

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 22nd March 2021
Virtual Meeting via Member Zoom Conferencing commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Present:			
Cllr R Weaver BEM RW	Chair	Cllr M Woollard MW	
Cllr J Barber JB	Vice Chair	Cllr R Kipling RK	
Cllr J Hughes JH		Cllr A Eburne AE	
Mrs B Bland BB	Clerk		

In attendance: Cllr Diccio

There were no 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. There were no members of the public attending. Apologies received from Cllrs Allsopp and Howell. The non-attendance without apology of Cllr Kipling is recorded. The meeting was being recorded.

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

2. Public Participation

The clerk confirmed no questions had been received 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 – 22nd February 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd February 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 22nd February 2021 were approved; proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Woollard.

5. Finance

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

5.1 March Payments

Parish Council March payments amounting to £5228.45 had been circulated for Member’s approval including staff costs. This included three additional payments totaling £58.92 for emergency covid shopping reimbursement to volunteer.

Signed Chair **Dated**

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IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved £5228.45 for March. Proposed by Cllr Woollard and seconded by Cllr Barber. The confidential staff costs (not for public circulation) approved by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Barber.

Sports Park March payments amounting to £4,559.63 had been circulated for Members approval. This included the invoice amount of £245.14 for Astleys new account for park consumables.

IT WAS RESOLVED Members approved £4,559.63 for March. Proposed by Cllr Hughes and seconded by Cllr Barber.

5.2 Finance Committee

Chair reported the finance committee meeting scheduled for 15th March 2021 is deferred to 29th March 2021.

6. Progress Reports

6.1 Village Hall Management Committee

Nothing to report and the Village Hall remains closed.

6.2 War Memorials

Clerk advised notification from National Cyclist's Memorial Conservators for postponement of the National Service on 6th May 2021 to 5th September 2021.

6.2(i) Heritage Monuments & Memorial Funding

The maintenance works being undertaken by IMI have been signed off by SMBC Conservation Team and War Memorials Trust. Work begins imminently and the public have been notified.

6.3 Meriden Pool

Clerk reported high water levels due to debris in trash screen preventing flow of water to Meriden Pools. Friends of Pool volunteers cleared trash screen and the levels decreased. SMBC have advised of an ongoing piece of work around flood risk in Meriden so the issue of how the pool is fed will be picked up as part of this work as it keeps cropping up.

Action: Ed Bradford Principal Engineer SMBC

6.3(i) Friends Group

Chair requested a letter of thanks be sent to the Friends of Volunteers for taking swift action averting flooding from the Pool onto Main Road.

Action: Clerk

6.3(ii) Management & Funding

Nothing to report.

Signed Chair **Dated**



6.4 Allotments

Clerk reported one vacant plot from 1st April 2021.

Action: Clerk to call next person on waiting list.

6.5 Footpaths/Forum

Nothing to report.

6.6 Quarry Liaison Group

Cllr Hughes reported meeting with Mark Andrews and residents to carry out a review of what planning permissions are currently approved on the Meriden Quarry site ; the parish council await formal response from Mr Andrews regarding the points raised. The Environment Agency, Parish Council and SMBC CEO are working towards resolution. There is no Quarry Liaison Group meeting scheduled at this time.

Action : Cllr Hughes

6.7 Solihull Area Committee

Chair reported the next meeting will be 20th April 2021. Guest speakers will be representatives from Housing and Highways. Cllr Hughes offered his apologies.

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. PCSO Hawkins and PCSO Murdoch will attend May’s forum.

Action: Cllr Hughes.

6.10 Community Speed Watch

Cllr Barber advised new volunteers are required. He anticipates starting the scheme up again as we come out of lockdown in June/July. Speed Watch is ongoing by the Police Team. Cllr Diccico added that residents from Eaves Green Lane, Lodge Green Lane and Showell Lane have contacted him disclosing their unhappiness at the speed traffic is travelling along these narrow rural lanes. He would like to be included in the next Speed Watch and requests this area be added to the list of hot spots given the genuine concerns raised. JB advised a risk assessment will be undertaken before speed watch is approved for this area. Training will also be required for new volunteers.

