

St Mellion Parish Council
Annual Meeting
Tuesday 8th May 2018 at 650pm in St Mellion International Resort
Minutes

In attendance

Cllr Bridie Kent (outgoing and incoming Chair) (BK); Cllr Alan Twist (outgoing and incoming Vice Chair) (AT); Cllr Steve Crook (SC); Cllr Nick Habermehl (NH); Christine Douglas (CD), Clerk to the Parish Council.

Five members of the public (three arrived at 7pm).

1. Councillor matters

APCM2018-1.1 To receive apologies for absences

None.

APCM2018-1.2 To receive declarations of pecuniary interests

None declared.

APCM2018-1.3 To receive declarations of non-registrable interests

None declared.

APCM2018-1.4 To approve written requests for dispensations

None submitted.

2. Current Chair's annual report

APCM2018-2 BK summarised work of the Parish Council for 12 months to 8.5.18 (attached). AT requested that the CIL hearing be included. BK agreed to add this point.

3. Appointment of Chair for 12 months to May 2019

APCM2018-3 SC nominated BK; NH seconded BK; no further nominations were proposed. BK received a unanimous vote and was duly appointed Chair for 12 months to May 2019. BK signed the declaration of acceptance of office, witnessed by CD.

4. Appointment of Vice Chair for 12 months to May 2019

APCM2018-4 NH nominated AT; SC seconded AT; no further nominations were proposed. AT received a unanimous vote and was duly appointed Vice Chair for 12 months to May 2019.

5. Internal audit report for year ended 31st March 2018

All Councillors had read the pre-circulated internal audit report from Hudson Accounting Ltd. The auditor made no specific recommendations but suggested posting the community grant scheme application form and guidelines on the Parish Council's website (discussed at item APCM2018-8) and introducing an equal opportunities policy and employee grievance procedure (discussed at items APCM2018-7.12 and 7.13 respectively). It was noted that the internal auditor confirms the requirements of the Transparency Code have been met.

APCM2018-5 It was proposed by AT, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**

To accept the internal auditor's report for ye 31.3.18 and consider its three suggestions re the Parish Council's community grant scheme, an equal opportunities policy and employee grievance procedure.

6. External audit submission for year ended 31st March 2018

The following documents had been pre-circulated and were reviewed on-screen:

- the completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) as at 3.5.18;
- the Annual Internal Report for 2017/18 (page 4 of the AGAR) completed by the internal auditor which confirms all applicable internal control objectives have been met;
- draft bank reconciliation dated 16.4.18;
- draft variance analysis dated 3.5.18;
- documents for exercise of public rights.

APCM2018-6i It was proposed by SC, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**

To exempt St Mellion Parish Council from a limited assurance review under Section 9 of the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 because gross income and expenditure for ye 31.3.18 was £12,246 and £11,600 respectively and below the £25,000 threshold.

BK and CD signed and dated the Certificate of Exemption on page 3 of the AGAR.

APCM2018-6ii It was proposed by AT, seconded by SC and **RESOLVED**

To answer 'yes' to statements 1 to 8 of Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2017/18 with statement 9 marked as 'not applicable'.

BK and CD signed and dated Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2017/18 on page 5 of the AGAR. Justifications for the answers are summarised below.

