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Minutes of Meriden Parish Council Meeting held on 28 October 2013
at The Village Hall, Meriden, at 7.30 p.m.

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

Cllr Tony Diccico and five members of the public.

Public Participation

The Chair welcomed Cllr Diccico and attendees to the meeting.

Members of the public raised issues with Members regarding parent parking at drop off and collection times including the blocking of school bus lay-by, parking on verges, obstruction of footpaths due to parked vehicles, HGVs breaking tactile paving due to parking on footpaths and speeding traffic throughout the village but particularly on Fillongley Road. There is no enforcement and requests were made for yellow lines, bollards, and keep off grass verge signs, enforcement officers and notices requesting no inconsiderate parking.

Cllr Diccico stated that this issue was currently undergoing Highways attention to deter and prevent inconsiderate parking. Cllr Lee informed the meeting that the Clerk was working with the Neighbourhood team, Highways officers and Community Police team and this remains a work in progress. It was noted that members of the public thanked the Parish Council and commented on the work undertaken to reduce in the number of HGVs travelling through Meriden.

A request had been received from Meriden School Parent Council to address the meeting regarding issues of class cohorts. The Parent Council informed the meeting of concerns around the capacity of Meriden School and advised that Reception and Year 2 classes had 34 and 33 pupils in each which is over the recommended 30 class size. Another teacher has been provided however this does not reduce the class size or provide additional teaching space. With the new developments in the village and new families moving into the catchment the capacity of school becomes a real issue for pupils. The question was asked of section 106 monies attached to David Wilson and Taylor Wimpey developments.



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Cllr M Lee stated that at consultation meetings in 2012 the Chair of Governors raised this issue and was informed that Taylor Wimpey had approached Solihull's LEA and been informed that there was no need to make education provision through any section 106 conditions. Cllr Weaver confirmed that there was no section 106 condition for funding to compensate the increased pupil cohorts.

The Parent Council further stated that with the 30+ class size in infants and the Head Teacher is under pressure to take more children, the classroom area has not increased due to reduced LEA funding. It was further stated that eight children did not get a place due to being outside of catchment however this was appealed and the LEA granted places.

Cllr Dicicco stated that he is Vice Chair of the Children & Young People's Board and has noted the issues raised and will bring to the attention of the Board.

Cllr Weaver stated that local farming communities that previously had been part of Meriden were now in Warwickshire but accessing education and health resources from Meriden Parish.

Cllr Kipling stated that these concerns were raised 15 years ago and Solihull has continued to ignore the situation and further stated that the Parish Council can do very little and recommends the current issues be picked up by Ward Councillors.

Cllr Weaver stated that when the Parish Plan and Visual Design Statement were being written four years ago, a meeting was held with Solihull MBC's Chief Executive Officer. Issues such as local schooling were raised and if Parish Council recommendations had been taken forward then many of the current issues would have been sorted out with a long term solution focus.

Cllr Dicicco stated that with new housing developments and population increase education and health need to be met. With a public enquiry and no conditions placed on new development he will take these issues back to the Council.

Cllr Lee indicated Taylor Wimpey would consider a project from their PR budget and confirmed that the Parish Plan had stated the existing school site was not large enough for any extension and to remove any further outside space from playing field or playground would not improve capacity issues.

The Parent Council reiterated their disappointment that no negotiation with Taylor Wimpey by the LEA was undertaken for S106 funds due to their being no issues with education or health provision; they further stated their disbelief that the only S106 conditions related to a balancing pond, woodland walks, a crossing to Leys Lane and footpath reinstatement.



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Cllr Diccio confirmed he will check via scrutiny panel and report back to the Clerk. Helen Vent is the link between the Board of Governors and Parent Council and the Clerk will provide update when received. The Parish Council concluded their disappointment with SMBC who support HS2 and airport expansion but show little support for local communities.

Cllr Lee closed the public participation and thanked the Parent Council, stating everyone was welcome to stay for Parish Council business if they wished.

1. Welcome & Apologies

Cllr M Lee opened the meeting and accepted apologies from Cllr D Bell.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Chair accepted apologies.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members had nothing to declare.

3. Minutes of 23rd September 2013

Members had been circulated minutes of 23rd September for consideration prior to meeting. Cllr Kipling proposed approval of minutes, seconded by Cllr P Lee.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members accepted minutes of 23rd September 2013 as read.