Action: Cllr Barber.

6.11 HS2

Updated weekly by HS2 Community Engagement Team to website and Facebook.

6.12 Meriden Sports Park

RW reported Directors met last week for AGM and presented Chair’s report after 12 months of lockdown with activities ceased or suspended. Today there were 15 people

Signed Chair Dated

walking around exercise track of park. RW remains as Chair and JB remains as Vice Chair. Young Ambassadors are required for the Park and hopefully there will be some cross over with Youth Council i.e. Sports Leader.

A bid has been submitted to SMBC for Community Wardens/Marshalls to assist policing the park; the police have been called once to disperse numbers but most of the time users/visitors are following guidelines.

Courts reopen 27th March football starts 11th April; risk assessments being undertaken weekly. 2021/2022 budget approved along with draft accounts for 2019-2020. The joint meeting with Trustees is deferred for a couple of months. New contractors commencing 1st April 2021 and clerk has conducted handovers. Dogs remain an issues in the park with owners ignoring No Dog signage.

6.13 Meriden Sport & Recreation Trust

The next joint Directors/Trustees meeting has been pushed back. There is a vacant seat for a Trustee if anyone is interested.

7. Clerk's Report

Clerk reported all matters included in Agenda.

8. District and Ward Councillor Reports

Cllr Diccio summarised the following items:-

- Quarry – this is a big one; email has been sent to EA. Sport checks continue and latest issues will be reported in the Newsletter.
- Speed Watch – reinstate post Covid and it is safe.
- Leys Lane closure – option to move forward with this later this year. Not getting true reflection of traffic due to Covid.
- Fillongley Bridge – community engagement and consultation.
- HS2 Haul routes – objections made; secretary of state to make changes if upheld; Plan B is mitigation of haul routes but we have to be realistic in what can be achieved.

Cllr Hughes asked about the relocation of the Bickenhill Waste Disposal site to Cornets End Lane? Cllr Diccio advised there are much better alternatives than Meriden Quarry. Most people get to current site via A45/M42. Access to Meriden Quarry would cause a lot of traffic problems and he would oppose strongly any plans to put PWDS at Meriden Quarry.

9. Correspondence & Communication

A letter received from SMBC Leader of the Council, Ian Courts, and CEO Nick Page; the content thanks community groups who have supported so many vulnerable residents over the last 12 months of Covid.

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Over 10,000 residents have been supported to provide access to food, prescriptions, advice, activities or listening ear and friendly voice to those struggling or isolated. Members acknowledged SMBC’s letter of thanks. RW reported Meriden Emergency Telephone line has dealt with 750 calls.

10. Meriden Village Matters

10.1 Meriden Library

Chair advised the clerk had written to Library Services sharing disappointing and frustration over the current situation; an email had also been sent to Saqib Bhatti MP and parliamentary assistant Ben Rayment. There are issues around Property Services and a meeting is to be arranged for all parties. HS2 community fund has been lost as Property Services did not do their report and costings. The parish council has spent years driving this forward without success. A letter of complaint is to be written to include Nick Page, CEO.

Cllr Diccico expressed his disappointment and embarrassment with Property Services. He advised it was right to make a complaint and suggested this be sent to Cllr Courts and Cllr Rolfe.

Action: Clerk to write letter of complaint.

10.2 Village Commemoration

10.2(i) VE75

Deferred to 2022.

10.2(ii) Platinum Jubilee 2022

Deferred to 2022.

10.3 Meriden Gate

The clerk mentioned an opportunity to speak with the Monitoring Officer who manages SMBC’s Legal Services team who said she would find out latest status; there has been no update and therefore nothing to report.

10.4 Taylor Wimpey (Transfer of Allotments/freehold land)

Awaiting the Deed of Transfer from Land Registry.

10.5 Highways

Nothing to report.

10.6 Land Registry & Ownership

Nothing to report.

10.7 Local Council Award Scheme

Chair reported this continues a work in progress. Cllr Barber has spent many hours updating website meeting the new criteria to take forward.