1. We have put in place arrangements for effective financial management during the year, and for the preparation of the accounting statements.	Yes; and verified by the CIPFA-qualified internal auditor.
2. We maintained an adequate system of internal control including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness.	Standing Orders and Financial Regulations are in place; bank reconciliations are completed monthly and reviewed by full Council on a quarterly basis at which time it is signed by a Councillor (not the Chair) on a rota basis; there is a 100% check on expenditure prior to full Council meetings (the monthly payment schedule and associated invoices are checked by a Councillor (not the Chair) prior to full Council approving payment; and a system is in place to ensure payroll is approved by two Councillors before being run); there have been no major breaches during the year; the CIPFA-qualified internal auditor confirms that internal controls are working satisfactorily with no significant issues raised.
3. We took all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and Proper Practices that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of this authority to conduct its business or manage its finances.	Yes; the PC does not operate outside of its legal powers.
4. We provided proper opportunity during the year for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	Yes; Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) posted on website and notice boards; AGAR and supporting documents posted on PC's website.
5. We carried out an assessment of the risks facing this authority and took appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.	Yes; financial risk assessment was revised in line with JPAG's 'Governance and Accountability for Smaller Authorities in England' March 2017 and approved on 31.8.17; insurance cover in place with Zurich.
6. We maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems.	Yes; CIPFA-qualified internal auditor completed a full review after year end and provided a detailed report of findings and recommendations; also completed and signed the AGAR's internal audit section to this effect.
7. We took appropriate action on all matters raised in reports from internal and external audit.	None raised by external audit; all matters raised in internal audit report for ye 2017 have been actioned and/or are ongoing work in progress.
8. We considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on this authority and, where appropriate, have included them in the accounting statements.	Yes, with no matters occurring that were not accommodated in the budget for precept.

APCM2018-6iii It was proposed by SC, seconded by AT and **RESOLVED**

To approve the figures in Section 2 Accounting Statements for 2017/18 as at 3.5.18, the bank reconciliation dated 16.4.18 and variance analysis dated 3.5.18.

BK and CD signed and dated Section 2 Accounting Statements for 2017/18 on page 6 of the AGAR.

APCM2018-6iv It was proposed by NH, seconded and AT and **RESOLVED**
To set the public inspection period from Monday 4th June 2018 to Friday 13th July 2018.

CD to finalise the annual return, forward the exemption certificate to PKF Littlejohn, and arrange for publication of required documents on the Parish Council's website and notice boards.

7. Review of Parish Council's policies and procedures

7.1 Standing Orders

BK confirmed these are based on NALC's 2013 model with various subsequent amendments. The last complete re-issue was adopted by full Council on 13.12.16. A further amendment was adopted by full Council on 14.3.17 (this referred to Code of Conduct and dispensations).

APCM2018-7.1 It was proposed by SC, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**
That no amendments are required to current Standing Orders at this time and they will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2019 or if/when a need arises sooner.

7.2 Financial Regulations

BK confirmed these are based on NALC's 2014 model and reflect further NALC amendments in January 2016. The last complete re-issue was approved by full Council on 11.10.16.

APCM2018-7.2 It was proposed by AT, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**
That no amendments are required to current Financial Regulations at this time and they will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2019 or if/when a need arises sooner.

7.3 Payroll signatories

BK confirmed the current procedure for payroll authorisation as follows. At month end, the Clerk emails hours, reimbursements sheet and receipts to the Chair, Vice Chair and one other Councillor for approval. Two of the three Councillors must approve the hours and reimbursements by return email. The email with approvals plus the reimbursement sheet is forwarded to the payroll agent for PAYE submission prior to the 5th of the following month. The three Councillors are copied on the email. It was noted that the internal audit report for ye 31.3.18 states this procedure 'appears to be working satisfactorily.'

APCM2018-7.3i It was proposed by AT, seconded by SC and **RESOLVED**
To continue the current payroll procedure and review again at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2019.

APCM2018-7.3ii It was proposed by SC, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**
That Councillor Steve Crook performs the role of third signatory for payroll.

7.4 Direct debit approvals

BK confirmed two direct debits as follows: NEST (monthly employer and employee pension contributions for the Clerk); EE (£6.53 inc VAT per month for ye 2019 for mobile phone air time).

APCM2018-7.4 It was proposed by NH, seconded by SC and **RESOLVED**
To continue direct debits to NEST and EE with further review at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2019.

7.5 Financial risk assessment

The spreadsheet dated 31.8.17 and approved by full Council on 12.9.17 had been pre-circulated. Councillors had no suggested amendments.

APCM2018-7.5 It was proposed by SC, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**
That no amendments are required to the financial risk assessment approved on 12.9.17 and that it will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2019 or if/when a need arises sooner.

7.6 Asset schedule and checks

The asset schedule for insurance purposes and asset schedule for audit purposes (both approved on 13.3.18) had been pre-circulated and were shown on-screen.

