



# Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on  
21<sup>st</sup> December 2015 at the Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

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

There were 3 Members of the public present and District Cllr Allsopp.

Chair welcomed members of the public and noted there were no guest speakers this evening.

**1. Public Participation**

Chair invited any concerns/issues to be raised by members of the public.

- Pertemps Planning Appeal was raised by residents. Cllr Weaver and Parish Council Planning Consultant, Avon Planning, attended the Appeal hearing that included a site visit with the Inspector and Planning Officers. Awaiting decision.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies received from Cllr Barber due to ill health and Cllr Bell who is overseas.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Apologies were formally recorded and reasons for absence accepted.

**Declarations of Interest**

3a To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature.  
There was nothing to declare.

3b To declare any prejudicial interests in items on the agenda and their nature  
There was nothing to declare.

**4. Minutes**

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015, circulated prior to meeting, were considered and agreed. Minor amendments had been received prior to meeting and actioned.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr R Kipling proposed acceptance of the minutes of Parish Council meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015. Cllr P Lee seconded this proposal.

**Signed** ..... **Chair**      **Dated** .....

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## 5. Finance

### 5.1 Approve December Payments

Members received payments for Parish Council and Sports Park for approval. The Clerk advised additional item added to Parish Council payments due to late receipt of invoice. Members considered Clerk’s actions in emailing contractors reminding of invoice payment date. Cllr Haque advised that this is not good use of time and therefore no further reminders should be made; i.e. it is up to contractors to note meeting dates and ensure their invoices are presented timely for payment process. Any late invoices wait until the following month for payment. This was seconded by Cllr P Lee and agreed by Members.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk will no longer send out contractor reminders to receive invoices to meet payment dates as recommended by Cllrs Haque and P Lee above. Cllr Kipling proposed approval of December payments of £5,719.88 for Parish Council and £3,927.80 for Sports Park, seconded by Cllr P Lee.

### 5.3 Precept 2015-16

Further to Clerk’s action, a revised precept base rate and indicative budget to include 3% uplift as agreed and resolved under agenda item 5.3 of full Council meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2015 agenda, was presented to Members.

To confirm: Based on indicative 2016-17 figures confirmed by SMBC, a 3% increase to be applied comprising a 1.0344 (1.03) pence increase = £35.51/Band D dwelling.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members unanimously approved the revised calculation as presented above. The Clerk will complete paperwork and forward to SMBC Corporate Finance team for April 2016 payment.

### 5.3 Budget 2016-17

Cllr Weaver advised that the tender process had concluded; it had been a useful day with contractors presenting their bids. All contracts had been awarded as per the strictly private and confidential contract schedule circulated to Members, with the exception of Contract 2 Specialist Works that requires more investigation by Sports Park Directors and Contract 9 that has been withdrawn to revise service delivery and specific sporting activities for targeted groups of local children, young people and adults. A funding application to Sport England is currently being put together to provide additional opportunities for targeted sessions.

Cllr P Lee recorded thanks to the shortlisting committee comprising Cllrs Weaver, Barber and the Clerk who have provided a robust tender process and contract awards for 3 years in the first instance with a 2 year extension subject to satisfactory performance and service delivery. Cllr Weaver thanked Members and advised that the Contractors worked well together with respect for one another’s strengths.

Signed ..... Chair Dated .....

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The budget process will commence early January.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members unanimously approved the Contract Awards schedule and formally recorded their thanks to the Tender Shortlisting Committee.

**Action:** The Clerk to commence the budget process for Parish Council.

## **6. Progress Reports**

Members requested that consideration of quarterly progress reporting be deferred to next meeting.

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee  
Nothing to report.

6.2 War Memorials  
Nothing to report.

6.3 Meriden Pool  
Cllr Haque advised of rodent infestation and SMBC's email to the Clerk regarding a quotation for pest control officers to deal with the problem. Further discussion by Members confirmed that the Pool is the responsibility of SMBC and as such any cost incurred for environmental health for rodent removal remains the responsibility of SMBC.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved any cost implication for rodent removal from Meriden Pool will be the responsibility of SMBC. The Clerk will liaise with SMBC officers.

6.4 Allotments  
Cllr Weaver advised that she and the Clerk had carried out an inspection on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> November with photographs being taken of areas that attention by allotment holders as well as Taylor Wimpey. Letters will be sent to allotment holders in New Year advising of tenancy agreement conditions and requesting a tidy up.

