



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 20th February 2017
Venue: Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

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

Cllr Weaver welcomed Members of the Public.

1. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr Haque due to illness, Cllr Barber due to family commitment and Cllr Allsop.

2. Public Participation

There were 6 members of the public in attendance and Chair invited any issues they may have to be raised.

The focus of the public open floor was a group of parents raising their concerns over the potential removal of the free school bus service from Millisons Wood to Meriden School at end of summer term (25 July 2017). A consultation will be carried out between 13th March and 28th April 2017, which is during the Easter holiday, and any final decision made on the basis of consultation feedback.

Dame Caroline Spelman MP has been notified together with Cllr Allsopp.

There are three options for Millisons Wood residents (i) using public transport without an escort; (ii) drive to the school increasing traffic and pollution; (iii) a walk of 45 minutes in all weathers. The rationale for the removal of service to Meriden School is that it is no longer cost effective with only 10 children on a 52 seater coach. Parents admitted a minibus was probably more cost effective and they were happy to pay for the service to continue. Either way nothing can replicate the service received currently. Apparently LEA legislation criteria for school transport has changed with the removal of free school transport to faith schools. Suggestions have been made for affected children and families to walk to the school; however it should be remembered that the footpaths are not maintained regularly and there is no lighting in parts for winter walking. A previous impact assessment deemed the footpaths to be unsafe, with traffic travelling at speed, lack of lighting and poor maintenance. Question: what has now changed to make the footpaths safe as traffic still travels above the 40mph and 50mph speed limits along the Birmingham Road.

Signed Chair **Dated**

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Action: Clerk to request Freedom of Information for Impact Assessment; Financial Impact of coach v. minibus.

Action: Clerk to advise SMBC School Transport (i) the Parish Council had not been included in any communication to date regarding the removal of school transport and for the Parish Council to be registered as a consultee.

Chair advised that as a Governor of Meriden School, she can confirm that the matter has been raised as a school and as a Board of Governors. She further commented that a 20mph zone outside school has been requested. Documentary evidence is being recorded via Speed Watch. This will also be picked through SMBC's Local Plan Review consultation and the Charter for Parish & Town Councils.

Action: Chair to ensure sustainable transport is included in the Local Plan Review response around rural communities; linked to health and well-being.

Action: Parents to forward the clerk all communication. All District Councillors to be notified; information share with Meriden Watch and Facebook. The item to remain on the agenda until the issue is resolved.

3. Declarations of Interest

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

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

4. Minutes

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23rd January 2017, circulated prior to meeting, were considered. Members approved the minutes as a true record.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr M Nunn proposed acceptance of the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 23rd January 2017, seconded by Cllr P Lee.

5. Finance

5.1 Approve February Payments

The clerk circulated February payments for consideration and approval.

- (i) Meriden Parish Council February payments £33,187.50. Cllr M Lee asked about the payment of £30,000 to Meriden Sport & Recreation Trust. The Clerk explained this was the gift to the Trust for the purpose of meeting SMBC loan repayment terms.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr R Kipling proposed approval of Meriden Parish Council February payments of £30,187.50 seconded by Cllr P Lee.

- (ii) Meriden Sports Park February payments £3,971.66.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**



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IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr R Kipling proposed approval of Meriden Sports Park February payments of £3,971.66 seconded by Cllr P Lee.

The Clerk advised communication from the Payroll Administrator advising an increase is to be implemented for 2017-18 payroll service at a fee of £101.00 which will include the completion of annual pension return.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously approved the continuance of the out sourced payroll service provided by Mrs Diane Malley MAAT regulated by the Association of Accounting Technicians.

5.2 Budget 2017-18

The clerk circulated copies of the proposed budget to Members. The finance committee recommended approval of the 2017-18 budget. A 3% increase has been implemented and the budget reflects this. Cllr Lynch-Smith asked if there is going to be an increase in contractor costs above the 3% implemented. Chair advised that the tender process included costs being held for a 5 year term. Budget justification was shared with Members who accepted the finance committee recommendation.

IT WAS RESOLVED: The 2017-18 budget as recommended by finance committee was approved by Members. Proposed by Cllr Kipling and seconded by Cllr M Nunn.

