

**St Mellion Parish Council
Annual Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday 14th May 2024 at 7pm
St Mellion Church Hall**

PRESENT:

Cllr Bridie Kent (BK) Chair
Cllr Pam Sambrook (PS) Vice Chair
Cllr Hilary Gill (HG)
Cllr Adam Sturtridge (AS)
Cllr Ben Bryan (BB)
Cllr Nick Habermehl (NH) (arrived at 18:57)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Parish Clerk Ren Jackaman (RJ).
One member of the public attended (arrived at 18:47pm).

1. Councillor matters

- 1.1. To receive apologies for absences: None*
- 1.2. To receive declarations of pecuniary interests: None*
- 1.3. To receive declarations of non-registerable interests: None*
- 1.4. To approve written requests for dispensations: None*

2. Current Chair's Annual Report:

This is the annual summary of activity from the St Mellion Parish Council for the year 2023 to 2024. All the parish councillors are volunteers and so this work in their, often limited, spare time; once again I'd like to acknowledge their hard work and thank them for their service to the community.

We are pleased to be able to report completion and closure of the work undertaken on the southerly bus shelter on the A388 in St Mellion village (heading towards Callington). The bus shelter now has a living roof and solar panels. The fencing around land adjacent to the bus shelter has been renewed, and the land has been maintained by the firm that was awarded the tender – ROOTED - Tree Surgery and Arboriculture. This area now looks so much better and we thank Billy and his team for all their hard work.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan has continued to be a planned activity for this last year. We submitted the draft plan to Cornwall Council for their feedback, which has been really helpful. More details are required, however the Government in the Levelling Up Bill, which came into effect in October 2023, is simplifying the process for small parishes such as St Mellion. This means we can develop a Neighbourhood Priority Statement, which is intended to be a much simpler version of a neighbourhood plan that planning authorities must take into consideration when reviewing their Local Plan. The working group will address the points raised and with any luck this will be completed in the 2024/2025 year.

This year we held two litter picks which, as usual, were rewarding, with many bags of rubbish collected during each pick. We thank all the volunteers who gave up their time to help us tidy up the lanes within the parish.

Along with the whole country, we enjoyed celebrating the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla. A massive thank you for all the volunteers who helped to make the party in the village a success. We have marked the occasion, and that of the death of Queen Elizabeth II, by purchasing a bench, which has been placed in the churchyard in St Mellion for all to enjoy.

Once again, I'd like to single out Ren, our Clerk to the Parish Council for thanks as she has supported and guided all the work of the Parish Council this year. We look forward to your continuing support this year.

3. Appointment of Chair for 12 months to May 2025

PS nominated BK, HG seconded the nomination and it was RESOLVED that BK be appointed Chairman for St Mellion Parish Council for 12 months to May 2025, all in favour.

BK signed the declaration of acceptance of office, witnessed by RJ.

4. Appointment of Vice Chair for 12 months to May 2025

BB nominated PS, AS seconded the nomination and it was RESOLVED that PS be appointed Vice Chairman for St Mellion Parish Council for 12 months to May 2025, all in favour.

5. Internal Audit Report for year ending 31st March 2024:

All Councillors had read the pre-circulated internal audit report from Dawe, Hawken & Dodd, the auditor made no specific recommendations.

It was proposed by PS, seconded by BB and RESOLVED To accept the internal auditor's report for ye 31st March 2024, all in favour.

6. External Audit Submission for year end 31st March 2024

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

- The completed Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).
- The Annual Internal Report for 2023-2024 (page 4 of the AGAR) completed by the internal auditor which confirms all applicable internal control objectives have been met.
- Bank Reconciliation dated 31st March 2024
- Variance Analysis
- Documents for exercise of public rights.

6.1. Certificate of Exemption:

It was proposed by PS, seconded by AS 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 year ending 31st March 2024 was £15165 and £17602 respectively and below the £25,000 threshold, all in favour.

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

6.2. Annual Governance Statement:

It was proposed by PS, seconded by HG and RESOLVED to answer 'yes' to statements 1 to 8 of Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024 with statement 9 marked as 'not applicable', all in favour.

BK and RJ signed and dated Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2023-2024 on page 5 of the AGAR.

6.3. Accounting Statements:

It was proposed by BB, seconded by PS and RESOLVED to approve the figures in Section 2 Accounting Statements for 2023-2024 as at 31st March 2024, the bank reconciliation and variance analysis, all in favour.

