



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 23rd May 2016
 Venue: Pavilion, Meriden Sports Park at 7.30 p.m.

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

There were 2 members of the public present, Cllr Bell and Cllr Allsopp.

Cllr Weaver welcomed the Members and the public to the meeting.

1. Apologies

No apologies were received. Cllr Barber stated he would be leaving the meeting at 20.30 due to family commitments.

2. Public Participation

Cllr Weaver invited members of the public to raise any issues or concerns.

The issue of Pertemps latest appeal to the Secretary of State was raised; planning permission has been granted for an extension to Meriden Hall and now a previous application that had been refused, has been resurrected by the Secretary of State using JLR as a case precedent for greenbelt commercial development. This planning appeal is for the development of a call centre on the car park at the entrance to Meriden Hall. Discussion surrounded any condition that may be made to Pertemps with an either/or caveat that reduces the threat of two large new commercial developments in the Meriden Hall grounds/parkland.

Cllr Weaver advised that the Clerk had engaged the planning consultant to review previous opposition and provide advice and a statement to the Planning Inspectorate reaffirming the original opposition; together with the caveat for Pertemps to choose one scheme only should the appeal be approved.

Members were asked to consider the appeal and imposing conditions for only one business extension to be agreed. Members approved unanimously.

Action: The Clerk to confirm outcome with Planning Consultant.

The Clerk to request date of last Bat Survey and forward to Planning Consultant.

The Clerk to write a letter to Caroline Spelman MP.

The Clerk to write a letter of complaint to the Planning Inspectorate regarding the lateness of letter receipt giving only 11 days to respond.

3. Declarations of Interest

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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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 25th April 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 25th April 2016, seconded by Cllr P Lee.

5. Finance

5.1 Approve May Payments

The clerk circulated May payments for consideration and approval.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr P Lee proposed approval of May payments of £4,647.63 for Parish Council and £7,566.14 for Sports Park, seconded by Cllr M Haque.

5.2 Year End 2015-2016

The clerk advised that year end is currently with internal auditor.

Action: The clerk will meet with auditor and conclude year end prior Member approval of Annual Return and external audit submission.

5.3 Annual Return, Internal & External Audit 2015-2016 & EGM

The clerk advised the internal audit could not be completed for this evening's meeting; therefore consideration to be given to (i) calling an EGM for the purpose of Annual Return sign off and end of year approval, or (ii) delegated powers given to finance committee to approve year end and make recommendation to full council via resolution at June's meeting. Grant Thornton deadline is 24th June 2016; next full council meeting 20th June. Members agreed to receive finance committee recommendation on 20th June for the clerk to meet external audit deadline.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved delegated powers to finance committee to receive year end and internal auditor report with a view to the Annual Return and associated documents being ratified at June's full council meeting.

5.4 New Financial Regulations/Audit/Transparency/Policies

The clerk reported that this is with finance committee and remains a work in progress with review of risk register for internal audit procedures.

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

5.5 St Laurence PCC Request for Graveyard Maintenance

Signed Chair Dated

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A request had been received from St Laurence PCC regarding a contribution towards graveyard maintenance. Members considered the requested and agreed to award a £1,000 donation for this purpose.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the award to St Laurence PCC of £1,000 towards graveyard maintenance costs; proposed Cllr P Lee and seconded Cllr M Lee. **Action:** The clerk will email the PCC (i) advising of award; (ii) requesting a formal letter and (iii) requesting a financial statement for 2015-2016 breaking down last year’s award v. graveyard maintenance costs.

5.6 British Heart Foundation Defibrillator and Training
Chair advised the following request has been received from a Heart Failure Nurse Specialist at George Eliot Hospital and a local resident of Meriden who is the Beaver Scout Leader for 1st Meriden Scouts.

“I work very closely with the British Heart Foundation and they have given me the opportunity to apply for a Community Defibrillator for Meriden which will be rewarded on a first come first serve basis for rural areas. There has been a huge push to have public defibrillators in rural communities for many years which has made a massive difference in helping people survive from a Cardiac Arrest. I am very keen to have a public defibrillator that will serve the community and will be available for the sports field and Meriden School. I have spoken with Meriden school and they are very keen to have one available. I am more than happy to provide basic life support sessions to the community to help raise the awareness.

