

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
Virtual Meeting via Member Zoom Conferencing commencing at 7.30 p.m.

<b>Present:</b>			
Cllr R Weaver BEM	Chair	Cllr M Woollard	
Cllr J Barber	Vice Chair	Cllr A Eburne	
Cllr J Hughes			
Mrs B Bland	Clerk		

**In attendance: Cllr Dicicco**

**There were 3 members of the public in attendance. There was no live streaming of meeting on Facebook, however the meeting was recorded.**

**1. Welcome & Apologies**

Chair welcomed Members and members of the public. Apologies received from Cllrs Allsopp, Howell and Kipling. The non-attendance without apology of Cllr Nunn is recorded. The meeting is being recorded however FB live streaming is not working.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members accepted apologies from Cllrs Allsopp, Howell and Kipling; recording the non-attendance without apology of Cllr Nunn.

**2. Public Participation**

There were no questions for the meeting.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

3a To declare any personal interests in items on the agenda and their nature.  
None.

3b To declare any prejudicial interests in items on the agenda and their nature  
None.

**4. Minutes of Last Meeting – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 were agreed as an accurate record. All matters arising are covered in the agenda.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** The minutes of the meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 were approved; proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Woollard.

**5. Finance**

The Clerk circulated finance committee minutes of 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021 a copy of which may be accessed on the website and payments.

**5.1 March Payments**

Parish Council April payments amounting to £3,623.01 had been circulated for Member’s approval including staff costs.

**Signed .....** Chair **Dated .....**

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**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved £3,623.01 for April. Proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Barber. The confidential staff costs (not for public circulation) approved by Cllr Barber and seconded by Cllr Hughes.

Sports Park April payments amounting to £4,688.85 had been circulated for Member's approval.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved £4,688.85 for April. Proposed by Cllr Barber and seconded by Cllr Woollard.

## 5.2 Finance Committee

Finance committee met earlier this evening. A summary as follows:-

- Internal Controls  
Asset Register to be updated; Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, Code of Conduct and Scheme of Delegation to full council for approval 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021;  
Internal audit in progress with no major issues raised to date.
- Scheme of Delegation  
The scheme to meet remotely concludes on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021 with High Court judgement awaited if scheme can continue. If there is no ruling to continue this could mean parish and town councils cannot make decisions without meeting face to face. The dates of May's Annual Meeting and Parish Council Meeting have been brought forward to 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021. WALC's legal advice is to delegate power to the clerk on a number of issues if we are unable to meet for 2/3 months (step 4 of road map out of lockdown is not until 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021). Therefore recommendation to increase powers to the clerk as follows:
  - (i) Increase spending to £10,000 limit;
  - (ii) To be named person for planning and finance committees and these committees to be renamed working groups so remote meetings may continue for consultation only with the clerk but no decision making to be undertaken;
  - (iii) This process to be put in place until Annual Meeting May 2022 or until such time as a legal full council resolution to amend or discontinue this practice.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members considered the Scheme of Delegation recommendation by Finance Committee and agreed this practice. Proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Barber.

## **6. Progress Reports**

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee  
Nothing to report.

6.2 War Memorials  
Nothing to report.

**Signed** ..... **Chair**      **Dated** .....

6.2(i) Heritage Monuments & Memorial Funding

We await Conservator's reponse for National Cyclists Memorial funding.

6.3 Meriden Pool

Following the actions of SMBC drainage team, their Principal Engineer has advised nothing out of the ordinary has been found in the area of the Pool. Further information will be made available regarding longer term maintenance of the feed to the Pool as part of the wider drainage scheme for Meriden.

**Action: Ed Bradford Principal Engineer SMBC**

6.3(i) Friends Group

Nothing to report.

6.3(ii) Management & Funding

Nothing to report.

6.4 Allotments

Nothing to report.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum

Hampton Lane has increase dog fouling; areas of pavement need resurfacing and due to overgrowth, pedestrians are walking onto highway to social distance.

There are also large divets on footpaths linking slip road to A45.

