



Meriden Parish Council

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Minutes of Meriden Parish Council Meeting held on 23 September 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

Public Participation

There were no members of the public in attendance.

1. Welcome & Apologies

Cllr M Lee opened the meeting and accepted apologies from Cllr M Nunn due to a prior arrangement and Cllr D Bell due to diary clash.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Chair accepted apologies.

Cllr Lee informed Members that she had attended an excellent Chair's Briefing session on effective chairing of meetings and encouraged all members to attend relevant WALC training courses.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members had nothing to declare; however it should be noted that Cllr Weaver declared an interest in item 9.2 traffic proposals for new parking restrictions for The Green which will affect residents in Cottages on Main Road.

3. Minutes of 22nd July 2013 an 19th August 2013

Members considered minutes of 22nd July and 19th August. Cllr Kipling proposed approval of minutes, seconded by Cllr P Lee.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members agreed minutes of 22nd July and 19th August 2013.

4. Progress Reports

4.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Nothing to report.

4.2 Community Governor for Meriden C of E School

Cllr Weaver advised a full Governor's meeting had been held setting agenda and committees for the new academic year.



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4.3 (i) War Memorials
Nothing to report.

4.3 (ii) Remembrance Day

Cllr P Lee reported disappointment that a letter dated 20/8 was actually received on 13/9 which was the deadline for application of road closure to Highways, Solihull MBC. Cllr Lee has sorted out application and all is in place.

Arrangements for the day include the Clerk and Councillors P Lee, M Lee, Weaver, Haque and Barber as Marshalls. Cllr Kipling will lay wreath. Cllr Lynch-Smith will represent Meriden PC at Solihull's Service. Cllr M Nunn will be photographer. Local community groups will be invited to Pavilion for refreshments and letters of invitation to be sent.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to write letters of invitation to local Community groups.

4.4 (i) Pool Tidy

The Clerk reported what a huge success this was. Unfortunately no volunteers from Meriden residents, but a wonderful team of volunteers from National Grid was supported by Bruce Brant and Chris Edgehill and his Park Rangers; note the new planting around culvert and Berkswell Road, painting of seats and noticeboard, tree bark to banking and general tidy up. Spring bulbs and wildflower seeds were also planted to start wildflower meadow to the left hand corner of the Pool. Please also note the new plants to the old public convenience site and general tidy up of tree debris.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members acknowledged the work of the Clerk in bringing together a working party and applaud the results with thanks to Rural Neighbourhood Officers and Rangers.

4.4 (ii) Pool Information Panel

Cllr M Lee informed Members that Doreen Agutter, local Historian, is happy to assist with this.

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

4.5 (i) Allotment Representative
Nothing to report.

4.5 (ii) Allotment Tenancy & Rents

Cllr M Lee informed Members that the Clerk had concluded temporary licence with Taylor Wimpey and Wright Hassall Solicitors.



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The Clerk stated a review of the current tenancy agreement and updating terms of tenancy and revision of rent to cover cost of the temporary tenancy licence for period 1st October 2013 to 30th September 2015; a meeting with Alan Gabbitas, Chair of Allotment Association, has been requested.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to undertake a review of existing tenancy agreement and research Borough and other Parish Council allotment rents and implement an increase for 2 year term 2013-2015. The Clerk will also set up meeting for allotment holders with Alan Gabbitas.

4.6 Footpaths/Forum

Cllr Lynch-Smith informed Members that she has started walking the footpaths and informed Members that she had recently tried walking footpath M237 between Queen's Head via Church Lane to Back Lane. There were a number of obstacles not least narrow gateways, no signage, farm entrances with no entry, beware of bull signage, no way through Church Lane to follow M237 footpath to its final destination. Cllr Lynch-Smith stated that she was recording and dating on OS map and commenting and photographing issues so this may be passed to footpaths officer. Cllr Kipling stated there should be a map with all footpaths recorded. Cllr P Lee asked if more signage was required with footpath numbers. Cllr Lynch-Smith stated that she will continue with her research and noted that footpath no. M267 appears not used but another path runs diagonally across a field coming out at Walsh Lane. Cllr Lynch-Smith continues her work with Mr Kearney, Solihull MBC footpaths officer regarding OS mapping and updates.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members acknowledged the excellent work carried out to date and agreed this will contribute to "Meriden Dog Walker's Guide". The Clerk is to order the current OS footpaths map.