4. Standing Order Review

Cllr Weaver informed Members that there was a requirement to review Parish Council Standing Orders.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members agreed for Cllr Weaver to undertake a review with the Clerk as directed within the new guidance received from the National Association of Local Councils.

5. FINANCE

5.1 October Payments

Members received October payments.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously approved payment list.

5.2 Quarter 2 (1st June to 30th September) and half year (1st April to 30th September) financial summary and reconciliation and half year was circulated to Members. The Clerk explained a double entry on the balance for Public Sector Deposit Account and Members accepted the Clerk's notation on their summary sheets.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members accepted and agreed a true quarter 2 account for period 1st June to 30th September 2013, and half year summary cash book, subject



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to amendment of double entry on Edge Finance system for Deposit Account, and thanked the Clerk for providing up to date financial data.

5.3 Precept

Members received a briefing sheet prepared by the Clerk following discussion with SMBC's Income & Awards regarding precept budget, top up grant and decrease in grant award for new financial year 2014-15. It is anticipated that the grant will be reduced by 10%. The Clerk invited comment from Cllr Diccico, who confirmed it would be wise to work on a 10% precept reduction.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members acknowledged the proposed 10% reduction. The Clerk will continue to monitor with NALC and SMBC for an accurate count of new houses and update Members.

5.4 Yew Tree & Coronation Island

A request had been made by SMBC for Parish Council confirmation of their responsibility to fund £300 for the purchase of the Yew tree and their undertaking to maintain the tree and island.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the purchase of a Yew Tree and their willingness to maintain the newly named Coronation Island at no cost to SMBC.

5.5 Military Records

Cllr P Lee provided a brief update of research of names on the War Memorial and his desire for a multi user account being set up for the continuation of this research project. He is currently waiting for costs and requested this item be deferred to next meeting.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members acknowledged Cllr Lee's actions and await update.

6. **TENDER PROCESS 2013-14**

6.1 Members had been circulated with papers for their consideration, amendment and approval. It was noted there are now nine contracts for tender and the advertisement should reflect the diversity of skill base required and therefore advertised outside of Meriden Village, via Balsall Common's Bugle, Solihull News, Solihull Sustain along with the Meriden Mag. The tender application deadline is 13th December 2013.

IT WAS RESOLVED In the first instance the Clerk was requested to obtain a cost from Solihull News. Cllr Weaver will contact Sustain.

6.2 Members had been circulated with new contract specifications supporting nine contracts. Cllr Haque suggested that the maintenance for Coronation Island and Yew Tree needed to be included.



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IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the content subject to the above addition and requested the Clerk to amend prior to the advertisement being sent to Meriden Mag for 4th November print deadline.

6.3 Delegated Powers to Finance Committee

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the tender process and agreed this will be undertaken by the Finance Committee and Sports Park Directors.

7. **Progress Reports**

7.1 Village Hall Management Committee

- Cllr Lynch-Smith advised bookings have increased.
- Mrs Copper will be WW1 representative.
- There are issues with Packington Estate and the cost of car park maintenance due to tree roots and a request to assist with the cost of resolving the problem; the Village Hall Committee already pay 6K p.a. for car parking rights and garden/car park maintenance.

7.2 Community Governor for Meriden C of E School

Cllr Weaver acknowledged parking issues already raised by the Parent Council and this would be followed up with SMBC.

7.3 (i) War Memorials

Nothing to report.

7.3 (ii) Remembrance Day

Cllr P Lee thanked Rev Kate Massey for her input to Remembrance Day arrangements. A rehearsal is in place for Saturday to go over wreath laying; marshalling and road closure signs. Cllr Lee will put road closure signs out and everything is in place.

7.4 (i) Pool Tidy

The Clerk reported no further actions and she would continue working with Neighbourhood team and Rangers to complete phase 1 and secure funding for phase 2.

7.4 (ii) Pool Information Panel

Cllr M Lee informed Members that Doreen Agutter, local Historian, is happy to assist with this and a further visit will be arranged for the purpose of gathering historical information.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr M Lee will continue liaison with the Clerk and Doreen Agutter to progress an information panel.

7.5 (i) Allotment Representative



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Cllr M Lee reported that she and the Clerk met with the Allotment Association and noted no Taylor Wimpey attendance. The Allotment holders are happy with interim arrangement of the Parish Council being granted a temporary licence to 30th September 2015.

7.5 (ii) Allotment Tenancy & Rents

The Clerk confirmed a rent increase from £25.00 to £35.00 p.a. A new Tenancy agreement had been drafted and accepted by the Allotment Association and circulated to Allotment holders. Two signed agreements including payment have been received.