BK and RJ signed and dated Section 2 Accounting Statements for 2023-2024 on page 6 of the AGAR.

6.4. Exercise of Public Rights

It was proposed by BK, seconded by PS and RESOLVED to set the public inspection period from Monday 3rd June 2024 to Friday 12th July 2024, all in favour.

7. Review of Existing Parish Council's Policies and Procedures

7.1. Standing Orders (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

The current Standing Orders were most recently updated to remove SO26 following the repeal of Remote Meetings Protocol & Procedures following The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 allow local councils to hold remote meetings, which update was adopted on 10th May 2022. The document has been reformatted, but the content remains unchanged and was subject to inspection at the Ordinary Meeting on 13th February 2024, at which time suggestions for any changes were invited. No suggestions have been received.

It was proposed by BK, seconded by AS 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 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.2. Financial Regulations (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

RJ confirmed that following the launch of the NALC consultation to update the current Model Financial Regulations in August of 2023, a new set of model Financial Regulations was issued on Thursday 9th May 2024, which was after the summons was issued for this meeting.

The new model differs significantly from the current Financial Regulations, which were adopted at the Annual Meeting on 10th May 2022 and were subject to inspection at the Ordinary Meeting on 13th February 2024. The new model needs to be worked through in detail to establish which elements need to be omitted and edited and a new set of Financial Regulations produced in response. There has not been sufficient time to produce the new version prior to this meeting.

It was proposed by HG, seconded by BB and RESOLVED that continue with the current Financial Regulations at this time and to review the new model and approve the draft Financial Regulations at the Parish Council ordinary meeting in June 2024, all in favour.

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, NH and HG 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 payroll administrator processes the information and provides a payslip, RTI and Pension summary, then facilitates the Direct Debit payment to NEST for monthly employer and employee pension contributions.

It was proposed by BK, seconded by PS and RESOLVED to continue with the current payroll procedures, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.4. Financial Risk Assessment (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

The Financial Risk Assessment was last altered to reflect the changes inherent in the transfer from Lloyds Bank to Unity Trust Bank and the adoption of online banking protocols in 2022, which version was adopted at the Annual Meeting on 10th May 2022 and was reviewed at the Ordinary Meeting on 9th April 2024 at which time suggestions for any changes were invited, no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by NH, seconded by BK and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the Financial Risk Assessment adopted on 10th May 2022, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.5. Asset Schedule for Audit and Insurance and Checks Procedures (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

The Asset Schedule for Insurance purposes has been updated to include the Coronation Bench and recent purchase of IT equipment and the values reflect those in the insurance schedule for the upcoming policy renewal on 28th May 2024.

The Asset Schedule for Audit purposes has likewise been updated to include the Coronation Bench and recent purchase of IT equipment and has been endorsed in the Internal Auditors report as appropriately gauged for the assessment of fixed assets.

It was proposed by NH, seconded by HG and RESOLVED that the asset schedule for audit and insurance purposes 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 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

Asset checks are undertaken quarterly and reported on at ordinary meetings. The asset check spreadsheet was shown onscreen and the allocation of assets to councillors was reviewed.

It was proposed by PS, seconded by NH and RESOLVED that the asset checking procedures are fit for purpose and will be reviewed again at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.6. Insurance Cover and Renewal (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

Quotes for insurance renewal were received from Zurich at £1100.22 and Gallagher £1236.62 for the same policy schedule and coverage.

It was proposed by BK, seconded by HG and RESOLVED that the cover provided by Zurich Insurance in the Policy Schedule dated 1st May 2024 is adequate and will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.7. Publication Scheme, including procedures for handling requests made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and GDPR (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

The Publication Scheme approved on 16th May 2017 has been checked against the latest ICO model and updated to include any new policies.

