



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on
27th July 2015 at the Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

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

There were 3 members of the public present.

1. Public Participation

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed Kirsten Kane, Head of Sustainability, Birmingham Airport who provided an update of the recent new flight path trials for departure routes accommodating long haul carriers such as Emirates twice daily service. Monitoring and evaluation continues regarding noise impact on redesigned routes. A copy of the presentation is attached for ease of reference.

Q & A session followed.

The Chair thanked Kirsten for attending and extended an invitation to attend October's meeting.

Action: Kirsten to be invited back to October's meeting to provide further update and outcome of trials and proposal to CAA.

The invited any further issues from the public to be raised at this point prior to moving onto Council business.

A resident wished to raise the following issues:-

- Roundabout at top of hill (Showell Lane) drain not cleaned with no obvious maintenance.
- Overtaking by vehicles using other side of road and bollards.
- Flying tipping Maxstoke Lane, Baulk Lane (Balsall/Berkswell PC to address).
- Stone wall Birmingham Road, left going uphill, covered with overgrown shrubs, weeds and reducing width of footpath.

Action: Clerk to raise with Neighbourhood, Streetcare and Highways Teams.

2. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllrs Weaver, Nunn, Bell and Allsopp.

IT WAS RESOLVED Apologies were formally recorded and accepted.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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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 22nd June 2015 were considered and agreed.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Kipling proposed acceptance of the minutes of Parish Council meeting 22nd June 2015. Cllr P Lee seconded this proposal.

Matters/actions arising: All as per agenda and standing items.

5. Finance

5.1 Approve July Payments

Members received payments for Parish Council and Sports Park for approval.
Cllr Lee proposed approval, seconded by Cllr Haque.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved July payments of £4,163.78 for Parish Council and £9,391.95 for Sports Park.

5.2 "August Holiday" with Delegated Powers to Finance Committee

Members considered the request for an "August holiday" and agreed in principle with delegated powers to finance committee for August payments approval. Additionally Members considered Chair's request for Clerk's remuneration to reflect recent qualification attained with approval received for delegated powers to finance committee for payment approval.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved delegated powers to finance committee for August payments approval.

6. Progress Reports

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr Lynch-Smith reported that all is going well with the next Big Picture Show booked for September.

6.2 War Memorials

Cllr P Lee reported that arrangements are in process for road closure for Remembrance Sunday Service.

Action: Cllr P Lee

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6.3 Meriden Pool

Cllr Lynch-Smith stated that with the lack of action by SMBC regarding the decimation of the boundary between bungalow and Pool, a precedent has been set for members of the public or the Parish Council to clear away or remove trees at will! The Clerk advised that the programme of works for pollarding and removal of new tree growth is in process with SMBC contractors. Cllr Haque asked for an update re sponsorship of the Pool project; the Clerk advised a tentative discussion has taken place with the Manor Hotel and quarry operators are keen to get involved too either with financial support or material/labour support. The project will remain a work in progress for 2016. **Action:** The Clerk will monitor and liaise with interested parties and SMBC officers.

6.4 Allotments

The Chair advised latest update of site meeting held with Taylor Wimpey on 26th June confirmed by email below from Rachel Bristow as follows:-

*“Hello All,
Following the meeting we had Friday on the closeout meeting for Meriden with both the Parish Council and Management Company, there are few things that need to be addressed.*

As per my previous correspondence with Barbara (see attached), we have no obligation to do any more than what is agreed in the S106. In the fifth schedule – allotments section, the following statements were included;

1.1.1 Two dedicated parking spaces for use by holders of an allotment which will be provided on a first come first served basis

We have included the two spaces and the legal handover needs to be agreed between the Management Company and Parish Council for access rights for both this and the storage facility. As it stands, the management company are taking control of this land as it is outside of the allotment area. We have agreed to provide a sign to highlight that the two spaces are dedicated to allotment holders only and paint NO PARKING within the turning head to prevent unauthorised parking.

1.1.2 The provision of water butts with each water butt to serve two allotment plots

The arrangement for delivery of the water butts needs to be addressed to Barbara. Phil can you advise? The Parish Council were under the impression that at some point, we were providing a water connection. We have enhanced the fact that this is out of our control and was never formally agreed.

