



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 25th April 2016
 Venue: Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

Present:			
Cllr M Lee	Chair	Cllr M Nunn	
Cllr R Weaver	Vice Chair	Cllr F Lynch-Smith	
Cllr R Kipling			
Cllr P Lee		Mrs B Bland	Clerk

There were 4 members of the public present and Councillor Bell.

1. Welcome & Apologies

The Chair Welcomed residents and Councillors to the Annual Parish meeting explaining the meeting is an opportunity for the public to raise their concerns, issues and comment on the village matters.

Apologies were received from Councillors Haque, Barber and Allsopp. Cllr Weaver will be arriving late due to an earlier meeting.

2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting 27th April 2015

The minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 27th April 2015 was proposed as a true record by Cllr Kipling and seconded by Cllr P Lee.

It was resolved Members approved the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 27th April 2015.

3. Chair's Report

The Chair read her report to the meeting as follows:-

"Meriden Annual Parish Meeting 25 April 2016 Chair's Report

Last year I focused on our successful partnership working with local government, businesses, community groups and residents. This does continue through the efforts of our clerk, Barbara Bland, with support from members.

This year has been a year of planning matters and with it has brought many frustrations to us as a parish council and residents alike.

But first, a review of the highlights in the past municipal year:

Barbara achieved her CiLCA (Certificate in Local Council Administration).

Signed Chair Dated

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This qualification means that Meriden Parish Council is eligible to operate under the General Power of Competence. It also enables us to apply for the Quality Standard Award from the Local Council Award Scheme.

We retained our Solihull Neighbourhoods in Bloom BEST VILLAGE title and also won the RHS Britain in Bloom, Heart of England SILVER award for Large Village.

Cllr Barber took over responsibility for Community Speed Watch which resumed in July.

Meriden Sports and Recreation Trust was formed in October which will oversee and govern the work we do for Meriden Sports Park and allow us to apply for charity funding through the trust. Sports park funds were handed over to the trust so as to invest it with CCLA and provide a financial return on investment.

Meriden's Neighbourhood Plan is now up to speed following the successful funding bid made by Cllr Weaver and Barbara to Locality. The £5566 has paid for the work needed on researching the community asset register compiled by Cllr Lynch-Smith and added to by other members and expanded on by Cllr P Lee. The funds will also be spent on the printing and analysis of the paper and online questionnaire. The questionnaire will be put through every household in the parish throughout late May and early June.

Cllr Weaver in her role as Vice Chair for Solihull Area Committee worked with the chair (Brian Hannaford Brown) to meet Solihull Chief Executive Nick Page on a quarterly basis.

Guest speakers at our full council meetings included

- ***Kirsten Kane, Head of Sustainability, Birmingham Airport,***
- ***PC Simon Harrison, Rural Neighbourhood Police Team***
- ***Tom Cox, GP Planning Limited, agent and planning consultant for Beechwood Recycling***
- ***SMBC Officer Harvey Speed, Drainage & Flood Risk Management***
- ***SMBC Officer Jo-Ann Williams, Community Engagement (Clean for the Queen)***
- ***Mr Robert Williams, Agent for A & A Recycling***

As mentioned earlier, planning matters throughout the year have taken up a lot of time for Barbara and our members including the development work on our Neighbourhood Plan.

We defended our decision to object to the controversial glass extension to Meriden Hall, Pertemps' head office. Despite the unanimous objection from Solihull Council's planning committee, Pertemps appealed and won.

Signed Chair Dated



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Cllr Weaver represented the parish council at the committee meeting and the appeal to deliver our reasons for objection which we agreed with our planning consultant, Avon Planning.

The historic copse and bridleway is being eroded by properties extending gardens. The Parish Council is working with SMBC officers to protect the remaining copse and bridleway immediately adjacent to the Sports Park. A woodland walk, footpath, gate and wildlife habitat boxes and information boards will be provided. It has been included on our community asset register and has been registered by SMBC as such.

Beechwood Recycling’s planning application for a biomass waste treatment facility at Meriden Quarry prompted us to invite them to discuss their plans with the council. This took place in October and after a site tour we published all the facts on our website including our response to the application with a list of conditions. In March, UKIP distributed a leaflet to residents which was filled with inaccuracies. Beechwood’s response featured on our website and they have organised two drop-in sessions for residents this month. Last week’s session attracted 12 residents and the second one takes place tomorrow night.

Our first ‘away day’ was held on a Saturday afternoon in January. The first half of the day was taken up with a presentation from Cllr Ian Courts and SMBC Officer Maurice Barlow who discussed their Local Plan which has been challenged by the planning inspectorate to provide for an extra 4,000 homes in the borough on top of the proposed 11,000 by 2028. They explained the possible ways to meet the demand which was then in the consultation phase. We spent the rest of the day, working through the consultation questions and putting our comments together to meet the submission deadline. Planning matters took over our development day.

There has been unsatisfactory progress on the Birmingham Road old garage and caravan site and the unlawful caravan site which we continue to monitor. The latest application for two 4-bed houses by Mr Rajvinder Singh contradicts his previous application for 14 bungalows. There is a need in Meriden for bungalows, not 4-bed houses. The council will object as it does not align with our Parish Plan or Visual Design Statement.

We have sent our HS2 petition against the High Speed Rail (London – West Midlands) Bill to the House of Lords. I would like to thank our vice-chair Cllr Weaver and our clerk Barbara Bland for working so hard to put together the concerns of Meriden and a detailed list of mitigation clauses that must be considered. All members approved this petition and I thank them too for their support.