5.3 Grant Thornton Audit/Annual Return 2015-16

Chair advised that she and the clerk had met with Andrew Kinsey and Trustees for the purpose of Counsel Opinion and recommendations made for a legal agreement between Meriden Parish Council and Meriden Sport & Recreation Trust. A copy of the draft agreement was received late today from SMBC Solicitor and will be circulated to Members.

Action: Chair and clerk to continue working with Andrew Kinsey and Trustees to finalise agreement. The clerk to circulate draft agreement to Members for comments immediately.

5.4 Freehold transfer of Sports Park and VAT

The clerk reported a request was made for Andrew Kinsey to provide a letter from SMBC confirming there is no VAT liability to Meriden Parish Council.

Action: Andrew Kinsey to write to Meriden Parish Council confirming no VAT liability on sale of Maxstoke Lane Playing Field.

5.5 New Financial Regulations/Audit/Transparency/Policies

Continues as a work in progress.

Action: Finance committee continues to conclude review process.

Signed Chair Dated

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5.6 Reserves for capital projects

The clerk advised recent financial briefings attended, recommends it is good practice to have a 3 year action plan for capital projects with restricted reserves identified as part of the transparency code, supported by a Reserves Policy. Members discussed and considered the recommendation and approved unanimously; suggested projects for consideration include Library and Meriden Pool.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved a 3-year action plan for use of reserves for identified capital projects.

Action: Finance Committee to put together 3-year plan for capital project work, a Reserves Policy and present to Members at next meeting.

6. **Progress Reports**

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr Lynch-Smith reported that all is going well particularly the big picture show.

6.2 War Memorials

Nothing to report.

6.2(i) Heritage Monuments & Memorial Funding

The clerk advised that WW1 Committee were to take this forward as a project which was to include St Laurence Church stained glass memorial windows and plaques, Berkswell Road and Cyclists Memorials. Cllr P Lee advised that he would set a meeting with St Laurence PCC.

Action: Cllr P Lee to arrange a meeting with St Laurence PCC.

6.3 Meriden Pool

Chair advised that we await the Red Kite Management Plan from SMBC.

Action: Chair and clerk to liaise with Chris Barr for update.

6.4 Allotments

The clerk advised issues of unpaid rents. Also recommendation of a £5 p.a. rent increase. An allotment inspection is overdue and Cllr P Lee suggested he and the clerk undertake an inspection together and review terms of tenancy regarding allotment holders who have not paid their rents.

Action: Cllr P Lee and the clerk to arrange allotment inspection and review tenancy agreement.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum

Nothing to report.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group

The next meeting is 6th March 2017.

Signed Chair **Dated**

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6.7 Solihull Area Committee
Nothing to report.

6.8 Tree Wardens & TPO List
Cllr Lynch-Smith advised the new Tree Warden is waiting for maps.
Action: Cllr Haque to print off A3 maps.

6.9 Community Surgeries
Nothing to report.

6.10 Community Speed Watch
The next speed watch is scheduled for 25th February 2017.

6.11 HS2
Nothing to report.

6.12 Meriden Sports Park (quarterly summary only)
The next update is scheduled for April 2017.

6.13 Meriden Sport & Recreation Trust Update
Please refer to item 5.3.

7. Clerk's Report

The clerk circulated report to Members prior to meeting. There were no questions.

8. District and Ward Councillor Reports

There were no Councillors in attendance.

9. Correspondence & Communication

All correspondence has been circulated to Members via email prior to the meeting, to which Members acknowledged receipt.

10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1 Library Update
Nothing to report.

10.2 Village Commemoration WW1

The clerk shared a telephone call she had received from Kenneth Bannerman regarding the site of a WW1 Airfield in Meriden. Cllrs Lee would liaise with Mr Bannerman regarding this matter as previously extensive work had been carried out with Meriden's Historian with no conclusive evidence to suggest a WW1 Airfield was location in Meriden.

Action: Cllrs Lee to contact Mr Bannerman and advise there is no evidence to his claim.

Signed Chair **Dated**

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10.2(i) WW1 Poppy Memorial Site

Cllr M Lee advised that this matter will be taken up by WW1 Committee and a meeting is to be arranged.

Action: Cllr M Lee to arrange WW1 Committee meeting take this forward.

