



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 25th January 2016
at the Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

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

There were 4 Members of the public present and Ward Cllr Bell.

The Chair opened the meeting with a welcome and thank you to all Members who attended the Parish Council Development Day on 9th January which proved productive and enjoyable. She further thanked Cllr Barber for his availability to be included in a live broadcast with BBC Radio Coventry and Warwickshire on the subject of rural communities and living in the historic Centre of England. A thank you was also extended to the Cameo Group who were meeting at the Pavilion and agreed to be interviewed and take part in the live broadcast.

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.

Planning application 133 FILLONGLEY ROAD PL/2016/00027/MINFHO was raised as a significant issue regarding off plan remodelling works and retrospective planning applications comprising intrusive extension including property elevation, roof height and windows. Cllr Bell has attended site and agrees inappropriateness of works. Cllrs P Lee and Kipling will carry out a site visit. Meanwhile a formal request to be made to planning on behalf of the Parish Council for a building inspector to attend site.

Action: The Clerk to request building inspector to attend site. The Clerk to write a letter of complaint to planning regarding (i) lack of enforcement and (ii) request meeting with senior planning officers.

Residents shared their disappointment and shock at the Planning Inspector's Pertemps appeal ruling for full plans approval for the glass building extension to Meriden Hall.

2. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr Allsopp. Cllr Barber advised he would be leaving the meeting at 21.00 hours due to family commitments.

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

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
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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 21st December 2015, circulated prior to meeting, were considered and agreed subject to change of next meeting date to read 25th January and not 23rd January.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Weaver proposed acceptance of the minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 21st December 2015, seconded by Cllr Kipling.

5. Finance

5.1 Approve January Payments

The clerk circulated payments for consideration and approval.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr P Lee proposed approval of January payments of £3,418.41 for Parish Council and £2,911.56 for Sports Park, seconded by Cllr Kipling.

5.2 Budget 2016-17

The clerk reported that the budget and business plan has been drafted for Meriden Sports Park; the budget is in process for Parish Council and the finance committee are to meet on 28th January to receive first draft.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members acknowledged the budget update and delegated to finance committee to finalise, prior to full council approval.

Action: The clerk to have first draft prepared for finance committee meeting on 28th January 2016.

5.3 New Financial Regulations/Audit/Transparency/Policies

The clerk had circulated update and WALC recommendations regarding the review of above policy and regulations. Members considered and agreed this item should be delegated to finance committee to undertake review and update policies and regulations accordingly.

Action: This item will be included on the agenda for finance committee meeting 28th January 2016.

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

5.4 Meriden 1st Scouts Group

The Chair advised a request for the annual donation for flag raising duties had been received.

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Members unanimously approved the annual donation of £400 be made to Meriden 1st Scouts Group.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr P Lee proposed donation of £400 to 1st Meriden Scouts Group seconded by Cllr Nunn.

Action: The clerk to prepare letter of award and cheque to 1st Meriden Scouts Group.

6. Progress Reports

Members requested that consideration of quarterly progress reporting be deferred and monthly reporting continue for the foreseeable future.

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr Lynch-Smith reported that the latest rural cinema show was well supported and plugged on local radio. There was a lovely atmosphere which is becoming a whole village event. The hall continues to be well booked and the next Big Picture Show is "The Royal Night Out".

6.2 War Memorials

Cllr P Lee reported that copy correspondence has been received from St Laurence Church PCC who have written SMBC in conjunction with MPC requesting they take over the maintenance of the War Memorial; he further advised that we will wait for SMBC's response before taking any action.

Cllr Weaver stated that this was raised at the last meeting with PCC committee without any follow up. The land was donated on 14th October 1948 to the community of Meriden by John Digby Banks.

Action: The clerk to request copy of covenant of transfer. The covenant gifts back to the village of Meriden so it is assumed to be a community asset. This document is a historical document that should be recorded with MPC.

Cllr P Lee stated that an offer has previously been made by local residents/trades who will carry out maintenance work at no cost.

6.3 Meriden Pool

Cllr Haque advised that she has been in contact with Woodland Trust regarding trees/hedging. There was no update from SMBC regarding rodent infestation and subsequent SMBC actions.

The clerk advised the missed deadline for SITA Trust application which she started in November. I have met with SMBC community engagement co-ordinator who has a group of volunteers to support a Pool tidy and replanting programme. A site meeting is to be organised with Parks, Rangers, and Ecology officers to get the project underway.

