





# Meriden Parish Council

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**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members unanimously approved payment list.

## 5.2 Village Hall Committee (VHC)

A request had been received for a contribution to Village Hall Committee. The Treasurer had formally written to the Clerk including a copy of year end accounts stating income v. expenditure, for Member's consideration. Cllr Lynch-Smith provided an overview of situation and advised Members of Packington Estate's desire for the VHC to contribute 30% of an £11,000 quotation to undertake work on the horse chestnut tree root ingression lifting the car park tarmac surface. Cllr Lynch-Smith further stated that the VHC already pay £550 p.a. for car park maintenance. Cllr P Lee requested a formal procurement process of a minimum of three quotations. Cllr Lynch-Smith confirmed that the VHC were seeking a quotation themselves.

Members were surprised the VHC did not have charity status or registered for VAT and therefore could not claim back 20% VAT on purchases, particularly fuel costs. Cllr Weaver suggested purchases to be made by the Parish Council to reduce costs and a conversation was required with VHC around this; she further referred to the presentation by Warwickshire's Fuel Consortium who is negotiating bulk ordering to reduce costs to community venues and residents. Cllr P Lee suggested the Parish Council write a letter to Lord Aylesford of Packington Estate and his Estate Manager, Nick Barlow, asking for an explanation of why VHC are paying annual maintenance charges and being asked for an additional funding contribution; he further recommended a positive approach be given to Community Fundraising and work with all Community groups/committees to achieve a level of income to maintain community services for the future.

Members considered the VHC issues and after discussion recommended a contribution of £1,000 for financial year 2013-14 only, be awarded; and for the Clerk to write to the Treasurer confirming Parish Council suggestions as above.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved a S137 donation to the Village Hall Committee for the sum of £1,000 for financial year 2013-14 only. All future requests will be reviewed and considered on their own merit. The Clerk will formally write to the Treasurer advising of decision and Parish Council suggestions above.

## 5.3 Precept

Cllr M Lee reported she and the Clerk had received a "working tool" from WALC on current situation, the expectation of a percentage decrease to the grant top up and based on new housing benefit how to calculate household's precept.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members acknowledged Cllr Lee's update and requested the Clerk to circulate documents by email to all Members.



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## 5.4 Request from Meriden Church of England School

A request had been made by Meriden School for either a financial contribution to their Christmas Fayre or some raffle prizes.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved the donation of two raffle prizes and Cllr Weaver agreed to drop off to School.

## 5.5 Meriden Mag

Cllr M Lee reported that the Meriden Mag has requested financial assistance and the publication is just about breaking even with quarterly shortfalls of between £50 - £75. Cllr Haque suggested sealing a maximum cap of £100 per quarter to be set aside; however after due consideration Members recommended that each case be reviewed quarterly and an award made to clear deficit but this will be no greater than the capped sealing.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved in principle to fund any quarterly deficit to a capped maximum sealing of £100 per quarter to be reviewed case by case.

## 6. **Progress Reports**

### 6.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr Lynch-Smith stated this had been covered under item 5.2.

### 6.2 Community Governor for Meriden C of E School

Cllr Weaver reminded Members of the School Fayre on 29<sup>th</sup> November directly after Carols on the Green and further advised that the school rely heavily on the PTA for fundraising and they are all volunteers.

### 6.3 War Memorials

Nothing to report.

### 6.4 Pool Tidy

Nothing to report.

### 6.5 Allotment Representative

Cllr M Lee reported that the Clerk had received an email from Andrew Taylor of Taylor Wimpey regarding questions raised at last Allotment meeting and read the following response to Members:-

- “1. Q.When the site is completed will there be an access driveway (car width) running along the allotments as previously there was a tractor/trailer width drive way for the delivery of local farmer fertilizer?  
*A. We will not be providing any access way within the allotments area.*
2. Q.Will this be a gated access point onto driveway?  
*A. There will be a pedestrian gate into the allotments at the end of the new road where the parking bays are shown on the plan.*



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3. Q. Will there be a secure fence erected separating allotments and housing?  
A. *The hedge will form the boundary. It will be supplemented with planting where there are gaps. There will not be a fence.*
4. Q. There is currently large gapping in hedge remaining. Will there be a programme of replanting and when?  
A. *We are in the course of agreeing a programme of planting and I will let you know when the work is to be done as soon as I can.*

The Clerk stated she had not checked the content of the Unilateral Undertakings 5<sup>th</sup> schedule to see what should be included and will follow up with Taylor Wimpey and the Allotment Association.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members requested the Clerk follow up actions above and report back at next meeting.

