

**Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2010 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm.**

**Present**

Melanie Lee, Bob Kipling, Rosie Weaver, Graeme Goodsir, Shirley Goodsir, Marilyn Hamilton, Paul Lee and 1 member of the public.

**1. Apologies**

None

**Absent**

Will Markham

**2. Declaration of Interest**

The Chair invited members to make declaration of personal and prejudicial interest in respect of items on the agenda of the meeting.

**3. Minutes**

**3.1 RESOLVED**

That the minutes of the last Parish Council meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2010, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

**4. Matters arising from the minutes**

RW formally welcomed Councillor Paul Lee as member of the Parish Council.

RW confirmed that she had e-mailed John Pitcher in regard to the proposed letting policy for the development at Maxstoke Lane.

Oak Lane bus stop – This was an issue raised at the last meeting. We have contacted Centro requesting a site meeting to see if there is a possibility of relocating the bus stop from Brick Hill Lane to Oak Lane. Chair has visited site to take some photographs and we hope that we can get Coventry Council to consider re-instating the crossing.

Timetables- Some of the shelters/bus stops are not advertising the current timetables. We have enquired with Centro who have confirmed that poster casings have been ordered and once they arrive, these will be erected in the shelters/bus stops and timetables will be displayed. We have asked for a timetable for delivery but have yet to receive a response. We hope that this will be soon but the Clerk is chasing Centro regularly.

Chair informed that many residents and shift workers are sitting at bus stops and waiting for a bus even though the bus route has changed. It was pointed out that the route resulting from the diversion at Showell Lane has not been advertised adequately by Centro.

People are being witnessed outside bus stops that are temporarily out of use.

The Chair referred to a letter received from a resident sent to him by Centro in response to a complaint. The Chair read out the contents of the letter which dealt with Centro's failure to put up timetables.

RW enquired whether person who wrote the letter would mind if we take a copy of the letter and pass it on to Caroline Spelman.

It was agreed that the Parish Council should inform Centro of the lack of information regarding the diversionary route.

**5. Public Participation**

A resident raised concern of matters on the agenda.

Road Hump and zebra crossing proposal – The resident enquired where this would be and where is it at in the planning stage.

The resident was advised that this has passed the planning stage. It was pointed out that some Councillors had not seen the plans before.

The resident advised that he strongly objects to a new road hump. If it is intended to reduce speed then this should be done by reducing the speed limit and not by the installation of a road hump. The residents attitude is that people breaking the law should be prosecuted, not everyone, which this would do.

Councillors questioned the position of the zebra crossing. There is concern that this will lead to a muddy track over The Green. The crossing would also impact on the limited parking available.

RW advised that the zebra crossing was in the first consultation plans. Afterwards the parish council invited the senior principal officer of traffic to meet with RW and Ian Roxburgh to illustrate the problems. RW demonstrated what would occur if the public used the crossing. SMBC took all this into consideration and then prepared the new plans. We were very clear as to what we wanted.

Bob Kipling proposed that the Parish objects to the road hump and Paul Lee seconded.

Rosie Weaver confirmed that the siting is not ideal but it had been decided upon and this was part of the development package. A dropped kerb was necessary to allow wheelchair users to get across.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Parish Council objects to the road hump and notifies the conservation committee.

The resident raised issue with the roads generally and the bollards on the Main Road.

RW advised details of the Parish Plan and that there is a group looking at these issues to include in Meriden's Visual Design Statement. If we actually come up with ideas, Solihull Council will take these matters on board in their planning guidance; however, we need more volunteers. There are currently only four members.

The resident then asked for an update regarding the Pool. The Clerk advised that she had become aware that the stream was not flowing. She had visited site and spoken to Solihull drainage department who had attended and cleared away roots. A further site visit is due to be arranged with a drainage engineer to discuss outstanding issues. The Clerk has been informed this morning that the weir was taken out as the water is too high. The situation regarding the Pool is being monitored.

The resident then advised that he had taken some photographs that he would like to show. These comprised of several photographs of Meriden Hill and illustrated the poor lighting and overgrown foliage. The photographs were provided to the Parish Council. The resident stated that while he was taking the photographs, he witnessed two cars travelling at an excessive speed and in his opinion about 60mph.

Rosie Weaver advised that the Parish would continue to chase Solihull Council. The Chair also advised that the Clerk was arranging a site visit with Darren Parkin to look at the foliage. The resident was invited to attend this site visit.

