



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of Meriden Parish Council Meeting held on 16 December 2013
at The Village Hall, Meriden, at 7.30 p.m.

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

No Ward Councillors or members of the public attended.

1. Welcome & Apologies

Cllr M Lee opened the meeting and accepted apologies from Cllr R Weaver, Cllr D Bell and Cllr T Dicicco.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Chair noted and accepted apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no other declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of 25th November 2013

Members had been circulated minutes of 25th November for consideration prior to meeting. Cllr Kipling proposed approval of minutes, seconded by Cllr P Lee.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members accepted minutes of 25th November 2013 as read.

4. Standing Order Review

The review of Standing Orders remains a work in progress.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Weaver and the Clerk will continue the review process.

5. FINANCE

5.1 December Payments

Members received December payments for approval. The Clerk drew Members attention to the high expenditure due to (i) Land Unit under query with end of year accrued sum of £2217.60 and, (ii) SMBC Property Services second interim payment of £3570.60, both inclusive of VAT.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously approved payments list and acknowledged items (i) and (ii) above.

5.2 Precept 2014-15



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Cllr M Lee reported that an email had been received by the Clerk earlier this evening which the Clerk had no chance of circulating prior to the meeting. Attached was a letter setting out precept and tax base figures along with the indicative tax base for 2014/15, together with an indication of Meriden's share of the support grant, as approved by Full Cabinet on 10th December. Cllr Lynch-Smith recorded the fact that at the 11th hour an important decision was required to be made without any opportunity to evaluate current situation to reflect any potential increase, to meet a deadline of 10th January 2014 for Meriden's indicative precept. Cllr Kipling regarded the information presented and made a recommendation of 3% uplift. Members considered this proposal and in principle agreed, however a further discussion was requested once Members were in receipt of paperwork and regarded content. The Chair suggested meeting early in January to approve Meriden's indicative precept on the basis of information received. The Clerk was requested to circulate Gemma Farrington's email and attachment, and call an Extraordinary General meeting on Monday 6th January 2014 to finalise outcome.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members acknowledged Cllr Lee's recommendation and requested the Clerk to circulate documents by email to all Members and call an EGM for Monday 6th January 2014 at 7pm at the Pavilion.

5.3 Tender Process

Cllr P Lee advised the tender short listing had been undertaken today, with five contractors being invited to attend for interview. Due to end of year, Members were asked for their agreement to receive email update with "in principle" recommendations for contract award, so three months notice may be given to existing Contractors who are unsuccessful. The Chair requested Members to approve delegated powers to Finance Committee with the addition of Cllrs P Lee and J Baber to interview and recommend accordingly.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved delegated powers to Finance Committee to finalise tender process and make recommendations to full Parish Council meeting at EGM on 6th January 2014.

6. **Progress Reports**

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr Lynch-Smith stated a letter should have been received from the Treasurer acknowledging Parish Council contribution. The Clerk confirmed receipt and read the letter to Members recording a vote of thanks to Meriden Parish Council and Cllr Lynch-Smith's valuable support and attendance at meetings.

6.2 Community Governor for Meriden C of E School
Nothing to report.

6.3 War Memorials
Nothing to report.



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6.4 Pool Tidy
Nothing to report.

6.5 Allotment Representative

The Clerk advised she had emailed Andrew Taylor of TWH on 5th December regarding follow up actions from 25th November meeting; the following response from Rob Beattie, TWH's Technical Director, in order of issues raised:-

- (i) Bridleway – TWH are not proposing any works within the allotment areas so this track will not be affected.
- (ii) Vehicular Access – Unfortunately TWH have worked to the requirements of the Unilateral i.e. within the approved layout of the only provision is a pedestrian gate that will be from the turning head adjacent to proposed shed/car parking bays.
- (iii) Perimeter Security – TWH advise there will be no close board fence proposed – the existing hedge is substantial enough to protect/screen allotments from the Estate.
- (iv) Erection of secure storage facility – see site plan. The Parish Council to contact the Allotment Association and agree suitability.
- (v) Water Butts – TWH to provide prior to formal transfer of allotments.

