

Minutes for Parish Council meeting held on 26th November 2007 in the Village Hall at 7.30pm

Present

Ms Weaver (Chair), Mr Goodsir, Mrs Goodsir, Mr Kipling, Mrs Lee, Mr Markham, and five members of the public.

1. Apologies

Mrs Hamilton, Mrs Markham, Councillor Bell.

Apologies accepted.

2. Declaration of Interest

The Chair invites members to make declaration of personal and prejudicial interest in respect of items on the agenda of the meeting.

None declared.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED

That the minutes the last Parish Council Meeting on 22nd October 2007, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the last Parish Council Sub-Committee Meeting on 14th November 2007, having been circulated, be taken as read and signed as a correct record.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes

No matters arising.

5. Public participation

1) 900 Bus Service

This service, having been reduced from a 20 minute service to a 30 minute service is affecting the residents travelling both within the village and externally. Additionally, buses are not always arriving at their scheduled time resulting in people being late for work/doctors/hospital appointments etc. To be put on agenda for next parish council meeting 12th December for further discussion.

2) Councillors Identity and need for ID Cards

A resident who was erecting tents on the playing field was approached by a lady who did not give her name but said that she was from the parish council. She was rude and verbally abusive to the resident insisting that the tents be removed. The resident could not see the lady present at the meeting. The resident had written a letter to the parish council about this but it had not been received by the Clerk. Clerks contact details were given to the gentleman to forward letter. Chair apologised that he was affronted in that manner and highlighted the need for councillors to have ID cards.

3) Trees on Fillongley Road

It was queried why only a few trees had bark under them and why branches had been removed but left. Clerk had spoken with Solihull MBC who advise it is financially too expensive to put bark under all the trees. The branches are being removed so that rubbish can be removed from under the trees and proper maintenance carried out. Another resident advised that the tree branches had been left through oversight of the Tree Officer, but that will be rectified.

4) Burnt remains of taxi – Birmingham Road

Taxi was burnt out at the weekend, although most of the debris has been removed some still remains. Clerk to contact Neighbourhood Co-ordinator.

6. Correspondence / Communication

1) Age Concern

Request for donation towards computer taster courses held for older people in Solihull. Courses held in Meriden library. It costs £1,500 per year and is staffed by volunteer tutors who give one to one advice.

RATIFIED

For a donation in the sum of £100 be made.

2) Solihull MBC

The Licensing Act 2003 Section 5 requires the Licensing Authority to determine a policy with respect to the exercise of its licensing function for each three-year period. Copy circulated with agenda. Comments required by **19th November 2007**. Request for details of the appropriate protocols referred to and for further clarification on point 4.9. Response awaited. Clerk to chase.

3) West Midlands Fire Service

Invitation to attend Annual Service Plan Consultation in which proposed changes to the fire service are detailed. Choice of meetings:- Wolverhampton 20/11/07; Coventry 21/11/07; Birmingham 22/11/07. No-one able to attend. Clerk obtained nine copies of the Annual Service Plan Consultation document for putting on circulation. Clerk would also like to distribute to community organisations ie the Library, School, Methodist Nursery, the Community Centre Any other suggested recipients, councillors and public asked. Post Office, doctors surgery, The Centre on the Green, tea rooms, Blitz (Millisons Wood), Brownies Scouts Cubs.

4) WALC

Draft protocol for greater involvement of parish and town councils in service delivery to enhance the quality of specific services (grass cutting, litter clearance, gully clearing) at parish level. Copy circulated with agenda. Views required by **30th November**.

All agreed that this is a good idea especially with the village appraisal. Query as to whether we would receive funding from Solihull MBC. Chair to liaise with Councillor Bell and to be included in agenda for Solihull Area Committee for whom Ms Weaver is the Chair.

5) Solihull MBC

Summary of work of the Rural Footpaths Ranger, Phil Prosser in Meriden parish during the last quarter. Fillongley Road – new kissing gate; Church Lane – all footpaths strimmed and cut back; Berkswell Road – heavy cut and strim. Mr Goodsir advised farmers not upholding their agreement to upkeep footpaths. Footpaths Committee need to obtain specific details of problems and footpath numbers before we revert back to Solihull MBC.

6) Warwickshire, Solihull, Birmingham Training Partnership

“The Next Step – Making the most of your role as Parish and Town Councillors”. 10.00am – 4pm Saturday 2nd February 2008. £30 per delegate. Any Councillors interested in attending? None at present.

