



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21st March 2016
Venue: Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

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

There were 10 members of the public present.

The Chair opened the meeting.

Chair welcomed Councillors and guest, Mr Robert Williams (RW), Alder Mill Agent for A & A Recycling at Meriden Quarry.

1. Public Participation

Chair invited RW to provide an update on latest A & A Recycling planning applications for additional site facilities PL/2016/00424/PPFL and discharge of condition submission for PL/2016/00394/DIS.

Briefly RW advised the current accommodation does not fulfil site needs and the planning application is to expand the portakabin accommodation to provide site rest room with canteen, toilet facilities and workshop, together with an office and training room. Plans and Design and Access Statement may be accessed via the Clerk.

The discharge of condition is to review the design scheme for the reed bed and pond to provide a fire break and water access as part of the emergency fire review undertaken since the fire of 2013. Using the pool and reed bed there will be improved collection of debris and sediment, extension of pool with tree planting and screening that will provide better visual aesthetics.

RK asked if all information is on line and may be publically accessed. RW confirmed this to be the case.

ML requested an explanation of “discharge of submission”? RW advised that is to do with the original planning condition dealing with the slinkett pond and flood risk assessment in consultation with the fire service. Provision is to be made for 70 fire engine fills of water in event of emergency with a better control of surface water run off together with grills installed that will prevent debris getting into water streams and will filter clean water.

Residents present raised their concerns and anger that they did not know about the proposed biomass plant recently leafleted to residents by the UKIP representative. ML reassured residents that the Parish Council had been diligent in their actions and

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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response to this latest application for Meriden Quarry. The Parish Council had sent in their reply outlining conditions and raising issues surrounding dust, noise, leachate, air and water monitoring controls.

Cllr Weaver reiterated and advised residents that an invitation had been extended to the Agent **Mr Tom Cox – GP Planning Limited Agent for Meriden Quarry - Proposed IVC Facility, Biomass Energy and Waste Water Treatment Plant.**

PL/2015/52078/PPFL (*Construction of an In-Vessel Composting (IVC) Facility, Biomass Energy Facility and Waste Water Treatment Plant including 3No weighbridges, weighbridge office, 2No car parks, coach park, outside learning space and office/education facility*), to attend full Council meeting on 19th October 2015 which he did providing a presentation and plans of the proposed site. Councillors requested a site visit which was subsequently arranged for 5th November in the presence of Cllr Bell, Chair of Planning Committee with Parish Councillors and resident representative attendance. Subsequently there has been open dialogue with Beechwood (the applicant), planning colleagues at SMBC and Cllr Bell. Updates have been posted on facebook and Parish Council website. The October public notification of full Council meeting was posted in the Parish noticeboards and website. The application could be viewed on line Solihull MBC's website and Parish and Neighbour notifications were sent by Solihull planning officers to Meriden and Berkswell Parish Councils and neighbouring properties. Meriden Parish Council's response to the planning application was published on website for community reference. She further advised that she, the Clerk and resident representative had met with concerned residents who had raised their concerns in January, and that Mr Tony Whey, MD of Beechwood has attended the last two Quarry Liaison Group meetings. Furthermore no resident complaints had been made to the Clerk during monthly Community Surgeries.

Residents responded that there needed to be improved communication between elected Members and their electorate. A formal request for Beechwood to organise open drop in's for the community to access updates and see the proposal first hand was made; additional requests for Caroline Spelman MP, Senior Planning Officer and Environment Agency attendance were made.

Action: Clerk to contact Beechwood to organise drop in events.

Residents raised concerns regarding Area G and Birmingham Road with persistent debris, mud and breaking up of highway surface. Cllr Weaver advised a wheel wash and road sweeper is in use and the breaking up of road surface has been actioned via the Quarry Liaison Group with an inspection being carried out by the site manager of NRS Wastecare (operator), Highways Officer and the Clerk. This will be ongoing and continues to be monitored.

Action: Clerk to contact Neighbourhood Co-ordinator and request Highways update.

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The Chair thanked Mr Williams and residents for their input. There was a short recess for attendees to leave prior to the Council business commencing.

