



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on
27 April 2015 at The Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Cllr R Weaver Vice Chair
Cllr J Barber
Cllr M Haque
Cllr F Lynch-Smith
Cllr M Nunn
Mrs B Bland Clerk

There were 5 members of the public present and Cllr D Bell.

1. Welcome & Apologies

Cllr Weaver opened the meeting advising that she would be chairing this evening's meeting in the absence of Chair. Apologies received from Cllrs M Lee & P Lee due to family holiday and Cllr Kipling who had been detained at work.

IT WAS RESOLVED Apologies were formally recorded and accepted from Cllrs M Lee, P Lee and R Kipling.

2. Declarations of Interest

2a To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature.
There was nothing to declare.

2b To declare any prejudicial interests in items on the agenda and their nature
There was nothing to declare.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd March 2015 were considered and agreed. Cllr Lynch-Smith proposed acceptance, seconded by Cllr Nunn.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the minutes as a true record of 23rd March 2015 and Chair signed.

Matters/actions arising: All as per agenda and standing items.

4. Elections

Chair extended congratulations to Members on their election unopposed. It is good that all Members are now formally elected for the next four years.

5. Internal Auditor Appointment

The Clerk presented to Members quotations from Michael Spencer of MS Audit & Consultancy Services for a period of three years 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously approved MS Audit & Consultancy Services at a cost of £200 plus VAT p.a. for each audit per year end above.

6. Finance

6.1 Approve April Payments

Members received payments for approval. The Clerk advised increased costs due to children’s play area remedial works and purchase of new laptop due to March’s hacking incident. An insurance claim has been made to Zurich for reimbursement and we await the outcome.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members accepted explanation and unanimously approved April’s payments.

6.2 Meriden Scouts Group

The Clerk presented a letter requesting a donation for flag raising duties. Mr Russell, Scout Leader, advised that this donation had previously been made automatically and was for financial year 2014-15, duly noted by Members. Chair stated that the Parish Council can no longer approve donations without formal written request, so an audit trail may be visible for internal and external inspection. Cllr Weaver recommended approving this request and making a donation of £400; further suggesting a letter be written advising of decision and asking for a further letter by return so a donation of £400 may be made for financial year 2015-16 bringing us back into line with fiscal years. Members unanimously agreed.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members agreed a donation be made immediately for £400 and a further £400 upon receipt of written request.

6.3 Berkswell Scout Appeal

The Clerk presented to Members a letter requesting a donation to this appeal fund. Cllr Bell advised that a large contribution had been made by Berkswell Charities. After due consideration and discussion it was felt that a large contribution had been made to Berkswell PC for Hs2 legal fees. Whilst accepting a donation will assist the appeal and some of Meriden’s young people attend Berkswell, Meriden PC support 1st Meriden Scouts, and this will remain their priority. Therefore Chair requested the Clerk to reply stating Meriden PC is unable to assist their appeal.

6.4 Graveyard Maintenance

The Clerk presented to Members a request from St Laurence Church for a donation to graveyard maintenance. Chair advised of meetings with the Parochial Church Committee, most recently when the Parish Council advised of savings that could be made using Parish Council contractors. Unfortunately the contracts for 2015-16 had already been awarded and therefore any change to a programme of works would not be scheduled until 1st April 2016.

Signed Chair **Dated**

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Members considered and discussed this request and whilst approving a donation of £1,000 agreed that this cannot continue year on year.

It is anticipated that the Parochial Church Committee will review their expenditure and recognise the reduction in their overheads using Parish Council Contractors in the future. The Clerk was requested to write to the Parochial Church Committee of St Laurence of decision and raise a cheque for May payments.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved a donation of £1,000 to be awarded to the Parochial Church Committee for graveyard maintenance. The Clerk is requested to write a letter and raise a cheque for May payments.