**Action:** Clerk to write to Allotment holders reminding of conditions of tenancy and to remove all rubbish and debris together with clearing of pathway.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum  
Nothing to report.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group  
Cllr Weaver reported that a meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015. All very positive with the MD of Beechwood, the applicant of new Biodiversity composting operation, attending to update the forum on planning application and take any questions

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regarding concerns. Moody are increasing their recycling activities under planning approval granted in January 2014; however there are no conditions attached to this planning approval restricting lorry movements and routing agreement.

**Action:** The Clerk to write a formal letter of complaint to Planning regarding the non-inclusion of transport conditions within this latest planning approval for variation of conditions.

Cllr Haque raised her concerns regarding the condition of roads in and around Meriden Quarry which are starting to break up; she has personally received 2 bullet holes to windscreen from flying stones lying on highway.

Cllr Weaver added that she has counted 5 lorries all un-sheeted and this continues to be the case without any enforcement by operators or police.

**Action:** The Clerk to liaise with police team and advise of situation.

Cllr Weaver stated that there is a willingness by Operators to work with Meriden and Hampton PCs to reduce HGV traffic through villages and also to ensure that the road sweepers are deployed to maintain the highways to a good standard with operators sharing the cost of highway maintenance.

Cllr Kipling raised his concerns regarding possible diversion of HGVs with the closure of Berkswell Road for resurfacing in January 2016.

**Action:** Cllr Allsopp will look into Berkswell Road closure, notification to Heart of England Club, households and diversion of traffic.

## 6.7 Solihull Area Committee

The next meeting is 21<sup>st</sup> January 2016. Cllr Weaver and Cllr Brown, Chair of Committee have met with Nick Page, Chief Executive of SMBC, regarding planning notifications, community infrastructure levy (CIL) and regular meetings with Town and Parish Councils to talk through their issues.

## 6.8 Tree Wardens & TPO List

Nothing to report.

## 6.9 Community Surgeries

The Clerk reported that there were no attendees at December's surgery.

## 6.10 Community Speed Watch

Cllr Weaver stated that new dates are waiting to be set with WPC Smith.

**Action:** Cllr Barber to follow up.

**Signed** ..... **Chair**      **Dated** .....

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6.11 Meriden Sports Park (quarterly summary only)  
Nothing to report. The next quarterly update will be provided at January’s meeting.

**7. Clerk’s Report**

The Clerk’s actions were circulated prior to meeting and reflect items of agenda.

**8. District and Ward Councillor Reports**

Nothing to report.

**9. Correspondence & Communication**

- Ian Geddes 2geedesign notification of retirement at end March and the need to look for new website management company. Cllr P Lee suggested contact be made with local colleges to source interested providers for new website set up and management. Meanwhile the Chair will explore interest with Cheeky Frog and the Clerk will explore interest with Real Point who currently provides IT support. **Action:** The Chair to contact Cheeky Frog and the Clerk to contact Real Point.
- Warwickshire Minerals consultation with external consultation period extended to 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016. **Action:** Cllr Kipling to read and prepare response to meet deadline on behalf of Parish Council.
- Local Plan Review consultation; appendices F & G of specific interest to Meriden regarding identified development sites. This is critical for Meriden to make representation and have their comments recorded. The Clerk advised that she has spoken to Maurice Barlow, Senior Spatial Planning Officer, who is liaising with Cllr Ian Courts, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Managed Growth, to attend Parish Council Development Day on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016. Members to bring their comments to the meeting. **Action:** The Clerk to electronically circulate copies of documents to Members once downloaded in PDF formats.
- Green Belt Review Policy documents – Cllr Weaver will read and respond on behalf of Parish Council.
- HS2 Update on Materials. Cllr Weaver has been part of SMBC working party and looked at comments. Cllr Allsopp suggested consulting with Berkswell and Balsall Common as Cllr Lloyd has made representations on what is and what is not worth consulting on and not being a lone voice for mitigation.

**10. Meriden Village Matters**

10.1 Library Update

Nothing to report.

10.2 Village Commemoration WW1

Nothing to report. The next meeting will be held in January.

**Signed .....** Chair **Dated .....**

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10.3 Meriden Gate  
Nothing to report.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments)

The Clerk advised that residents have raised concerns regarding the non-planting of hedgerow instatement programme of works. Members requested the Clerk write a formal letter of complaint to Solihull Planning.