4.7 Quarries Liaison Group

Cllr Weaver reported she attended the Quarry Liaison group meeting on 16th September together with the Clerk and Lynn Parker, resident representative. Operators are working with the Parish Council to reduce quarry traffic using the village and issuing 3 day bans. New signage is in place and Highways wish Operators to monitor and record drivers caught using Hampton Lane. A few residents are supporting the Clerk with recording registration numbers and emailing to operators. Operators also have letters and maps which are provided to hauliers confirming designated route.

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

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

Nothing to report and the next meeting will be 24th October 2013.



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4.9 Tree Wardens
Nothing to report.

4.10 Community Surgeries

The Clerk referred Members to Clerk's Actions with reference to Community surgery held on 9th September 2013, with Bruce Brant, Neighbourhood Co-ordinator. Resident issues included Taylor Wimpey; hedge removal on Leys Lane; collapsed drains and new table top Maxstoke Lane; re-surfacing of Maxstoke Lane; re-siting of Meriden Gate lamp-post; parking with designated bays including disabled vehicle; crumbling wall in walkway between shops and Arden/Alspath; parent/carer parking at Meriden School (ignoring yellow lines and blocking drives, specifically Highfield residents); traffic survey; Fillongley Road crossing; hedges/verges/litter; neighbour difficulties with agricultural equipment storage and footpath obstructions.

IT WAS RESOLVED All above actioned with relevant SMBC officers and work in progress. The Clerk to monitor issues and liaise with relevant SMBC officers for conclusion.

4.11 Community Speed Watch

Cllr Weaver stated she had been in contact with WM Police regarding further training and emailed dates to Cllrs Lynch-Smith and Barber. Cllr Weaver confirmed the use of photographic evidence for the police to action as long as it did not put Councillors at risk. A letter can then be sent from the police advising they had been speeding and adhere to speed limit when travelling through the village. Cllr Barber stated that he had "tested" flashing speed signs and they are on time sensors and continue flashing 35 yards after sign is triggered, therefore there is no proving that motorists are speeding at this point.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to contact to follow up at next Beat Surgery with PCSOs. Cllr Barber to attend next training session at Shirley Police Station.

4.12 HS2

Cllr Lynch Smith reported on the recent working party meeting on 5th September 2013 and reported on (i) the possible move of line further to the east around Chelmsley Wood; (ii) reduction to local impact and Solihull MBC are requested to carry out their own survey; (iii) Balsall Common tunnel is not intended in new route and is considered no advantage to Solihull MBC; (iv) visual and hydrogeological impact and rise of viaduct at Patricks Farm; (v) 10,000 new jobs are reported; (vi) recognise that HS2 development will impact on M42 corridor and therefore carriageway upgrade and widening scheme will be undertaken; (vi) complimentary, employment, accessibility, integration are all considered HS2 benefits to the region and local areas affected. For ease of reference please refer to web link below to access minutes:-

<http://www.solihull.gov.uk/akssolihull/users/public/admin/kab12.pl?cmte=HS2&meet=13&arc=71>



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IT WAS RESOLVED Members acknowledged Cllr Lynch-Smith's diligence and representation on the working party.

5. Oil Painting

Members considered an appropriate venue for the painting to hang; together with wishes to photograph and catalogue the Kittermaster Collection currently residing with Doreen Agutter, local Historian. Possibilities to be followed up by Cllr M Lee are on loan to Birmingham Library, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Manor Hotel, St Laurence Church. Cllr Lee to explore transfer of ownership to Parish Council and work with Doreen Agutter to draw down some Heritage funding.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Lee to explore options with Doreen Agutter.