APCM2018-7.6 It was proposed by NH, seconded by AT and **RESOLVED**

That the asset schedule for audit and insurance purposes, both approved on 13.3.18, are an accurate reflection of current assets and will be updated if further assets are acquired or existing ones disposed of, and reviewed again at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2019.

Assets are checked on a bi-monthly basis as follows: AT checks Dunstan Lane grit bins (2); CD checks the Parish Council computer and cabinet; all other assets are checked by SC who records all checks on a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet could not be shown on-screen and so review of this and the process were deferred to the ordinary meeting on 12.6.18.

7.7 Insurance cover

Zurich policy schedule (dated 2.4.18), policy wording, and certificates for employee and public liability for ye 27.5.19 had been pre-circulated. The premium of £314.55 was included on the payment schedule for 10.4.18.

APCM2018-7.7 It was proposed by NH, seconded by BK and **RESOLVED**

That the cover provided by Zurich Municipal in the policy schedule dated 2.4.18 is adequate and will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2019 unless a need arises sooner.

7.8 Publication scheme (including procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998)

The Publication Scheme approved on 16.5.17 and published on the Parish Council's website had been pre-circulated.

APCM2018-7.8i It was proposed by BK, seconded by AT and **RESOLVED**

That no amendments are required to the Publication Scheme at this time but it will be reviewed versus the ICO's model document once this has been revised for GDPR compliance.

APCM2018-7.8ii It was proposed by SC, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**

To continue with ICO registration at an annual fee of £35 renewable in November 2018.

7.9 Policy for dealing with the press/media

Councillors agreed this is covered by Standing Orders (no. 21) already reviewed under item 7.1.

7.10 Complaints procedure

Councillors agreed this is covered by Standing Orders (no. 13) already reviewed under item 7.1.

7.11 Remaining policies and procedures contained in the procedures manual

A hard copy of the manual was available at the meeting.

APCM2018-7.11 It was proposed by BK, seconded by AT and **RESOLVED**

To defer review of the procedures manual until measures required under GDPR had been completed and any resulting amendments could be actioned in one go.

The Policy on Travel and Subsistence Expenses for Parish Councillors (approved on 8.11.16) states: 'In accordance with paragraph 99 of the Guidance on Consolidated Regulations for Local Authority Allowances (ODPM 2003), after any revision, and at least annually, this policy will be posted on the Parish Council's website and notice boards for a minimum period of four weeks.' CD to arrange this required publication.

7.12 New item to consider: equal opportunities policy

As suggested by the internal auditor, a draft dated 2.5.18 and based upon NALC's model policy had been pre-circulated and was shown on-screen for review.

APCM2018-7.12 It was proposed by SC, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**

To approve the draft equal opportunities policy dated 2.5.18.

CD to add to the 'updates' section of the procedures manual.

7.13 New item to consider: employee grievance procedure

As suggested by the internal auditor, a draft dated 2.5.18 and based upon NALC's model policy had been pre-circulated and was shown on-screen for review.

APCM2018-7.13 It was proposed by SC, seconded by AT and **RESOLVED**

To approve the draft employee grievance procedure dated 2.5.18.

CD to add to the 'updates' section of the procedures manual.

8. Review of Parish Council's community grant scheme

BK recapped that, on 11.10.16, full Council resolved to allocate the £25k compensation payment from the Newton Ferrers solar farm to a 'community grant scheme'. An application form and completion guidelines were approved by full Council on 8.11.16. To date, the scheme has funded a park bench for The Glebe (£333.33 ex VAT). There is £24,667 remaining. The scheme is publicised on the Parish Council's website, has been advertised in the *Mellanus News* and also in the notice for the Annual Parish Meeting of Electors. A condition of the resolution on 11.10.16 was to review the scheme at Parish Council annual meetings.

At the Parish Council annual meeting on 16.5.17, it was resolved to continue the scheme with the proviso that, should a need arise for its funds to be diverted to a project proposed by the Parish Council, this would be allowable pending a registered motion that would be debated by full Council in public session. Councillors agreed to continue with this resolution and also to post the application form and guidelines on the Parish Council's website.

