



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 22nd February 2016
Venue: Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

Present:			
Cllr M Lee	Chair	Cllr M Nunn	
Cllr R Weaver	Vice Chair	Mrs B Bland	Clerk
Cllr R Kipling			
Cllr P Lee			

There was one member of the public present and Ward Cllrs Bell, Dicicco and Allsopp.

The Chair opened the meeting.

Chair welcomed Councillors and guest speakers SMBC Officers Harvey Speed, Drainage & Flood Risk Management and Jo-Ann Williams, Community Engagement Clean for the Queen.

1. Public Participation

Chair invited any concerns/issues. Nothing was raised.

Chair outlined the content of Councillor pre meeting with Harvey Speed regarding the flooding on Saturday 6th February. Harvey Speed summarised; 4 out of the 5 programmed works to existing drainage system identified by Neal Thomas in 2013 have been completed including realignment of culvert under Main Road, upgraded trash screens and alterations to water flow behind properties on Main Road running into the Pool. The cause of the flooding was already saturated fields creating surface water onto highway and property, triggered by the wettest day since 2012. Cameras have identified no blockages to existing drainage however one pipe takes both surface and foul water.

Future works will include commissioned consultant to undertake hydraulic modelling to determine whether the pipes are sufficient; to potentially install a buffer and to speak to farming community for them to release land to work as a restrictor whereby surface water backs up into fields i.e. flood plain.

Chair stated that the emergency number 0121 704 8004 residents called did not respond. A better flood strategy is required to support vulnerable residents and properties.

Cllr Lee reported that it took 40 mins to get sandbags organised and flood warning signage. Harvey Speed responded that future resilience could include grit bins filled with sand that SMBC would supply and fund, to fill up sandbags as an initial barrier. Improved flood alerts need to be in place and protocols need addressing. Cllr Lee suggested that sandbags and signage may be stored at the Sports Park.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

Clerk: Barbara Bland
55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ
T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com
www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

Cllr Diccio, Portfolio Holder, agreed that discussion continues with addressing better floor risk protocols and practice that remains a work in progress; and stated that lessons will be taken back, householders need to be in a position to help themselves, find a way to respond quickly to residents, look lifting plate currently in place so the flow is directly into the Pool with a 6 week clean out being programmed, new cameras need to be improved to provide flood alerts.

Cllr Weaver stated that drains and gullies around the Green and Darlaston Row are full of autumn debris. The frequency of cleansing is not known but the cars that park by their properties have to be moved for the annual clean usually with Cllr Weaver organising neighbouring properties to remove their vehicles.

The Clerk reported additional cleansing is required for Maxstoke Bridge leading into Coronation Island, first reported November 2015 – all gullies blocked with debris; a bank has collapsed on Eaves Green Lane where ditch cleansing/remedial works was carried out in 2015; silt is building up on Cornets End Lane, Meriden Hill from Showell Lane to Church Lane all gullies blocked with debris.

Action: Ed Bradford to organise a meeting in the coming weeks once the hydraulic modelling has been completed to provide an update and solution.

Chair thanked Harvey Speed for his attendance and overview provided and introduced Jo-Ann Williams.

Jo-Ann Williams summarised the “Clean for the Queen” campaign as part of SMBC’s annual clean. The campaign will centre on March in readiness for the Queen’s birthday in April. Invitations to join SMBC who will supply equipment and provide removal of rubbish to all schools in the Borough. Meriden School has signed up and will be carrying out their “clean for the Queen” event in and around the Village on Friday 4th March. Areas identified for Meriden School to tidy and litter pick are:-

- Mulberry Gardens public open space (off Leys Lane).
- Meriden Gate public open space (off Maxstoke Lane).
- Fillongley Road towards village right hand side grassed area and Fir Trees.
- Sports Park – groundsman will not to litter pick on Thursday or Friday including bins.
- Village Green.

The Parish Council will contact other community groups to support this campaign.

Action: Clerk to notify residents and community groups to support the campaign.

2. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllrs Barber and Lynch-Smith due to illness; Cllr Haque due to work.

Signed Chair **Dated**

Clerk: Barbara Bland
55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ
T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com
www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

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

3. **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 28th January 2016, circulated prior to meeting, were considered and agreed.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Kipling proposed acceptance of the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 28th January 2016, seconded by Cllr Weaver.

5. **Finance**

5.1 Approve February Payments

The clerk circulated payments for consideration and approval.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Kipling proposed approval of February payments of £3,098.04 for Parish Council and £2,381.99 for Sports Park, seconded by Cllr Weaver.