## 6.6 Footpaths/Forum

Nothing to report. Cllr Lynch-Smith is now in receipt of OS map and awaits a “personalised Meriden” OS map to be delivered which has now been ordered.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk will drop map to Cllr Lynch-Smith when delivered.

## 6.7 Quarries Liaison Group

The Clerk had written to David Wigfield requesting his assistance with routing and agreements with quarry operators which had been circulated to Members; his response was to discuss issues raised with David Lechmere. Members noted nothing further has been received. Cllr Weaver confirmed the next Liaison Group meeting is scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> December at the Pavilion.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk to follow up and liaise with all parties.

## 6.8 Solihull Area Committee – Cllr Weaver & Cllr M Lee.

Nothing to report. However Cllr Weaver advised her attendance at the recent Rural Partnership meeting. There were various speakers but the most important to Meriden’s residents was Age UK Winter Warmth Campaign with some information booklets left at the Pavilion to be circulated to Library. If anyone is over 50 and their home is without heating they can apply to Age UK who have arrangements in place with EDF and EON to provide heaters.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk will drop information into Library and information will be put in Parish Newsletter January and onto website.

## 6.9 Tree Warden

Cllr Kipling noted the loss of the holly tree at Meriden Hall. Cllr M Lee advised members of the situation currently at Sports Park with identified trees with Ash Die Back which is now confirmed with the loss of 12 young trees.



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Members wished to record their disappointment with Darren Parkin and his email response suggesting following a video link for the Clerk to identify, particularly in light of this being the first identified outbreak in Solihull Borough; they requested the Clerk to formally record this disappointment in a letter to the Portfolio holder, and copy in Mike Swallow and David Waterson and ask why more interest was not given to the Clerk's initial notification. Cllr P Lee asked the Clerk to find out if a claim can be made on insurance for replacement trees?

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk will find out who is and write to the Portfolio holder recording their disappointment with Darren Parkin's non action; the Clerk will contact Tennyson Insurers and see if a claim may be made for replacement trees.

## 6.10 Community Surgeries

The Clerk reported excellent attendance at November's combined community and beat surgery. The main issues reported are Fillongley Road crossing; carriageway hatching/layout on Main Road and Manor/Darlaston Court parking; drainage; Leys Lane and hedges. All issues are a work in progress with SMBC officers and she is awaiting replies to letters sent to Mr Chohan and Mr Bradford.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk to continue to liaise with residents, SMBC officers and follow up actions.

## 6.11 Community Speed Watch

Cllr Weaver stated that she has raised this in general with the police team and had hoped for a report back at Rural Partnership Forum.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr Weaver will continue to pursue and update at next meeting.

## 6.12 HS2

Cllr M Lee informed Members of Cllr Diccico's email regarding the Hybrid Bill in Parliament and advised of his comments as follows:-

"Aside from the information deposited, or made available through the HS2 website, members of the public with further queries will continue to be able to contact the HS2 public enquiries team on 0207 944 4908. I know that several local people have gone down to London today to protest against HS2 – good luck to them but I fear that it's a lost cause. I think we need to keep pressing for better compensation for local residents and for better environmental damage limitation."

The Clerk had circulated Members with HS2 updates as she receives them; however Cllr Diccico's email is to be circulated to Members for information.





