



Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 22nd June 2020
Virtual Meeting via Member Zoom Conferencing commencing at 2.00 p.m.

Present:			
Cllr R Weaver RW	Chair	Cllr M Woollard MW	
Cllr J Barber JB		Cllr M Nunn MW	
Cllr J Hughes JH			
Mrs B Bland BB	Clerk		

1. Welcome & Apologies

Chair welcomed Councillors and noted the non-attendance without apologies of Cllrs Kipling and Lynch-Smith.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members recorded the absence of Cllrs Kipling and Lynch-Smith.

2. Public Participation

RW advised this was ground breaking in so much as this is the parish councils first zoom meeting to be streamed live on Facebook and the invitation for members of the public with password to join the meeting, had been included on agenda for public participation. Clerk had also invited questions to be received prior to meeting but no questions had been emailed to her. RW thanked the team, as it has been very much a team effort, in enabling the parish council to be one of the first to conduct their business using social media resources.

JB reported that there had been interest on Facebook for residents to get involved with Bloom and suggested a tidy up of the Village roundabout flower beds.

Action: JB to forward names to Clerk.

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 – 18th May 2020

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2020 were agreed as an accurate record. All matters arising are covered in the agenda.

IT WAS RESOLVED The minutes of the meeting held on 18th May 2020 were approved; proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Woollard.

5. Finance

5.1 June Payments

Signed Chair **Dated**

Parish Council June payments amounting to £4703.73 had been circulated for Member's approval. Highlights noted Meriden in Bloom summer planting £1059.00 and Neighbourhood Plan consultancy £495.00. A total sum of £33.21 has been added to the total for Covid-19 volunteer reimbursement from resident float.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved £4703.73 for June. Proposed by Cllr Nunn and seconded by Cllr Hughes.

Sports Park June payments amounting to £4304.56 had been circulated for Members approval.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved £4304.56 for June. Proposed by Cllr Barber and seconded by Cllr Hughes.

5.2 Finance Committee Recommendation

RW advised whole council has taken on the role of finance committee with delegated powers remaining with the clerk during this period of Covid-19

5.2(i) Annual Accounting Statement Section 2 – AGAR 2019-2020

Clerk advised the 6 page AGAR document had been circulated to members for ease of reference identifying each page requiring action as follows:-

- Page 1 of 6 – ok
- Page 2 of 6 – for clerk to complete checklist after approval & before submission of AGAR
- Page 3 of 6 – Internal Auditor completed & signed off
- Page 4 of 6 – Annual Governance read by Chair at last meeting; approved subject to advice from PKF on boxes 7 & 8. PKF confirm YES to both. Completed & signed off by Clerk and awaiting Chair signature
- Page 5 of 6 – Annual Accounting Statement completed and signed off by RFO. Members to approve at Monday's meeting. Minute date & reference to be completed after meeting and Chair to sign off
- Page 6 of 6 – PKF to complete External Auditor Report & Certificate.

Clerk invited questions; none received.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the Annual Accounting Statement Section 2 – AGAR 2019-2020. Proposed Cllr Barber and seconded Cllr Woollard

5.2(ii) Variance & Reserves (supporting documents for AGAR)

Clerk advised these documents had been circulated to Members and invited questions. She reaffirmed the variance explanation for item 3 Total Other Receipts showing an increase of 25.04% was due to the Community Infrastructure Levy of £2,800. Item 6 All Other Payments showed an increase of 86.59% with the following explanation:-

- Library £21,000
- Pool £500

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

- War Memorial Legal £1446
- War Memorial Trees £500
- Lamppost Poppies £195

Members approved the variance and reserves supporting documents to the Annual Accounting and Governance Statement 2019-2020 Part 3.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved the Annual Accounting and Governance Statement 2019-2020 Part 3. Proposed Cllr Weaver and seconded Cllr Hughes.

6. Progress Reports

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee
Nothing to report.

6.2 War Memorials
Nothing to report.

6.2(i) Heritage Monuments & Memorial Funding
Clerk reported acknowledgement from Monuments Trust of safe receipt of funding application for repairs and maintenance of Memorial; however they have since requested a second quotation for the work which has now been submitted and that we will only be awarded 50% of total requested. Panel meet in August to award funding.

6.3 Meriden Pool
RW advised there had been some issues regarding the Pool around planting of trees and a memorial garden; all of which have been resolved. We have more volunteers joining the Friends Group. The pool levels and brook flow was reported to SMBC Principal Engineer who confirmed the drop in levels was due to hot weather and lack of rainfall. Residents have enjoyed visiting the Pool and it is delightful to see the babies and family of swans.