6. District and County Councillors' Reports

Nothing to report.

7. Correspondence & Communication for information share only

The Clerk acknowledged circulation of documents between meetings and presented to Members the following:-

- (i) Acknowledgement from Meriden Charities of invoice to be reimbursed at next meeting of Trustees.
- (ii) Funding application from Castele Consultancy Limited for Table Tennis initiative supported by Solihull Sports Active.
- (iii) Rural Neighbourhood Newsletter.
- (iv) Localised Council Tax support 2014/15 from Solihull MBC.

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.

Cllr M Lee advised Members of the Clerk's meeting with Mr N Barlow, Packington Estate Manager, exploring options of suitable land for football/cricket pitches extending Meriden Sports Park to accommodate local demand. The Clerk explained two options (i) the field immediately behind Sports Park accessible from Millennium Way, and (ii) a field currently being restored mid-way along Hampton Lane. Both options will be shown to captains of football and cricket teams to ensure fit for purpose to meet league criteria for match play.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will meet Members on Saturday 5th October and show the options to take forward with Packington Estate and the financial consequences for Parish Council.



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9. Meriden Village Matters

Members noted the resurfacing programme issued by SMBC Highways for resurfacing works to commence on 26th and 27th September for Hampton Lane roundabout to Archery Road and Fillongley Road to Maxstoke Close.

Cllr Lynch-Smith asked if there had been any response to advertisement for a volunteer to transport and set up the rural cinema, to which the Clerk reported no response. Cllr Lynch-Smith asked if a letter had been sent to Rotary to explore their assistance. The Clerk responded no and will action accordingly.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk to write to Rotary Club.

9.1(i) Library Update

Cllr M Lee reported no update from Tracey Cox, Head of Library Services. Cllr Lee stated that she will obtain quotes for first floor strengthening and restoration based on Property Services specification which she will request.

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

9.1 (ii) Historic Panels

Cllr M Lee stated that Doreen Agutter is keen to help with putting together a historical and pictorial panel of Meriden's history and heritage. The Spar Shop has agreed for this to be sited on the wall of their premises facing the Library entrance.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Lee will pursue this matter with all parties.

9.2 (i) Bins

The Clerk reported the bins are emptied 3 times a week, Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Wendy Henry, SMBC have assessed the amount of litter and feel the amount of bins is more than adequate. SMBC however agree that the bin outside the post office could be replaced with a larger free standing bin and have placed an order and arrange for installation on arrival from our supplier. The bin opposite Showell Lane has been stolen, and as it is quite secluded SMBC are reluctant to replace but will continue to monitor the litter and reconsider their position.

9.2 (ii) Footpaths

The footway from Arden Close to Main Road should be cleansed weekly and Wendy Henry, SMBC have instructed the contractor to ensure this is happening and to carry out a weed spray.

Wendy Henry has also assessed the issues with the footpaths along Hampton Lane (Meriden Mile) and Birmingham Road, Millisons Wood, the verges along here are cut by flail four times a year and are due again in September, these are rural footpaths and are edged up every three years and we are informed they were edged up last winter. SMBC do not carry out any maintenance on the hedges.



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Bruce Brant suggests the Clerk adopt SMBC's "Love Where You Live" initiative which he will discuss at next Community Surgery.

9.2 (iii) Main Road

The Clerk reported the following from Mr D Chohan, SMBC Highways Officer. "Following a previous similar enquiry, I met a local resident on site on Wednesday, 28 August 2013. Hatched carriageway markings, within coloured red surfacing, are present between the westbound carriageway and the adjacent cycle lane in this direction on Main Road to try and provide better segregation between the two different types of road user. It was suggested that the hatching would be more appropriate along the centre line of the carriageway to provide better differentiation between the two opposing directions of traffic. A review of the coloured surfacing, which would include consideration of its removal or alteration, is likely to be considered in conjunction with a resurfacing scheme. However, at present the carriageway surface of Main Road is in a very good condition so it was not likely to be resurfaced for a considerable period of time."