## **RESOLVED**

That the Clerk would arrange a site visit and the resident would also attend.

Rosie Weaver thanked the resident for taking the time to obtain the photographs.

## **6. Correspondence and Communication**

6.1 Solihull in Bloom – Response from Centre Charity Shop indicating a willingness to sponsor a hanging basket. We have already received responses from two other businesses willing to sponsor hanging baskets and another offering to care for a basket so the response has been positive.

6.2 Meriden Tree of Thought – e-mail received from Alan Lole (Founder) advising works undertaken and for the Parish Council to consider request for a donation. The Chair read out the e-mail. A donation was approved.

### **RESOLVED**

That a donation is made to Meriden Tree of Thought.

6.3 Heart of England Way Association – membership renewal – approval to renew membership. The membership relates to promoting the Heart of England Way and the Arden Way and costs £7.00 for annual membership. The renewal was approved.

### **RESOLVED**

The membership is renewed.

6.4 Bus withdrawal – Letter received from National Express apologising for inconvenience caused by route changes. Advising that due to not enough customers using parts of the route it was not commercially viable to continue operating the service. We have given further details to Centro of the inconvenience and distress caused to residents together with examples but we have received no further reply other than the apologies.

## **7. Receive Reports**

7.1 Committee Member for Village Hall Management Committee - no report

7.2 School Governors for Parish Council - no report It was agreed that the Parish Council should send the new Head a welcoming letter.

7.3 Committee Member for War Memorial – no report

7.4 Pool – as discussed earlier in public participation

7.5 Allotment Representative – no report

7.6 Footpaths/Forum – Graham Goodsir advised that new metal gates had been put up around the area. Solihull Council has undertaken a lot of work. It was agreed that a thank you letter should be sent to Solihull Council to the footpath officer David Kearney.

7.7 Meriden Sands Working Group – a meeting is due to take place on Wednesday 25 August at 6.30pm. Councillor Bell is due to attend.

7.8 Conservation Committee – two meetings have been held but nothing to report relating to Meriden

7.9 Local Strategic Partnership – no report

7.10 Police Rural Assembly – no report

7.11 Solihull Area Committee – no meeting although a number of documents have been circulated

7.12 Tree Wardens – no report

7.13 Parish Plan – next meeting due on 23<sup>rd</sup> September

- 7.14 Community Surgery – The Clerk advised that the present neighbourhood co-ordinator has now left. We do not know who is the replacement. There is also due to be a new community Officer.
- 7.15 Joint Councillor Surgery - no attendance by public –Bob Kipling asked about raising more awareness of meetings.
- 7.16 Community Speed Watch – Paul Lee confirmed that he plans to carry out further speed watch sessions. We are struggling for volunteers and it is being undertaken by the Councillors at present. However the sessions have had a positive effect.
- 7.17 Fusion Football Sessions – Wednesday evenings – see 7.18
- 7.18 Paul Jayes Football Academy – Meriden Rovers – Saturday Mornings – Rosie Weaver confirmed that these sessions were progressing well. An academy was on all this week from 9am to 12 noon. The children appear really keen and the coach thinks that there may be a possibility of matches in the future. Rosie also confirmed that she has managed to raise income for the Parish through the use of the football pitch. This is £100.

## 8. **Village Matters**

8.1 **Showell Lane Bridge Closure** – This became effective from 16<sup>th</sup> August. The bus route has also changed as a result. The work is scheduled to last until April next year. We are informed that the work is necessary and cannot be put off any longer. The diversion has been marked with residents concerns taken into account and to avoid increasing the volume of traffic to Eaves Green lane.

Bob Kipling questioned whether there had been any response to the diversion. It was mentioned that one of the signs may be routing people incorrectly from Eaves Green Lane. Solihull Council to be notified if this still exists.

8.2 **Pool – Update** – The Chair confirmed that this item had been discussed at point 5 above.

8.3 **Parking on The Green** – Wooden posts – The neighbourhood co-ordinator has confirmed that two wooden posts have been ordered and will be erected once these are delivered. The Clerk has checked with Solihull Planning department regarding any planning permission required and has been informed that this is a highways matter and they would not become involved. The Clerk has also checked with the neighbourhood co-ordinator who has confirmed that since posts have already been erected, there would be no issue in erecting further posts. The location of the two new posts will be outside the Spar. We have asked for two additional posts but have been advised that since they are costly we should monitor the situation after the two posts are erected.