Action: The Clerk to liaise with community engagement team to finalise arrangements. Cllr Haque and the clerk to set aside some time for SITA Trust application for funding.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**



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6.4 Allotments

The clerk reported she attended site this morning and met Taylor Wimpey contractors as boundary hedge planting has commenced. Outstanding action from January meeting is letters to allotment holders regarding conditions of tenancy. She also advised that consideration needs to be made for an increase in rents due to taking over STWA costs at point of land transfer.

Action: Clerk to write to Allotment holders reminding of conditions of tenancy and to remove all rubbish and debris together with clearing of pathway; to consider and make recommendation for rent increase at February’s meeting.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum

Cllr Lynch-Smith reported that there appears to be three mountain bikes using footpaths, particularly through woodland.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group

Nothing to report. The next meeting is 7th March 2016.

6.7 Solihull Area Committee

Cllr Weaver reported she and the clerk attended meeting on 21st January 2016 with guests Cllr Bob Sleigh and CEO Nick Page; providing Combined Authority updates and taking questions of Local Plan Review consultation process, of which it was agreed that the public consultation was poor with such a tight deadline and no time to organise public meetings.

Cllr Weaver along with Chair of SAC and Clerk of Castle Bromwich PC gave a presentation to Sutton Coldfield as they consider becoming a Council.

Cllr Weaver further reported that she is now the elected Deputy Chair of WALC with newly elected Chair, Cllr Dan Essex, from Rugby; with a remit to review future training programmes for councillors.

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 Barber reported that the next speed watch date is arranged for 20th February 2016.

Action: Cllr Barber to organise.

6.11 Meriden Sports Park (quarterly summary only)

Cllr Weaver reported that she had completed a Big Lottery Fund Awards for All bid to run tennis/petanque sessions with a family focus for school holidays.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**



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The newly created Meriden Sport and Recreational Trust was launched and photographs were taken of Trustee, Parish Council, Sports Park Director representatives to accompany launch article in Meriden Mag. The freehold land transfer is in process with SMBC Legal and Wright Hassall. The transfer of legacy fund is also in process.

Cllr Weaver made Members aware that freehold transfer had not been concluded and therefore the Parish Council did not hold the deeds for the sports park. Cllr P Lee stated to wait for the freehold transfer to conclude prior to the transfer of funds from MPC to MSRT will result in continued loss of income. It was reaffirmed that Members have approved the transfer of funds and this should conclude to maximise interest return. The clerk advised that she had received the Licence document between SMBC and MPC for Meriden Sports Park dated 11th October 2011 from SMBC.

Action: The clerk will complete CCLA redemption form and liaise with CCLA to finalise transfer of funds from MPC to MSRT.

Action: The clerk to write a letter of complaint to SMBC CEO Nick Page and Senior Partner at Wright Hassall regarding the time it has taken to conclude the transfer of sports park freehold.

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 transfer advising that the contract will be sent to Wright Hassall tomorrow (26th January) and should be concluded in 3-4 weeks.
- (ii) Shepherds Lane flying tipping & North Warks – Cllr Diccico is dealing with this.

9. Correspondence & Communication

- All copies of correspondence electronically sent to Members for comment and information.
- Public Health Warwickshire – **Action:** Cllr Weaver re. Neighbourhood Plan.

10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1 Library Update

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". Cllr Barber will be recording the event.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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- (ii) 23rd/24th April 2016 – St George’s Day - Great War Society & Living History Society including a Medical Hospital. Scouts & Society to raise and take down St George’s flag. St Laurence Church will be hosting a special service on 24th April with congregation coming down to attend the Great War Society event. The cost for this is 3k and forms part of the WW1 lottery funding secured with free admission, free parking at the Queens Head. Cllr Haque stated that information needs to be sent to Heart of England, Meriden, Berkswell, Hampton-in-Arden and Eastern Green schools. Chair continued that this will be done including notification to journalists, local radio stations (particular recent contact made with BBC Coventry & Warwickshire).

Action: WW1 committee.

10.3 Meriden Gate
Nothing to report.

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

10.5 Highways
The clerk advised that no update has been received from SMBC. Cllr Kipling reiterated his concerns regarding HGVs using Berkswell Road. The matter is to be referred to Bruce Brant/Highways officers to further earlier requests regarding potholes, broken curbs/verges, surface breaking and a pedestrian footpath. Notification had been received for resurfacing works to Berkswell Road to be carried out in January, however no property/business notifications have been received. Cllr Allsopp was to follow up but no update has been received.

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

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership
The clerk reported that the appointment of a graduate to undertake this work has concluded with James Hodgkins agreeing to a 3 month contract arrangement, supervised by Avon Planning’s Neal Pearce. This will support community asset register compilation and neighbourhood planning. Cllr Allsopp is to provide update from SMBC regarding extended gardens onto SMBC Meriden Pool land.