An invitation was extended to residents who may wish to stay but not participate in the next part of the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies received from Cllr Allsopp (SMBC meeting) and Cllr Haque due to work.

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 22nd February 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 22nd February 2016, seconded by Cllr Weaver.

5. Finance

5.1 Approve March Payments

The clerk circulated payments for consideration and approval; and asked Members to note that expenditure was high due to year end and agreed Neighbourhood Planning payments and agreed programme of works for play area and specialist grounds work.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Weaver proposed approval of March payments of £7,443.35 for Parish Council and £21,344.88 for Sports Park, seconded by Cllr P Lee.

5.2 Year End 2015-16

The clerk advised receipt of Grant Thornton statutory deadline for approval of Annual Return is 30th June 2016. Therefore requested submission date for completed accounts is 24th June 2016.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the submission dates detailed above.

Action: The Clerk/RFO will complete year end to meet submission dates.

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.

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

6. Progress Reports

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr Lynch-Smith reported bookings are going well. The mid-week picture show was not as popular or well attended as weekends.

6.2 War Memorials

Cllr P Lee reported there is a memorial to Captain Banks in Forest Hall from the Woodmen of Arden.

6.3 Meriden Pool

The clerk advised of Meriden Pool Improvements for 2016. The Parish Council have liaised with their colleagues from Solihull MBC to repair the collapsed wall of the Pool. SMBC will be undertaking some repair works to the bank of Meriden Pool (affectionately referred to as Meriden Duck Pond) towards the end of the month. SMBC are proposing to remove the collapsed wall section and replace it with a new geotextile bag system. The bags will provide structural support for the bank, whilst allowing the growth of wild grass through gaps in their structure. We hope they will provide a more natural appearance and increasing biodiversity.

In order to undertake the work, SMBC are proposing to dam a section along the Berkswell Road side. The water will then be pumped out of the working area into the main pond. There are no plans to lower the level of the main pond as such. The works are planned for 23rd March to 25th March or thereabouts. A full description of materials to used and method can be found on Parish Council website.

6.4 Allotments

Nothing to report.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum

Cllr Lynch-Smith advised she has walked M238 given complaints of hawthorn/ivy ingress to domestic gardens and fencing. There is evidence of an old fenced boundary of the Triumph Factory site that may be of historical importance that some houses have made gaps in to access footpath from gardens that may be an old field boundary with hedging. A request will be made to local historian to identify how old the hedged/fenced boundary may be and see if this may be adopted as a community asset. There will be a budget implication to remove hawthorn/ivy trees and part of the footpath has been encroached upon by householders. Photographs have been taken.

Action: Cllr Lynch-Smith to work with historian and date hedge for inclusion in community asset register.

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6.6 Quarries Liaison Group

Cllr Weaver reported the following actions from 7th March meeting:-

1. Puddling/pooling of surface water immediately at Cornets End Lane quarry entrance – attention needed to find solution to problem as the entrance becomes flooded. Request made by Cemex, Tarmac and Hope operators.

Response from Ed Bradford SMBC “Harvey popped out to take a look at Cornets End Lane on Thursday 10th March and logged a request for the gullies to be cleansed by Tanker Services- this work was undertaken on Sunday 13th. Hopefully this work has now made a difference as Harvey noticed that one of the kerb inlet gullies was blocked. Please note that we cleanse the gullies every 6 months as opposed to the usual annual frequency, given their location.”

2. Requests have repeatedly been made for the bridge on Cornets End Lane to be repaired and drainage improved as it is a corner and blind bend that is flooding. A further request for the removal of fencing and cones from previous highway works. Tarmac raised the issue and all operators agreed this area to be at risk and dangerous to hauliers especially when vehicles are passing at this spot.

Response from Ed Bradford SMBC “This may improve now that the gullies have been cleansed. Harvey didn’t notice any major puddles when he visited. As stated, we have cleansed the gullies but we will try and pop out in the next few weeks with the CCTV equipment to check the connections are ok and nothing untoward is going on.”