Please see below a link for you to have a look at what the BHF are offering and I would like to work with you or someone more appropriate to get the bid in as soon as possible as we only have a limited time. The BHF will fund the defibrillator with a £400 contribution from us which can be easily fundraised.”

Members considered this request and discussed the benefits of this initiative to the local community. Two sites were identified being The Green and Millisons Wood, with potential siting in disused telephone boxes. Members agreed financial support and the Chair and Clerk will follow up.

IT WAS RESOLVED The clerk will arrange a meeting with the neighbourhood team and Mrs West-Eggar; Members approved a £400 contribution. Chair will speak to Lloyds and the Practice Manager at GP surgery. Chair will speak to Sports Park Directors for funding of second unit at June’s meeting.

6. **Progress Reports**

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee
Cllr Lynch-Smith reported bookings are going well with last film sold out. The next film show will be 18th June entitled “Before I go to Sleep”.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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6.2 War Memorials
Nothing to report.

6.3 Meriden Pool
The Clerk advised of an excellent meeting with SMBC ecologist regarding pool improvements including interpretation boards; reducing/eliminating the use of bread as a source of food due to rate infestation and health of wildfowl; dropping levels due to culvert plate being removed; SMBC maintenance programme; removal of dead tree branches; reinstating hedgerow; installation of feeding platform, fully accessible pathway and bridge connecting footpath towards Berkswell.
Action: The clerk to continue liaising with SMBC officers and community engagement officer for volunteer clean up. Funding to be explored via Tarmac and SITA Environmental Trusts.

6.4 Allotments
Nothing to report.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum
Nothing to report.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group
The next quarterly meeting will be held on 6th June.

6.7 Solihull Area Committee
The next quarterly meeting will be held in July.

6.8 Tree Wardens & TPO List
The recent application for the felling of two Oak trees will have a condition to replace in the woodland adjoining the affected property.

6.9 Community Surgeries
The clerk advised that she, neighbourhood co-ordinator and PCs Andy Timmins and Simon Harrison, hosted a joint community and beat surgery without any resident attendance. The next joint surgery is planned for August.

6.10 Community Speed Watch
Chair advised that the Parish Council is waiting for the police to give dates.

6.11 Meriden Sports Park (quarterly summary only)
Chair reported next Directors meeting is scheduled for June.
Cllr Kipling requested a copy of accounts since its formation; in particular the interest received on the CCLA investment portfolio prior to its transfer to Meriden Sports & Recreational Trust.
Action: The clerk will provide the information to Council.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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7. Clerk's Report

The clerk advised all actions for May are reflected in content of agenda items.

8. District and Ward Councillor Reports

Nothing to report. On behalf of the Parish Council, Chair formally record congratulations to Cllr Tony Diccico as elected Councillor for Meriden Ward.

9. Correspondence & Communication

- Letter from Rotary Club regarding Chair becoming an Honorary Member in appreciation and acknowledgement of partnership working and links.
Action: The clerk to write and confirm Cllr Weavers acceptance of Honorary Membership.
- Invitation to Mayor's Civic Service and Reception on 12th June in honour of Queen's 90th Birthday.
Action: The clerk to rsvp on behalf of Cllr Lynch-Smith.
- Letter from Field's in Trust regarding nominations for open space to be placed in trust.
Action: Chair and Clerk to consider.

10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1 Library Update

Chair asked what was happening with taking forward any further refurbishment of Library to include first floor strengthening works and expanding frontage. Cllr Bell advised he would take this up with Head of Libraries and report back.

Action: Cllr Bell to follow up with Library Services.

10.2 Village Commemoration WW1

Cllr M Lee advised there were no more planned events. The group was concentrating on finishing the booklet. The Royal Corps of Signals will be returning for the annual cricket match in August; there are three vigils commemorating Meriden's fallen between now and end of year; the Cyclists Memorial Centenary is 2021.

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

Chair advised that on the issue of VAT a request has been made to SMBC solicitor for statement of account tracking VAT expenditure liability under Freedom of Information.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)

Nothing to report.

Action: The clerk will chase up Taylor for update on outstanding issues.