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Cllr Weaver informed Members that she had attended a Group 51M meeting in Aylesford which is a group made up of Local Authorities opposing HS2. Parish Councils have the opportunity to join the group. There will be a formal process for Parish Council representatives to attend London to present their individual case of opposition. Cllr Weaver volunteered to represent Meriden Parish Council if Members agree to join group. Cllr Kipling stated as Meriden is part of HAG can we not just send a letter? Cllr Weaver replied that there is strength in number of attendees at Committee meeting.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr Weaver will complete the “opposition document” on behalf of Meriden Parish Council.

## **7. Clerk’s Report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting**

The Clerk circulated by email to Members her actions since last meeting. There were no questions and the Chair expressed her thanks and acknowledged content.

## **8. District and County Councillors’ Reports**

Cllr Diccio sent an email to update to Members on (i) HS2 and (ii) Solihull Plan, and this is attached for ease of reference. The email will be circulated to Members by the Clerk.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk will forward email update to Members.

## **9. Meriden Village Matters**

### **9.1(i) Library Update**

Cllr M Lee wished to record an apology to Tracy Cox, Head of Libraries, for her misinterpretation of actions that had been left open in August.

Cllr M Lee advised Members that she, Cllr P Lee and the Clerk attended a meeting with the Cabinet Member, all three Ward Councillors, Library Manager and Property Services to explore options for future Library use and first floor strengthening works. It is advised that the first floor is for domestic use only and considerable work and cost is needed, including full window replacement, to provide usable space and potential planning permission for change of use; however this would not be DDA compliant. Cllr Diccio was supportive and suggested the use of environmental champions and volunteers to assist, which he would investigate. Due to the cost, and after Parish Council feedback of stakeholder consultation in 2012, focus was given to creating a better space and improved access downstairs with suggestions of a computer suite at back of library to accommodate six computers, rearranging storage of books, increasing children’s reading space, providing wifi and ebooks, and extending frontage to create additional space and work area for librarians. The outcome of the meeting was a condition survey to be undertaken in the first instance, which Cllr Lee confirmed was carried out on 21<sup>st</sup> November. Cllr Weaver asked for the Maintenance programme carried out on listed buildings and why the first floor



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has been allowed to get into a state of disrepair. Cllr Diccio was keen to support improving the Library and fully explore options.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr Lee will continue to liaise with Head of Libraries and explore options. The Clerk is requested to investigate the maintenance programme for listed buildings.

## 9.1 (ii) Historic Panels

This item is deferred to next meeting and there is no update.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members agreed to defer to next meeting.

## 9.2 Village Commemoration WW1

Cllr M Lee reported invitations have been sent to Community groups to attend the first planning meeting on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 11 am at Pavilion. Cllr P Lee informed Members that the Army Benevolent Fund is on board and they have been invited to field a football and cricket team for friendly matches next year; he further added that he proposed to adopt the Army Benevolent Fund (The Soldiers Charity) as Meriden's chosen Charity for all fundraising events; which will be over a 5 year plan and will include Village projects. Members discussed and considered this proposal and it was felt that other Services' charities are cash rich with higher profiles, and due to connections with this fund to a local resident, there is a village connection and Members agreed to adopt "the Soldier's Charity".

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved The Soldier's Charity as their chosen Charity.

## 9.3 Flooding, roads, crossing, bins, green, parking, trees/hedges

The Clerk had circulated relevant papers to Members for their information and comments:-

- Flooding  
22 residents attended a public meeting for update to flooding works undertaken by SMBC and STWA. Neal Thomas reported on actions and informed the meeting that 75K has been secured from Taylor Wimpey Homes to improve pipe work, repair collapsed drains and culverts supporting Main Road which will be delivered over two phases across two financial years commencing in 2014. Cllr Lee further advised positive feedback from residents attending and that the Clerk, on behalf of the Parish Council, had written a letter of thanks to Mr Thomas and wishing him well in his new post with Coventry City Council; she further stated that a letter has been received from Mr Thomas commending the Parish Council on their pro-activity and support to Meriden residents in resolving issues with a positive outcome.
- Roads  
Awaiting reply to letters written to Mr D Chohan and Mr E Bradford. Cllr Diccio also agreed to follow up and we await his update.



