

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2021  
Virtual Meeting via Member Zoom Conferencing commencing at 7.30 p.m.

<b>Present:</b>			
Cllr R Weaver BEM RW	Chair	Cllr M Woollard MW	
Cllr J Barber JB <i>(Left meeting 19.45-20.15)</i>	Vice Chair	Cllr R Kipling RK	
Cllr J Hughes JH		Cllr A Eburne AE	
Mrs B Bland BB	Clerk		

**In attendance: Cllr Dicicco**

**There were members of the public in attendance; meeting streaming live.**

**1. Welcome & Apologies**

Chair welcomed Councillors, members of the public and invited guests. Apologies received from Cllr Nunn due to family bereavement. Condolences sent to Cllr Nunn from the Team at this sad time. Apologies also received from Cllrs Allsopp and Howell. The meeting was being live streamed and RW thanked all members of the public for logging in.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members accepted apologies from Cllrs Nunn, Allsopp and Howell.

**2. Public Participation**

Chair welcomed HS2 team and thanked them for providing their update presentation. Updates are provided quarterly and posted onto parish council website and also appears on HS2 Solihull website. Local community representatives are invited for Construction Committee which is a steering group of local residents.

The full and detailed presentation can be found on parish council website under HS2.

The following Q & A followed:-

- RW asked about more pedestrian walkways/footpaths and cycle ways and is this in line with SMBC's Cycling Strategy?

HS2 replied this will be taken back to the team to map and report back.

**Action: Fiona Woolston**

- RW stated large numbers of people working on HS2 sites including vehicle movements; more rubbish is collecting in hedgerows particularly bottles. Can personal be reminded to take their rubbish home!

**Action: Fiona Woolston**

- Cllr Dicicco reiterated the litter problem locally specifically A452 to Balsall Common. HS2 workers have increased and discarded litter is becoming very bad on HS2 routes. The leader of the council, Ian Courts, who lives locally has recently commented on the high levels of litter along highways, carriageways and hedgerows.

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

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He continued with the tree clearance around the Aston Martin garage at Bradnocks; the litter issues needs to be looked at because with the removal of so many trees the litter problem has been exacerbated.

FW responded that HS2 have driver facilities that includes the lorry park at Lincoln Farm. She will circulate reminders to managers to direct their teams to not litter from cabs/vehicles.

**Action: Fiona Woolston/Nick Cuming**

- RW reminded HS2 that we continue into 3<sup>rd</sup> lockdown with safe distancing and the wearing of masks being the norm; HS2 drivers who use the village shops and takeaway facilities are entering premises without masks, and if exempt then it is not obvious because they are not wearing lanyards.

**Action: Fiona Woolston to remind drivers of their responsibilities when accessing local community facilities and retail.**

- Rachel Johnson noted questions in the chat, which she will take away and a formal response will be emailed to the clerk for circulation, which she is happy to do outside of this forum.

**Action: Rachel Johnson**

Chair thanked the HS2 team for their attendance and looks forward to welcoming back in 3 months times.

Chair welcomed David Keaney, SMBC Highways; who thanked the parish council for their invitation and proceeded to give the following summary update to the questions received from the clerk on the items raised as follows:-

- Leys Lane consultation

Proposed scheme to restrict through traffic 2021-2022 being developed on Common Place portal. There are differing impacts with initial surveys identifying 700/800 vehicle movements in 12 hour period with 80% being through traffic. Potential impact on wider area. Bringing forward plans for April 2021 consultation to steer experimental order initially for temporary impact or permanent order. Impact will be to Main Road and Fillongley Road.

- 20mph speed limit through Village Centre

This has been extended from its introduction at outset of 2020 Covid to end September 2021. There will be a review of all speed limits and potentially this could be made permanent. There are similar requests from Balsall Common to make this permanent. Cllr Hawkins is widely supporting this initiative with public consultation.

- Resurfacing works Old Road and Harvest Hill

These are not schemes for active plans and fall into community aspirations for resurfacing.

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



- Fillongley Road Bridge and diversion

The enabling works end in March 2021. Main works will end July 2021.

- Farming community concerns regarding Bridge repairs, length of closure time, diversion routes – impossible for movement of machinery during harvesting (combines) and silage seasons (large tractors and trailers). SMBC not communicating with farmers?

The communications team have engaged with the local farming community and will continue to do. DK will take back farmer’s concerns regarding diversion routes, safe transportation of farm machinery etc, access to Arnold farm weighbridge.

- Completion of Fillongley Road traffic calming including looking at impact on Kittermaster Road

All lining and signage works ordered and to be installed as soon as weather has improved probably towards end March 2021; it has been difficult to navigate as just too wet.