5.2 Budget 2016-17

The clerk circulated the final draft budget to Members for their consideration. Cllr Weaver, on behalf of finance committee, recommended Member's approval as finance committee had worked closely with the Clerk/RFO. Members acknowledged the work involved and approved the final draft, thanking the Clerk for her work.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members considered the recommendation made by the finance committee to approve the final budget. Cllr Kipling proposed approval and this was seconded by Chair and Cllr Weaver.

Action: The Clerk will transfer information onto system for new financial year once year end has been completed.

5.3 New Financial Regulations/Audit/Transparency/Policies

The clerk reported that the finance committee have this on their agenda and remains a work in progress with committee.

Action: Finance committee to undertake review of all finance policies and regulations in accordance with WALC recommendations for Audit/Transparency policy.

6. **Progress Reports**

Signed Chair Dated



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee
Nothing to report.

6.2 War Memorials
Nothing to report.

6.3 Meriden Pool
Nothing to report.

6.4 Allotments
The clerk advised consideration be given to a rent increase to take account of STWA charges being transferred to Parish Council from Taylor Wimpey. The recommendation is to increase rents to £55 per full allotment, £37.50 per half allotment and £22.50 per quarter allotment. These charges have been researched in line with SMBC allotment rents. Members considered the request v. bi-annual water billing and approved a rent increase to be implemented from 1st April 2016.

Action: Clerk to set up meeting with Allotment Association Chairman to agree rent increase, write to Allotment holders advising of increase and issue new tenancy agreements reviewing conditions of tenancy. All new documents to be issued before year end effective from 1st April 2016.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum
Nothing to report.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group
Cllr Weaver advised the next meeting is 7th March 2016. A new planning application for A & A Recycling is in process with the Parish Notification being sent to Berkswell PC. An email from David Wigfield has been received apologising for this faux pas, giving Meriden the opportunity to respond.

Action: Clerk to meet with resident representative and compile response.

6.7 Solihull Area Committee
Cllr Weaver reported the next meeting will be held on 21st April 2016 at the Pavilion.

6.8 Tree Wardens & TPO List
Nothing to report.

6.9 Community Surgeries
The Clerk hosted a Community Surgery with the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator on 08-02-16 as follows:-

1. Flooding to Main Road – what is happening, why & thought work had been completed to stop future flood risk?
2. Eaves Lane – flooded and bank collapsed.
3. Trash screens? Are they adequate?

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

Clerk: Barbara Bland
55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ
T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com
www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

4. Leys Lane signage for disabled access been erected in wrong place?
5. No danger signage when using footpath onto Leys Lane.
6. No handrail been put on steps up/down from Leys Lane/Allotment footpath.
7. Meriden Hill
 - Drains/gullies blocked with debris from last grass cut never collected!
 - Footpaths excellent job – however gutters need sweeping and piles of leaves collected!
8. Maxstoke Lane Bridge – all gullies blocked quantities of surface water first reported November 2015.
9. Archery Club footpath – NRS have cleared it but are making a recommendation to remove verge and tarmac from road to ditch for improved pedestrian access. Matter been referred to Highways colleagues and will be put onto Quarry Liaison agenda for 7th March.

Action: The Clerk to follow up with SMBC and resident representative.

6.10 Community Speed Watch

Chair reported that a speed watch took place on Main Road on 20th February with a total of 270 vehicles in one hour being recorded. 20 vehicles were recorded above speed limit. Police officer pleased with result and letters will be sent to offenders reminding of speed limit to be observed and target repeat offender.

Action: Cllr Barber to organise more speed watch events.

6.11 Meriden Sports Park (quarterly summary only)

The next update will be provided in April.

7. Clerk's Report

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

8. District and Ward Councillor Reports

Cllr Bell reported:-

- (i) He has spoken with Josie Haigh, SMBC Legal regarding the delays in freehold. A more detailed update is provided under item 10.3.

9. Correspondence & Communication

- Invitation from Mayor's Parlour to receive nominations for residents celebrating their 90th birthdays during 2016. Names will be put into a draw for afternoon team with the Mayor.
- Members acknowledged the thank you card from Mr & Mrs Harbage.
- Email from Kath Hemmings regarding the Parish becoming a Fair Trade Parish for use of fair trade refreshments.

10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1 Library Update

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

Clerk: Barbara Bland

55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ

T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com

www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

Nothing to report.

10.2 Village Commemoration WW1

The Chair advised two events are organised as follows:-

- (i) 6th April 2016 - An Evening with Doreen Agutter "Meriden in the Great War".
- (ii) 23rd/24th April 2016 – St George’s Day - Great War Society & Living History Society including a Medical Hospital. Free event.