**Action:** The Clerk to write a letter of complaint to SMBC Planning.

10.5 Highways

Cllr Kipling raised concerns regarding HGVs using Berkswell Road. The matter is to be referred to Bruce Brant to further earlier requests regarding potholes, broken curbs/verges, surface breaking and a pedestrian footpath.

**Action:** The Clerk to raise the issues with Bruce Brant.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

The Clerk reported that land being encroached upon residents of Main Road is a private land matter with the landowner. Cllr Allsopp reported that this has been the case for a long time and SMBC are aware of the situation but no action has been taken to date. Cllr Allsopp further reported that a peppercorn rental is paid to the landowner to retain land being used for extended gardens. Cllr Allsopp will check into this and provide an update.

**Action:** Cllr Allsopp to investigate with SMBC officers.

10.7 Public Convenience Site Transfer

The Clerk reported that the latest Solicitor communication is that Solihull MBC will not agree to the amendments to the letter requesting a 50/50 split for site demolition in the event of the War Memorial site being handed back to SMBC. They state, "Unfortunately, I am unable to agree to the changes put forward in the revised letter attached to your email. The use of the land as a memorial would be entirely your client's decision, as landowner. The Council did not contribute to the demolition costs of the public conveniences (as per the Transfer dated 12th September 2005) nor did the Council contribute to the cost of the memorial or were they party to the decision to change the use of the land for the memorial. The position with regards to any transfer back to the Council should remain at your client's cost, again as per the Transfer dated 12th September 2005."

Members considered this latest communication and agree that it is unlikely this site will ever not be a "dedicated War Memorial Site known as Memorial Approach". On that basis full approval was given the matter to be brought to conclusion as per the

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proposed side letter to sit alongside the Transfer Document dated 12<sup>th</sup> September 2005.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved the side letter and requested the Clerk to instruct Wright Hassall to conclude the matter on behalf of Meriden Parish Council.

10.8 Solihull Neighbourhoods in Bloom & Heart of England in Bloom 2016  
Nothing to report.

10.9 Litter  
Nothing to report.

10.10 Co-Op  
Nothing to report.

10.11 Mobile Mast Update  
Nothing to report.

10.12 Local Council Award Scheme  
Nothing to report. This item will be discussed and reviewed at Parish Council Development Day on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

10.13 Meriden Volunteers for Cancer Research  
Cllr Weaver advised this group has asked what the Parish Council are doing as a community commemoration event to mark the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday? Also that Rev Lilley will be putting a letter to the Parish Council as the Church is keen to get involved. Cllr P Lee reported that Alan Lole wanted to do something too in June 2016. Members suggested could this be a project for the Bloomer's Group to undertake for their colour scheme? The Fun Day event on the Village Green, whilst excellent community participation, with something like this there would be increased risk as roads are not closed and additional numbers attending are likely with Parish Council underwriting liability. The Sports Park would be an ideal venue for a community themed commemorative event. Cllr P Lee stated that the Queen's actual Birthday is 21<sup>st</sup> April, not June. Members discussed the practicalities of hosting an event and due to resource issues did not feel able to take on the organisation totally; however they would 100% support and provide what resources are available to local community groups to get a commemorative community event organised. Cllr Weaver concluded that the Parish Council will support as much as it is able to anyone who wishes to take on the organisation of a community event.

**Action:** Cllr Weaver will contact Cancer Research Volunteers and share outcome.

## 11. **Solihull Partnership Forum**

Cllr Weaver advised she and the Clerk attended a briefing from SMBC Neighbourhood Planning team with presentations from Hampton PC, who have completed their plan,

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and Knowle & Dorridge Community Forum, who have just started, are formed as no Parish Council exists, and who many volunteers, leaving the session with a great deal of despondency.

Incorrect information has been given regarding Neighbourhood Plans linking to Local Plans, and with the onset of the Local Plan Review, any amendments made and subsequently adopted, the suggestion is that any Neighbourhood Plan must go through a similar review process. This has been challenged with Avon Planning and the Parish Council Planning Consultant is raising his concerns over the mis-information with SMBC on our behalf.

## 12. Planning Matters

### 12.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Cllr Weaver advised that she and the Clerk had completed a Locality funding application for 5566K to assist with the budget required for the Neighbourhood Plan process. December's meeting has been cancelled and moved to 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016. An assembly has also been arranged between 08.20 and 09.30 on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016 with 147 Meriden children/young people who attend Heart of England School, to share the neighbourhood plan process, meaning and gather comments from presentation and questionnaires.