IT WAS RESOVLED Members requested the Clerk follow up actions above.

6.6 Footpaths/Forum

Cllr Lynch-Smith is now in receipt of a “personalised Meriden” OS map, compass and water proof wallet. She will follow up a meeting with Cllr Richard Lloyd in the New Year.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Chair thanked Cllr Lynch-Smith for her ongoing work.

6.7 Quarries Liaison Group

Cllr M Lee invited the Clerk to provide an update on this afternoon's meeting. The Clerk advised there is to be a programme of works for resurfacing of Cornets End Lane including surface and strengthening works with overlaying from Patrick's roundabout to Quarry entrance. This will comprise a three year works order programme at a cost of £100K, to raise curbs, gullies and improve drainage on this section could potentially double the budget and priorities are currently under review as Highways cannot commit budget for one road only. A further planning application has been put in by Jack Moody Limited for the construction of a concrete pad and associated operational development together with change of use of land to carry out wood chipping operations. David Lechmere reported that 20% of vehicles are NRS related and procedures are in place to enforce lorry movements with ongoing monitoring. Variations of previous planning applications to extend site licence does not appear to take account or increased lorry movements, although impact surveys are carried out, and therefore no section 106 conditions are attached, with particular



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concerns around the Area G sand cap which will see increased volumes of infill due to restoration programme. Members discussed the merits of an independent traffic survey and the Clerk was requested to contact CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) West Midlands for their help and guidance.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to contact CPRE for advice and guidance.

6.8 Solihull Area Committee – Cllr Weaver & Cllr M Lee.
Nothing to report.

6.9 Tree Warden
Nothing to report.

6.10 Community Surgeries
The Clerk reported no attendance at recent surgery. She met with Bruce Brant and they utilised the time catching up on village matters. Please refer to Clerk's Actions report for full update.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to continue to liaise with residents and SMBC officers.

6.11 Community Speed Watch
Nothing to report.

6.12 HS2
Cllr M Lee informed Members that the Clerk was now in receipt of the Environmental Statements and Hybrid Bill which will be available for public scrutiny, interest and information at the Pavilion with immediate effect and throughout January.

7. Clerk's Report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting

The Clerk circulated by email to Members her actions since last meeting. There were no questions and the Chair expressed her thanks and acknowledged content.

8. District and County Councillors' Reports

Cllr Diccio sent an email to update to Members as follows:-

1. **Parking near Meriden School** - I have checked with SMBC Parking Services and they have informed me that Enforcement Officers have been to Fillongley Road twice recently but have only observed one car parked in contravention. The driver was asked to move and warned not to park illegally otherwise she would be ticketed.

Please could you let me know if residents have experienced parking issues recently near the school or elsewhere in Meriden?,



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2. Proposed Parking restrictions around The Green - I have discussed this with Ed Bradford and he has informed me that SMBC do not intend to take this scheme further at this time due to the concerns that were raised by the Parish Council and local residents. I think that this is the sensible decision.

3. Birmingham Road parking bay - Ed Bradford informs me that this has not progressed any further since the letter to the Parish Council on 4th November. The issue is that there is no available SMBC budget for this - I can continue to press for this but I'm not sure how successful I will be. Does the Parish Council have any funds available?

Some other issues of interest:

1. The Solihull Local Plan - this received a very positive report from the Planning Inspector who proposed very few changes. The Plan was ratified at the Full Council Meeting on 3rd December despite the Labour Party and Greens abstaining. We wanted to have a unanimous vote in favour as any opposition from local councillors will open up the Plan to potential judicial review. The Local Plan is Solihull's best defence against inappropriate development, especially in Meriden Ward where a number of developers would like to build a significant number of houses. The other risk is that Solihull could be required to take some of Birmingham's housing requirement - obviously we will fight any excessive demand.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will forward Cllr Diccio email update to Members.