10.5 Highways

Cllr M Lee advised a meeting with SMBC Flood Risk team was positive. Mr Bradford is to liaise with CWS (Coventry, Warwickshire & Solihull) Flood Planning team to work with the Parish Council in putting together an operational Flood Plan. NRS Wastecare Limited will be providing sand and sand bags to the local community.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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Suggested hot spot sites for storage are the GP Surgery, Bull's Head and Sports Park. Cllr P Lee will investigate willingness of sites to have a grit box (housing sand and bags) stored on these sites.

Action: Cllr P Lee to liaise with identified sites; Mr Bradford to refer to CWS; a meeting to be arranged with CWS.

Chair reported that the resurfacing works to Birmingham Road has now been completed. Thanks recorded for the speediness of action from SMBC officers.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

Nothing to report.

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

The clerk advised of the disappointment in volunteer numbers and due to capacity Meriden will not be entering RHS Heart of England in Bloom this year. Concerted efforts will focus on the village. A good relationship is developing between Bloomers and Wyevale who will be undertaking the planting of the Poppy site.

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

10.8 Litter

Cllr P Lee advised his frustration with having to litter pick the Green and clear away dog fouling prior to Cyclist's Memorial Service. Also the bins were full of rubbish with litter being blown from the tops.

Action: The clerk to liaise with Neighbourhood Team and Contractor; a schedule of bin emptying to be obtained from SMBC. No Dog Fouling signs to be sourced and displayed.

10.9 Mobile Mast Update

Nothing to report.

10.10 Local Council Award Scheme

Chair advised this remains a work in progress with all Members. The Council Development Day was useful in identifying training needs. A copy of WALC guidance to be circulated to Members by Chair.

Action: All Members.

10.11 82 Bus Route & Failure of Service

Cllr Nunn reported he has commenced engaging with Millisons Wood users including Meriden Business Park employees. This continues as a work in progress.

Action: Cllr Nunn to continue piloting questionnaires and engaging with users.

10.12 Street Association Project

The clerk reported feedback to date was excellent; the next meeting is to be held at the Pavilion on 26th May.

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11. Solihull Partnership Forum

Nothing to report and representation at future meetings on a volunteer basis as to who is available to attend.

12. Planning Matters

12.1 High Speed Rail Bill Petition in the House of Lords

Cllr Weaver outlined actions to date regarding the HS2 Bill Petition, namely publicly advertising in local press, Solihull Observer. To formally record the process Members are required to record a unanimous vote of opposition. Cllr Kipling proposed approval and this was seconded by Cllr P Lee. Therefore Chair asked for a show of hands for and against.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members voted unanimously to oppose HS2 and fully support the High Speed Rail Bill Petition in the House of Lords for mitigation for noise, traffic, accessibility and associated building.

Action: Cllr Weaver to oversee conclusion of HS2 petitioning process.

Chair further advised the appointment of Cllr Richard Lloyd to act as Meriden Parish Council's Agent; Cllr Lloyd fully understands the issues impacting on Meriden and is already registered as an Agent to address the House of Lords. Chair asked for Member approval for Cllr Lloyd to represent Meriden Parish Council as their Agent. Cllr Kipling proposed approval and this was seconded by Cllr P Lee. Therefore Chair asked for a show of hands for and against.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members voted unanimously to appoint Cllr Richard Lloyd of Berkswell Parish Council to act as the Agent for Meriden Parish Council in all areas of the HS2 Bill Petitioning.

12.2(i) Neighbourhood Planning Update

Chair welcomed the new Chair of the steering group Cllr M Lee.

Cllr Lee advised that the on line questionnaire is now live. The paper copies are being printed and will be delivered by the end of the week. Assistance is required to put into envelopes and also volunteers to be available to assist residents with the questionnaire completion in the Library and distribution.

The next meeting is arranged for Wednesday 25th May with printed copies delivered 26th May.

Action: Cllr Lee will co-ordinate and steer the group to meet end May/early June circulation deadline for public consultation.

12.2(ii) Community Right to Bid & Asset Register

Nothing to report. Cllr P Lee assisted with some land identification. The clerk will contact Avon Planning for update.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Avon Planning.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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

Cllr Kipling provided update of planning committee meeting regarding latest applications. The planning committee had met prior to council meeting to go through individual planning applications. It was agreed that he would be placing comments on the planning portal and maintaining the status of each application.