Cllr Weaver has met with Neil Pearce and expressed concerns over resources and volunteer time, with no one having the capacity or technical expertise to assist with land issues linked to the work the Clerk has started. It is anticipated that this work will be integral to the writing of the Neighbourhood Plan and include Policy writing and review and evidence base benchmarking. Funding for this additional person has been included in the bid. Cllr Weaver thanked all volunteers and Councillors who sit on the steering group.

**Action:** Cllr Weaver and the Clerk will continue working through the process. The next meeting will be held at the Pavilion on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2016 at 19.15.

### 12.2 To receive update and status on Planning Applications

The Clerk had circulated Members with latest planning application updates available on the Parish Council website.

Cllr Weaver advised she attended the Pertemps Appeal at Sans Souci with Planning Consultant and residents and went on the site visit. It was noted that Parish and Neighbour Notification letters were either late being sent or not sent at all. The Parish Council comments to the Inspector had not been received and residents who had written letters had been advised of hearing date. There is an 8 week waiting period for the appeal decision to be made.

Cllr Lynch-Smith advised that she attended the Planning Inspector's site visit to Meriden Hall regarding the appeal by Morrison Park Homes to develop and expand

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the site onto the Walled Garden, curtilage listed and part of the original Meriden Hall kitchen garden. Consideration was given to the wildlife habitat, TPO's and community open space.

There were questions allowed and any comments could not be recorded or become part of the decision making process. Pipework has already been put in for future development of this site linking mains services and utilities. Car parking remains an issue for residents. There is an 8 week waiting period for the appeal decision to be made.

## 12.2(i) To consider Planning Committee

This item is deferred to Parish Council Development Day on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

**Action:** The Clerk to amend Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for the purpose of discretionary planning commitments.

## 12.3 Update of Old Garage & Caravan Storage Site, Birmingham Road

The Clerk reported that she has received an email from the applicant requesting a meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> December. Unfortunately the office will be closed and a meeting will be arranged for the New Year.

## 12.4 Unlawful Caravan Storage Site

The Clerk reported that the appeal has upheld SMBC planning refusal; enforcement is in place and expires on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016. Mr Wigfield, planning officer has stated that SMBC will pursue site occupant for removal of caravans and will go to court for eviction notice.

## 12.5 Land for Burial – Cllr Lynch-Smith

Cllr Lynch-Smith advised that she has met with Gordon Hull and Reverend Lilley. Another meeting will be arranged for January/February to start looking at suitable land including Diocese representation. All parties are keen to get something sorted. Cllr Weaver referred to briefing notes issued by WAL, and also stated that the issue is not for Parish Council solution with liability for any identified land; it should be noted that SMBC may be accountable to pursue a solution to the Parish's problem of land acquisition.

**Action:** Cllr Lynch-Smith to update at next meeting.

## 12.6 Planning Application Copse & Bridleway – change of use from unused land to common land

The Clerk has liaised with Mr Stephen Wilkinson and Mr Jim Butler regarding this issue. No 47 Strawberry Fields has been approved for change of use from unused land to garden. The historic copse and bridleway is being eroded by properties extending gardens. The Parish Council is working with SMBC officers to protect the

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remaining copse and bridleway immediately adjacent to Sports Park. A woodland walk, footpath, gate and wildlife habitat boxes and information boards will be provided.

**Action:** The Clerk to continue working with SMBC officers to bring this matter to conclusion.

### 12.7 Community Right to Bid

The Clerk reported that an application had been completed and sent to SMBC for the copse and bridleway above. Mr Jim Butler has been extremely helpful providing OS maps for unregistered and common land in and around the Parish. He has a great deal of knowledge regarding Meriden and has proved to be of great assistance bring this matter to conclusion.

He is open to assist further with our Neighbourhood Plan work and identification of unused and unregistered land. Members unanimously requested a letter of thanks be sent to Mr Butler for his support and helpfulness.

**Action:** The Clerk is requested to write a letter of thanks to Mr Butler.

### 13. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda

- Greenbelt Review
- 82 Bus Route and Failure of Service
- Enforcement Notices issued over 10 years 2006-2016 (not actioned upon)
- Solihull Local Plan
- Summary of Parish Council Development Day 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016

### 14. Date of Next Meeting

There will be a Parish Council Development Day Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2016.  
The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

The Chair closed the meeting thanking Councillors and members of the public for their attendance at the last meeting of 2015, wishing all present a very happy Christmas and New Year.

The meeting closed at 21.04

Signed ..... Chair Dated .....

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