3. The highway known as Birmingham Road travelling towards Coronation Island, travelling from Coronation Island towards NRS AREA G Quarry entrance, and around Coronation Island, is breaking up very badly with potholes and severe rutting in places. The volume of HGVs now using this highway are damaging the road surface. This has been brought to PC attention by residents and also NRS. Dav, Wayne Wardell, NRS Site Manager and myself walked this stretch yesterday after the meeting and confirm urgent attention is needed. (Dav was going to raise this with Bruce directly).

Response from Bruce Brant SMBC “Birmingham Road/Coronation Island highway radius has been monitored on a monthly basis and it has been noted that it has deteriorated. This area has been programmed in for resurfacing within the 2016/17 financial year programme. I have requested that this be done as early as possible. In the meantime only essential repair works will take place.”

4. NRS have done an excellent job of clearing the footpath opposite Area G entrance immediately outside Archery Club. Mark Ketcher (MD NRS) has previously discussed a solution with Bruce and myself; yesterday Wayne talked through the potential removal of the grass verge and replace with tarmac. NRS and Tarmac will work together to provide equipment/material however a contribution from the SMBC is required to assist with this work.

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Can highways please contact NRS, Wayne Wardell and discuss how this can be achieved as it will allow NRS to use their sweeper to cleanse pathways whilst sweeping highway. Many complaints have been received this winter from pedestrians trying to access the 900 bus stop or just walking using the footpath which has been non-existent before NRS's helpful support in cleansing and removing the debris.

Members considered this request and there was strong feeling that any green verge should not be eroded further; therefore a vote was taken with the following outcome:- 4 votes against; 2 votes for and 1 abstention.

Action: Clerk to advise Operators and SMBC of Parish Council wish not to proceed.

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

This item was covered under item 6.5.

6.9 Community Surgeries

Nothing to report as there was no attendance at 7th March surgery.

6.10 Community Speed Watch

Cllr Barber reported no further speed watch days had taken place due to ill health. Twenty speeders should have received letters from West Midlands Police. During April further speed watch dates will be organised. There are 7/8 volunteers across Borough but more volunteers are required.

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

No Ward Councillors were in attendance.

9. Correspondence & Communication

- Invitation from Mayor to St George's Day Ball.
- Invitation to participate in Remembrance Day Parade.

Action: Clerk to RSVP on behalf of Cllr Lynch-Smith to attend.

- Letter from EOS regarding Annual Garden Party Event in the grounds of Meriden Hall.

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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".
- (ii) 23rd/24th April 2016 – St George’s Day - Great War Society & Living History Society including a Medical Hospital. Free event.

Action: WW1 committee.

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

Nothing to report and remains in the hands of Parish Council/SMBC Solicitors.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)

Nothing to report.

10.5 Highways

Cllr Kipling wished to record the excellent job Highways have done on Berkswell Road.

All other items covered under 6.6 Quarries Liaison Group.

Action: The Clerk to write a letter of thanks.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

The Clerk advised the appointment of Hannah Robson to assist with this project work as part of Neighbourhood Planning to be supervised by Neil Pearce, Avon Planning.

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

The Clerk advised the next meeting will be 2nd March 2016.

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

10.8 Litter

Nothing to report.

10.9 Mobile Mast Update

Cllr Lee read the following update from the General Manager at the Manor Hotel:-

"Dear Barbara, thank you for your email.

Sadly no pick up yet form mobile companies, two have it listed with their location teams but it would appear there needs to be considerable demand before they invest. We even proposed that we could pay to install one but nothing as yet, they did say it might take some months for a demand to be established so have not quite given up hope but nothing certain at all. Lucy Talbot Clegg."

10.10 Local Council Award Scheme

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

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Action: All Members.

10.11 82 Bus Route & Failure of Service

Cllr Nunn reported there had been 7 responses to the survey to date. Further questionnaires will be trialled in Millisons Wood with some door knocking considered.

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

Cllr P Lee reported the following response from Paul Thomas, Chief Operating Officer, National Express Bus regarding the complaint sent to reduce the speed of the 900 bus service when travelling through the village:-

“Thanks for the email. NX garages focus a lot on speed awareness for all our staff in addition to bi annual driving safety courses (defensive driver training). I am disappointed to hear this and will ensure the operating garage carries out checks in addition to highlighting the comments to our drivers. I will ask the garage to update us both in a few weeks.”