Members asked if the rent would cover the legal expenses incurred to set up this arrangement and if a water supply charge is also included. The Clerk confirmed that the rents for the next two years, with maximum take up, would just about break even; the water supply with STWA has been transferred to Taylor Wimpey for duration of this interim arrangement and full reimbursement has been received for the period 1st September 2012 to 18th July 2013.

Cllr Kipling stated that the Oddfellows Allotments have doubled their rent to £50.00 p.a. and they do not pay water, however he will check out and report back.

IT WAS RESOVLED The Clerk to liaise with Allotment Association and ensure allotments are rented and monitor the arrangement. Cllr Kipling to report at next meeting.

7.6 Footpaths/Forum

Cllr Lynch-Smith confirms she is still walking the footpaths, collecting data and photographing; there are some permissive paths that are not footpaths and a request is made for the landowners to look into. The Clerk has not yet purchased the Ordnance Survey map requested. Cllr Lynch-Smith continues her work with Mr Kearney, Solihull MBC footpaths officer regarding OS mapping and updates.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk is to order the current OS footpaths map.

7.7 Quarries Liaison Group

Cllr Weaver reported the Clerk continues her pursuit of operators not adhering to Hampton Lane signage. Members of the public present acknowledged the work and complimented the Parish Council on the reduced HGV vehicle movements through the Village.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to continue working with Operators and Residents to reduce quarry traffic through the village.

7.8 Solihull Area Committee – Cllr Weaver & Cllr M Lee.



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Cllr Weaver confirmed she and the Clerk attended a meeting on 24th October and shared with Members the new Charter for Better Working Between Solihull MBC and Parish and Town Councils dated October 2013 and signed off by Governance Board. This will now be rolled out to all Members, Parish and Town Councils, and SMBC officers. A presentation from Emma Mayhew and Chris Morris for SMBC's new website was informative and raised many questions from attendees not least access to TPO and footpath data electronically via SMBC portal. Cllr Weaver advised that she has accepted the role of elected Member County Committee Representative.

7.9 Tree Warden
Nothing to report.

7.10 Community Surgeries

There was no Resident attendance at October's surgery. The Clerk, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator and Community Police team are going to trial a combined community and beat surgery on Wednesday 6th November at the Pavilion to generate more interest.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to report on outcome of combined surgery.

7.11 Community Speed Watch

Cllr Weaver stated that SMBC are undertaking a speed watch on the Fillongley Road and she has volunteered to be part of this.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Weaver will update at next meeting.

7.12 HS2

Cllr Lynch-Smith informed the Members that meetings are on Wednesday evenings and due to a continued commitment on that night she is unable to attend and therefore has nothing to report.

8. Clerk's Report on Urgent Decisions since last meeting

The Clerk circulated to Members actions since last meeting and invited questions. There were no questions and Members expressed their thanks and acknowledged content.

9. District and County Councillors' Reports

Cllr Diccio confirmed nothing to report.

Members invited Cllr Diccio to support the Santa Fun Run.

10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1(i) Library Update

Cllr M Lee had requested a specification from Property Services for the 12K strengthening works required to the first floor and reported that she had received the following reply from Tracey Cox, Head of Library Services; "the budget proposals for



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14/15 will not be in the public domain until early January when they go before the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Board. Proposals would then normally be agreed at Full Council on 27 February 2014.

Unfortunately, I do not have a specification from Property Services that you could use to brief your local builders. However, I have asked Adrian Stringer - Senior Corporate Land & Property Manager, if he could assist with your enquiry."

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Lee will continue to pursue Property Services for specification and request quotations for comparison.

10.1 (ii) Historic Panels

Cllr M Lee stated that she had met with Doreen Agutter and requested this item be deferred as further visits are needed.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Lee will arrange further visits to Doreen Agutter.

10.2 Village Commemoration WW1

Cllr M Lee reported that nominations for representatives from local community groups had been received including Meriden School PTA, Brownies, Scouts, Village Hall Committee, Rotary, St Laurence Church, Methodist Church. Cllr P Lee reported that the British Army had been approached together with Meriden Spartans to put on an U-25's cricket match. Local football teams are being asked to get involved too. The Cyclists Memorial Event is confirmed as 18th May 2014 with the dedication from the Bishop of Warwick. The Clerk was requested to provide some dates for late November/early December and arrange the first planning Committee meeting, preferably on a Saturday to maximise attendance.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will contact local groups and arrange first meeting for a Saturday at the Pavilion.