MW asked if there could be another board giving feeding information.
Action: SMBC/Friends Group

6.3(i) Friends Group
More volunteers have joined the Friends Group; some Friends have undertaken works to remove weeds/nettles from around new hedgerow. A Rowan tree has been planted. Benches donated by Meriden Mag and Meriden Bloomers are awaiting installation. A meeting is to be arranged with SMBC in the near future.
Action: Clerk to contact Head of Public Realm for meeting dates.

6.3(ii) Management & Funding
Rotary Club are wishing to purchase and donate 2 new planters to the Pool.
Action: Clerk to liaise with Rotary Club.

Signed Chair **Dated**



6.4 Allotments

Clerk advised one plot was vacant; with full tenancy to all others. There is a waiting list of 9 people and she is meeting a prospective allotmenteer this afternoon at 4.15pm, the first on the list.

Action: Clerk

6.5 Footpaths/Forum

The footpaths leading onto the A45 require maintenance, as reported by Cllr Lloyd. It is also recognised that these footpaths are dangerous and there is no desire to have residents/visitors walking these footpaths to fine themselves on the hard shoulder of the A45. A discussion with Mr Hawley, SMBC footpaths officer, is requested.

Action: Clerk to contact Mr Hawley.

6.6 Quarries Liaison Group

RW reported disappointment at poor attendance for March meeting and then cancellation of 3rd June meeting. A request was made for a zoom conference with all operators but the recommendation from NRS was Q & A email exchange with relevant operators. Emails have been sent to Wayne Wardle and Cllr Howell asking for their assistance. This is not a parish council led meeting and therefore responsibility is with Cllr Howell as Chair and Mr Wardle to review and progress future meetings. A letter to be written to landowners and all representatives asking for their presence at the next meeting. JH suggested inviting our MP to attend to give it more weight.

Action: RW/Clerk to draft letter to members of the quarry liaison group.

6.7 Solihull Area Committee

RW reported an interim meeting was held via zoom regarding issues affecting parish and town councils from SMBC's reorganisation. Not all parish/town councils had been informed. A briefing letter is to be sent out this week by Assistant Director outlining changes and SMBC reporting mechanisms for parish/town councils. The next meeting is arranged for 9th July at 7.30pm.

6.8 Tree Warden & TPO List

Nothing to report.

6.9 Community Surgeries

Clerk reported fly tipping on Eaves Green Lane and Birmingham Road which have been reported to Connect and logged. Some removed within 5 days of reporting. MW advised another hotspot being Whitestitch Lane and she had reported and got cleared via Fix My Street. Residents requested to call Connect to get incidences of fly tipping logged. A resident complaint had also been received regarding Meriden Gate open space and attenuation basin which has been forwarded to Principal Engineer for drainage for comments and direct response to resident concerns. A further issue has been received from resident with land adjacent to their property not being maintained.

Signed Chair **Dated**

This has been raised with Operations Lead for street cleansing and verge maintenance. The land is un-adopted and this is now being investigated by our solicitor.

Action: Clerk/Principal Engineer/SMBC Connect service/Solicitor.

6.10 Community Speed Watch

JB advised that it was still not safe to undertake Speed Watch in numbers and therefore reinstatement would commence before September/October.

6.11 HS2

RW reported HS2 updates received regularly and put on social media sites including website for public access of all roadworks and road closures effecting local highways networks i.e. A446, A452, junction 6 M42 and North Island (Birmingham Business Park) and M6 junction.

6.12 Meriden Sports Park

RW reported the park re-opened 22nd June; Directors have followed Government and SMBC guidance parks. The courts, outdoor gym and children's play area remain closed. Fencing is in place securing those areas remaining closed. And In and Out gate access is in place for access with lines for social distancing reminders in place. Park users are responsible for keeping themselves and family members safe. Additional cleaning and litter collections have been put in place. Risk Assessment has been completed by Directors. All major and specialist works have been completed. RW recorded the thanks of the parish council, directors and members of the public to Cllr Barber who has put in place the safe distance markings and ensured children's play, outdoor gym and courts are secured. It should be noted that if there are any problems with inappropriate use, unsafe distancing, litter, vandalism, the park will be closed. The park fencing and seating was jet washed prior to park opening; the park will be managed by volunteers with a Director on site each day to assist with disabled access if requested. The park is open with restricted hours being 10-16.00 hours Monday to Friday.

JB reported theft of the Covid signage on gates on Friday 19th June at 20.50 hours which has been recorded on CCTV with car details and sent to Police. The person travelled towards Hampton in Arden along Hampton Lane.

MW recorded her personal thanks to all involved with arrangements to reopen park which will be gratefully received by parents of those children only attending school one day per week.

JH reaffirmed MW's sentiments and recorded his personal thanks to all involved.