**Action: Clerk to email Footpaths Officer/Highways**

There has been a message from National Sheep Association via Charlie Beatty, Advising the importance of keeping dogs on leads when using public footpaths Across fields of livestock in light of an incident at the weekend. Also for dog Owners to collect dog fouling as this can cause illness to livestock and take lives. The new National Code for the Countryside will be posted onto Facebook.

**Action: Cllr Hughes & Cllr Eburne.**

6.6 Quarry Liaison Group

The QLG is yet to meet. There is on-going work with residents around dust and air quality monitoring. The EA have sent their technical and summary reports; Members request a meeting with the EA so they may provide an overview of the technical report.

**Action: Clerk**

General discussion continued with the focus being on there is a lot going on at the quarry and we need to start quizzing operators around issues of noise and dust. Objections have been sent in by residents on the latest A & A application for retrospective permission for hardstanding. There is not enough evidence for further hardstanding for HGVs and trailers.

**Signed .....** Chair **Dated .....**

The QLG is a voluntary group ; there are no conditions placed upon operators to attend these meetings and the parish council is without any influence to request operators to participate in the QLG. A suggestion is to invite landowners Berkswell, Packington and Harworth Estates to a meeting with the parish council and interested parties to understand the complexity of operations and responsibilities of landowners to the local community. The parish council and district councillors are being contacted regularly by residents regarding quarry operations. The general opinion is that we need to mitigate the effects of quarry operations, influence good practice conditions within each planning application and reticence by planning officers.

**Action : Cllr Hughes/Cllr Dicicco**

#### 6.7 Solihull Area Committee

The SAC have met with the following 3 themes as its focus:-

- (i) Enforcement Officer Steve Wilkinson provided an overview of planning conditions/applications. Any member of the public who wishes to report may call him direct on 0121 704 6345. There are only 2 officers serving the Borough and currently there is a backlog of 176 outstanding cases to deal with. It was noted that there have been 5/6 recent CLUED applications resulting in retrospective permissions granted.  
**Action: Cllr Dicicco to request more officers.**
- (ii) Covid infection rates decreased including admissions to hospital. Public Health notifications continue. Anyone can now get a Lateral Flow Test kit from local pharmacy free.
- (iii) Adverts will be circulated soon for Commonwealth Games volunteers in June/July. The parish council will promote on their website. If anyone is interested then complete these applications after which there will be no further opportunity to volunteer.

#### 6.8 Tree Warden & TPO List

Nothing to report.

#### 6.9 "Tea & Talk"

The next Tea & Talk for residents will be hosted by Cllr Eburne and Cllr Woollard on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 11.00 to 12 noon. PCSO Hawkins and PCSO Murdoch will attend this forum.

**Action: Cllr Hughes.**

#### 6.10 Community Speed Watch

The initiative is being restructured so it is volunteer led. Thank you to all volunteers for their perseverance and keeping it going.

**Action: Cllr Barber.**

#### 6.11 HS2

**Signed .....** Chair **Dated .....**

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There are concerns at what HS2 are doing to the environment; taking down trees and hedgerows. We need to be more proactive in asking what they are doing and when tying HS2 down with what they are getting away with and confirming licences have been obtained from Natural England for this purpose. The haul route of Hall Meadow Road, Station Road and Kelsey/Waste Lanes is not coming to planning committee in the next week or so and is delayed until May 2022; there are highway safety issues for residents with not enough evidence to support this haul route. 400/day HGVs proposed to use haul route of Kelsey Lane. Cllr Howell is working with local community opposing this operation. LM contractors currently undertaking construction works but with BBV coming on board construction works will go up a notch and it will get worse.

Cllr Diccio chairs the IAG (advisory group) until 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021; he has written to officers and HS2. There will be a new chair of IAG and we have reached a critical phase now with volumes of increased lorries and emissions. There are reports of residents asking HS2 operatives what they are doing, and having to put up with rude and dismissive answers. There is a code of conduct that construction operatives should be adhering to. One small gain is that all construction traffic will be Euro-compliant in the construction of the line and viaduct in Balsall Common. Air quality monitoring to be installed and as soon as maximum levels reached they work is to be stopped.