9. Meriden Village Matters

9.1(i) Library Update

Cllr M Lee reported that she is still waiting for the outcome of the recent Condition Survey undertaken. The Clerk stated that she has received acknowledgements from Linda Wilson regarding Meriden PC's request for the Maintenance Programme and any recommendations therein for Meriden Library and programme of works for SMBC's grade II listed buildings.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Lee will continue to liaise with Head of Libraries and explore options. The Clerk will chase up SMBC Property Services.

9.1 (ii) Historic Panels

This item is deferred to next meeting as there is no update.

9.2 Village Commemoration WW1

Cllr M Lee reported that the first meeting of the working group was held on 7th December with seven attendees and four Councillors. It was a good meeting with everyone taking away actions to report back to next meeting on 18th January 2014.



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Cllr Haque reaffirmed it was a good meeting with everyone getting involved. There is a lot of activity going on in the Village for next year and it is important for all parties to be aware of what events are being organised; Cllr Haque stated she would be putting together a calendar of events for 2014 and she is waiting for the various groups to get back to her with their diaries.

Cllr P Lee stated the chosen Charity will be the ABF The Soldiers Charity (formerly the Army Benevolent Fund).

Cllr Lynch-Smith will be looking into organising a coach trip for interested Meriden residents to the Imperial War Museum, London.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved The Soldier's Charity as Meriden's chosen Charity.

9.3 Flooding, roads, crossing, bins, green, parking, trees/hedges

The Clerk advised Members that no new information had been received since last meeting.

- Flooding
Nothing to report.
- Roads
See refer to agenda item 8 and Cllr Diccico's update.
- Crossing
Nothing to report.
- The Green Parking
Please refer to agenda item 8 and Cllr Diccico's update. Cllr Lynch-Smith reported that Amey (SMBC Street Cleaning service), are still parking their vehicles the wrong side of slip road thus blocking access on service road. The Clerk agreed to email the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator for action to be taken.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will continue to liaise with relevant officers.

- Trees/Hedges
Work has been carried out by two private landowners on Birmingham Road.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members acknowledged the work undertaken to improve boundaries, footpath and cycle lane.

9.4 Meriden Gate

Cllr M Lee advised a decision was needed regarding the £10K for early years play ground/play area on the Meriden Gate development and if this play area did not go ahead then what can/cannot the Parish Council spend the funding on, and we as a Parish Council reserve the right to spend it appropriately on a chosen project? Discussion lead by Cllr Kipling, agreed the Parish Council could not financially



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maintain a second play area. If SMBC were to agree to the maintenance, then this decision may be reassessed. There was also discussion around the wildlife sanctuary/refuge and bridleway to be established at site completion. The Clerk reported she had raised residents concerns about the balancing pond discharge into the River Blythe from private land belonging to Packington Estate and Jephson Housing Trust.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will write to David Waterson regarding Meriden Gate Play Area and establish alternative use of £10K. The Clerk will also check email regarding discharge and report back at January's meeting.

9.5 Memorial Bench

The Clerk advised Members of a request from Mrs Cubbon for a Memorial Bench dedicated to her daughter on the verge overlooking the Pool. The Clerk had requested a site visit from Highways and Neighbourhood Co-ordinator to approve site, and confirmed there were no issues for a bench not to be sited. The Clerk further advised that Mrs Cubbon would be responsible for the supply, installation and long term maintenance of the bench in accordance with recent Parish Council policy.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously approved Mrs Cubbon's request for a Memorial Bench and instructed the Clerk to action with the family.

10. **Meriden Sports Park**

10.1 Cllr M Lee advised the loss of 12 new trees due to Ash Dieback. A decision to replace trees will be deferred until the New Year. The Clerk reported there had been no reply to letter of complaint sent Chris Barr requested by Members regarding SMBC's actions or lack of.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will report back to Members at next meeting with SMBC's reply.

Cllr M Lee advised Members that approval was required for the two tennis courts to be recognised and approved by the LTA (Lawn Tennis Association) as good quality and of a good playing standard. There is a cost implication of £100 for LTA quality status, and Members were asked to approve this for a two year period to see if this will attract club matches with future income generation.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously approved LTA approved status at £100.