6.13 Meriden Sport & Recreation Trust

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

RW advised JH is Parish Council Trustee; he will provide quarterly feedback. JH advised he will be attending the next Trustee's zoom meeting which will focus on 2020-2021 income with policy for small grants to be suspended and the Investment Group briefing on how the trust is performing in current situation.

7. Clerk's Report

Clerk reported all matters included in Agenda items.

8. District and Ward Councillor Reports

Nothing to report.

9. Correspondence & Communication

Nothing to report.

10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1 Meriden Library

RW advised there were some delays with the floor strengthening works. BB had written a letter of complaint circulated to Members and was awaiting a response. A request has been made for the return of the parish council's contribution of £21,000 until property services resolve the issues or further boreholes determining loading of first floor for office space. This is a frustrating situation and since discussions were opened with Library Services in 2014 there has been no mention of the first floor not meeting the requirements of a parish council office. Clerk advised receipt of an email from Mr Waterson attaching Heads of Terms Agreement and Lease Plan. Our Solicitor Michael Walton is advising the parish council on next steps.

Action: Clerk to liaise with solicitor regarding Heads of Terms Agreement and Lease Plan.

Action: Clerk to chase Kate Bunting for response to letter of complaint.

10.2 VE75 Village Commemoration

RW reflected the postponement of the Village Event and advised it would be good to hold an event later in the year. Future planning to be considered with event organisers and government guidance.

Action: Event Organisers and working party to consider options.

JH raised road closures for Remembrance Sunday process with SMBC and liaison with the Churches. JB confirmed he has had all Mr Lee's files and notes handed to him and he will be leading on the road closure application for Remembrance Sunday. The application is due to be submitted in September subject to Covid-19 guidelines.

Action: JB to submit road closure application to SMBC Highways and liaise with Churches and Members regarding Covid-19 guidelines and advise.

10.3 Meriden Gate

Signed Chair **Dated**

Clerk advised there are some long standing issues which are delaying the adoption of the open space and attenuation basin by SMBC. This appears to be holding up the freehold transfer of the sports park to the parish council. Additionally there is the subject of VAT liability which remains unresolved.

Action: Solicitor/Clerk/David Wilson Homes/SMBC.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)

Clerk advised this is now moving forward with solicitor appointment to act for the parish council in drafting transfer deed for Taylor Wimpey to transfer the Leys Lane allotment gardens back to the parish council.

Action: Clerk/Solicitor.

10.5 Highways

Clerk circulated highways recommendation for replacement gateway signage to junction of Birmingham Road/Maxstoke Bridge/Coronation Island (due to vehicle collision and damage). The sign will be "Welcome to Meriden – Please drive carefully". It is not possible to have a gateway sign with 30mph incorporated due to the speed limit actually changing on Maxstoke Lane from de-restricted 30mph before drivers enter the Village. After Member consideration it was agreed to approve SMBC Highways recommendation.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved new gateway signage as recommended by SMBC Highways "Welcome to Meriden – Please drive carefully". Proposed Cllr Weaver and seconded Cllr Woollard.

Action: Clerk to advise Mr Chohan, SMBC Highways.

JH wished to record thanks on behalf of the parish council for Paul Tovey, David Keaney and Stephen Hawley to meet with us on phase 2 traffic calming and future opportunities to ease the traffic issues in Meriden. The team accepted the parish council invitation to attend July's parish council meeting to bring residents up to date with TRO's (traffic regulation orders).

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

Clerk advised Solicitor is looking at transfer of copse adjacent to Sports Park from SMBC to parish council. Internal review is underway on SMBC ownership as this will be an easier route than Land Registry transfer deed under adverse possession. The parish council is maintaining this land. Additional work is being carried out on a parcel of land which formed the entrance to the old Maxstoke Lane playing field which it appears is un-adopted and therefore unsightly as no maintenance is being carried out. The solicitor is searching to confirm the land is owned by the parish council and is not included in the David Wilson adopted footprint of the development.

Action: Clerk/Solicitor.

10.7 Local Council Award Scheme

Signed Chair **Dated**

RW stated she was mindful of ensuring the parish council was meeting requirements for LCAS submission for Quality Award. New legislation is in place for accessibility for anyone with disabilities. NALC published a document providing good guidance for parish and town councils to use. JH advised he is looking at BBC link which has updated and changed some of the accessibility of websites guidance.

Action: All

10.7(i) Website

RW reported the website is looking good and nears completion. JB has led on review and refresh of content management. We have a good system in place with all new briefings/information being posted onto website and social media sites. BB commented that the site was far more user friendly and information easier to find. She thanked JB for updating and posting all new information she receives and forwards to him. RE and JH echoed their thanks on behalf of the parish council.

Action: JB/RW/JH/BB.

10.8 Meriden Public & Community Transport

Nothing to report.