ADDITIONAL

7) Sustain and Solihull Partnership

Invitation to attend Solihull Partnership Forum on 3rd December, The Fordbridge Centre, 1pm held by Sustain and The Solihull Partnership to learn about developments to the structure for the Local Strategic Partnership and to receive an update on the new Sustainable Community Strategy for Solihull. Chair and Clerk to attend.

7. Receive Reports

NALC AGM 25th October 2007 was attended by Ms Weaver and Clerk. Cllr Ken Cleary, the NALC Chairman spoke about the implications the Local Government Bill will have on Town and Parish Councils and The Power of Well Being and Clustering. A copy of the speech is on circulation.

8. Village Matters

1) Public Conveniences

Mr Kipling attended site. He cannot see any evidence of asbestos and therefore they may cost considerably less to demolish than originally thought. Before an accurate estimate can be obtained we really need to know what state the site is required to be left in after demolition. However, a local building company will be asked to give an estimate prior to the next meeting.

With regard to the necessity to move the bus shelter, we need someone with soil erosion knowledge to advise us on that. Clerk to contact Solihull MBC for list of experts.

Chair asked for agreement to write to Solihull MBC to be released from the covenant in order to pursue alternative use for the site. The next stage then is to look at the costs of alternative uses.

AGREED

Chair to write to Solihull MBC to have covenant released.

2) **Bus Shelter, James Dawson Drive**

Clerks met with Centro, Coventry CC and Littlethorpes. Shelter can be replaced end of November. Estimate as follows:

Bus shelter	£4,980.00
Transport to site	<u>£ 350.00</u>
Sub total	£5,330.00
VAT 17.5%	<u>£ 932.75</u>
TOTAL	£6,262.75

The Clerk points out that a replacement bus shelter was not budgeted for this financial year. Funds to cover the cost of the shelter can be “borrowed” from the heritage fund (£2,465) and from playing field improvements (£4,736).

Installation of the bus shelter to be undertaken by Tony Roach in the sum of £1034.00 (£880+VAT) making total cost of replacement bus shelter £7,296.75. Council to liaise with Tony Roach direct to keep costs to a minimum.

RESOLVED

That the bus shelter be replaced at cost of £7,296.75.

3) **O₂ Award Scheme**

A new award scheme to enable people to make a difference in their local environments up to £1,000. Applications can be made any time and will be judged on the 20th of every month. Categories are :

Community Places – reinvigorating community, amenity and recreation areas, for example installing new equipment for a playground, repairing a pavilion roof, erecting a community notice board.

Community People – creating a sense of ownership and social responsibility, for example, promoting personal safety awareness to young people, supporting a self help group for elderly people.

Community Pride – cleaning litter and rubbish, removing graffiti

Community Landscape – creating community gardens, planting trees, improving public access to riverbanks.

Suggested, assistance with cost of bus shelter, removal of graffiti in bus shelter.

4) **Allotments**

Clerk obtaining quote from Chris Dean to investigate possible leak. Mr Dean contacted Clerk yesterday advising that he could not find any evidence of a leak. Resident advised the Clerk of a contact who knows of problem.

Severn Trent have written asking for brambles overgrowing the meter to be cut back so that they can fit a new lid. Mr Markham volunteered to cut brambles back.

ADDITIONAL

5) **Pond**

Clerk has spoken with the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator who advises that a report has been undertaken by a consultation firm and that further work is needed which could cost £17,000 to rectify. Solihull MBC do not have sufficient funding in this years budget for any work to be carried out. However, a new grant has been awarded to the West Midlands for green spaces, from the lottery. Solihull MBC have asked for our assistance in applying as local government are unable to apply. The deadline for applications is 18th January 2008

Chair read out report summarising costs required to reinstate pond. Residents with background knowledge of the pond felt the report was inaccurate and costs could be saved by work being carried out stage by stage.

If the Parish Council apply for lottery funding for the pond this may have an adverse affect on obtaining funding for the second stage of the village appraisal. Suggested a joint bid with Solihull MBC. Chair is happy to liaise with Solihull MBC.

Residents and Councillors also suggested contacting The Manor, Forest of Arden, Pertemps and the Airport re. funding and voluntary organisations such as RSPB and English Heritage who may assist with any work.

Chair requested we call together a meeting between Severn Trent, Solihull MBC, the person who wrote the report and persons with background knowledge of the history of the pond. Clerk and Chair to arrange.