APCM2018-8 It was proposed by BK, seconded by AT and **RESOLVED**

To continue the community grant scheme with the proviso that should a need arise for its funds to be diverted to a project proposed by the Parish Council, this would be allowable pending a registered motion that would be debated by full Council in public session.

Note: a GDPR-compliant privacy notice to be added to the application form and guidelines before being forwarded to applicants and/or posting on the Parish Council's website.

9. Subscriptions to other bodies

The Parish Council subscribes only to CALC (annual fee for ye 2019 of £168.83 + £13.57 VAT is on the payment schedule for 8.5.18). There were no suggestions for additional subscriptions.

APCM2018-9 It was proposed by SC, seconded by BK and **RESOLVED**

To renew the annual subscription with CALC for ye 31.3.19 at a fee of £168.83 + £13.57 VAT.

10. Review of Service Level Agreement with Cornwall Legal for ye 31.3.19

A draft SLA from Cornwall Legal had been pre-circulated. Councillors agreed to defer review and formal approval until the final version has been received. It was noted that the hourly rate has increased from £95 to £96 per VAT.

11. Agenda items and Councillor roles/responsibilities

The current agenda and responsibilities had been discussed in the context of personnel matters and resources in closed session on 10.4.18. In the light of Ian's death, Hugh's resignation, Alan's potential departure and the three remaining Councillors working full-time, it was agreed to discuss a six month suspension of the following items at the Parish Council annual meeting:

- local housing needs assessment;
- given names for key parish roads;
- safe passageway.

Councillors agreed this was a prudent decision in the light of resource limitations and also that the suspension should be reviewed at the Parish Council's December meeting.

APCM2018-11 It was proposed by SC, seconded by NH and **RESOLVED**

To suspend the following items from the agenda for six months and review again at the Parish Council meeting in December 2018: local housing needs assessment; given names for key parish road; the safe passageway.

A summary of Councillors' roles and responsibilities dated 3.5.18 (pre-circulated and shown on-screen) were noted.

12. Representation on/work with other bodies and arrangements for reporting back

Three external groups were discussed with no additional bodies being suggested.

i. Cornwall Council's Community Network Panel meetings: AT has served as representative for ye 2018. NH agreed to act as representative for ye 2019.

APCM2018-12 It was proposed by BK, seconded by AT and **RESOLVED**

That Councillor Nick Habermehl serve as St Mellion Parish Council's representative on Cornwall Council's Community Network Panel meetings for ye 2019.

ii. Cornwall Bus Forum meetings: no further correspondence has been received on this since an email dated 9.5.17 from Glyn Williams (Head of Integrated Public Transport & Technology at Cornwall Council). Councillors agreed not to pursue.

iii. Tamar AONB meetings: previous Councillor Hugh Campbell had acted as the Parish Council's representative for ye 2019. Councillors agreed to defer considering a replacement until current vacancies have been filled.

13. Parish Council meeting schedule up to/including the 2019 Parish Council annual meeting

Councillors agreed to continue Parish Council ordinary meetings every second Tuesday of the month (except August) at 7pm (venue tbc pending repairs to the church hall); and provisionally set the Parish Council annual meeting 2019 for Tuesday 14th May at 7pm in the church hall.

14. Public comment

(i) Joan Allen asked why the Parish Council had decided to suspend three agenda items in closed session and not at a public meeting; and why the Parish Council always has a closed session. BK confirmed that the Parish Council doesn't always have a closed session¹; and that suspended agenda items had been discussed in the context of personnel matters which (because of their sensitive personal nature) had to be done in private. The resolution to suspend the items, however, had been made at the current meeting in open session. BK asked if there were any of the items Ms Allen would like kept on the agenda. Ms Allen said the issue wasn't the agenda items but the closed sessions as these can't all be about the Clerk's wages. CD confirmed that outcomes from closed sessions that could be discussed in public were noted under 'matters arising' in the subsequent Parish Council meeting. For example, the resolution not to proceed with an inquiry into Cornwall Council's handling of PA17/12263 had been made in closed session on 10.4.18 because it concerned potential legal action, but the outcome had been published on the agenda for the Parish Council meeting on 8.5.18.