7. Progress Reports

7.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr Lynch-Smith advised that the Rural Cinema is becoming more popular with people being turned away at the doors due to fully booked for the Imitation Game shown on 25th April. It is anticipated that the success can be maintained.

7.2 War Memorials

Nothing to report.

7.3 Meriden Pool

Chair advised residents remain outraged by the decimation of the tree/hedge line between 150 Main Road and the Pool. Parish Council has requested a prosecution and damages. The Clerk was asked to follow up with Mr Tipping, SMBC officer for Parks & Open Spaces. Residents are urged to write to their District Councillor.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously requested the Clerk to follow up with David Tipping.

7.4 Allotments

The Chair reported the following response from Taylor Wimpey Homes in reply to Lawrence Osborne letter:-

'Hello Lawrence

I have received you letter regarding the allotments at leys Lane and have summarised our position below;

1. *The secure facility is a timber shed (as highlighted on the drawing attached) with a padlock fixing. I believe the dimensions are a 8x6ft with a 4msq area.*
2. *The boundaries will be treated as per the attached management plan that was approved.*

Signed Chair **Dated**

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3. Any damage to the existing hedgerow will be replaced with the native hedgerow mix. We will also fill in an area of close board up to the mature hedgerow, particularly where the access gate will be.
4. By suitable and useable, what are you anticipating? We presume this will just be a soiled patch.
5. Can you please inform us of where the access hatch is on Leys Lane and we can investigate this further? Our engineer was not aware of this.
6. The agreement is that a water butt per 2 plots is provided as per the S106.
7. I have called the site manager and he has confirmed this fencing will stay up as of today.

All the above has been addressed to the Parish Council in the previous meeting.

Any problems please let me know.

Kind Regards,

Rachel Bristow | Assistant Design & Planning Executive | Taylor Wimpey Midlands'

The Clerk advised that Cllr Bell had referred her to Rebecca Webber who is responsible for SMBC allotments to provide advice and guidance. A meeting will be arranged as soon as possible. Chair requested members to consider continuing with negotiations with a view to future transfer of site to Parish Council? Members advised a continuation of negotiations on behalf of the Allotment Association.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously gave their 'in principle' agreement to taking back the allotment gardens subject to condition of transfer and for the Clerk to continue negotiations.

Actions (i)Clerk to write to Lawrence Osborne; (ii) Clerk to liaise with Taylor Wimpey (iii) Clerk to meet with Rebecca Webber.

7.6 Footpaths/Forum
Nothing to report.

7.7 Quarries Liaison Group
Cllr Weaver read the following update received by email from David Lechmere SMBC as follows:-

'Good morning Barbara

Apologies for the delay in responding to you on this. We have now had an opportunity to consider your request for an additional signs in the area around Coronation Island and liaise with Pete Perryman at NRS.

Signed Chair **Dated**

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We are of the opinion that Hampton Lane remains the biggest issue for HGV quarry traffic and although NRS relocated to area G (accessed off Birmingham Road) around 7 months ago, some companies only visit site every few months and inevitably there will be a period of adjustment as drivers realise they no longer operate from Cornets End Lane.

With regard to vehicles travelling to and from the area G access on Birmingham Road, there does not appear to be a significant amount of genuine quarry traffic travelling through the village by mistake. It appears that the vast majority of drivers know where the site is and they would have no reason to turn left from Maxstoke Lane. Leaving the site, the A45 is close by and well signed at both ends of Birmingham Road. However, I believe some drivers are using the facilities in Meriden and some smaller companies may still choose to use Fillongley Road but do not contravene the routing agreement in doing so.

The Council has recently introduced a 'De-cluttering Policy' to try and reduce the number of traffic signs on roads around the Borough - too many signs can confuse drivers and be counterproductive. We also want to ensure that the focus remains on compliance with the routing arrangement which restricts the use of Hampton Lane and Meriden Road and, on balance we would be reluctant to agree the provision of additional signage in this area.