Action: Cllr Allsopp to update at next meeting. The clerk and Cllr Weaver to liaise with Avon Planning.

10.7 Public Convenience Site Transfer
The clerk advised that she had received from Wright Hassall the deed of transfer including two copies of engrossment Side Letter for "the Transfer of the Property dated 12th September 2005 between (1) The Metropolitan Borough of Solihull and (2) Meriden Parish Council in accordance with clauses 13(b) and 13(f) of the Transfer.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**



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Once the documents have been duly signed and witnessed, this matter is concluded and will be removed from future agendas.

Action: Chair and Clerk to sign and witness two copies of engrossment Side Letter as detailed above to conclude the transfer process.

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

The clerk had circulated the sites of bulb planting; bulbs having been donated by Wyevale, Balsall Common. Additional vegetable bulbs donated for start off community allotment project. The first meeting is scheduled for February. The theme for 2016 floral displays is red/white/blue to commemorate Queen's 90th Birthday celebration.

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

10.9 Litter

Nothing to report.

10.10 Mobile Mast Update

Nothing to report.

10.11 Local Council Award Scheme

Members discussed the content and agreed this to be require a "whole" council contribution. It should be included in the next quarterly development day to be arranged. Some policy review and regulatory controls will be undertaken by finance committee however transparency codes will be picked up via new website design models.

Action: Finance committee and full Council.

10.12 82 Bus Route & Failure of Service

Cllr Nunn reported that the service is not good enough with inconsistent timetabling and residents left stranded at bus stops when the service fails to arrive, affecting senior residents, children and Meriden employers. If the 09.30 route fails, residents wait an hour for the 10.30 service which is so full there are no seats, or you cannot get on it! Representations have been made to Diamond Buses the service provider, without success, as no manager is available to talk to and complaints are fielded through a general customer enquiry line.

Cllr Haque suggested a poster be placed in bus shelters regarding survey for service users. Cllr Nunn to draft questionnaire and poster; investigate getting information to residents via Meriden Mag, Library, bus shelters, local shops, social media including PC website enquiry line.

Action: Cllr Nunn to draft letter of complaint to Diamond Buses; social media and information sharing for questionnaire and evidence collation.

11. Solihull Partnership Forum

Nothing to report.

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12. Planning Matters

12.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Cllr Weaver advised the next meeting is 28th January 2016. The Locality funding application has been secured with an award of 5566K to assist with the budget required for the Neighbourhood Plan process. Cllr Haque is leading an assembly with the Head Boy between 08.20 and 09.30 on 28th January 2016 for 147 Meriden children/young people who attend Heart of England School, to participate in the neighbourhood plan process and consultation, with a prize draw of two I-Tune vouchers. A graduate has been appointed to a 3 month contract to support the process and undertake land ownership and unregistered land project linking to community right to bid applications.

Action: The next meeting will be held at the Pavilion on 28th January 2016 at 19.15. Cllr Weaver and the clerk will liaise with Locality for grant conditions and receipt of funding.

12.2(i) To receive update and status on Planning Applications

The clerk circulated planning status for information and comment.

12.2(ii) To consider Planning Committee

Members discussed the merits of reinstating a planning committee at the Development Day and agreed the formation of a committee comprising Cllrs Kipling, Lynch-Smith, Nunn and Barber. Cllr Kipling will chair the committee. Terms of reference to be formalised. Cllr Weaver recommended Planning Aid England as a source of information with guidance on how to respond to planning applications; also attendance at planning seminars and briefing updates by WALC.

Action: Cllr Kipling to set meeting dates and terms of reference with the clerk.

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

The Chair summarised the following meeting with the clerk Mr Rajvir Singh owner and developer of old garage & caravan storage site as follows:-

Tyler Parker is the Agent acting for the land owner of land on the corner of Birmingham Road, who have contacted Mr Singh to ask if he wants them to act for him too. They have put forward a development proposal to SMBC for Birmingham Road sites as per Local Plan Review identified Meriden sites which includes Mr Singh's site, as one development package. Currently SMBC are advising Mr Singh that the bungalow site is to support 60% rented from housing association, and 40% shared ownership. None of the property will be privately owned. Meanwhile Tyler Parker's site will be the normal 40% social housing the remainder privately sold.

- How are SMBC planning officers working with land agent for site development?

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- Mr Singh wishes to work with MPC and develop the site in accordance with identified need, but not on any social or shared ownership scheme.
- Mr Singh sitting tight waiting for someone to either approach him (i) to buy the land or (ii) advise him to submit revised plans.

Action: Cllr Bell to investigate situation with SMBC planning officers and report back.