10.3 Flooding, roads, crossing, bins, green, parking, trees/hedges

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

- Flooding
A public meeting is arranged for 13th November at the Pavilion for Neal Thomas to update residents prior to his leaving SMBC. He will be supported by Ian Shaw from STWA.
- Roads
A work in progress with Highways and Neighbourhood teams regarding on-going repairs and signage. A public meeting is arranged for Mr Chohan, Highways Engineer, on 5th November at the Pavilion, to speak with concerned residents regarding parking outside Manor Hotel and carriageway hatching.



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- Crossing
The pedestrian survey is being evaluated and the outcome of the pedestrian count will be known in November.
- Bins
Wendy Henry has agreed for a replacement fixed litter bin to be placed outside Post Office and the lamp post mounted bin will be removed and re-site opposite Meriden School.
- The Green Parking
Cllr Lee confirmed receipt of a letter from Mr Bradford, Highways Officer, acknowledging the Parish Council's opposition to the proposal for restricted parking on Main Road alongside the Green and the request to consider making parking available on Birmingham Road as identified in the Parish Plan and Visual Design Statement. Mr Bradford is to review however he requests any work undertaken to be funded by the Parish Council as there is no budget to support this request.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Diccico will follow this item up to alleviate parking issues.

- Trees/Hedges
This is a work in progress with landowners and households bordering Birmingham Road and Main Road. The Neighbourhood team are in the process of sending letters requesting the cut back of overgrown vegetation impacting on footpaths and highways.

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

10.4 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Weaver requested Members approval to start the neighbourhood plan process. With the Parish Plan and Visual Design Statement completed it is anticipated this exercise will not prove as onerous. Members suggested an advertisement in the Meriden Mag asking for volunteers to come forward to form a working party. The Clerk was requested to arrange a free training session with Kirkwells for February/March 2014. The Clerk confirmed starting a funding application for 6.7K towards a stakeholder event and publicity.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved moving forward and requested the Clerk to confirm training.

10.7 Santa Fun Run

Arrangements continue for the Santa Fun Run to take place on Saturday 8th December 2013. Members offered the Pavilion facilities for meetings and for the day, and marshalling duties.

IT WAS AGREED Members agreed on-going support from the Parish Council for this event.



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10.6 Leys Lane Update

The Clerk referred resident issues of overgrown hedgerow, HGV, traffic and general nuisance of site development works together with the erection of fencing, turfed entrance and sales portacabin complete with flags. All issues have been forwarded to Taylor Wimpey and resident reports indicate a favourable “open door” policy and proactive support. Members discussed the mud on Leys Lane and recommended a wheel wash be requested or at very least regular sweepers to remove surface mud and debris.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will contact Taylor Wimpey and the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator.

11. Meriden Sports Park

11.1 Meriden Sports Park Management Company

Cllr R Weaver advised Members that the Clerk had chased Wright Hassall regarding the completion of registration paperwork for Companies House. An email had been received confirming the matter was in hand and in the absence of Helen Samuels, Amelia Hardman was dealing with the matter. Cllr Weaver further informed Members that due to the delay in setting the Company up, a charge of 2.4K had been incurred by the Audit Commission as the Parish Council had to accept the transfer of Maxstoke Playing Fields funds into its bank account and therefore disclosed as income for financial year 2012-13.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members agreed Cllr Weaver and the Clerk to continue to bring the matter to conclusion.

11.2 Patrol Alarms CCTV

Cllr P Lee stated that DTZ had not responded to the Clerk’s request for a breakdown of costs and specification of installation. He further advised that SMBC was no longer paying DTZ (John Shaw) to assist with the Sports Park. Members requested the Clerk to contact Mike Swallow and David Waterson and obtain relevant information.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members requested the Clerk contact Mike Swallow and David Waterson to receive breakdown of costs and specification of installation and equipment for next meeting.

11.3 Packington Estate

Cllr M Lee advised Members that an email sent to the Clerk confirmed Mr Barlow was away on leave and therefore not able to provide any information on potential land and cost of rental. This item is deferred to next meeting.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will follow up with Packington Estate.

12. Planning Matters



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12.1 Neighbourhood Planning Applications

The Clerk confirmed all planning notifications had been circulated to Members for their comments and recorded electronically on Planning Services portal and in process. A request has been made for approval or decline of each to be notified to the Clerk.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will continue to monitor and notify Members.