1.1.3 The provision of a secure storage facility for the use of holders of the allotments the size and location of which to be agreed as part of the scheme

As nothing was formally agreed, we provided an area allocation on the planning layout back in December 2013 for a storage base approx. 3x4m during the

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process of clearing the remaining planning conditions. These amendments were made during the landscaping comments and Barbara was sent the most up to date layout during that time for review along with our proposed details of material (see attached). Barbara has queried whether the Parish Council can pay the difference to provide a better specification than what we have accounted for. Currently, we have proposed a wooden shed and the dimensions have not been formalised. Adam can you liaise with Barbara please and inform her of the timescales?

Additionally, we have agreed to provide a sign to the entrance of the site to inform disabled users that the South pedestrian link is not available to wheelchair users, should they wish to use that access in and out of the site.

Rob will also contact Solihull Council Highways to query the need for additional safety to the South pedestrian link onto Leys Lane as there has been some concerns from the residents/parish. This will be in the control of the Council so Rob will forward any correspondence onto Barbara.

Can the relevant persons ensure that we finalise these arrangements please?

Regards, Rachel Jones, Assistant Design & Planning Executive

Prior to finalising any agreement with respective solicitors, there are matters remaining unresolved. The Clerk will continue to liaise with Taylor Wimpey.

Action: The Clerk will continue to liaise with Taylor Wimpey and update at next meeting.

Additionally the Chair advised that the Parish Council will be providing two allotments to Meriden Bloomers for a community project enabling the growing of plants, plant/produce exchange for volunteers and Meriden School Eco Group.

Action: Meriden Bloomers.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum

Cllr Lynch-Smith reported there was a problem with the entrance to one but SMBC has been advised. There is now an Apps download of footpaths.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group

The Clerk advised the next meeting is 14th September. There have been issues of rogue HGVs through the village called in to operators to deal with. There has been an incident of brick debris at Meriden roundabout fallen from loaded lorry – all cleared by vigilant residents.

6.7 Solihull Area Committee

The Chair provided an overview of the meeting held on 9th July with Leader of SMBC Bob Sleight and CEO Nick Page presenting the Combined Authority Statement of Interest, launched on 6th July 2015, which is an amalgamation of Birmingham,

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Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall and Wolverhampton councils to provide a combined authority for the West Midlands. The launch statement was circulated to Members (and this will be attached to minutes for reference), and an invitation to attend a briefing on 3rd August 2015 had been accepted by Cllrs Kipling and Lynch-Smith. Consultation briefings will continue until a final decision being made in October.

John Crossling from WALC also provided an overview of the role played by the association is supporting Parish/Town councils and their Clerks; not least with advisory services such as legal/employment law/finance providing value for money. A programme of training continues which enables clerks and councillors to fulfil quality award schemes for their councils.

6.8 Tree Wardens & TPO List

Nothing to report.

6.9 Community Surgeries

The Clerk held a community surgery on 6th July 2015 without Neighbourhood Team presence due to extended leave of absence. The following issues were raised:-

1. Digby Place. Following up last month's concerns regarding signage to Digby Place that remains unresolved. A meeting with Annie Masters to be arranged from SMBC and site visit.
2. Fly tipping between Shepherds Lane and Maxstoke Lane reported to North Warwickshire and SMBC.
3. Resident requested signage on green regarding restricted parking be lowered as too high to read.
4. Residents individually and collectively not happy with "eyesore" of skip and materials store outside News Express.
5. Resident complaints regarding Birmingham Road, overgrown trees and shrubs overhanging footpath and causing obstruction.
6. Resident reported concerns re. overgrown pathways, trees, laurels extending over footpaths, overhanging branches, overgrown nettles making areas of footpaths impassable. Millisons Wood footpath from top of Showell Lane to Albert Road particularly unpleasant. With a disabled wife and motorised wheelchair & scooter, it is now becoming increasingly difficult to walk with wheelchair without using cycle lane on highway.
This also includes those pedestrians using the 900 bus stop alighting at top of Meriden Hill and walking down to Albert Road.

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- 7. Litter on walkway from Fillongley Road to Highfield and shops to Arden Close.
- 8. Residents from Letitia Avenue have raised their concerns regarding recent incidents and request Parish Council support.

Action The Clerk is awaiting email response from relevant SMBC officers and follow up actions.

6.9 Community Speed Watch

Cllr Barber advised that the speed watch team is ready to go and the first speed watch will take place on 29th July 2015 between 3 and 5pm. Cllrs Barber, M Lee, Lynch-Smith and P Lee will be supported by PC Smith.