Signed Chair **Dated**

The Quality Award will be looking at website so is key to getting the flow of information correct. JB added we are getting there slowly with quarries, policies and archives not far off. The home page and community page to be reviewed in accordance with new guidelines and accessibility.

Action: All

10.7(i) Website

The review continues. A bid went in for tablets and met closing date of 17th March. JH advised of a digital screen post Covid for community interaction and engagement in advising SMBC of local issues via digital reporting.

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

JH reported that all business information is on website. With businesses re-opening after lockdown enquiries to be directed to SMBC post Covid lockdown business guidance.

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.

11. Planning Matters

11.1 Neighbourhood Planning Update

Chair advised she and clerk had worked through Examiner's recommendations for minor amendments to be made for Referendum 6th May 2021. Parish Councillors and the NDP working group attended the monitoring officer's briefing. Because of Purdah the parish council cannot be seen to be promoting the NDP but the working group can distribute leaflets, posters and banners.

JH offered thanks on behalf of Members for the speedy turnaround of amendments and submission to SMBC's tight deadline for Referendum inclusion.

Action: NDP Steering Group

11.1(i) Locality Funding Bid

Clerk advised the End of Grant notification had been received and she was reconciling the funding received with expenditure as part of year end.

11.2 Planning Application Status Updates

Signed Chair **Dated**

Cllr Woollard advised no new planning applications received. She had spoken with Mr Wilkinson, SMBC Enforcement regarding Bakers Field. A lot of comments had been received and it was likely this would go to Committee for decision.

Action: Planning Committee

11.3 Parish Action Plan & Business Plan

Chair advised both had now been reviewed and updated by finance committee.

Action: RW/Clerk.

11.4 Solihull Local Plan Review

Chair reported the report is out for public scrutiny and a list of comments is on SMBC website.

12. Climate Change

JH advised this was being advertised with an invitation for volunteers to join the group. This will be discussed at Annual Assembly. There are 7 interested parties from local business and resident communities.

Action: Cllr Hughes

13. Youth Council

Cllr Hughes reported that the Youth Council has been launched today. There are 2 volunteers and more information will be going out over this week.

Action: Cllr Hughes

14. Council Development Day

The next Development Day is scheduled for May 2021. Cllr Nunn requested no Saturday mornings due to commitments.

Action: RW

14.1 Apprenticeship/Trainee Scheme

Deferred to end of current lockdown.

Action: All

15. Annual Parish Assembly

Chair advised that new guidance has been received regarding use of virtual meetings post 7th May 2021. Members do not want to meet in a room. Cllr Diccio is requested to ask if the parish council can use SMBC Chamber subject to risk assessment as it will hold more people socially distanced. There is currently a lot of lobbying be done by parish and town councils. The LGA solicitors are also lobbying for a change in the guidelines but we need to have a contingency in place.

Action: Cllr Weaver/Cllr Hughes/Clerk/Cllr Diccio

Signed Chair **Dated**

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16. Casual Vacancy (Co-Option)

Clerk advised an advertisement will go into noticeboards and website with a closing date of 3rd March. There has been one email of interest from the old advertisement on website. The application form is ready to go.

Action: Clerk

17. Community Champions

Chair advised she and clerk attend fortnightly briefings; last week focused on vaccine availability and those residents eligible should book before 28th March. Use the NHS booking system or call 119. All second appointments made for April will go ahead. This information to be put onto social media sites. The message as we come out of lockdown is for caution in the weeks ahead.

Action: Cllr Weaver/Cllr Eburne.

17.1 COVID-19

Chair advised the action team helpline continues to operate.

Action: Cllr Weaver

18. Councillor's reports and items for future agenda

Cllr Woollard requested the Litter Group be put back on. There is a lot of attention of social media sites on fly tipping and general littering on verges, pavements and footpaths. A huge thank you to all residents who are walking and litter pick. RW suggested the community champion's network can give advice to MW along with Love Solihull.

Action: RW/MW/Clerk

19. Date of Next Meeting

The next **Parish Council meeting** will be held on Monday 19th April 2021 at 19.30 hours via Zoom Conferencing.

Chair closed the meeting at 20.42 thanking Members for their attendance.

Signed Chair **Dated**