Posters are displayed in Library and Primary Schools. Cllr Bell is sending to Balsall Common community groups. The Society will be raising the flag on St George’s Day, and the Scouts upon their return from camp will be taking the flag down. On the 24th April St Laurence Church will be holding a special services for the serving officers and men lost in 1916 as part of the on-going Centenary commemoration events. The congregation will be invited to walk down and visit the site and activities funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Action: WW1 committee.

10.3 Meriden Gate (transfer of freehold of land known as Meriden Sports Park)

The Clerk advised an email received from Wright Hassall including the following statement from SMBC regarding VAT position:-

“SMBC Transfer of Land to Meriden Parish Council – VAT Position

The Seller understands that the disposal of the Property is subject to VAT at the standard rate.

*The Seller is advised that **VAT Guidance note VATSC03400** deals with supplies made for no consideration. The Seller understands this guidance stipulates that VAT is due to HMRC in cases where there is a transfer for no monetary value.*

***Group 1, Schedule 9 of the Value Added Tax Act 1994** details not only those land and property transactions which are exempt, but also those which are specifically excluded from exemption and which fall to be treated as standard-rated. The Seller is advised that such supplies include the following:*

- **the freehold sale of a "new" or uncompleted non-domestic building**

A building is new if it was completed less than three years before the grant.

Completion is taken to be the date when the architect or engineer issues a certificate of practical completion, or the building or civil engineering work is fully occupied or used. Non-domestic property means that which is neither deigned as a dwelling nor intended for use solely for a relevant residential purpose or a relevant charitable purpose. Although the building upon the Property is now more than 3 years old, the Seller is advised that any attempt to treat the building as ‘old’ could be considered VAT avoidance on the basis that the Development Agreement between the Seller and the Buyer dated 3rd February 1999 and all subsequent arrangements, were entered into with the understanding that the building would be transferred. The Seller is advised that the passage of time to complete the transactions is incidental.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

Clerk: Barbara Bland

55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ

T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com

www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

• **the grant of facilities for playing sport.**

The Seller understands that with effect from 1 April 1994, the grant of facilities for playing sport is in most circumstances exempt when supplied by a non-profit making body (by virtue of **Group 10, Schedule 9 of the Value Added Tax Act 1994**). Local authorities are specifically excluded from the definition of a non-profit making body (defined as a public body) and therefore such supplies remain standard-rated.

In the circumstances, VAT will be payable by the Buyer to the Seller on the current market value of the Property. The Seller shall issue an invoice in respect of the VAT payable for payment by the Buyer before or upon completion.

However, the Seller makes no representation or warranty in respect of the VAT position and the Buyer must rely entirely upon its own advice and employ the appropriate expert in this regard.”

Members considered the implications of this statement and impact on MPC reserves. More advice is needed to sensibly make a decision payment and HMRC VAT refund. There was mixed discussion and opinion regarding SMBC’s actions and lack of consultation from the onset on any VAT liability associated with transfer of freehold.

Action: Cllr Bell to seek advice from Deborah Merry regarding VAT liability and challenge the legal process.

Action: Clerk to contact Mark Millar, Wright Hassall, for advice and documented evidence of any VAT liability set out in any agreements, or by way of a side letter, between SMBC and MPC.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)
Nothing to report.

10.5 Highways

The clerk advised notification of Berkswell Road closure for resurfacing for 4 days. Cllr Kipling stated no notification has been sent to residents or businesses on Berkswell Road. Additionally HGVs continue to destroy verges and overgrown trees and shrubs are now encroaching 3-4 metres of the bend in Berkswell Road where HGVs have to take the middle of the highway causing other vehicles to mount verges to pass. Ditches are also overgrown and in need of cleaning out.

Action: The Clerk to raise the issues with Bruce Brant and request update for next council meeting.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership
Nothing to report.

10.7 Solihull Neighbourhoods in Bloom & Heart of England in Bloom 2016

The Clerk advised first meeting has been held planning for 2016.

A meeting has been arranged with Judge Robin Russell for 8th March to enable Bloomers to improve on their success in 2015 and receive guidance for 2016. The

Signed Chair **Dated**

Clerk: Barbara Bland
55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ
T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com
www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

Clerk has also met with Woodland View Senior OT Practitioner for community engagement and use of polytunnels and other community projects including allotment.

Action: The Clerk to continue planning with Bloomers for 2016.

10.9 Litter

Covered under guest speaker "Clean for the Queen Campaign" – Jo-Ann Williams.