Cllr Weaver suggested a meeting with householders to address issues with representation from SMBC Highways.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will continue communication with Mr Chohan and Mr Bradford and request public meeting for residents' attendance.

9.2 (iv) Hampton Lane

Highways are contacting Packington Estate and Lafarge Tarmac for their autumn schedule of maintenance together with Lafarge Tarmac to cut back hedges and trees.

9.2 (v) Service Road & Green

The Clerk shared information received from Ed Bradford, Highways Officer as follows:-

"SMBC are now in a position to progress this scheme as part of our 2013/14 Traffic Regulation Order works programme and as such we have drawn up Plan No. 7798 to show our initial thoughts. As the plan shows, we are considering maintaining the existing 1 hour limit on the parking bays outside of the shops. However, in order to address the concerns that have been raised, we are considering introducing a 3 hour limit in the parking area indicated on Main Road, effective Monday to Friday between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

It is our view that this would increase the opportunities available for those wishing to use the nearby shops and address the initial concerns that were raised with us. At the same time, we are also considering amending the existing single yellow line restriction on The Green to become double yellow lines.



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Given the width of the carriageway, it is our view that it is not appropriate for vehicles to park on this side of the road at any time, not just between the hours of 9am and 6pm.”

IT WAS RESOLVED Members requested the Clerk to arrange for a public meeting so plans may be shared and residents consulted with. The scheme received negative comments and not supported.

9.3(i) Village Commemoration for WW1

Cllr Lee is working on project tracing the names of those commemorated on the Memorial which is proving time consuming. A request was made for help and a suggestion to place an advertisement in the Meriden Mag for a genealogist(s) to come forward as this needs professionally researching, with a view to forming a working party and the eventual publishing of a history book and funding being secured from Lottery Heritage.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Lee will continue leading on this item.

At the last meeting Cllr P Lee suggested a Commemorative legacy and outlined twinning with a Belgian Village surrounding WW1 battlefields. Unfortunately current workload is not going to allow for further research. Cllr Weaver volunteered to explore options of twinning.

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr R Weaver will explore options for Meriden to twin with a Belgian village and report back at next meeting.

9.3 (ii) Community Group Letters

The Clerk confirmed that letters had been written and approved by Cllrs P Lee and Lynch-Smith and sent to some of the Community groups on the list she is working down.

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will circulate letters to Community groups.

9.4 Fillongley Road Survey

There was nothing to report.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members requested the Clerk follow up with Highways and advise SMBC actions at next meeting.

9.5 Meriden Roundabout Oak Tree & Memorial Stone

Cllr M Lee advised Members that communication with the Hunt family results in two options for consideration.

(i)The stone is set extremely solidly into the ground so would be difficult to excavate and move. The original inscription was engraved and then painted.



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The paint has long gone and the engraving is so badly worn that it cannot be re-cut. For a proper restoration the stone would need to be removed and have the surface milled smooth, the inscription re-cut and repainted from scratch, then returned to the site and securely set back into the ground. The stone is of such soft material that this restoration would only have a limited lifetime and in another 10 or 20 years the whole thing would need doing again. In principle this is possible because the stone is extraordinarily thick, but obviously the process cannot be repeated forever due to financial burden to the Hunt family.

(ii) The alternative is to leave the stone in situ and construct granite "veneer" that would be bonded (by dowels and a resin "glue") to the front of it as a new facing. The granite would be cut to exactly the right shape and size; the wording would look exactly as shown in the original photo, essentially lasting forever. The only downside would be that granite comes in a limited range of colours, so the facing would be more grey than brown. Although Mr Hill did not say this, I am guessing it might look more like a tombstone than a milestone, although choosing a suitable font might mitigate this. This is the cheaper option. It also carries less risk because there is no fear of damage to the original stone during excavation or transit.