- Carriageway refresh of markings

This is programmed for 2020/2021 tranche update. Cycling update to Birmingham Road with segregated cycle facilities.

- EATF Tranche 2 – outcome

As of today launched proposals for Tranche 2 scheme.

- Parking restrictions including Cabinet outcome for Leys Lane and Disabled parking bays

Both Leys Lane and Disabled parking bay prioritised.

- Enforcement – more officer presence around 3-6 pm daily

Referred to Paul Tovey for action. Await update.

- Improved walking route from Berkswell Road to Berryfields Farm Shop

The improved walking route is part of the HS2 Road Safety Scheme with consultations and funding investment. The parish council supports this proposal as safe access to footpaths and farm shop.

- Cycle lanes and decreasing width of Birmingham Road to slow traffic

Temporary Cycle Lanes Consultation. The three new temporary cycle lanes proposed are Blossomfield Road to Solihull Town Centre, Knowle High Street to Solihull Town Centre and Meriden to Millisons Wood. Consultation closes on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021. The aim of these temporary cycle lanes is to get more people out and about on bikes, increasing their confidence to cycle safely whilst at the same time benefiting the environment. Recent consultation told us that safety concerns are one of the key barriers to taking up cycling.

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

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The high quality segregated cycle provision that we plan to introduce is designed with safety in mind and makes use of and improves existing road space where possible.

- Damage to Village Green but too large vehicles using service road – can a width restriction be placed at entrance of service road?

To be advised.

The following Q & A followed:-

- Clarification of walking route from Meriden Pool to Berryfields?

DK confirmed due to width restrictions on Berkswell Road. HS2 Road Safety Fund could provide financial support as it will be an expensive scheme.

- Pavements on Berkswell Road is a potential aspiration?

DK confirmed and advised open to exploring options and nothing would happen without consultation.

- Cllr Diccico stated SMBC is trying to improve cycling and walking routes across the Borough. There is much speeding on Showell Lane, Eaves Green Lane, Lodge Green Lane raised by concerned residents. It is difficult to know how to slow down cars.

DK advised there will be a review of speed limits but drivers do not always adhere to speed limits in rural locations. It is a wide area and remains a community programme for traffic calming.

- RK recommends leaving the Leys Lane through traffic restrictions until after the Fillongley Road Bridge repairs are concluded. Who enforces the 20mph speed limit?

DK takes on board recommendation; he added the 20mph speed limit is an emotive subject that does not really have the desired impact with traffic continuing to travel at 35-40 mph. However it does make a difference and reduces risk.

- RK reported the roads around the quarries are disgraceful with vegetation and carriageways covered in mud. This has been brought to Mr Wigfield's attention numerous times without satisfactory action.
- AE describe an incident involving herself when out running and on approaching quarry entrance was covered in mud from passing HGVs.
- RW added the 20mph temporary signs need replacing with semi-permanent signs. There have been some awful near misses with pedestrians walking in the road to safe/social distance.

DK replied that the semi-permanent signs will be installed shortly. He further added that more information is required on the programme of works for Fillongley Road Bridge and more consultation is necessary on the diversion routes and engagement with the farming community. There is also dialogue with colleagues from Coventry and Warwickshire as the Bridge is right on the border and any diversion routes, and programme of works must be planned at an appropriate time to minimise disruption. All updates will continue via the clerk to circulate.

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

RW thanked Mr Keaney and Highways colleagues and emphasised the parish council appreciation for their support to Meriden's traffic management.

**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 – 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 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 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were approved; proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Kipling.

**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 February Payments**

Parish Council February payments amounting to £4,255.65 had been circulated for Member's approval including staff costs.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved £4,255.65 for February. Proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Woollard.

Sports Park February payments amounting to £4,520.90 had been circulated for Members approval.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members approved £4,520.90 for February. Proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Woollard.

**5.2 Finance Committee**

Chair reported the finance committee met on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021. Finance Committee approved Version 2 Budget for financial year 2021-2022 and recommended to full council for approval. There were no questions. Approved by full Council.

**IT WAS RESOLVED** Members unanimously approved the Budget for financial year 2021-2022. Proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Woollard.

**6. Progress Reports**

**6.1 Village Hall Management Committee**

Nothing to report.

**6.2(i) Heritage Monuments & Memorial Funding**

Nothing to report.

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

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6.3 Meriden Pool  
Nothing to report.

6.3(i) Friends Group  
Nothing to report.

6.3(ii) Management & Funding  
Nothing to report.