*Kind regards
David Lechmere
Principal Officer
Safe and Active Travel Team'*

Action The Clerk to email Nick Atkins and request this be put on agenda for next Quarry Liaison Group meeting.

7.8 Solihull Area Committee
Chair advised meeting was held on 23rd April with Police Crime Commissioner as guest speaker delivering a message of strategic policing for Solihull in austere times with no beat policing. There is a theme for partnership working looking at Parish/Town/Borough working together including the possible introduction of community wardens.

7.9 Tree Wardens & TPO List
Nothing to report.

7.10 Community Surgeries
The Clerk no residents attended April's surgery. The following email update was received from Harvey Speed, SMBC, in response to previous issues raised as follows:-

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1. Showell Lane – at the top of the Lane where it meets the island of Birmingham Road Millisons Wood there seems to be constant water running and it appears to be coming from the property on the corner. This has been the case for some time. Can this be investigated

First I have been personally made aware of this particular issue – I will investigate later this week when I'm in the area.

2. The recessed gullies along Birmingham Road Millisons Wood are frequently silting up which may be linked to item 1. In particular the gully opposite Albert Road is consistently blocked which leads to surface water being ever present. Can these be looked at once and for all?

Drainage works on Birmingham Road are programmed provisionally for June 2015. This includes replacing all set-back gullies with in-carriageway gullies and replacing all trough gullies with new standard road gullies. Quite a major and costly scheme so not something that can be delivered at the click of a finger. The gully opposite Albert Road is not included as part of this scheme but I will investigate whether this on-going standing water is simply a maintenance issue or a structural issue. We have certainly attended to clean this particular gully within the past 12 months.

3. Eaves Green Lane/Showell Lane – at the bottom of Showell Lane next to Eaves Green Lane junction there was a surcharging gully and there seemed to be a lot of surface water in Eaves Green Lane and also further down the lane. Have these items been investigated and resolved?

I had previously explained on site that we were proposing works on Eaves Green Lane this financial year to address the general issues with excessive surface water. The cause is a combination of poor ditch maintenance, which is legally the adjoining landowners responsibility and the well/spring discharging directly onto the highway. This is worsened due to the road being very sheltered from sunlight by trees at the bottom of the hill, limiting natural evaporation. Similar to Birmingham Road, these are works involving new asset creation that require planning, investigation of the existing network and budgeting. We undertook a CCTV survey of Eaves Green Lane's drainage system in February, so work has been progressing. The construction works are provisionally proposed for July 2015. I will have a look at this surcharging gully on Showell Lane separately.

4. One I am not sure you know about – The Duck Pond end of Berkswell Road – there seems to be a stream of water coming from somewhere that is causing and escalating carriageway surface damage. I have some potholes I need to get fixed but water is passing through them. Phil Tomkinson witnessed this yesterday. Can this be looked at please?

Can I encourage new water leaks to be phoned through to STW directly using their simple contact centre on 0800 783 4444. If STW pass it back to us I can

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arrange for an investigation or trial hole. I will have a look at this one when I'm in the area with the above issues and phone STW if required.

Thanks

Harvey Speed
Highway Services'

7.11 Community Speed Watch

Cllr Barber continues to follow up with Community Policing Team based in Balsall Common. The gun needs recalibrating and this will be arranged. Volunteers are requested to put their names forward for speed watch training.

Action: Cllr Barber to follow up.

7.12 HS2

Nothing to report.

7.13 Meriden Sports Park (quarterly summary only)

Nothing to report.

8. Clerk's Report

The Clerk circulated actions since last meeting to Members. There were no questions.

9. District and Ward Councillor Reports

Nothing to report.

10. Correspondence & Communication

The Clerk had circulated information electronically to Members but draws attention to (i) Invitation from Mayor's Parlor re Investiture of Mayor on 19th May (ii) Letter from Taylor Wimpey Homes for donation of £500 towards Poppy garden (iii) FEDCOG (Federation of Colliery Opposition Groups) returning funds of £1637.58 (iv) Lewis Hall, Cyclist's Conservators regarding Order of Service from 24 May 1931 (v) ESOS letter advising of annual Summer Party.