Action: Cllr Barber to update outcome at next meeting.

6.10 Meriden Sports Park (quarterly summary only)

Cllr Kipling requested an update regarding Charities Commission feedback for charity registration of Charitable Trust. Chair advised there was nothing to report. The Clerk reiterated that no information had been received from Charities Commission and we were still inside the 30 day window for their reply. Cllr Kipling wished to record his inclusion in any decision making process with input to conditions attached to revised Articles and Memorandum of Association.

7. Clerk's Report

The Clerk had circulated actions prior to the meeting and drew Members attention to the conversation with the Manor Hotel for an application for a telephone mast sited in their rear car park to be made; the Clerk requested an in principle agreement for further investigations to be made by the Manor Hotel which was considered to be an improvement to the signalling issues in Meriden. All Members unanimously agreed that this was a welcome opportunity to improve the mobile signal for the local residents and business community.

Action: The Clerk will advise the Manor Hotel management of Parish Council support.

8. District and Ward Councillor Reports

Nothing to report.

9. Correspondence & Communication

All correspondence had been circulated to Members electronically for their information. Copies of the following were circulated to Members for their information:-

- 1. Highways – Old Road Drainage Works
- 2. NALC Local Council Award Scheme
- 3. St Laurence Church acknowledge of donation received.

10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1 Library Update

Nothing to report.

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10.2 Village Commemoration WW1

The Chair advised that the next event will be 2nd August with a cricket match Meriden Spartans v. Royal Corps of Signals with all funds raised going to ABF Charity. Additionally Doreen Agutter, local historian, will be giving a talk on “Meriden in the Great War”. Tickets available at £5/head including refreshments. The next meeting is Saturday 19th September.

10.3 Meriden Gate

- Freehold Transfer

The Clerk has written to David Waterson and confirmed solicitor’s details. James Terry, Wright Hassall will liaise with Josephine Haigh of SMBC Legal Team to bring this matter to conclusion however it is the start of a lengthy legal process.

A further letter has been sent regarding the copse/footpath (bridleway) behind he sports park which had formed part of the original freehold transfer if land to Meriden Parish Council together with the wildflower meadow. (Reference public meeting 27/6/11)

Action The Clerk will liaise with SMBC and Wright Hassall. A further email to be sent to Mike Swallow regarding the copse/footpath and wildflower meadow.

- Overage

The Clerk has written to David Waterson and spoken with Income and Awards regarding monies owed. The matter has been settled with overage paid by David Wilson Homes to SMBC; the payment to Meriden Parish Council will now be processed with all haste.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey & Associated

The Clerk advised that the layby works had now been rectified and concluded.

10.5 Highways Update

The Clerk circulated a letter received from Harvey Speed regarding highway drainage and carriageway resurfacing works to Old Road, Meriden. The work is outstanding from the public meetings hosted by Neal Thomas prior to his departure. The works are to address issues with the piped drainage system which were identified following a recent CCTV survey of the network. Highways maintenance team have also brought forward proposals to resurface Old Road and this will follow on immediately after drainage works have been concluded. It is anticipated Old Road will be closed for 2 weeks.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

Nothing to report.

10.7 Public Convenience Site Transfer

The Clerk advised that the following had been received via email this evening (23/7) from James Terry, Paralegal, Wright Hassall, confirming:-

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“With regards to the site of the former public conveniences, I am pleased to note that an agreement has been reached with regards to the memorial now situated at the site. Therefore, we will proceed to liaise with Solihull Council in relation to the side letter in order to formalise this agreement and therefore complete this matter.”

The matter remains with Legal Teams and will be closely monitored by the Clerk.

Action: The Clerk will liaise with Wright Hassall.

10.8 Heart of England & Solihull Neighbourhoods in Bloom 2015

The Clerk advised that judging had now concluded for both competitions. There had been positive comments received however no results will be known until presentation evenings on 10th and 15th September respectively. Meriden Bloomers are to be congratulated on their efforts, support and volunteering to provide the colourful floral displays and new features enjoyed by residents and visitors.,

Action: The Clerk will continue working with Meriden Bloomers and the first Bloomers meeting is arranged for 10th September to commencing planning for 2016.