RW requested the clerk write to TfWM Jon Hayes advising she had tried contacting him without success regarding use of the 89 and blue feeder bus to provide transportation of meds/groceries to vulnerable residents during Covid-19 lockdown and those shielding.

Action: Clerk

10.9 Dementia Friends/First Aiders/Dementia & Autism Training, Business Network
JH reported that the Business Network page is working well on website providing up to date information on Covid-19 guidance. There have been two responses from local businesses thanking the parish council. JH also recorded his thanks to JB for setting up the Business Network page and uploading relevant information for local business access.

JH advised there is no progress on Dementia Friends, First Aiders, Dementia/Autism training. He suggested consideration being given to HS2 funding for training to be delivered. Public Health England promote psychological first aid for members of the public who are targeted for how they are coping with pre and post Covid.

Action: JH

11. Planning Matters

11.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

RW advised that Regulation 16 8 week plan is with SMBC currently. The NDP group are to meet via zoom on 24th June at midday to identify tasks required and how we will be consulting with members of the public and wider community engagement. SMBC have given the go ahead for Regulation 16 consultation to commence 29th June 2020.

Signed **Chair** **Dated**

Flyers, banners and hard copies of consultation documents to be arranged with printers once finalised and approved by NDP group. PR will be promoted via social media sites. SMBC's Jo Wort, Senior Delivery Officer, Policy and Delivery, will be attending the meeting.

Action: NDP Steering Group, SMBC and Printers.

11.1(i) Locality Funding Bid

Clerk advised end of year grant had been completed and submitted to Locality. Acknowledgement received and we await final sign off by Locality Team.

A new application is in process to bid for Regulation 16 and Referendum funding to conclude the Neighbourhood Development Plan process.

Action: RW/BB.

11.2 Neighbourhood Community/Ward Action Plan

RW advised that the Ward Action Plan will be dovetailed into the Parish Business Plan. A review of the Ward Action Plan is required given the reorganisation of SMBC and loss of Neighbourhood Services.

Action: All

11.3 Solihull Local Plan Review

Nothing to report.

11.4 Planning Application Status Updates

JH had circulated planning updates to Members for June which may be accessed from website clicking on Planning. JH advised the Holiday Home Park, Eaves Green Lane, application had been refused. Two local businesses have contacted the parish council requesting meetings with Members on two sensitive planning proposals which is appreciated by the parish council prior to formal submission to SMBC Planning colleagues.

Action: JH and full council.

12. Climate Change

Nothing to report; JH advised the parish council is looking for volunteers with a keen interest to join a working group, but NDP and Covid-19 are taking priority currently.

Action: JH

13. Youth Council

JH advised HS2 has declined funding application for youth worker. A meeting with an HS2 Enabler was beneficial and RW and BB attended the meeting. The idea was liked and the project has been given support for a revision of application submission. JH has written a draft Constitution to set up a Youth Council. Contact has been made with Heart of England School as large stakeholder and awaiting response from Vice Principal.

Signed Chair **Dated**

Action: JH.

14. Digital Review

RW advised JB/BB are on track with website. JH reported FB 700 likes with 760 followers and currently the parish council meeting is live on FB. JH is currently looking into FB live for NDP Regulation 16 consultation. For the future a FB live Q & A session is proposed for Councillors to participate.

RW advised this had been a joint and successful team effort in getting information to members of the public informed. All is working well and going better than anticipated.

Action: RW/JH/JH/BB

15. Parish Council Development Day

RW advised that the agenda sets out what we are going to do; everything with be virtual for some time to come. A Development Day to be organised for the future.

Action: All

16. Annual Parish Assembly

RW reported there has been no Government guidance regarding holding Annual Parish Meetings. Usually an annual parish meeting is a legal requirement and should be held between 1st April and 30th June. It was recommended that the Chair's Report (Annual Report) be written as usual, and posted onto social media sites enabling members of the public to read about the year's achievements based on Annual Assembly feedback from 2019.

17. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda

RW provided the following update:-

- Covid-19 Help Line has been busy with 425 calls received since March. Volunteers are helping with shopping, meds collections and emotional support to residents. SMBC has thanked the Emergency Team formally as we have provided a service and decreased the number of residents that SMBC would have picked up. **The parish council records its personal thanks to the Volunteer Team for their outstanding efforts running the helpline and providing a community service for residents with shopping, meds collections and emotional support.**
- Casual Vacancy

Action: Clerk to speak to Monitoring Officer and report at next meeting.

18. Date of Next Meeting

The next **Parish Council meeting** will be held on Monday 20th July 2020 at 2 pm via Zoom Conferencing. (Time to be confirmed – please see meeting agenda).

Action: Clerk to extend invitation for Paul Tovey to attend regarding Highways review and update.

The meeting closed at 15.30 hours.

Signed Chair **Dated**