Members agreed they support the Hunt family in arranging option (ii) and record their gratitude to the family for their financial support for this work to be undertaken.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the Hunt family to arrange and pay for restorative works in accordance with option (ii) above, to this Memorial and record the gratitude of Meriden Parish Council and the local community.

9.6 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Weaver informed Members she and the Clerk had taken the first steps towards looking at funding and training for Neighbourhood Planning. Cllr Kipling asked if this was a Parish Council requirement. Cllr Weaver replied that this is the next stage of the Parish Plan and Visual Design Statement shaping the future development of the Village and its environs. Cllr Weaver further stated that free training is available from Kirkwells and requested Members comments to drive this forward. Members considered and agreed Cllr Weaver and the Clerk to follow up.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved Kirkwells Training and letter of invitation to local residents in the Meriden Mag to attend. The Clerk will make all necessary arrangements for the New Year and complete funding application for financial support to host stakeholder events.

9.7 Santa Fun Run

The Clerk informed Members that the Santa Fun Run will take place on Saturday 8th December 2013. Arrangements are based on last year and the Clerk will be liaising with Tony Hill and John Baker, Rotary organisers.



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IT WAS AGREED Members agreed that the Parish Council will support this event and offer the Pavilion, Sports Park and themselves as Volunteers/Marshalls.

10. Leys Lane

10.1 Taylor Wimpey Development Update

Cllr M Lee advised nothing to report. The Clerk confirmed transfer of responsibility for STWA water supply for allotments had been accepted by Taylor Wimpey from 18th July 2013 and full reimbursement of charges have been received for period 1st September 2012 to 17th July 2013.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved Clerk's actions.

11. Meriden Sports Park

Cllr M Lee informed Members that Spartans Cricket Club wish to have the Sports Park as their home ground for season 2014 for matches played on Saturdays and Sundays and 20/20 matches played on Tuesdays giving 30 matches in total at a cost of £1650 p.a. with a minimum of 50% paid if rain stops play as the Sports Park needs a minimum season fee to cover pitch maintenance. Cllr Lee further stated that Solihull Municipal are on a season's notice and will need to find another home ground for 2015.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved Spartans Cricket Club and fee income.

11.1 Meriden Sports Park Management Company

Cllr R Weaver advised Members that she and the Clerk had met with Mark Lewis and Helen Samuels, Wright Hassall, to conclude Companies House Registration in light of the lack of help by SMBC Legal Affairs team. Cllr Weaver explained that Cllr M Lee is required to sign on behalf of Meriden Parish Council which will afford weighted voting; and the Company set up required another Director to be nominated. Cllr Weaver proposed Cllr J Barber as the fourth Director due to his football links and groundwork undertaken and Cllr P Lee seconded the proposal.

Cllr Weaver confirmed:-

- Subscribers - Meriden Parish Council, Cllr R Weaver, Cllr P Lee, Mr M Askey.
- Directors - Cllr R Weaver, Cllr P Lee, Mr M Askey and Cllr J Barber.
- Company Secretary - Mrs B Bland

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved (i) Cllr Weaver and the Clerk to continue the registration process to its conclusion; (ii) Cllr J Barber be appointed Sports Park Director (iii) Mrs B Bland – Company Secretary.

11.2 Patrol Alarms CCTV

Cllr P Lee informed Members that he was in receipt of a proposal for modifications to existing system. Cllr Kipling asked why after two years was there a need to update and modify CCTV.



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Cllr Lee replied that the current system is not fit for purpose; however prior to any modifications being undertaken, a copy of the original specification is requested together with the breakdown of cost of installation. This item is deferred to next meeting.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members requested the Clerk contact John Shaw, DTZ, and obtain specification of installation and equipment for next meeting.