10.9 Litter

With the Bloom preparations litter hotspots have been highlighted around the Parish. A further community litter pick is required and the Clerk will speak with SMBC community team to arrange this.

Action: The Clerk to contact Jo Williams from the SMBC Community Engagement Team to arrange.

10.10 Co-Op Update

Nothing to report.

10.11 Parking – The Green

A suggestion had been made for an increase to the waiting time restriction for parking on the service road. Generally the current restriction was considered to be adequate and there would be no point in increasing the restriction. Blue Badge holders can override the restriction if they need to. The current situation is not helped by 3 car spaces being taken up by a skip and materials store. Additional parking is available in the sports park. Cllr Haque stated that the village population is growing and alternative parking is needed. Cllr Weaver had previously suggested this issue be raised as a bigger piece of work linked to the Neighbourhood Plan.

Action: This item will be referred to the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group for solution. The Clerk will continue lobbying support from enforcement regarding skip and materials storage.

10.12 Pot Holes Berkswell Road

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Cllr Kipling raised his concerns regarding the potholes on the section of Berkswell Road between Pool and Heart of England Club. There has been a recent incident of a trailer coming off back of car when car hit pothole!

Action: The Clerk to raise with Bruce Brant, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator.

10.13 Use of HGV/Articulated Vehicles Berkswell Road

Cllr Kipling raised his concerns regarding 42' articulated vehicles using Berkswell Road to access Pettifors and Home Farm. He further stated that the lane is too narrow for this size vehicle and they are usually in the middle of the road negotiating corners bends in lane etc., causing safety issues for oncoming traffic. Members discussed and considered the issues and wished to raise this with Berkswell PC along with Highways officers for the purpose of width/weight restrictions with the exception of public transport.

Action: The Clerk to contact Berkswell PC and Highways officers outlining concerns.

11. Solihull Partnership Forum

Nothing to report. The next meeting is 8th September 2015.

12. Planning Matters

12.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Chair advised the cancellation of July and August meetings due to lack of interest in the Neighbourhood Planning process and limited number of volunteers on steering group. More volunteers are needed. There was good interest at recent summer fayre at Meriden School with a good number of questionnaires being completed and interest in becoming part of process. The next meeting will be 17th September.

12.2 To receive update and status on Planning Applications

All planning applications have been circulated to Members for their comments and recorded on SMBC planning portal and hard copy letter to named planning officer. The latest application is for News Express for the third flat in the attic space. Generally Members discussed their dissatisfaction with SMBC planning controls and lack of enforcement regarding the use of the service road as a skip and materials store. Cllr P Lee advised he and the Clerk had met with the planning officer and contractor on site to understand the latest planning application and was surprised to see the car parking space behind News Express with denied access by the landowner. Issues remain outstanding addressing refuse/wheelie bin storage, emergency fire, no accessible rear entrance/exit and dormers to front of property no in keeping with conservation area. Reports requested from Fire Officer and Refuse Management Team. The Clerk had received no support from planners or enforcement to ease the situation and the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator remains on extended leave of absence. Members request the Clerk copy in Nick Page, CEO, SMBC Council to all future correspondence and log a formal complaint.

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Action: Clerk to email Neighbourhood, planning officers, enforcement/licencing/highways.

12.3 Proposed Development of Old Garage and Caravan Storage Site
Nothing to report.

12.4 Unlawful Caravan Storage Site
Nothing to report.

12.5 Land for Burial
Nothing to report.

13. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda

In the absence of Cllr Weaver, Chair advised of recommendation for Clerk to receive remuneration adjustment to reflect recent qualification of attaining CiLCA (qualified Clerk status). Members were happy for this to fall under delegated powers of personnel and finance committees during August recess.

Action: Personnel and Finance committees to meet during August.

Cllr Lynch-Smith advised her suggestion of making certain areas of Meriden “No Cold Calling” preventing potential burglaries and protecting Meriden’s vulnerable residents. Lots of Councils have implemented this initiative and it was considered further exploration was required. Cllr Lynch-Smith will update Members at next meeting.

Action: Cllr Lynch-Smith to report at next meeting.

Any other items to be emailed to Clerk.

14. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting will be Monday 21st September 2015 at 19.30 at The Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park.

Apologies offered by Cllr Haque due to work commitments and accepted by Chair.

The meeting closed at 21.50 hours.

Signed Chair **Dated**

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