10.3 Meriden Gate

In the absence of Cllr Allsopp, Chair read the following email communication to Cllr Allsopp from Mike Eastwood, Principal Landscape Architect:-

"I confirm as per Lawrence's mail, until such time as the roads, open space are adopted then the development is the responsibility of the developer and not the Council.

I will liaise with my colleagues in Planning and request that this is registered as an enforcement case.

I hope the above is of assistance and if I can be of any further help please do not hesitate to contact me."

Action: SMBC to liaise with developer Barratt David Wilson Homes to resolve the situation. Clerk to monitor.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)

Nothing to report.

10.5 Highways

Chair recorded thanks to Cllr Barber for his assistance with traffic management after the incident at the roundabout junction of Fillongley Road and Main Road where a vehicle's suspension collapsed rendering the vehicle immovable without tow truck assistance. The Police attended but were unable to stay and direct traffic. Damage to the Green was incurred as until Cllr Barber coned a diversion and directed traffic, vehicles were using the Green to access Main Road. Damage was reported to the Police and Highways.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

Nothing to report.

10.7 Solihull Neighbourhoods in Bloom 2017

Nothing to report.

10.8 Litter

The Clerk advised that SMBC is promoting the "Great British Spring Clean" and have offered a Community Clean Up for Meriden.

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Action: The Clerk to liaise with Sarah Jones, Environmental Projects Officer, to arrange dates. A request for volunteers via Meriden Mag has been placed.

10.9 Mobile Mast Update

The clerk advised further requests from residents for better mobile signals in Meriden. Councillors requested the clerk explore options of a mast to be sited in the sports park. BT are checking out sports park superfast broadband connection which is proving difficult.

Action: The Clerk to pursue BT and mobile mast service providers.

10.10 Local Council Award Scheme

Nothing to report.

10.11 Meriden Public Transport

Chair referred to public participation and issues surrounding school transport from Millisons Wood proposal to cease in July 2017 and subsequent consultation.

10.11(i) 89 Service Replacing Taxibus

Cllr Nunn advised that a meeting had been held with Catherine De Barnes Residents Association, Hampton in Arden PC, Hampton Society and Meriden PC regarding joining up to tackle the removal of taxibus and 89 service replacement.

Cllr Nunn further explained that a public meeting was well attended with 40 plus residents. The content included:-

- Look again at the opportunity for service 89 to serve Coventry Shop Mobility and also whether the service can enter the Solihull Hospital site in addition to the stops at the hospital located on Lode Lane.
- John Hayes to speak to Betty (at ATG) about the numbers of passengers previously using the Taxibus to access the local luncheon clubs and what days of the week this was required?
- We will use the data collected from the above to identify potential suitable transport providers and costs to serve these locations – this would be to start and facilitate the discussion rather than become the broker/administrator.
- Check the percentage of passengers who are school children using the service.
- Investigate whether the vehicle could be fitted to Audio Visual displays to announce next stop information.
- Provide councillors with the information on the finances behind service 89 compared to Taxibus.
- Provide councillors with a copy of the Equalities Impact Assessment for the transition to Service 89 from Taxibus.
- The group were going to provide us with the details of the lady who was unable to walk to the end of her drive to catch the 89 bus so that we can establish whether the feeder bus could collect her.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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- We discussed at the meeting 2 possible options for the provision of a demand responsive service to bolster the provision of service 89 after 26th March when the feeder bus will finish. Hopefully we were clear at the meeting that this would only be available for those people who cannot be reached by the service 89 vehicle and live with the service 89 corridor. These options are as follows.
 1. 4 day a week provision between 10am and 2pm (approx.) giving access to local amenities
 2. 2 day a week provision at the same hours of the current feeder bus to give access to service 89 for onward travel to Solihull and Coventry.

From the discussion the preferred option appeared to be for the 2 day a week service. John Hayes asked for confirmation that the above was the understanding of those present at the meeting and if so, we will move forward on this basis and provide further details in due course.

TfWM will look to come back to residents by Friday 24th February with further information on the above.

Action: Cllr Nunn to liaise with Meriden Action Group, liaise with TfWM and provide on-going support.

10.12 Street Association Project
Nothing to report.

11. Solihull Partnership Forum

The clerk advised the February’s meeting is rescheduled for 28th March, and the will feature Transport for West Midlands as guest speakers regarding the rural transport issues currently experienced. Cllr Nunn and the clerk will be attending.