**Action: Cllr Diccio**

6.12 Meriden Sports Park  
Nothing to report.

6.13 Meriden Sport & Recreation Trust  
Nothing to report.

## **7. Clerk's Report**

Clerk reported all matters included in Agenda.

## **8. District and Ward Councillor Reports**

SMBC focus is on the Local Plan Review and HS2. Talking to residents about diversion of traffic for Fillongley Road Bridge repairs. Paul Tovey, Head of Highways to modify diversion routes. There has been no comms strategy and no consultation has been undertaken with members of the public regarding the proposed diversion routes. We need to mitigate the possible grief to the local community with safety being a priority. Engagement with residents, local community, parish council is necessary. A meeting is planned for around 17<sup>th</sup> May by the Comms Team to brief Borough Councillors. The parish council request an invitation so we are included in this briefing. Residents should be able to feed into this process too including the farming community who will find the proposed diversion route difficult to navigate.

**Signed .....** Chair **Dated .....**

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Residents have not had details of the NDP Referendum and this was omitted from the polling cards sent out. This has been queried with the monitoring officer who confirms the printer could not do 4 voting papers on one card and NDP was not put in postal pack. A separate voting card will be sent out.

**9. Correspondence & Communication**

Nothing to report.

**10. Meriden Village Matters**

**10.1 Meriden Library**

We met with Library Services and the Library future has been brought to a shuddering halt! SMBC property services have decided that despite 7 years of discussion with the parish council, the Library will need major structural works to strengthen the first floor but also the fire regulations are so extensive that it will be impossible to enable the upstairs to be used. Feelings of disappointment, exasperation, shoddy and poor communications by SMBC officers leave the parish council feeling thoroughly let down.

**10.2 Village Commemoration**

**10.2(i) VE75**

Deferred to 2022.

**10.2(ii) Platinum Jubilee 2022**

Deferred to 2022.

**10.3 Meriden Gate**

Nothing to report.

**10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)**

Nothing to report.

**10.5 Highways**

We have met with Highways, Mr Keaney, who provided an update on the traffic calming measures including Leys Lane. Briefly the scheme involves introducing a physical restriction approximately half way down Leys Lane, to prevent traffic from using the lane as a cut through. There are 3 options to consider as follows:-

- (i) An experimental order likely to commence in June 2021 despite the abnormal traffic. Residents will be notified in advance but the actual consultation starts only once the order has gone live. The consultation lasts for 6 months so would be live during the period that Fillongley Road is closed at the bridge. This means the experiment would not be in place during typical road conditions and so residents are unlikely to see the true effect. It will also create a longer diversion for those residents at the top of

**Signed .....** **Chair**      **Dated .....**



- Fillongley Road who would already be inconvenienced by the closure of Fillongley Road.
- (ii) Proceed at this stage with consultation on a permanent order referencing the survey data and open the consultation up to the Village, considering all representations before making a decision. The consultation will be undertaken before any changes are made o the ground however feedback is likely to be based on the perceived impact rather than actual.
  - (iii) Delay the implementation of the experimental order until such time that the Fillongley Bridge work is completed, approximately 12 months, and then undertake the closure and consultation in a real world traffic environment which will aid an evidenced based approach to be taken.

The was discussion and consideration for option 1 being the experimental order. However before Members agreed they wished clarification from Mr Keaney that if the consultation proved negative to have negative impact then can the scheme be pulled?

**Action: Clerk to contact to Mr Keaney and report back at next parish council meeting.**

10.5(i) Litter

Thank you to volunteers who are litter picking on their walks. Discussion around “Adopt a Street” initiative for litter picking. Volunteers can pick a specific street. Solihull is not part of this initiative and Love Solihull Team, Sarah Jones, to be contacted for assistance.