6.4 Allotments  
Clerk reported a delivery of pallets from HS2 for allotment holders but the wood chip ordered had been recycled on site.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum  
Nothing to report.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group  
Chair and Cllr Hughes provided a summary update from recent meeting and complaints received :-

- On-going noise problems raised with SMBC, EA and Operators

Cllr Diccico advised the impact of the complaints have been raised with the EA, SMBC, MP and escalated to the CEO of SMBC.

A resident representative explained actions regarding the recent set of complaints as follows:-

- SMBC officer has been diligent and quick off the mark to determine source of noise as the shredding machines on the A & A operations. This has been referred to the EA.
- A letter to Saqib Bhatti MP with a response from EA within 5 hours.
- At 8am this morning the noise levels are higher than the last 2 weeks.
- EA Incident Team are undertaking site visits to determine noise levels and highlight times of day.
- There is confidence in the EA and residents are responding by reporting excessive noise to the incident line as requested.
- A referral has been made to MP and CEO of SMBC.

Cllr Diccico advised the CEO has taken resident's concerns seriously. He suggested the quarry liaison group puts pressure on operators in contravention of planning conditions leading to planning and enforcement intervention. Cllr Hughes replied that consistently concerns are raised to operators but without the support of officers present nothing gets done. There is a wider problem with planning not taking into account the cumulative impact of any new planning application for the quarry site. Chair stated the parish council and residents cannot hold the operators to account; this must come from LPA officers.

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

Cllr Kipling stated that during the last 30 years the parish council has raised issues with all quarry planning applications without any support from planning officers and feel very let down as the situation only gets worse. Resident raised the lack of transparency around some planning applications relating to variation of conditions which cannot be cut through or enforced. Cllr Hughes advised that Derbyshire and Staffordshire impose conditions and these can be put in to protect local communities.

Cllr Diccico advised he will feed back to SMBC parish council and residents disquiet around planning and enforcement to quarry operations.

**Action: Cllr Diccico and Cllr Hughes.**

6.7 Solihull Area Committee  
Chair advised the next meeting is April.

6.8 Tree Warden & TPO List  
Nothing to report.

6.9 "Tea & Talk"  
Chair and Cllr Hughes hosted a Tea & Talk session on 20<sup>th</sup> February which proved very useful. Collective comments from residents included:-

- Litter/Laybys A45;
- How we can do more joint work with Balsall Common re. litter/commercial waste;
- Regional/National feedback that fly tipping is very organised with the Police work ongoing to catch criminal gangs;
- Discarded litter from moving vehicles onto verges and highways with increased traffic from local HS2 sites.
- Community litter picking events on hold due to Pandemic and safe distancing;
- Next Tea & Talk will be 10<sup>th</sup> March @ 1 p.m. followed by 8<sup>th</sup> April @ 6.30 p.m. and both will be advertised.

**Action: Cllr Hughes.**

6.10 Community Speed Watch  
Nothing to report.

6.11 HS2  
Update as per presentation by HS2 Community Engagement Team.

6.12 Meriden Sports Park  
The next quarterly update will be March 2021.

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



6.13 Meriden Sport & Recreation Trust

The next joint Directors/Trustees meeting will be 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021. Cllr Hughes reported the investment fund had done well with UK market growth. The small grants programme will be re-run.

**7. Clerk's Report**

Clerk reported all matters included in Agenda.

**8. District and Ward Councillor Reports**

Cllr Diccico reported residents had contacted him regarding speeding traffic on Lodge Green Lane. It is a difficult situation and asked if Meriden Speed Watch could be carried out in the area. Chair replied that due to Covid Speed Watch Team had been unable to undertake their regular speed watch however the Police had continued to put in place Speed Watch in and around Meriden's hot spots. Cllr Diccico requested he would like to come out with the Team when Speed Watch is reinstated.

**Action: Reinstatement of Speed Watch dates to be emailed to Cllr Diccico.**

**9. Correspondence & Communication**

- A letter of thanks received from 1<sup>st</sup> Meriden Scout Group acknowledging receipt of the cheque and donation for flag raising duties.
- An email from the Civic Officer advising Civic Protocols for the Death of Prince Philip.

**10. Meriden Village Matters**

10.1 Meriden Library

Chair advised a meeting of the parish council, property services and library services was arranged for 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 with a view to receiving the cost involved in the refurbishment works including underpinning, which we have been waiting months for. Clerk advised a conversation with the Constituency Office who have pledged their continued support and have confirmed Funders are ready to receive applications for end March.

**Action: Chair and Clerk to meet with Property and Library Services Teams to receive costs of library works.**

**Action: Clerk to liaise with Constituency Office to complete funding applications for end March.**

10.2 Village Commemoration

10.2(i) VE75

Deferred to 2022.

