

MOLLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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**Draft Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 23th January 2024 at 8.00pm**

Present:

Councillor Peter Gorman
Councillor Phil John
Councillor Steve Lapper
The Clerk
Residents and Public – 2

Welcome and introductions

Members are reminded that this is a meeting in public, not a public meeting, and all points, questions and comments should be addressed through the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Received from District Councillors Phil Chapman and George Reynolds, the Chairman Jim Broomfield and Councillor David Sullivan

Declarations of Interest *Members are asked to declare any personal interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting.*

1126 Minutes of the meeting held 28^h November 2023 (previously circulated) and Matters arising. The minutes had been circulated in advance of the Meeting. It was agreed that there were no matters arising that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**1127 Clerks Report
Financial Statement**

The Clerk reported that 9 cheques had been raised in the period November to December 2023

735	Thomas Fox	Grass cutting 11.12.13	970.80	In Budget
736	CDC	Dog bins	334.62	Over Budget
737	Thomas Fox	Grass cutting 14	323.60	In Budget
378	Barriers Direct	Traffic mirror	72.44	In Budget
739	SLCC	Subscription	105.00	In Budget
740	Texprep	Mollington Matters	88.30	In Budget
741	DM Payroll	Payroll Services	50.00	In Budget
742	HMRC	PAYE for Clerk's salary	156.00	In Budget
743	Clerk	Salary	702.30	In Budget

There was £561.86 VAT outstanding at the end of December 2023 which has not been claimed.

Taking the above into account, the expected bank balance is £19,475.65 which is reconciled to Bank statement sheet No.228 at 29th December 2023. This balance contains the remaining reserves of £2857.50 for Orchard Piece Community Play Area. The General Fund at the end of December stands at £16,434.61.

The Clerk reported that CDC had updated the information regarding the dog bin collections and as a result, the annual charge was increased from April 2023 by 214% to cover 5 dog bins being emptied fortnightly.

Cheque numbers 684 (£144.00 – 16/6/22) and 720 (£446.40 – 16/5/23) have not been cashed despite investigations by the recipient – Thomas Fox Landscaping in both cases. As both cheques are over 6 months old, they are to be recorded as spoilt, and reissued.

Resolved: To accept the financial report

1128 Appointment of Internal Auditor

It was recommended that Elaine Anstee was to be appointed as Internal Auditor

Resolved: To accept Elaine Anstee as Internal Auditor

1129 Budget and Precept for 2024-2025

The Parish Council are required to submit a precept demand to CDC for the next financial year based on the likely parish expenditure and income, including grants and reserves.

The budget proposal, including a 30% increase in precept was previously circulated and approved by the Parish Council. This increase is mainly to cover the ongoing upkeep of the two play areas, and to improve the appearance and safety of the village with further tree and hedge cutting work. The budget retains approximately 12 months' funding as a provision for emergencies. The Clerk was authorised to confirm the precept with Cherwell District Council.

Resolved: To submit the 2024-2025 Precept Requirement notification to Cherwell District Council for the sum of £16520.00.

1130 Consultations

- a) Bank mandate update – Councillor John reported that this process was ongoing
- b) Request for Church Funding update – It was reported that following Royal Assent, a new section 19A has been inserted into the 1894 Act coming into force on 26 December 2023. The government's view is that its amendment in the form of section 19A clarifies that the 1894 Act does not affect the discretionary powers of parish councils in England to fund church repairs or improvements or property held for an ecclesiastical charity. NALC recommends that its members adopt the government's view when they receive requests for funding. This means that councils can use their discretionary powers to fund such property, including that of other Christian denominations and non-Christian faiths. The Parish Council will discuss All Saints Church's need for immediate funding for the necessary restoration, and the ongoing maintenance, either through a one off grant, or a sum paid annually in the precept.

1131 Planning matters

Applications

- 24/00080/EL Southam Rd Installation of 3rd wire to electricity lines *It is recommended that MPC do not object to this proposal, as the 3rd line already has planning approval*
- 24/00072/F The Yews Southam Rd OX17 1AZ Demolition of 2 agricultural buildings and erection of 2 new dwellings in lieu of approval of 21/01325/F *It is recommended that MPC do not object to this proposal, as it had already gained planning approval in 2021*

Decisions

- 23/03209/F Acorn House Main St First floor extension and rear roof porch APPLICATION WITHDRAWN

1132 Councillors Reports

Councillor Broomfield

None received

Councillor John

Maintenance

- a. Thomas Fox has completed the grass cutting activities as per contract. Additional work as itemised in the contract for hedge cutting was undertaken and invoiced
- b. Tree survey has been carried out throughout the village and quotations received for works both immediate (overhanging tree / branch in Orchard Playing Fields) and possible future corrective maintenance in the next few months. Several areas will need extensive work and cutting back of growing ivy in order to reduce possible damage.
- c. Planned visit early next week by other Tree Removal contractor to obtain further quotes.
- d. Several trees were cut down by villagers with prior approval of PC on the land adjacent to the Village Hall, these were dying and clearly needed to be removed before further damage / safety issues. There is still further removal work required and this will be done in the next few weeks. OCC have also sent notification of tree works that they intend to undertake, including felling and ivy clearance, throughout the village.

Village Hall

- e. Monthly Munch took place earlier in the month and was well attended.
- f. Coffee mornings continue either organised by Village Hall Committee as well those linked to Church Roof Repairs Funding
- g. Dates provisionally confirmed for Quiz nights in March and Oct this year.
- h. Several private functions have and will take place in the coming weeks
- i. The Village main hall ceilings and walls have been repainted with free labour through the good services of villager Steve Rumsford, this is greatly appreciated. Further works will be required on other internal rooms in the coming weeks.
- j. Village Hall Committee is finalising an application for additional funding through Cherwell District Council for new external works to the village hall, this needs to be submitted by 4th Feb 2024.

Councillor Lapper

It was reported that several water leaks through the village especially on the High Street, March Road and close to the allotments have been identified. Testing has shown that the water is chlorinated and are therefore related to the Thames Water Infrastructure; these have been reported and steps are already being taken to undertake repairs.

During the recent cold weather, and resulting icy conditions, OCC placed salt bags at the source of the leaks to help prevent ice building up on the road.

It is hoped that maintenance on the play areas will resume once the weather improves, and discussions regarding the equipment in Orchard Piece play area are ongoing.

Councillor Gorman

It was reported that work was ongoing to produce the Emergency Plan that could be submitted in February. It was hoped that this could be a concise document using a universal template, to make the plan easily accessible if needed.

Councillor Sullivan

Nothing to report

1133 Councillors Points of Interest:

None

1134 Date of next meeting

Tuesday 26 March 2024 Mollington Village Hall at 8.00pm

Parish Council meeting closed at 8.40pm

Chairman, Mollington Parish Council

Public Participation Session

It was reported that the Church restoration fund has raised £48k of the required £69k. It was emphasised that with prices of materials increasing all the time, that work should be started as soon as possible.

The Village Fete is planned for the 15th June 2024, and the committee requested that a member of the Parish Council was nominated to join them.