**Action: Cllr Woollard**

There is more evidence of fly tipping. Fillongley Parish Council has contacted the clerk regarding the layby at Kinwalsey Lane being used for this purpose. Residents have spoken to the clerk and two have sent photographs of cars emptying boots of black sacks into the layby. Photographs of vehicles, persons and registration numbers have been sent to SMBC and West Midlands Police to follow up. More evidence is needed to have covert cameras installed; the numbers of fly tippers increases and SMBC is being urged to prosecute. SMBC replied that the SLA for removal of fly tipping is 7 working days. If evidence is found and investigation pursues then removal may take longer.

Availability at the public waste disposal site at Bickenhill is currently a 3-4 week appointment lead time. More slots are needed to reduce fly tipping. Improvements for commercial vehicle use also needs to be reviewed. Discussion continued around Combined Authority relaxing commercial waste costs; Andy Street leading on behalf of the Combined Authority to tackle regional fly tipping and organised commercial gangs.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

Nothing to report.

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10.7 Local Council Award Scheme

A work in progress.

**Action: All**

10.7(i) Website

Disappointing not to have received the funding from Heart of England Fund for the digital review. More funding has been made available and advice has been asked for so we can submit the same bid again.

**Action: JB/RW/JH/BB.**

10.8 Meriden Public & Community Transport

Nothing to report.

10.9 Dementia Friends/First Aiders/Dementia & Autism Training

Nothing to report.

10.10 Business Network

Nothing to report.

10.11 Millison's Wood Telephone Box & Emergency Response (Defibrillator)

Work in progress.

**Action: Clerk**

**11. Planning Matters**

11.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Referendum 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Banners/posters displayed around Parish.

11.1(i) Locality Funding Bid

Nothing to report.

11.2 Planning Application Status Updates

Planning meeting scheduled for 2pm 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 with 4 applications to consider.

**Action: Planning Committee**

11.3 Parish Action Plan & Business Plan

All signed off and on website.

**Action: RW/Clerk.**

11.4 Solihull Local Plan Review

Nothing to report.

**12. Climate Change**

Nothing to report. Will be included in Annual Assembly.

**Action: Cllr Hughes**

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**13. Youth Council**

Nothing to report. Will be included in Annual Assembly.

**Action: Cllr Hughes**

**14. Council Development Day**

The next Development Day will be held in the summer post step 4 lockdown restrictions 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

**Action: All**

14.1 Apprenticeship/Trainee Scheme

Deferred to end of current lockdown.

**Action: All**

**15. Annual Parish Assembly**

The Annual Assembly is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021 at 7pm. Anyone can join via zoom link displayed on website and noticeboards. There will be a presentation on different areas of our work to date.

**Action: Cllr Weaver/Cllr Hughes/Clerk**

**16. Casual Vacancy (Co-Option)**

There were three applicants; one withdrew the day of interviews. Two candidates were interviewed both very capable. The personnel committee recommend to full council that Mrs C Smith be elected co-opted member of the parish council. A welcome was given to Mrs Smith who was attending; an appointment letter will be sent together with an induction pack including legal requirements and code of conduct, and acceptance of office.

The unsuccessful candidate will be notified and invited to work with the parish council as a co-opted resident representative to working groups as he has a wide range of knowledge beneficial to the parish council team.

**Action: Clerk**

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members considered personnel committee recommendation and approved the appointment of Mrs C Smith as co-opted member of the parish council. Proposed by Cllr Barber and seconded Cllr Woollard.

**17. Community Champions**

17.1 COVID-19

Infections are down including hospital admissions. Do not drop your guard and do not become complacent in this transition from lockdown.

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

Nothing to report.

**Signed .....** Chair **Dated .....**

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**19. Date of Next Meeting**

The next **Annual Meeting and Parish Council meeting** will be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021 at 19.30 hours via Zoom.

There will be no June meeting due to the High Court ruling that remote meetings will cease for Government and Council Bodies after 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021. There will be a shortened agenda for the parish council meeting to clear essential and urgent business only. A scheme of delegation to the clerk will be adopted until further notice.

An invitation is to be extended to Mr Williams, Alder Mill, for overview of proposed new planning application for Coleman’s Yard site.

**Action: Clerk**

The meeting closed at 20.55. Thank you to all attendees.

**Signed .....** **Chair**      **Dated .....**

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