10.10 Mobile Mast Update

Nothing to report.

10.11 Local Council Award Scheme

Nothing to report and will be picked up as part of next Council Development Day.

Action: All Members.

10.12 82 Bus Route & Failure of Service

Cllr Nunn presented Members with a first draft of survey questions for the purpose of canvassing opinion as to the regularity of service and residents requirements and how existing service does not meet demand. Cllr Weaver agreed the questions are good and these could assist with Neighbourhood Planning transport evidence. Cllr Nunn will include any amendments and format to an excel document. Chair and Cllr Weaver suggested trialling this at one bus stop to gain residents interpretation of questions and answers, and thought the Village Green bus stop was probably had the highest use. Once the pilot has been analysed by Chair, Cllrs Lee and Weaver, the survey can be rolled out to all residents.

Action: Cllr Nunn to pilot survey and feed back to Chair, Cllrs Lee and Weaver.

11. Solihull Partnership Forum

Nothing to report.

12. Planning Matters

12.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Cllr Weaver advised that the steering group met on the 18th February and work had commenced on questionnaires for residents and businesses. The questionnaires are to be printed for end of March distribution. Questionnaires will also be posted onto website by way of survey monkey who will analyse data and provide evidence based analysis. The Clerk to speak to Real Point for their assistance with survey monkey set up and data analysis. Cllr Weaver thanked Chair, Cllr Lee and the Clerk for their assistance in meeting the end of March deadline.

Cllr Weaver further advised James Hodgkins has declined the offer to assist with land ownership work linked to neighbourhood planning development. We anticipate

Signed Chair **Dated**

Clerk: Barbara Bland

55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ

T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com

www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

assistance from Avon Planning to link up with another Graduate for this 3-month project.

Action: Chair, Cllrs Lee and Weaver to meet to finalise questions. Clerk to speak to Real Point re. survey monkey set up and data analysis.

12.2 To receive update and status on Planning Applications
The clerk circulated planning status for information and comment.

12.3 Update of Old Garage & Caravan Storage Site, Birmingham Road
Nothing to report.

12.4 Unlawful Caravan Storage Site
Nothing to report.

12.5 Land for Burial – Cllr Lynch-Smith
Nothing to report.

12.6 Copse & Bridleway – change of use from unused land to common land
The Clerk advised work had been concluded to the site with steps, handrail and waymarkers in place. A barrier has been made between No.67 and Parish Council land that extends beyond and garden and will be reported to Mr Wilkinson.

Action: The clerk to continue liaison with footpath officer, ecologist and planning enforcement. Information boards to be designed with Rangers.

12.7 Community Right to Bid & Asset Register
Cllr Lynch-Smith has made great progress and Cllr P Lee continues formatting the information and adding to the database that he is compiling.

Action: Cllrs Lynch-Smith and P Lee to share information and continue database collation.

12.8 Greenbelt Review
Cllr Weaver advised this had been completed as part of Local Plan Review consultation process.

12.9 Local Plan Review
Cllr Weaver reported this consultation process is completed and deadline submission met with acknowledged receipt from SMBC.

12.10 Enforcement Notice Register
Cllrs P Lee and Kipling continue to work through the register identifying Meriden enforcement notices but due to the format it is a lengthy process.

Action: Cllrs P Lee & Kipling to analyse data and report back to Members once exercise completed.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**



Meriden Parish Council

the centre of england

13. Summary of Parish Council Development Day

The Clerk advised her conversation with Mr James Carpenter, Head of Planning, who has agreed to attend the next Development Day in April. Consideration was given to a convenient date and 30th April was agreed.

Action: Date of next quarterly Council Development Day agreed for Saturday 30th April 2016.

14. Ward Action Plan 2016

The clerk had circulated the agreed Ward Action Plan which includes the list submitted by the Parish Council.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Kath Hemmings and Bruce Brant regarding content and programme of works.

15. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda

Under Village Matters new item Street Association Project delivered to residents of Alspath Road.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 21st March 2016.

The next Council Development Day will be held on Saturday 30th April 2016 between 10-12 noon. An invitation extended to Mr James Carpenter, Head of Planning, to attend regarding SMBC and new planning policy framework.

Action: Apologies received from Cllr P Lee for not attending the Development Day due to work commitments.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21.17.

Signed Chair Dated

Clerk: Barbara Bland
55 James Dawson Drive, Millisons Wood, Coventry, CV5 9QJ
T: 01676 522474 M: 07767 162423 E: barbarablandmpc@btconnect.com
www.meridenparishcouncil.org.uk