



**Minutes of the Merriott Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9th March 2026, 19.00 in the
Community Pavilion**

Those present:

Harriet Baggs (Clerk)	Cllr Steve Ashton (SA/Chair)
Cllr Jeremy Graham (JG/Vice Chair)	Cllr Rich Tucker (RT)
Cllr Deb Matthewson (DM)	Cllr Brian Rogers (BR)
Cllr David Aslett (DA)	Somerset Council – Cllr Jo Roundell-Greene (JRG)

Apologies for absence:

Cllr David Shillibier (DS)
Cllr Caroline Reed (CR)

26/235 Public Open Sessions

The Chair opened the meeting at 19.00

- A resident of Merriott was welcomed to the meeting. The gentleman introduced himself and indicated an interested in knowing what took place and how the Council was run. Information was given to him about an opportunity to join as a Councillor for him to consider.
- Two representatives from Merriott Social Club gave information to the Council, explaining the support they are giving to a number of activities within the village and the number of people using the club for a variety of reasons. The Social Club is open to all residents of Merriott, as well as those from surrounding areas.
The Social Club are undertaking a lot of work at present due to the ongoing repairs and maintenance required to keep the building fit for use but the costs are mounting and ask if there is any support financially from the Parish Council. A request was made by SA to come back to the meeting with quotes for the work required, with this being present by the representatives at April's meeting. The information should be emailed to the Clerk prior to the meeting for Councillors to read.
- Mark Bunting, Church Warden discussed the ongoing request to support the cost of the grass cutting. This is an agenda item in the financial report (26/241 E).
- Cllr Jo Roundell-Greene updated the Parish Council on Somerset Council activities which included the ongoing pothole work across the county, the money required to support children with special educational needs, the Government support in reducing this year's cost relating to SEN support by 90%. All residents are encouraged to report potholes and other road issues and not to assume others have reported.
- DM requested support from JRG to get Rights of Way (RoW) to engage.

26/236 Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interest

RT has an expense on the Financial Report

26/237 Minutes of February 2026 MPC meeting

a. To review and resolve that the Minutes of the February 2026 meeting are an accurate record.

All agreed

Proposed JG/Seconded RT

b. To consider any matters arising within the minutes, not on the agenda

- BR had applied for lottery funding but still awaiting outcome and not expected to hear for around 6 to 7 weeks. It was raised in the February meeting if the Short Matt Bowls Club could request assistance from the Parish Council to contribute anything towards the cost. An offer of £1500 was granted once the money has been transferred from the 35-day account. **Proposed RT/Seconded JG**
- JG asked about the address held by HMRC; this was noted and will be handed over to the new Clerk once appointed to address once in situ.
- The Pavilion mortgage was raised by DA as not present at February meeting and requested if this has been agreed. Information relating to future costs had been shared by Open Spaces but we await the financial benefits consideration of any mortgage lump sum payment from the Finance Team who were not present for this meeting. To be raised at April MPC meeting.

26/238 Governance

Nothing to report

All working party repots can be found in the appendices and therefore the minutes will give an outline of the discussions held in addition within the Council.

26/239 Planning Appendix named Goldwell Farm

An updated was verbally given by JG. No other planning submissions for review this month.

26/240 Clerk Update

Discussion relating to the present Clerk's resignation and the gap whilst awaiting the appointment of a new Clerk. DM agreed to take the laptop and support emails and non-financial administration post 31st March 2026 until the new Clerk is in post. Finance Team and Chair to support.

26/241 Finance

Finance Report

- a. Payments – all agreed
- b. Receipts – all agreed
- c. Bank reconciliation – at present this sits at a 2pence negative difference
- d. Monthly budget – SA raised the question of VAT and requested an extortionary meeting be arranged. Clerk explained that all VAT had been claimed except for the remaining months of the financial year. SA would still want to see a breakdown of the VAT payments as not clear on scribe. Finance Group to review.

e. Mark Bunting, as the Church representative. Attended the meeting to request if the annual payment agreed in previous years could be repeated. A number of quotes had been sourced as requested by the Parish Council and the present contract was still by far the cheapest. MPC agreed to grant £3000 as per the previous years – All agreed.

26/242 Open Spaces Report Appendix 10

- Open Spaces reported the work to get ahead of outstanding projects ahead of the Easter Break and to gain quotes for ongoing/new projects for the year ahead. The work to complete included the Pavilion clock being changed and the replacement doors (quotes sourced and awaiting all to come in).
- There is a requirement to review the dog ban on the recreational ground, a Public Spaces Preservation Order (PSPO) will need to be applied for.
- The boundary hedges are still being cut by a local resident backing onto Clapperhey. Chair to write to the resident requesting they leave the hedging.

26/243 Highways and Pathways Appendix 9

- A secure base ladder has been requested to improve the health and safety of the volunteers changing the batteries and moving the SID to the various locations around the village. This has been agreed by the Clerk and Chair as cost does not exceed £500.
- SID recordings have been indicated in the report and is still showing a positive impact.
- A meeting with Lee Norman from County Highways and Pathways is planned for Tuesday 10th March and will be reported in next months meeting. The walk round will include ongoing concerns related to blocked drains/gullies, potholes, road surface on Lower St/Shiremoor and pavements.
- BR showed a oak finger post sign that H&P will get quotes to replace some of the old posts that are no longer suitable. Quote to be in next month's report.
- H&P will bring a request to Council to proceed with the single quote obtained from Tom Wallis as other contractors have rejected the work or are unable to access rights to the land. RoW team at County are still not prepared to carry out the work and still awaiting a meeting with the present Officer.

26/244 Items for next meeting

Nothing requested at the meeting

Meeting closed at 21.07

26/245 Next meeting Monday 13th April at 19.00 in Community Pavilion

Signed as accurate recording by Chair..... Printed Name

Date