Action: Cllr Kipling to (i) formally respond to all new planning applications; (ii) set up monthly committee meetings (iii) adopt terms of reference.

12.3(ii) Pertemps Appeal

This item is covered under agenda item 2 Public Participation.

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

Nothing to report.

12.5 Unlawful Caravan Storage Site

Nothing to report.

12.6 Land for Burial – Cllr Lynch-Smith

Nothing to report.

12.7 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Chair raised the implementation of the CIL. Cllr Bell stated that Parish and Town Councils will receive 25% based on new property development from July if development sites are within their Ward boundaries.

12.8 Copse & Bridleway

The following report is received from SMBC Ecologist as follows:-

- *“I suggest that we thin some of the holly in the greenway to allow more light to penetrate to the woodland floor. This will encourage an increase in woodland flora.*
- *Remove the invasive Spanish bluebells. These need to be dug out or sprayed.*
- *Reduce ivy from woodland floor*
- *Monitor woodland flora and possibly plant up with native flora if required.*
- *I am happy to bring the midweek volunteers along after bird nesting season (October) to carry out the holly thinning.”*

Action: The clerk will continue working with Ecologists/Rangers to improve this area.

12.9 Enforcement Notice Register

Cllr Lynch-Smith advised that she had gone through enforcement notice register dating back to 1982. The list has been highlighted to follow up enforcement actions. She is keen to continue with the work and will be picking it up again during half term week.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

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Action: Cllr Bell will liaise with enforcement officers to determine enforcement time frame and update next meeting (outstanding action).
Cllr Lynch-Smith will continue highlighting Meriden’s enforcement notices.

13. Parish Council Development Day

Chair advised the next Development Day is scheduled for July and due to summer holidays etc. is it prudent to defer until September? Members agreed that this was probably wise due to holiday period and to maximise attendance. Chair suggested meeting on a 1:1 basis with Members for the purpose of a skills audit and future training needs.

Action: Date of next quarterly Council Development Day agreed to be deferred until September. Meanwhile Chair will meet with individuals for the purpose of a skills audit.

14. New Website

Cllr M Lee advised she and the clerk attended a meeting with Hampton and Castle Bromwich PCs to move forward the new template and commence the process of personalisation and re-branding. Discussion surrounded a hot topic site; pen portraits, images to be used as new banners; archiving; populating new and current. The new website design is well underway; new hosting addresses applied and email accounts set up but there is a training need for Members.

Action: (i) Clerk to liaise with Real Point; (ii) Meeting arrangement for Chair, Cllr M Lee and clerk to focus on content and rebranding; (iii) Cllr Barber to look at rebranding using existing logo but modernising.

15. NALC Parishes 2025 Survey

Chair advised this is a SWOT analysis of Parish and Town Councils; good practice is for the 10 questions to be answered individually and then she will put together Meriden’s response to the questions including all Member views.

Action: Members to forward Chair their responses by close of business tomorrow to meet the submission deadline of Wednesday 25th May.

16. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda

Any items to be forwarded to the clerk for agenda inclusion.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next Meeting is the Annual Meeting of Meriden Parish Council to be held on Monday 20th June 2016.

The Chair closed the meeting at 21.23.

Signed Chair Dated

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The following closed session commenced:-

CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS
All public and press attendees will be asked to leave for confidential matters closed session:-

17. Clerk’s Remuneration

(i) Members to receive update from reviewing officer regarding Clerk’s professional development review.

Cllr Weaver, as supervising officer, provided an update of the clerk’s appraisal and performance development review process, outlining content of years’ work, targets met and overall performance.

(ii) Members to consider and approve scale point increment award recommendation.

Based on the successful completion of performance targets and annual appraisal, Cllr Weaver recommended an incremental award be made to the clerk. Members unanimously approved a one point increment from scp 23 to 24 with effect from 1st April 2016.

It was resolved: Members unanimously approved one point increment award from scp 23 to scp 24. This award will be implemented from 1st April 2016.

The clerk was invited to re-join the meeting and Members applauded the clerks achievements during the last 12 months.

Chair thanked Members and closed the meeting at 22.55.

Signed Chair **Dated**

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