12.3 Eaves Green Lane Public Enquiry

Nothing to report other than confirming the results of the Public Enquiry will be published in December.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr M Lee would continue monitoring the situation and liaise with relevant Officers.

13. **Parish Council Newsletter** Editorial Committee

Cllr Lee recommended that the newsletter be published in January which would provide an interim update of Parish Council news in between Meriden Mag winter and spring publications.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved Cllr Lee's recommendation of an end of January 2014 publication.

14. **Oil Painting & Kittermaster Collection**

Cllr M Lee informed Members she had seen the Kittermaster Collection during her recent visit to Doreen Agutter. It comprises pencil and water colour works that are old and delicate and would not withstand handling, comprising scenes of Meriden, St Laurence Church, Meriden House and areas of interest around the village. The aim is to preserve and exhibit. Cllr Lynch Smith suggested contacting museum advisors and calling the Birmingham Gallery for their assistance. Cllr Haque volunteered to get some help from an art professional friend. Cllr Lee will consult with Doreen Agutter who states that the Kittermaster family, now residing in Canada, after removing personal pictures, gave the collection to her but retain rights of ownership.

The Oil painting remains in the safe keeping of Cllr Kipling at the Heart of England Social Club until a permanent site can be found to hang and exhibit.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Lee to follow up as above.

15. **Councillor's reports and items for future agenda**

- Cllr Kipling stated he is extremely concerned regarding the volume, weight and size of articulated vehicles using Berkswell Road to and from Pettifors, Home Farm and Oak Farm; Berkswell Road is too narrow and not fit for purpose for 42 tonne vehicles. Rev Massey reinforced this concern using two recent accidents as examples. Cllr Kipling further stated that grassed verges



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were ruined with ground falling away onto the carriageway. Cllr Weaver suggested this may be a “Chair to Chair” contact with Berkswell Parish Council for joint actions.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr M Lee will follow up with Cllr G Locke, Chair of Berkswell PC for combined action.

- Cllr Lynch-Smith asked if the Clerk had written to the Rotary Club (Mr Ron Potter has volunteered to co-ordinate and organise) with information regarding setting up the rural cinema. The Clerk responded that it was an outstanding item as all information passed to Cllr Lynch-Smith was unable to be opened or passed onto Mr Potter.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to write to Rotary Club volunteer.

16. Correspondence & Communication for information share only
Cllr M Lee acknowledged circulation of documents between meetings and presented to Members the following:-

- An email received from Liz Willis regarding the Annual Carol Service requesting a change of time to 6pm on 21st December, and the erection of two gazebos on the Green to provide shelter and lighting for the Silver Band and hot refreshments including access to electricity supply. Members discussed arrangements and requested a risk assessment be undertaken and insurance confirmed prior to the event.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously approved the arrangements subject to satisfactory risk assessment and insurance, and offered the use of the Pavilion for car parking, toilets and a base for band members to drop bags, instrument cases etc., and any further support required.

- An email received from Rev Kate Massey advising of St Laurence’s first Christmas Tree Festival on 13th to 15th December inviting Parish Council participation.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members unanimously accepted the invitation and agreed to decorate a Christmas tree for the Festival.

- Cllr M Lee advised of North Warwickshire Borough Council’s Core Strategy public examination that is open from 7th January 2014. Further information can be found on the Core Strategy Examination page of the Council’s website www.northwarks.gov.uk

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will scan and circulate North Warwickshire’s letter providing examination dates.



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17. Parish Council meeting dates and venue

The Clerk circulated proposed meeting dates for 2014 and proposed change of venue. Members discussed and considered savings required for 2014, and the convenience to the Clerk of having wi-fi and access to files at Parish Council office. Members of the public commented their support if a financial saving was to be made. Cllr Lynch-Smith stated the Village Hall’s historical venue for Parish Council meetings and as such is the centre of the community; Members were unable to agree and consideration was needed for public participation and Annual meetings to accommodate larger numbers of participants. A compromise was to schedule four meetings in the Village Hall with the remainder in the Pavilion. The matter was put to a vote with a 6:2 majority in favour of the proposal.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the dates subject to amending 22nd December to 15th December and agreed 9 meetings at the Pavilion and 4 meetings at the Village Hall.

16. Date and time of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 25th November 2013 at 19.30 hours in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.40

Signed Cllr M Lee
Chair

Dated