10.12 Street Association Project

Cllr Nunn advised his meeting with the project co-ordinators and Neighbourhood Team’s Kath Hemmings. Basically it is to bring the old and young within the community together and the specific area chosen is Alspath and Arden. There is a need for more support to be provided for the elderly residents to engage with the youngsters. A barbecue event is to be organised. The Pavilion may be used for meetings.

11. Solihull Partnership Forum

Cllr Weaver was unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies.

12. Planning Matters

12.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Cllr Weaver advised that the sub group have drafted questionnaires and are currently out for consultation with the wider Steering Group. She further advised that she and the clerk had met with Neil Pearce, Avon Planning regarding time-lining what is needed and the process. He had suggested Simon Purfield, Consultation & Insight Manager, Chief Executive's Unit, Stratford District Council, to undertake the formatting of the questionnaire, provide links to website, data collation and analysis. Funding is secured within the Locality Grant. Everything is on course including new website and the next Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group meeting will be held on 24th March.

Action: Cllr Weaver will project manager and steer the group to meet deadline of end April public consultation going live.

12.2 To receive update and status on Planning Applications

The clerk circulated planning status for information and comment.

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It was further noted that a new planning application notification had been received for two detached family dwellings on the old garage site at Birmingham Road. Members unanimously object to this latest application on the basis that the need for family dwellings had been identified in the Parish Plan or Visual Design Statement and did not meet the specific requirement for single storey dwellings for elderly residents.

Action: Clerk to comment respond to Planning Notification opposing development.

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

Nothing to report other than the old garage has a planning application for two detached family dwellings.

12.4 Unlawful Caravan Storage Site

Nothing to report.

12.5 Land for Burial – Cllr Lynch-Smith

Cllr Lynch-Smith reported that a meeting is being organised for Gordon Hull, Rev Lilley and herself to discuss how to move this forward.

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

The Clerk advised of the decision for this site to be placed on the SMBC Community Asset Register under the Community Right to Bid. She is waiting to hear from Enforcement Officer regarding the barrier build by the adjoining property's garden extension.

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 Weaver reported that with the appointment of Hannah Robson, the information will be shared with her identifying 12 priority areas for her to research and commence the process.

Action: The Clerk will liaise with Hannah and forward all relevant documents.

12.8 Enforcement Notice Register

Cllrs P Lee and Kipling reported that the register received from SMBC is tedious and laborious to work from and identify Meriden specific notices. They conclude their disappointment and unhappiness with what SMBC have done relating to enforcement and follow up actions. Cllr P Lee suggested A3 printed copies would be helpful. Cllr Lynch-Smith suggested she may have access to the copies when printed as she is happy to make a start in searching Meriden specific notices issued.

Action: Cllrs P Lee to organise A3 printing of the Enforcement Register and notify Members when it has been done and where it may be found.

13. Parish Council Development Day

The Clerk advised Mr Carpenter is unable to attend the next Development Day.

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

14. New Website

Cllr Weaver advised meetings had taken place with Real Point to commence the process of putting together a new website. Invitations were extended to Hampton-in-Arden, Castle Bromwich, Allesley and Mappleborough Green PCs, to collectively appoint Real Point to receive a more favourable and competitive rate due to the previously reported retirement of Ian Geddes, the existing website manager and service provider. Currently Meriden and Hampton have appointed Real Point. A standard template will be set up for each Parish to personalise to meet their own requirements including format, font and branding. Chair confirmed the management content will be provided by wordpress that will allow designated Members to access and update. A training day will be provided for all interested parties.

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

- (i) How to better promote the work of the Parish Council including publicity and information sharing.
- (ii) How to recruit volunteers to assist with the promotion and information sharing.

Any other items please email the Clerk prior to next meeting.

16. Date of Next Meeting

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Monday 25th April 2016.

The next Council Development Day will be held on Saturday 30th April 2016 10-12 noon.

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

The Chair closed the meeting at 21.35.

Signed Chair Dated

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