(ii) Michelle Bland asked if the Parish Council is going to fill the current vacancies by election or co-option. CD confirmed the process as follows. The notice from Cornwall Council was published on 2.5.18. If ten or more electors request an election within 14 days, there will be an election. If this doesn't happen, Cornwall Council passes the responsibility to the Parish Council to fill the vacancies by co-option.

15. Close

The Parish Council annual meeting 2018 closed at 758pm.

[The Parish Council ordinary meeting started at 759pm.]

I certify that these minutes are a true reflection of the St Mellion Parish Council annual meeting held on 8th May 2018.

Signed

Name Bridie Kent

Position Chair of the Parish Council

Date 12th June 2018

¹ [Footnote subsequent to the meeting] In year ended 2018, there were seven closed sessions (out of 13 meetings): April (Clerk's appraisal/pay); May (Clerk's resignation/vacancy recruitment); June (Clerk's withdrawal of resignation/cessation of recruitment); October (Clerk's contract, IT policy); November (Clerk's contract); December (Clerk's contract/reimbursements, personal on-line banking); February (data protection/GDPR actions).

St Mellion Parish Council
Annual Meeting 8th May 2018
Chair's Report

After the elections in May last year, three new councillors joined three more who had been re-elected and we started to get to grips with Parish Council activities. Ian Waite was elected as Chair, with Alan Twist as his second in command. Unfortunately a short time into the year, we heard the bad news that Ian was unwell and so we worked hard for the rest of the year to support him, as he remained committed to the Parish Council until his untimely death in March this year. Ian was a really good Chair, providing excellent leadership and guidance. We will miss his good humour, his knowledge of processes and his good timekeeping. He will be a hard act to follow.

So what's been happening this year? We had the housing needs survey completed early in the year with the results revealing that there is a really need for affordable housing within the parish. We have spent quite a bit of time exploring options for moving this forward.

We had the public consultation between the 26th June and 14th July to finally get our bus stops, traffic calming and footway improvements in Church Lane and the light in the Glebe off the ground. Partial success here with work still needs to start on the bus stops and the traffic calming measures. It will be so good to see people waiting for buses in a dry environment, instead of the rain and wind.

The safe passageway proposal saw a room full of people coming together to hear about the proposed route, provide suggestions for change and discuss the feasibility of this plan. We even hit the local press.

We have responded to requests to name local roads in order to better identify locations in times of emergency. We have a number of roads that have never had a name and this can create delays when emergency providers need to respond to calls and the switchboard operators can't locate the property. Some of the roads now have names including Church Lane. Others are presenting us with difficulties that have to be overcome before we can proceed. One of these is the relief road for the village - this was found to be unfeasible and so sadly we have had to agree to stop work on this initiative.

We have faced a number of planning challenges this year and have needed to question some of the decisions taken by Cornwall Council. The key one here is the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for which Cornwall Council and the external examiner disagreed with our request to be placed in a lower charging zone. We requested this because data show that it is the turnover of house sales on St Mellion Park that is driving our classification. Unfortunately we lost this argument and so St Mellion remains in the highest CIL zone. As a Parish Council, we are here to be a voice for your concerns and we have tried to do this with drive and commitment; winning some battles and losing others.

We have seen our team change over the last 12 months as two councillors (Alan Cookson and Hugh Campbell) have resigned from the Parish Council for personal reasons; I thank them both for their support and hard work. We also welcomed Nick Habermehl who joined the team late last year.

I'd like to thank all the councillors for their teamwork, energy and enthusiasm this year, under quite difficult conditions. Finally I would like to thank our Clerk Christine Douglas who yet again has been instrumental in the work we do! She has guided us through many obstacles, worked magic at times, been a detective enabling new options to be explored and generally been fantastic.

Last but by no means least once again I'd like to thank all our Parishioners for their input and support throughout this year.

Kind regards to you all,
Bridie Kent,
Chair of St Mellion Parish Council.