Action: Cllr Nunn and the clerk to attend on behalf of Meriden.

12. Planning Matters

12.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Cllr M Lee reported that the last meeting was poorly attended with only three Members of the Group. Cllr Weaver led the session with focus being the draft business survey/questionnaire. The next meeting will be held on 16th March 2017 at the Pavilion.

12.1(i) Locality Funding Bid

Cllr M Lee advised that an expression of interest will be registered for the next round of funding available from 1st April 2017. A maximum of £3,444.00 is available for the Neighbourhood Planning Group to apply for. The funding will be used for the Business Survey and populating the information in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Action: Cllr M Lee to register expression of interest.

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12.2 Neighbourhoods Community Action Plan

Chair reported that discussion had taken place for the shared resource of an enforcement officer for Meriden, Hampton and Balsall PCs. SMBC have given their assurance of 50% funding for the post. Chair has emailed Chairs of Hampton and Balsall and this item is to be placed on their agendas for consideration and further exploration.

Action: Chair to follow up with Chairs of Hampton, Balsall PCs and SMBC.

Chair advised that she and the clerk had met with the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator to update the Action Plan and recorded the following:-

- Chair and clerk to meet planning officers to establish process for regular dialogue and early involvement of the Parish Council on all planning matters pertaining to Meriden Parish. Identify planning officer and communication frequency. Meeting confirmed for 8th March 2017.
- A meeting to be arranged with Street Cleansing to establish rota of litter and bins emptying to improved quality of service. Reference Parish Charter.
- Review of Visual Design Statement and Parish Plan to update progress.
- Volunteering engagement updated.
- Highways evidence continues a work in progress.

Action: Chair and clerk to liaise with Neighbourhood Co-ordinator.

12.2(i) Evidence Base Highways Restriction Review (TRO)

Chair reported that this remains a work in progress.

Action: Chair, Cllr Nunn and Clerk. Cllr Nunn to gather photographic evidence.

12.3 Solihull Local Plan Review & Meriden Sites

Chair advised that the Local Plan consultation response was completed by Cllr M Lee and herself, submitted 17th February meeting the revised deadline. Chair thanked Members for their input and Cllr Lee for her assistance in formalising comments from Members and the Public open days.

12.4 Planning Application Status Updates

There was no planning schedule available for February.

Cllr Kipling advised that Area G was the only planning application received and in process.

Cllr Weaver advised that there is a need to have a copy of each planning application and comments logged on the SMBC planning portal filed for audit purposes. Also copies of the planning committee minutes and terms of reference should be filed in the Parish Council office.

Action: Cllr Kipling to provide the clerk with copies of approved terms of reference, minutes and planning application comments.

Signed Chair Dated

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Planning Committee Members debated the need for meetings and whether a continuance of emailed comments to Planning Committee Chair would suffice as meetings to date have been difficult to schedule. It was agreed email was probably the more efficient as long as there was a paper trail of application and comments logged printed off and filed.

Action: Cllr Kipling to co-ordinate email comments and submit to SMBC via Planning Portal, printing an office copy for future reference and public record.

12.5 Community Asset/Right to Bid

A list of the priority sites has been provided to Avon Planning for process.

Action: Cllr M Lee to monitor via Neighbourhood Planning Group.

12.5(i) Register Grade II Listed buildings not included in Heritage Listings for Green Conservation

Clerk advised that the florists and extended jacket potato outlet are not registered. Cllr M Lee stated she would contact Hannah Robson, Avon Planning.

Action: Cllr M Lee to liaise with Avon Planning.

12.5(ii) Fields in Trust

The clerk advised that she has a meeting with Angela Lewis, Fields in Trust representative on 21st February at 09.30.

Action: Clerk to provide update at next meeting.

13. Parish Council Development Day

The next Development Day is arranged for Saturday 6th May 2017.

14. New Website

Cllr M Lee advised she would pick this up with Real Point.

Action: Cllr M Lee and Real Point to liaise and finish website.

15. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda

Nothing to report.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next Meeting of Meriden Parish Council is to be held on Monday 20th March 2017 at 7.30 pm venue Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21.30 hours.

Signed Chair Dated

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