8.4 **Tennis Courts – Maxstoke Lane** – Update – The fencing around the tennis courts and the courts has been removed. Priority Builders have been invoiced for the works and we await payment in due course.

8.5 **Road Hump and new zebra crossing in Meriden** – The Chair confirmed that this item has been discussed at point 5 previously.

8.6 **Eaves Green Lane** –Update and details of appeal process – Clerk has spoken to the Planning Officer concerned. The timetable has now commenced but formal notification has not been received. The matter is due to go to public inquiry and a hearing is expected to take place sometime in January. The Parish and all other objectors will have an opportunity to make further representations. We are waiting for the formal statements of case from Solihull Planning department so that we may consider any response to

be submitted. The Chair advised that she felt that RAID seemed to have more information than the Parish Council particularly the date for the Inquiry. The Chair confirmed that the Clerk had spoken to the Planning department that day who had confirmed that a date had not been set.

**Consider whether the Parish would like to take legal advice** – Clerk has spoken to Wright Hassall Solicitors who have advised that in their opinion representations should be made even if this is simply to repeat the previous objections. They cannot say the nature of those objections until they have seen statements of case.

Chair confirmed that she has also spoken to Philip Lloyd-Williams at SMBC who has also provided his opinion. He advised that we should make some representations but why waste residents' funds in getting legal representation to reiterate what is already in your objection. He feels that since Solihull Council will be there with their legal team and RAID will be there with their legal team, we could attend as Councillors and represent the views of the Parish. He thinks it would be very refreshing. We could put a statement in writing and then request that we stand up and read this out. Rosie Weaver confirmed that she would be happy to read a statement and Bob Kipling confirmed that he would be happy to do this as well. The Chair confirmed that the matter would be reviewed once the statements arrived.

**8.7 Transport** — The Chair confirmed that a resident had referred to the Local Government Act 1997 – sections 26 – 29. The Parish Council can provide grants but any such grant has not been budgeted within expenditure for the year. It was felt that Centro should address the transport issue. The Chair advised that hopefully more pressure will be put on Centro by Councillor Bell and Caroline Spelman. Rosie Weaver confirmed that the transport issue had been discussed by the Partnership Group and we can put this on the agenda again. It will also strengthen our case if we keep sending Centro examples of the lack of service. It was noted that we could contact the Chairs of other local parishes to discuss plans.

## **RESOLVED**

Rosie Weaver will e-mail details to The Chair regarding the Partnership Group.

**8.8 Meriden Walks Leaflet** – Comments required before it goes to print. The leaflet was considered to be good but we need specific mention of dog/pet litter and that this should be included. The children at school have spent a lot of time doing a big project for the removal of pet litter and we should support them.

**8.9 Remembrance Sunday** – Parish Council budgeted for purchasing road closure equipment – to approve purchase. The Chair confirmed that she had contacted two contractors names of which had been given by Solihull Council regarding the purchase of equipment. The quotes are £580 and £720. Paul Lee also confirmed that we needed locks and chains as the equipment may be left overnight and needed to be secured. Bob Kipling suggested suited locks so that one key would fit all locks.

## **RESOLVED**

That the road closure equipment is purchased together with locks and chains.

**8.10 Public Conveniences** – Specifications for works – to approve obtaining three quotes. Ralph Ledbrook will be prepared to provide a quote for the specification of works. The Chair confirmed that we would need a further quote from Graham Sanderson who had provided a quote for the build, but not the specification.

Concern was raised that the Police may not support the project. The cost of demolition was considered to be of equal value. It was agreed that we needed to establish the Police's true commitment to this project. The Chair will contact Commander Foulkes to discuss this.

It was suggested by PL to offer the Police free rental. PL has volunteered to lead this project. Once the works are eventually undertaken – PL considers that it would be a good idea to get an advertising board –

The Clerk is waiting to hear from Solihull Planning department as to whether we would need planning permission to erect an advertising board. If we managed to obtain one, this could provide a source of income for the Parish Council and a valuable place to advertise local community news and features— there is one already outside the Pharmacy.