Signed Chair Dated

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In the last year, outside of planning issues, Cllr Nunn conducted an online and face to face survey on the service provided for the 82 bus route. The results will be sent to Diamond Buses for comment.

Meriden’s First World War Centenary Commemorations included a commemorative cricket match in August and football match in October with the Royal Corps of Signals, an evening with Doreen Agutter – Meriden in the Great War earlier this month and the Great War Society weekend just gone. The latter two events were very educational and both have been captured on video. Remembrance Sunday Parade and Act of Remembrance continues to be supported by the parish council in providing the road closure service.

Community events were once again successfully organised. We send a special thank you to Alan Lole for Meriden Tree of Thought who has raised to date over £48,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support and Marie Curie Hospice Solihull of which nearly £6,000 was raised at his Funday Sunday and Tree Dedication events last year. Special thanks also go to Meriden Rotary Club for Meriden Megaride in June and the 4th Santa Fun Run in December.

Here are plans for the forthcoming year:

- ***Our finance committee will undertake a review of all finance policies and regulations in accordance with WALC recommendations for Audit/Transparency policy.***
- ***Our clerk will identify and secure funds for the Pool Project. Work in partnership with local businesses and set up working group to identify who is doing what, when and how, supported by Cllr Haque.***
- ***We will work with Beechwood to achieve financial settlement in mitigation of the biomass plant.***
- ***Local Council Award Scheme to be completed to achieve the award of Quality Standard for Meriden Parish Council.***
- ***Cllr Kipling will chair our newly formed planning committee.***
- ***Meriden Bloomers with the support of our clerk will plan for Solihull Neighbourhoods in Bloom & Heart of England in Bloom 2016. The theme for 2016 floral displays is red/white/blue to commemorate the Queen’s 90th Birthday celebration.***

I thank all our councillors and the clerk for their contribution and commitment over this past year. Melanie Lee Chair 2016”

Signed Chair Dated

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4. Public Participation

Chair invited members of the public to comment on the Chair's report or raise any issues or concerns they have with Council.

Mr Lole advised his attendance at the meeting for the purpose of sharing with Council a recent petition he has undertaken to support a pedestrian crossing on Fillongley Road, adjacent to the post box. The petition has been placed in Lloyds and Spar for residents to sign. Two main factors are drivers for this petition (i) speed of vehicles coming off island at junctions of Main Road, Hampton Lane, Birmingham Road and Fillongley Road; and (ii) repeated HGV parking opposite Post Box which is a hazard to pedestrians and vehicles existing Maxstoke Lane.

It is the view of the petitioning signatories that a pedestrian crossing will alleviate the hazard, danger and significant risk to pedestrians and vehicle movements at junction of Fillongley Road/Maxstoke Lane. It is recognised that there is not a constant flow of vehicle movements throughout the day on Fillongley Road but at peak times i.e. mornings, school drop off/pick up and evenings; and weekend visitors/shoppers using service road, there is real danger for pedestrians from speeding vehicles exceeding speed limits; this compounded with parking of commercial vehicles on double yellow lines and pavement obstruction, an accident is waiting to happen.

Chair responded that this situation has worsened over the last 12 months due to population growth, vehicles using Meriden as a "cut through", and expansion of local businesses not least Area G of Quarry, together all contributing factors.

Cllr P Lee stated that the new Mulberry Gardens development has exacerbated the problem.

Cllr Bell stated a recent survey had been undertaken; Cllr Lynch-Smith advised that the survey did not evidence sufficient flow of pedestrian movement to necessitate a crossing; Cllr Kipling advised that during the Meriden Gate consultation period, a crossing at this point was requested.

Cllrs Weaver and Lynch-Smith both replied that having met with Highways engineer, Mr Chohan the infrastructure needed to remove existing storm drain, reinstate further along highway with new gully and the cost of the crossing was in the order of 40K and therefore prohibitive due to low footfall from survey.

Cllr Bell advised he will support a crossing and present the 416 signature petition together with letters of support from himself and the Parish Council.

Action The Clerk to draft a letter from the Parish Council and liaise with Cllr Bell. Cllr Bell to write a letter of support and present to Cabinet Member, Cllr Ted Rogers for Scrutiny Board consideration.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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Cllr P Lee raised the secondary issue of parking, use of parking bays and the private land behind the shops that the landowner denies for use of shop staff parking.

Cllr Weaver advised that this issue has been well documented previously in the Parish Plan and is currently being reviewed as part of the Neighbourhood Plan review process. Chair advised that a previous request had been made for the removal of yellow lines and for the siting of parking bays on Birmingham Road.

Further concerns were raised regarding the ditch that is full of silt and if not cleaned will impact on heavy rain and surface water resulting in flooding between the Bull's Head and Berkswell Road, and flash flooding experienced in February this year.

Chair replied that enforcement had been issued for Pertemps to clear their boundary ditches with long term management of boundaries to alleviate flood risk.

Further work is to be carried out on the culverts and a camera survey has been undertaken by SMBC and this information will be shared at a future update and review meeting with SMBC flood risk, highways and drainage officers.

Action: Clerk to follow up and liaise with Ed Bradford and his team.

The Chair thanked members of the public for their input and closed the Annual Parish meeting. The meeting closed at 20.30.

Signed Chair Dated

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