10.2(ii) Platinum Jubilee 2022

Deferred to 2022.

10.3 Meriden Gate

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

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Clerk reported she had requested an update but nothing has been forthcoming.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)  
The Deed of Transfer has been sent to Land Registry.

10.5 Highways  
Update received from Mr Keaney in his presentation.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership  
Chair reported this continues a work in progress.

10.7 Local Council Award Scheme  
Chair reported this continues a work in progress. Cllr Barber has commenced building a gallery of photos and sent to Cllr Weaver and the Clerk for their comments. The digital review discussed at the recent Development Day is underway with a shopping list of mobile devices enabling the local community in their participation in council business and meetings; including the enablement of community groups to meet and provide an outlet to social isolation. Funding to be applied for from Heart of England Community Fund for Digital Inclusion of local communities, groups and individuals. Training will be provided and all mobile devices to work with wifi connectivity or sim cards. A digital screen to be explored for outside Library for residents to report a pothole or tree down direct to Solihull Connect.

**Action: All**

10.7(i) Website  
The review continues. Photos are being uploaded to the gallery and community engagement is being evidenced and uploaded to the community pages. The digital review also continues as a work in progress with external funders identified to enable the purchase of mobile devices.

**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)  
Clerk advised this project had been delayed due to Covid and lockdowns.

**Action: Clerk to arrange installation date.**

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



**11. Planning Matters**

**11.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update**

Chair advised a meeting is scheduled for 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 to formally agree the Independent Examiner’s report and recommendations, and SMBC’s draft Decision Statement. An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Parish Council is scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 to approve NDP Steering Group recommendations. The NDP Group is working towards a Referendum date of 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021; there will be 3 weeks to make changes and submit amended copy to SMBC for publishing prior to Purdah commencing.

**Action: NDP Steering Group, Parish Council and SMBC.**

**11.1(i) Locality Funding Bid**

Nothing to report.

**11.2 Planning Application Status Updates**

Cllr Woollard advised planning committee had met earlier this evening; minutes will be circulated to Members with outcomes and actions.

**Action: Planning Committee**

**11.3 Parish Action Plan & Business Plan**

Chair advised plans for 2020/2021 have not been achieved due to Covid and will be deferred to post Pandemic. Parish Action Plan and Business Plan are drivers for precept increase; a review and revisions of both Parish Action and Business Plans will be made and final approved document will be put onto website.

**Action: RW/Clerk.**

**11.4 Solihull Local Plan Review**

Chair reported awaiting examination and date to be advised.

**12. Climate Change**

Deferred until a face to face meeting may be arranged.

**Action: Cllr Hughes**

**13. Youth Council**

Cllr Hughes reported that he will advertise for Members directly rather than relying on Heart of England and Meriden Schools to put forward interested representatives. There is currently quite a bit of funding around young people’s mental health that may be applied for. Chair confirmed we should go ahead with this project.

**Action: Cllr Hughes**

**14. Council Development Day**

Nothing to report.

**14.1 Apprenticeship/Trainee Scheme**

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

Deferred to end of current lockdown.

**Action: All**

**15. Annual Parish Assembly**

Chair reported new guidance from WALC recommends holding the Assembly between April and June 2021. Currently we are exploring models of delivery enabling community participation via zoom.

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

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

Chair asked when disqualification notice period ends for advertising co-opted vacancy. Clerk replied 26<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and she will be putting an advertisement together. Any interested parties to call the clerk.

**Action: Clerk**

**17. Community Champions**

Chair advised she and clerk attend weekly briefings; numbers are slowly reducing but community transmission continues.

**Action: Cllr Weaver/Clerk**

**17.1 COVID-19**

Chair advised the action team helpline continues to operate. An advertisement in the Meriden Mag calls for volunteers with DBS check to come forward.

**Action: Cllr Weaver**

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

Cllr Kipling asked about the future of the Bickenhill PWDS and if there was any update on re-siting the facility? Cllr Diccico replied that there is discussion about JLR Elmdon works and a combined waste recycling centre with facilities at Moat Lane depot relocating to this site too. Nothing has been finalised.

It was suggested that HS2 provide an update to any discussions regarding the re-siting of the Recycling Centre for next meeting.

**Action: Clerk**

**19. Date of Next Meeting**

The next **Parish Council meeting** will be held on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021 at 19.30 hours via Zoom Conferencing.

Chair closed the meeting at 21.19 thanking Members for their attendance and expressing it had been a very good discussion and useful meeting.

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

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