The Chair then raised the issue relating to the visit by one of the Contractors on site. The Clerk provided an update of the visit. Whilst the contractors were on site it was noted that the gents toilet door had been forced open and the lock is broken. Also a member of public tried to use the toilets. A notice has now been displayed on each door to advise that the toilets are not for public use. However, the Parish Council must consider whether to simply replace the lock in the gents toilet or to board up completely to avoid any access. The PC's have attracted vandals and anti -social behaviour in the past. The cost of replacing the lock is between £40- £60 and a quote for boarding up the property has been given at £198.00 plus VAT. The Clerk read out the quote from Sandford Building Services. The risk with simply replacing the lock could mean that the door could be forced again resulting in replacing the lock. To board up, would result in preventing any access. The time for works to be carried out could be several months so some action is necessary.

Bob Kipling proposed that the PC's are boarded up

Paul Lee seconded.

### **RESEOLVED**

That the PC's are boarded up as soon as possible

**8.11 Red Kiosk – Millisons Wood** – We have already signed a previous contract but due to notification to proceed with Option 1 whereby BT will continue to be responsible for the electrical supply and disconnect this in the short term, a revised contract requires to be signed.

Bob Kipling proposed to sign the revised contract.

### **RESOLVED**

The revised contract is signed.

**8.12 Training** – WALC are organising a further Planning Seminar. This is a repeat of a briefing session held earlier in the year dealing with how to respond to planning applications. It is to be held on Saturday 2 October at Dunchurch Sportsfield and Village Hall, Rugby. The cost per delegate is £30.00. The Chair and Paul Lee would like to attend and have been booked to attend. Any other Councillors interested in attending? No further interest.

### **RESOLVED**

The cost of the course is approved

**8.13 Referendum** - This is to decide whether to submit a formal objection to the capping of Parish Council precepts. The intention is that severe increases should be subject to approval by planning and a formal voting procedure. Meriden could be affected as it has reduced its precept considerably and a new precept may be seen as a significant increase. We can respond along the lines of the response put forward by NALC and suggest that any capping should affect council's with precepts over £1 million

### **RESOLVED**

That the response by WALC is satisfactory and no further response is necessary.

8.14 Police Authority Meeting 4<sup>th</sup> October – “at the Holiday Inn, Homer Road Solihull, the West Midlands Police Authority will be holding a consultation event for Solihull Neighbourhood Watch representatives. The meeting starts at 7pm however refreshments are available from 6.30pm. We would very much like all Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators to attend this event, providing you with an opportunity to discuss and influence policing priorities in the local area and across the West Midlands. Police Officers will also be available to deal with issues and enquiries. We look forward to meeting you at this event. Could you confirm your attendance by emailing [s.turrall@west-midlands.police.uk](mailto:s.turrall@west-midlands.police.uk) or phone 0121 626 5143 as we are limited by our numbers.”

Shirley Goodsir to provide details of any neighbourhood watch representatives that may be interested in attending the event.

**8.15** The Chair raised the issue of an e-mail received from a resident regarding the Parish Council's conduct in relation to a planning application. Our objection to the application was based on a change of street scene. The Chair read out the e-mail. Rosie Weaver stated that we need to raise the matter with Solihull Planning department as to whether it is their policy to prefer pitched roofs. Marilyn Hamilton advised that the appearance was all the same and a change would alter the appearance. It was agreed that Solihull should inform us of their policies so that matters could be addressed correctly. The matter should be referred to Solihull.

## **9. Planning Matters**

9.1 **2010/684 – Eaves Green Lane – Update.** Notification has been received that an appeal has been lodged by the Applicant.

9.2 **2010/1211 – Lanscombe, Truggist Lane, Berkswell – Certificate of lawful development for the proposed construction of a garage.** We have received confirmation from Solihull that we were notified as the property was near to Meriden. Berkswell have also been notified so we do not need to comment should we not wish to do so.

Comment: no comment

9.3 **2010/1122 – The Bakersfield, Hollyberry End, Meriden – Proposed steel framed agricultural storage building.**

Comment: no objection

9.4 **2010/1274 – 35 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood – Rear conservatory and garage conversion to create extended lounge.**

Comment: neighbour notification

9.5 **2010/1207 - 27 Birmingham Road, Millisons Wood, CV5 9AY – Two storey rear extension to form/extend kitchen family room with 1 No. bedroom above.**

Comment: neighbour notification

**10. Accounts and Governance**

- a) **Clement Keys - Annual Return 2009/2010** – An unqualified audit opinion has been given for Annual Return 2009/2010 with no matters to be drawn to the attention of the Council.

**Accounts for Payment**

**RESOLVED**

That the accounts are approved for payment.

**13. Date of Next Meeting**

The next Parish Council Meeting is Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2010 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.30pm.

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_