11. Meriden Village Matters

11.1 Library Update

Chair advised the re-opening of the Library on 9th April 2015. Members agreed that the new computer suite is very good.

11.2 Village Commemoration WW1

Cllr Lynch-Smith briefly reported a visit to the National Memorial Arboretum on 18th April 2015 went ahead; further events planned are Picnic in the Park and other themed

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events including the WI started by Mrs Banks in 1918, and candle lit memorials for Captain Banks and other military personnel who fell during 1915 commemorating their 100th anniversary. Cllr Lynch-Smith further advised that the commemorative board is back up in the Village Hall.

11.3 Meriden Gate

11.3(i) Freehold Transfer

Nothing to report as matter remains with SMBC Legal Team.

11.3(ii) Overage

Nothing to report as the matter remains with David Wilson Homes and SMBC.

Action The Clerk to follow up with David Waterson, SMBC.

11.4 Taylor Wimpey & Associated S106 Works

Nothing to report.

11.6 Highways Update

Nothing to report.

11.7 Land Registry & Ownership

Nothing to report.

11.8 Public Convenience Site Transfer

Nothing to report and the matter as the matter remains in the hands of SMBC Legal Team.

Action The Clerk will liaise with legal parties to bring the matter to conclusion.

11.9 Solihull Neighbourhoods in Bloom 2015 & Heart of England in Bloom 2015

The Clerk reported that the working group is going well and progressing with baskets planted and in polytunnels, plugs in greenhouses, design and replanting programme to meet this year's judging of sustainable, recyclable and innovative, well underway. The next meeting of Meriden Bloomers will be on 30th April.

Action The Clerk continues to support the work of Meriden Bloomers.

11.10 St Laurence Church

Please refer to item 6.4.

11.11 Community Clear Up Day

This item was covered by Jo Ann Williams, SMBC Community Engagement Officer, during Annual Parish meeting.

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11.12 Co-Op Update

The Clerk reported that the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator is pursuing this.

Action The Clerk will follow up with Bruce Brant.

12. Solihull Partnership Forum

Cllr Weaver advised nothing to report.

13. Planning Matters

13.1 Neighbourhood Plan Update

Chair reported that the inaugural meeting was well attended. Monthly meetings are scheduled for Tuesdays. More volunteers are needed for task and finish groups. A skills audit will be undertaken. The next meeting is 19th May.

Action Cllr Weaver and the Clerk to undertake skills audit.

13.2 To receive update and status on Planning Applications

No update due to IT issues. However all Members have been electronically notified of new applications for their consideration and comments.

Action Members to send their comments to the Clerk.

13.3 Proposed Development of Old Garage and Caravan Storage Site

The Chair reported she, Cllr M Lee and the Clerk had met with developer to understand delay and also officer's recommendations. A meeting has been requested with planning officer Kim Allen for 6th May to go through application.

13.4 Land behind Caravan Storage & Meriden Garage, Birmingham Road

The Clerk advised this remains in appeal process.

13.5 Land for Burial

Nothing to report.

13.6 Daw Mill & Proposed Container Distribution Centre

Nothing to report and this item to be removed from standing items.

13.7 Proposed Development Coventry CC – A45/Pickford Green Lane

Nothing to report and this item to be removed from standing items.

14. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda

Any items for inclusion at May's meeting to be sent to Clerk.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**



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15. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting being the **Annual Meeting** will be Monday 18th May 2015 at 19.30 at The Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park.

The Chair closed the meeting thanking residents for their attendance and explaining further Council business will be conducted under closed session.

The meeting closed at 21.45 hours.

16. Confidential Matters re. Clerk's Remuneration

The meeting closed at 22.05 hours.

Signed Chair Dated

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