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- Crossing  
Awaiting reply to letter sent to Mr D Chohan.
- The Green Parking  
Awaiting update from Cllr Diccico regarding Birmingham Road parking identified in Parish Plan.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr Diccico will follow up roads and parking with relevant SMBC officers and report back. The Clerk will follow up crossing with Mr Chohan.

- Trees/Hedges  
Work has been carried out by two private landowners on Birmingham Road. The Neighbourhood team will send letters requesting the cut back of overgrown vegetation impacting on footpaths and highways to private households on Birmingham Road.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members duly noted the work in progress and requested the Clerk to monitor and update accordingly.

#### 9.4 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Weaver confirmed training is booked for 10<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

#### 9.7 Santa Fun Run

Cllr P Lee stated arrangements are in place. A big sign is requested to be fixed to Sports Park fence. Members considered this and did not wish to set a precedent for the future and therefore denied the request, however no parking signage will be required. Marshalling is only required for Meriden Sports Park by the Parish Council and this item may now be removed from agenda.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr P Lee will notify Rotary that no signage will be allowed at Sports Park and organise no parking signage.

#### 9.6 Leys Lane Update

Nothing to report.

### 10. Meriden Sports Park

#### 10.1 Meriden Sports Park Management Company

The Clerk had circulated confirmation of new Company Incorporation to Sports Park Directors and Cllr M Lee shared this with Members. Cllr Weaver is now going to apply for Charity status. Members offered congratulations and Cllr P Lee wished to record a vote of thanks to Cllr Weaver and the Clerk to bring this to conclusion.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr Weaver to apply to Charities Commission.

#### 10.2 Patrol Alarms CCTV





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Cllr P Lee asked if any information had been received? The Clerk confirmed no, and Cllr Lee asked her to forward email requests so he may follow up with Mike Swallow and David Waterson.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr P Lee will following up with Mike Swallow and David Waterson to receive breakdown of costs and specification of installation and equipment for next meeting.

## 10.3 Packington Estate

The Clerk informed Members that Packington was waiting for the Parish Council to state how much land they wish for football and cricket pitches. Cllr Barber had not been specific in acreage required and Cllr Weaver suggested a more detailed discussion was required. Now the Sports Park Company is set up, a meeting can be arranged to explore options and provide Packington with the information they require to give an indication of rent for additional land.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk will arrange a meeting and follow up with Packington Estate.

## 11. **Planning Matters**

### 11.1 Neighbourhood Planning Applications

The Clerk confirmed planning notifications had been circulated to Members for their comments and recorded electronically on Planning Services portal and in process for 2013/1874, 2013/1806, 2013/1820, 2013/1801 and 2013/1727.

With resubmission of News Express planning application members raised concerns regarding parking, vehicle access and what was happening. Members suggested meeting with the planning officer responsible to discuss issues particularly the management of building works and access of service road and to understand the complexities of ownership, use and any planning change of use.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The Clerk will continue to monitor and arrange a meeting with named planning officer.

### 11.2 Eaves Green Lane Public Enquiry

Cllr M Lee reported that the Traveller's Appeal and return bid had failed in Meriden. Members recorded their disappointment that they had found out from local and national media and the update from David McGrath in the recent Meriden Mag issue.

## 12. **Parish Council Newsletter** Editorial Committee

Cllr Lee confirmed publication in January 2014 and requested articles for inclusion from Members early January.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved plan and time line.



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**13. Oil Painting & Kittermaster Collection**

Cllr M Lee informed Members she had seen the Oil painting of Meriden Heath by the artist Frederick Herbert Henshall, and this remains in the safe keeping of Cllr Kipling at the Heart of England Social Club. Secure storage is required and Cllr Haque is to follow this up with an art acquaintance and report at next meeting.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Cllr Haque to update at next meeting.

**14. Councillor’s reports and items for future agenda**

Members had no items for the next agenda and were requested to email the Clerk with any items to be included in December’s agenda.

**15. Correspondence & Communication** for information share only

**IT WAS RESOLVED**

**16. Date and time of next meeting**

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2013 at 19.30 hours in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.25

Signed ..... Cllr M Lee  
Chair

Dated .....