11.3 Rateable Value Assessment of Sports Park

The Clerk informed Members that David Waterson had requested Members acceptance of rates for period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014; and confirmed SMBC has waived original rates bill for period 1st August 2011 – 31st March 2012 and 1st April 2012 – 31 March 2013. The Clerk further confirmed that an application has been made for small business relief. Cllr Weaver asked if there was a further reduction with charitable status and why were we paying rates?

IT WAS RESOLVED The Clerk will contact SMBC's income and awards to clarify position and chase up valuation office for small business relief outcome.

12. **Parish Council Newsletter** Editorial Committee

It was agreed that the Editorial Committee will meet on Saturday 5th October 2013 at Pavilion. Cllr Haque stated her commitment to assisting with the newsletter.

13. **Planning Matters**

13.1 Neighbourhood Planning Applications

Members acknowledged receipt of the following planning applications for their consideration circulated by the Clerk between meetings. Applications awaiting outcome are 2013/1541, 2013/1471, 2013/1085, 2013/1368, 2013/1135.

The Clerk informed Members that a further planning application had been submitted by Budget Skips, Fordson Farm, application no. 2013/1498 re. formation of access driveway from lane to yard area and erection of raised helve five bar field gates and 1m high flanking brick walls to road frontage. Cllr Kipling asked if the Clerk had received status of previous application, which was negative. Members agreed that their previous opposition remains unchanged and should be recorded accordingly.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved Clerk's actions.

13.2 Jephson Housing Association

Cllr Weaver reported that she and the Clerk had met with Jo Welch, Jephson Housing, Rachel Batts and Mark Colyer from Solihull MBC, for them to explore options for future development of land owned by Jephson.

Cllr Weaver, on behalf of the Parish Council reiterated there would be no support of another housing development and summarised the following actions;



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(i) Jephson is to reflect on outcome of meeting and put together an outline plan of potential number of single storey dwellings or 2 storey apartments ground floor being adapted for disabled residents, access route from Birmingham Road and landscaping of grounds for community use under an enabling scheme to enhance housing opportunities for plus 55s linked to The Firs; and
(ii) Solihull MBC will investigate caravan and garage land ownership on Birmingham Road and confirm current planning consent and any expiry or re-submission; and (iii) Meriden Parish Council stated identification of need for senior housing within the Parish Plan and Visual Design Statement; however it was reaffirmed that the Parish Council would not support any development unless it met local and community need. Cllr Weaver reiterated that any future development on this land would fall under the Rural Exceptions Policy

IT WAS RESOLVED Cllr Weaver will lead on this issue and keep Members informed. Members recorded their unanimous opposition to any future development.

13.3 Eaves Green Lane Public Enquiry
Nothing to report.

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

14. **Finance**

14.1 Receive and approve September payments.

Cllr Kipling proposed approval of payments seconded by Cllr P Lee.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved September payments.

14.2 Chair's Allowance

Members considered and approved payment.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved payment of Chair's allowance.

14.3 SLCC Membership Subscription

Members considered an approved renewal of SLCC membership.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved renewal of subscription.

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

Each Councillor is requested to use this opportunity to report minor matters of information not included elsewhere on the agenda and to raise items for future agendas. Councillors are respectively reminded that this is not an opportunity for debate or decision making.

There were no Member requests for items to be included for October's agenda.



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Cllr Lynch-Smith wished to record a vote of thanks to Cllr David Bell for his attendance at Meriden Parish Council meetings. Members unanimously agreed and also offered Cllr Tony Diccico their thanks for his attendance at recent public meetings relating to flood issues. Any other Councillors who represent Meriden Ward are welcome to attend.

16. Date and time of next meeting

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday 28th October 2013 at 19.30 hours in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 21.37

Signed Cllr M Lee
Chair

Dated