name	Reason for payment	Amount	Notes
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501693	Countrywide Grounds Maintenance	October Invoice for grass cutting	£280.00	Inc. £46.67 VAT		
501694	Mr I King	Litter picking October 2015	£83.85			
501695	Mr B Branson	Litter picking October 2015	£100.88			
501696	Mrs T Block	Salary for October 2015 (includes £15.25 for office sundries)	£406.21			
501697	Mr P M Langridge	Hedgecutting of the Behind the hedge footpath	150.00	Inc. £25.00 VAT		
<p><b>To consider any proposals for expenditure for the financial year beginning in April 2016 ahead of budget setting in November.</b>  The Parish Council did not wish to consider any additional expenditure ahead of budget setting, although there will be expenses should the caretaker scheme progress further.</p>						
<p><b>To receive an update regarding the replacement roundabout:</b>  The Clerk had placed an order for the installation of the “Whisk” roundabout at a cost of £5,250 + £250 removal of the old roundabout with Barge Ltd. All prices exclude VAT. The Clerk had received confirmation that the removal and installation will be completed on 13<sup>th</sup> November.</p>						
<p><b>To consider the proposed changes to the arrangements for Mersham with Sevington Parish Council</b>  The Parish Council is in full support of the review but considers that once Sevington gets to be a certain size, Mersham and Sevington may split as pre-1973.</p>						
<p><b>To receive an update on the Village Caretaker Scheme</b>  The likely annual cost for the Village Caretaker (split between the 4 parishes) is likely to be between £22,000 and £27,000. KCC will offer £2,000 per annum per parish for the scheme, ABC will pay £5,000 per annum for the entire cluster which would provide funding per annum of £13,000. ABC have offered an extra £5000 for the first year only. The Parish Councils currently spend approximately £7,000 per annum for the services that the Handyman would do. The other costs will need to be met from the parishes, either by increasing the precept or by sponsorship and grants etc.</p> <p>Set up costs likely to be in the region of £15,000. Up to £10,000 may be available from Ashford Borough Council. Andrew Wickham has said he will consider some support.</p> <p>Cllrs Murphy and Turley have agreed to represent Mersham at the governance forum alongside representatives from each parish.</p> <p>There is to be a meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> October whereby a decision must be reached on whether the scheme is to progress and how the shortfall of between £5,000 and £9,000 is to be reached.</p> <p>Following some discussion regarding the benefits and opportunities this scheme might offer, it was suggested that Mersham make up 40% of the expenses. Following a further look at the expenses, Cllr Turley proposed that up to a maximum of £7,000 per annum be paid in by Mersham, subject to commitments from other PCs.</p>						GM,PT
<p><b>Any Other Business</b>  Chequer Tree paddock – Cllr Fletcher has raised this with Richard Alderton who has responded to the Planning Inspectorate’s report.</p> <p>Blind Lane – environmental enforcement are aware of the issues here.</p> <p>Planning Application for the erection of detached incidental building for the housing of vintage buses for hobby use. It is considered that the Officer has been mis-led and that the company, Marshopper is being</p>						All

run from this site. The Clerk is to contact the Planning Enforcement team regarding this matter.	TB
The solar lights on the footpath behind the hedge are not working, the Clerk is to report this.	TB
There are a number of benches in a state of disrepair in the village. The Clerk is to place an article in The Villager asking if anyone would wish to donate a bench in memory of a loved one.	TB
The hedge alongside the footpath has now been cut at £150, the Parish Council were very pleased with the work undertaken.	
Cllrs Kibble and Smithers reported that they had both attended the Planning Meeting and felt that it was not very helpful as it covered too broad a spectrum of detail.	
Local Needs Housing – Section 106 issues raised by the Church of England who were not happy with the “in perpetuity” clause. The Church of England wanted a restriction on the land to be written in to the contract but the Housing Association would then not be able to raise funds against the site. Church Commissioners and English Rural Housing have now resolved the issue and are therefore allowing the local needs housing to go ahead.	
<b>The next meeting</b> was confirmed as Monday, 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2015, the Clerk would like any items for the agenda by Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> October, please.	All
There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 9.00 PM.	