9. Planning Matters

1) P/A 2007/2351- 118 Fillongley Road, Meriden

Garage extension and new boundary wall

RATIFIED

Leave to neighbour notification

2) P/A2007/1925 – Main Road Meriden

Listed building consent for ventilation equipment and raising of parapet wall.

3) P/A2007/2183 – 6 Bonneville Close, Millisons Wood

Full plans approval for ground floor extension to form a conservatory.

4) P/A2007/2013 – Grange Farm, Fillongley Road

Full plans approval for conversion of barn to residential accommodation. (Renewal of planning permission 1997/1770).

5) P/A2007/1782 – The Woodlands, Lodge Green Lane

Full plans approval for change of use from residential garage and hobby room to holiday let cottage.

6) P/A2007/2450 – Berkswell Quarry, Cornets End Lane, Meriden

Open windrow composting of organic material. Correspondence received from Wardell Armstrong, planning consultants for the applicant. Enclosed location map and FAQ's. Inviting us to visit Cheslyn Hay site. Mr Kipling to attend site.

Quarry is actually in Berkswell parish. Clerk to contact Clerk to Berkswell Parish Council to work together.

To hold a meeting on 12th December prior to Parish Council Meeting specifically to discuss this planning application. Berkswell PC to be invited.

RATIFIED

To object in principle but ask for more time to carry out investigations. Request deadline date.

7) P/A2007/2084 – Swallowfield, Hampton Lane

Full plans approval for two storey rear extension to form kitchen/dining room and living room with 2 bedrooms over.

8) P/A2007/2223 – 155A Main Road, Meriden

Change of use from B1 to A2 use.

RATIFIED

Leave to neighbour notification.

9) P/A2006/2064 – Tarmac Construction Limited, Cornets End Lane

Sand & gravel extraction, inert waste disposal, restoration to agriculture & nature conservation.

Planning Sub Committee meeting 7/11/07 attended by former Chairman, Clive Jones. Various concerns raised in March 2007 were reported to the planning sub-committee and taken into account. However, they were dismissed. (All documentation available at meeting for anyone to review). Although we did get some support it was seen that if a financial contribution was made to Meriden Parish it would be seen that planning permission was bought.

We can apply to the Aggregate Levy Fund for compensation.

Number and size of vehicles passing through the village may increase. Registration numbers need to be logged and photographs taken where possible of vehicles passing through or parked in the village. Revised problems list for completion by Councillors.

10) P/A2007/2187 – Land adjacent to 53 Fillongley Road

Full plans approval for erection of a 2.5 storey detached dwelling.

10. Accounts

a) Any comments regarding budget / precept 2008/2009 – no comment.

b) Clerk set up costs

- i) installation of second BT phone line at a cost of £124.99 (subject to survey) Cost will be included on first bill for new line. Installation to be completed shortly.
- ii) purchase of laptop £299.00
- iii) Microsoft office. Clerk contacted Regional Adviser at SLCC. Would not be able to use Microsoft Student as the computer is also being used for commercial use. We are not classed as "household". Will require software with commercial licence. Clerk to liaise with Mr Markham
- iv) Salary increment to scale 19 £17,154

RATIFIED

That the above costs are agreed.

c) Bank Mandate cheques need Clerk/RFO plus two names to sign cheques and three signatures to confirm that the Clerk/RFO is the only person to give instructions to the bank. Authorised persons need to sign Appointment of Bankers form but do not need to provide details as did so in May 2007.

AGREED

Signatories can be changed for new Clerk to sign cheques.

d) 2007/08 National Salary Award for Clerks has now been agreed at 2.475%. All increases should be backdated from 1st April 2007.

RATIFIED

That 2.475% annual increase be awarded to Mrs M Edwards and Mrs J Hall.

That the increase be backdated from 1st April 2007.

e) Awards For All grant has been approved in the sum of £3990. Chair of the Steering Group, Iain Roxburgh requests the authority to agree spending of less than £50. Purchases above £50 to be ratified at Parish Council Meetings prior to payment. Management of Village Appraisal Finance document detailing the above was circulated (attached).

RESOLVED

For Management of Village Appraisal Finance document to be agreed with Iain Roxburgh with the words "may have" to be deleted from point 4.2.

ADDITIONAL

f) The booking fees for the Village Hall have not been increased for the last three years. Accordingly, the Committee have agreed, that as from 1st January 2008, the rate will be increased to £10.00 per hour.

Accounts approved for payment.

The date of the next Parish Council Meeting is Wednesday 12th December 2007 and Finance Meeting / Sub-Committee is Wednesday 16th January 2008 starting at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and declared the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Chair _____

Date _____