It was proposed by PS, seconded by NH and RESOLVED that the updated Publication Scheme be adopted, published on the Parish Council website and will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.8. Policy for dealing with the press/media

The Media Policy is based on the NALC model and was adopted at the Ordinary meeting on 14th July 2015. It has been reformatted, but the content retained. It was reviewed at the Ordinary Meeting on 9th April 2024 at which time suggestions for any changes were invited, no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by NH, seconded by PS and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the Media Policy adopted on 14th July 2015, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.9. Complaints Handling Procedure (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

The Complaints Handling Procedure was formally adopted at the Ordinary Meeting on the 9th March 2021. It was reviewed at the Ordinary Meeting on 9th April 2024 at which time suggestions for any changes were invited, no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by BB, seconded by AS and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the Complaints Handling Procedure adopted on 9th March 2021, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

7.10. Dignity at Work (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

The Dignity at Work Policy was formally adopted at the Ordinary Meeting on the 9th March 2021. Suggestions for any changes were invited, no suggestions were received.

It was proposed by PS, seconded by BB and RESOLVED that no changes were required to the Dignity at Work Policy, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

8. New Parish Council Policies for Adoption

8.1. IT & Cyber Security Policy (pre-circulated and shown onscreen)

The Draft IT & Cyber Security Policy was reviewed at the Ordinary Meeting on 9th April 2024 at which time suggestions for any changes were invited. It has since been amended in section A2 following advice from Western Web on the type of firewall software to be utilised.

It was proposed by HG, seconded by PS and RESOLVED to adopt the IT & Cyber Security Policy, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

9. Review of the Parish Council Community Grant Scheme:

The Community Grant Scheme is advertised on the website, at the Annual Electors Meeting and in the Mellanus News. It has also been directly offered to several local groups. To date, the only application made was from Amanda Copson in 2021 to help cover the costs of producing the Mellanus News but although the application was successful, it has not been possible to issue a payment as the bank account for the Mellanus News has become dormant.

Advice from CALC is to undertake a robust advertising campaign for the Community Grant and to set date(s) for applications to be submitted. Grants would also be permissible to organisations from outside St. Mellion Parish on the condition that any activities or services they provide are used by parishioners of St. Mellion.

It was noted that following the alterations under the Levelling Up Bill 2023 to the prohibition in Local Government Act 1894 on providing funds for church property, applications for grants relating to church fabric can now be considered but that any funding provided as a result of such an application would be subject to the S137 limit for the parish of St. Mellion.

10. Subscriptions to other bodies:

St. Mellion Parish Council currently pays annually for membership of the Cornwall Association of Local Councils (through which the National Association of Local Councils is automatically accessible), the annual renewal of this membership cost £269.03 which payment was approved at the Ordinary Meeting on 9th April 2024.

The council also reimburses the clerk for a subscription to the Society for Local Council Clerks, via which organisation the clerk is currently undertaking the FILCA qualification. This membership is renewed in October and the reimbursement of £112.00 was approved in the payroll of October 2023.

It was proposed by NH, seconded by PS and RESOLVED that the membership of CALC and payment of subscription to SLCC should be continued and will be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

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

The current roles are as follows:

- Tamar to Moor Artee Partnership (formerly Caradon Community Network Panel) – AS.
- Tamar Valley Natural Landscape (formerly TVAONB) – BK.
- St. Mellion Primary School – HG.
- St. Mellion Golf & Country Club – BB.
- Licensing – PS
- ADDED
- Police & Crime Commission – BB

It was proposed by BK, seconded by PS and RESOLVED to continue the current roles, to be reviewed at the Parish Council annual meeting in 2025 or if/when a need arises sooner, all in favour.

12. Parish Council meeting schedule up to/including the 2025 Annual Parish Council Meeting

Ordinary Meetings take place on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Church Hall, except for August and December when the council is in recess. The Annual Parish Council Meeting and Annual Electors meeting take place prior to the ordinary meeting on the 2nd Tuesday on May. Extraordinary meetings can also be called at any time should the need arise.

Therefore, the schedule of dates for meetings up to and including the Annual Parish Council Meeting 2025 are:

Tuesday 11th June 2024
Tuesday 9th July 2024
August – Council in recess

Tuesday 10th September 2024
Tuesday 8th October 2024
Tuesday 12 November 2024
December – Council in recess
Tuesday 14th January 2025
Tuesday 11th February 2025
Tuesday 11th March 2025
Tuesday 8th April 2025
Tuesday 13th May 2025

It was proposed by BB, seconded by NH and RESOLVED to continue to hold ordinary meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7pm in the Church Hall, except for August and December when the council is in recess and to provisionally set the date for the next Annual Parish Council meeting on 13th May 2025 subject to any changes required because of local election dates, all in favour.

13. Public comment: none

14. Close BK closed the meeting at 19:22