10.2 Patrol Alarms CCTV

Cllr P Lee advised that he and the Clerk had met with an independent Company to assess the original specification against actual installation.



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The findings were enlightening and a formal letter of complaint has been written to Mike Swallow, SMBC's Head of Strategic Lane, requesting an investigation into the procurement of this installation, emailed to Members for their information.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr P Lee will continue to monitor the situation and the clerk will follow up response from SMBC.

10.3 Packington Estate

Cllr M Lee advised Sports Park Directors had met on 8th December and outlined two options for consideration by Packington Estate, letter emailed to Members for their information. The Parish Council await Estate response.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will monitor and update in January.

11. **Planning Matters**

11.1 Neighbourhood Planning Applications

The Clerk advised of two new applications for Members comments being 2013/2028 and 2013/2041.

The Clerk advised that she had received full plan refusal from SMBC for 2013/1953 Fordsons Farm. Planning Applications 2013/1805, 2013/1820 and 2013/1859 are with SMBC Planners.

The Clerk reported she had made contact with Jon Hallam, the named officer for News Express planning application who confirmed Highways have made no representation regarding concerns over parking and access during programme of works; and any re-siting of the flue is a private matter; with confirmation that there is no change of licence for the premises other than retail.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will continue to monitor.

11.2 Eaves Green Lane Public Enquiry

Cllr M Lee read an email received from David Wigfield, Enforcement & Conservation Manager as follows in response to her email to Anne Brereton regarding planning application 2013/48:-

"Further to your recent email to Anne Brereton enquiring about the above matter (planning application 2013/48 and the adjoining field), I can confirm that the Secretary of State issued his decision letter on 21st November 2013. The Inspector had recommended that the appeal be dismissed, the Secretary of State agreed with this conclusion, and the appeal was duly dismissed on that date. As far as I'm aware, we have not yet heard any more since then from the appellants or their representatives regarding any further proposals or intentions for the site.



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The land was largely restored in material compliance with the Council's suggestions, back in the summer. As you may be aware, the Planning Committee requested that some further works be pursued to address one final detail relating to differences between levels in part of the field. We have endeavoured to pursue this with the land owner and through his solicitors, but the matter has been delayed as we understand he is, and has been, out of the country for several months. This matter will be reviewed, to assess and agree what further works, if any, may still be appropriate, as soon as we can make contact – which I imagine will probably be early in the New Year now.

I hope this is of some assistance, but feel free to contact me direct if you have any further queries.”

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk was requested to remove this item from future agendas and Members unanimously acknowledged that this was a good outcome.

12. Parish Council Newsletter Editorial Committee

Cllr Lee confirmed publication in January 2014 and stated there would be inclusion from the WWI Working Group.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Lee will continue with publication.

13. Oil Painting & Kittermaster Collection

Cllr Haque advised she was still checking with Museums and Art Galleries. Cllr Kipling advised that the maximum value of the painting is £4K but this does not reflect market value and how difficult it would be to replace. Information regarding who donated the painting has been lost in the Library. This remains a deferred item for future agendas.

IT WAS RESOLVED This item is deferred.

14. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda

Cllr Haque advised of the recent email communication regarding poachers in Millisons Wood and a notice posted by Residents Association. No one could explain actions of Residents Association or confirm there was an outbreak of poaching. The Clerk was requested to find out about Residents Association and to contact Balsall Common community Police Team.

Members were requested to email the Clerk with any items to be included in Janaury's agenda.

15. Correspondence & Communication for information share only

The Clerk asked Members to review their training requirements as per email sent to all regarding Data Protection, Governance and Accountability and New Planning Framework. The following is to be booked:-



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Clerk Data Protection; Cllr M Lee, Cllr Nunn & Cllr Lynch-Smith Governance; Cllr Haque, Cllr Nunn, Cllr Lynch-Smith & Clerk Planning.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will complete booking.

16. Date and time of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 27th January 2013 at 19.30 hours at Pavilion.

There will be an Extraordinary General Meeting on Monday 6th January 2013 at 19.00 hours at Pavilion.

The meeting closed at 21.15

Signed Cllr M Lee
Chair

Dated