12.4 Unlawful Caravan Storage Site

The Clerk reported nothing further to report other than an update from her meeting with Mr Singh who advises he is owed money but the land occupier has no assets to meet court fees applied. SMBC enforcement remains in place but occupier is not vacating the site.

Action: Update to be requested from SMBC enforcement officers for next meeting.

12.5 Land for Burial – Cllr Lynch-Smith

Nothing to report.

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

The clerk had circulated photographs of the work carried out by contractors to provide a woodland walk and footpath using way markers and introducing stepped access and handrail. Further planting works to be carried out in the near future. Investigation for access of landlocked copse to be made to create woodland habitat.

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

12.7 Community Right to Bid

Cllr Lynch-Smith presented a draft register as discussed at Development Day for comments. Members acknowledged the work and thanked Cllr Lynch-Smith; Cllr Haque agreed to forward her list to Cllr Lynch-Smith and Cllr P Lee agreed to collate all information onto a database. Any amendments, comments and alterations to be emailed to Cllr Lynch-Smith.

Action: Cllrs Lynch-Smith, Haque and P Lee to share information and collate onto database.

12.9 Greenbelt Review

Cllr Weaver reported that this was on her to do list and linked to Local Plan Review.

12.10 Local Plan Review

Chair and Cllr Kipling, on behalf of Members, acknowledged and thanked Cllr Weaver for her work in collating Member comments from Development Day working groups. A comprehensive submission met the deadline of 22nd January 2016 for consultation responses.

12.11 Enforcement Notice Register

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Chair stated the following had been received by the clerk dated 25th January 2016 from Mr Wigfield, in response to previous requests and latterly a Freedom of Information request, as follows:-

“As it happens, we are just in the process of getting the enforcement register into a form which will enable it to be viewed on the internet, at the moment. The current paper register has been scanned and will be uploaded to the enforcement page of the Council’s web site, alongside a new spread sheet which will be kept up-to-date and will form the statutory register going forward. That should be done within the next few days, but in the meantime I’m quite happy to send you the scanned copy of the register – there have been no new entries since it was scanned last week so it remains currently up-to-date as of today – see attached register and accompanying index. As previously explained, it’s not divided into Parishes, and trying to go through all the entries over the last 10 years, to try to pick out which ones were in the Parish of Meriden, and then review each of those cases to assess their status, would take so much time I don’t think it could be regarded as a reasonable request under Fol, but hopefully this will provide you with what you need, and if you have any queries regarding any specific case or address, just let me know and we can soon get you a full reply . If this is not sufficient and you still want to pursue a formal request under Fol, let me know and I’ll pass your email on to the Council’s Corporate Information Governance Team to go through the formal process – but I’m not sure what sure what more any further response could contain.”

Cllr P Lee requested the scanned register be sent to Members; Cllrs Lee and Kipling agreed to go through the register identifying Meriden enforcement notices.

Action: The clerk to forward Mr Wigfield’s email and attachments to Members.

13. Summary of Parish Council Development Day

Cllr Weaver wished to record Meriden Parish Council thanks to Cllr Ian Courts and Mr Maurice Barlow for their attendance at the Council Development Day providing a briefing on the Local Plan Review consultation process. She further stated that the day was productive and suggested quarterly development days to focus on specific projects. Cllr Kipling agreed and asked what the next focus will be – suggestion Local Council Award Scheme.

Action: Date of next quarterly Council Development Day to be agreed.

Action: The clerk to write a letter of thanks to Cllr Courts and Mr Barlow.

14. Ward Action Plan 2016

The clerk had circulated ideas to Members for comments as per Neighbourhood Team request. The following list was submitted to Kath Hemmings for consideration and inclusion for Meriden:-

1. Pool Project – wildflower planting & information boards for duck feeding

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2. Bridleway & Copse Woodland Walk & information boards for history of site and information board for wildlife habitat
3. Pool Project re-instatement of hedgerow/trees felled by 150 Main Road
4. More bulb planting Fillongley & Millisons Wood
5. Replacement Planters
6. Replacement Gateway Signage
7. Wildflower seeding to banking surrounding Coronation Island
8. Bench seating to POS Meriden Gate
9. Bench seating to POS Mulberry Gardens
10. Improve litter by increasing bins or replacing existing to larger (3 litter bins needed for Mulberry Gardens, Meriden Gate and Maxstoke Lane)
11. Improve dog fouling by providing more bins

Action: Clerk to liaise with Kath Hemmings and email Members with outcome once in receipt of finalised Ward Action Plan.

15. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda

Nothing to report. Any items to be sent to the clerk for inclusion in February’s agenda.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 22nd February 2016.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21.35.

Signed Chair Dated

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