

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
Wednesday, 2nd December 2020
via Zoom Video Conferencing**

Present:

Cllr Clive Hill - Chairman
Cllr Karen Dunn
Cllr Kim Wallace
Cllr Michael Kay
Cllr Jonathan Horton
Cllr John Fox
Cllr Wayne Hadley
Cllr Peter Tennant
Cllr Trevor Wills

Clerk: Franciska Giles

RFO: Carole Cox

Public: 0

3022 The Clerk advised that Lizzy Quinney has sent her apologies for not attending the meeting but provided some documents to share with the Parish Councillors. The Clerk presented the documents and the Parish Council had no comments. It is anticipated that Lizzy Quinney will participate in the January 2021 Parish Council meeting.

3023 Rules and Procedures of Video Conferencing

Cllr Clive Hill explained the rules and procedures of Zoom video conferencing.

3024 Clarification of Parish Council Meetings Held via Zoom Video Conferencing

The Clerk stated that the Coronavirus Regulations 2020 were passed by Government on 1st April 2020 and apply to meetings taking place before 7 May 2021. The regulations enable local authorities to hold meetings remotely including by (but not limited to) telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming.

3025 The Public

None present

3026 Apologies

None

3027 Declaration of Pecuniary Interests and Dispensations

None

3028 Jessica Rathbone's Resignation

Cllr Clive Hill stated that following Jessica Rathbone's resignation, the vacant position has been advertised as per statutory requirements.

3029 Parish Hall Trustee Vacancy

Cllr Clive Hill stated that following Jessica Rathbone's resignation the vacant Parish Hall Trustee position must be filled and asked the Councillors if they would like to nominate themselves. Cllr Peter Tenant abstained due to conflict of interest. Cllr Wayne Hadley expressed his interest and the Parish Councillors agreed to him becoming a Parish Hall Trustee.

Proposed: Cllr Clive Hill

Seconded: Cllr Trevor Wills

Abstained: Cllr Peter Tennant

Majority in favour

It was resolved that Cllr Wayne Hadley was voted in as a Parish Hall Trustee.

3030 Approval of the Parish Council Meeting Minutes - Held on Wednesday 4th November 2020

Cllr Clive Hill asked the members if they had read the minutes and if they could confirm these as a true and accurate record.

Proposed: Cllr Karen Dunn

Seconded: Cllr John Fox

All in favour

It was resolved that the minutes were a true and accurate record

3031 Matters arising from the Parish Council Meeting Minutes – Held Wednesday 4th November 2020

Minute no. 2987 – Remembrance Day Service

Cllr Clive Hill stated that the Parish Council's Virtual Remembrance Day Service was a success and many residents commented on the Council's Facebook page. Cllr Clive Hill thanked everyone who was involved.

Minute no. 3013 (1481) – Burial Plot P29

The Clerk advised that the original deed has now been received and the cheque is being produced. Once all necessary Parish Council signatures are obtained, the check of £273 will be sent to Mrs Hayden in the post.

Minute no. 3013 (1482) – Advertising boards

The Clerk stated that SMBC confirmed the below process in relation to advertising boards and banners:

Although the advertisement regulations are complicated the regulations allow a wide range of adverts to be displayed on shops, business premises, schools, sports clubs etc, without the need for consent. Nevertheless, it depends upon a number of factors, such as the size, location, illumination in order for the advertisement materials be included in this category. Most adverts on shops and business premises do not need local authority permission.

There are usually two main types of adverts which fall outside the categories - adverts on highway land and adverts on private land.

Process:

a) Advertisement on highway land: enquiry to be sent to SMBC Highways department via the Contact Centre, connectcc@solihull.gov.uk. Please note that Highways are themselves permitted to erect road signs – no consent is required

b) Advertisement on private land (e.g. a large advert displayed permanently at a residential property, or one displayed on farm land): enquiries to be sent to the Planning Enforcement department on dwigfield@solihull.gov.uk.

Minute no. 3015.1 (1478) – Bench Removal Quote

The RFO stated that she sourced an additional quote to have the bench removed. Flowers have quoted £125 + VAT for the removal of the damaged bench including the concrete base, the unearthing of the underground system, the landscaping of the area and the removal of all rubbish. The Parish Council agreed the quotation.

Proposed: Cllr Trevor Wills

Seconded: Cllr Wayne Hadley

All in favour

It was resolved that the Flowers quotation of £125+VAT for the removal of the damaged bench has been agreed by the Parish Council.

Minute no. 3016 – Parish Councillor Applicants

Due to the local T3 restrictions and the close proximity to the Christmas period, the Parish Council has decided to postpone the recruitment process until 2021.

Proposed: Cllr Kim Wallace

Seconded: Cllr Trevor Wills

All in favour

It was resolved that the recruitment process to fill the vacant position is postponed until 2021

Cllr Wayne Hadley wanted to make the Parish Council aware that after assessing the current John Deer Mower it is recommended that a new one is purchased. Cllr Wayne Hadley recommended to set a healthy budget for a new mower and that to source some quotation from vendors and suppliers. In addition, Cllr Wayne Hadley also recommended the current pick up vehicle should be replaced, whether buy purchasing or leasing one. The Parish Council agreed that the two matters to be included on the Recreation Committee Agenda for further discussion.

Proposed: Cllr Trevor Wills

Seconded: Cllr Clive Hill

All in favour

It was resolved that the two matters, namely the replacement of the current John Deer mower and the Pick Up van, be included on the Recreation Committee agenda for further discussion.

3032 Matters arising from the Planning Committee Meetings - Held on 12th & 26th November 2020

Cllr Jonathan Horton said that: the Planning Committee made the below comments:

App. No: **PL/2020/02388,**

Application: Unit 1 And 2 Prologis Park Progress Way Marston Green Solihull

Proposal: Consent to install 4 No. externally illuminated wayfinding totems and 3 No. internally illuminated wall-mounted signs.

Comment: The Parish Council objects on the basis of light pollution into Blackfirs Lane.

Furthermore, the Parish Council questions the need for such signs in the first place.

App No: **PL/2020/02474**

Application: 6 Land Lane, Marston Green, Solihull B37 7DE

Proposal: Change of Use to four bedroom house and erection of detached dwelling

Comment: The Parish Council agrees to the changes to the existing building proposed but objects to the plans of the new built proposed on over-intensity, does not fit in the street scene, highways issues and the negative effects on the local amenity (the Memorial Garden being on the opposite side of the road).

3033 Matters arising from the Finance Committee Meeting - Held on 23rd November 2020

Minute No 640.1 (1498) – Fairways Hedge Cutting

The Recreation and Finance Committees had discussed quotes for the annual hedge cutting work and recommended Fairways' quotation, firstly the Recreation Ground car park driveway at a cost of £280.00, secondly, Recreation Ground perimeter hedge at a cost of £500.00 and finally the Amenity

land allotment hedge at a cost of £185.00. A total cost of £965 +VAT. The RFO asked the Parish Council for their approval.

Proposed: Cllr Karen Dunn

Seconded: Cllr Wayne Hadley

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council agreed Fairways' hedge cutting quotation, at the total cost of £965

Minute No 645 – Bickenhill Relief in Need Charity

Following recent correspondence from the Charity Commission, which the RFO had circulated to members of the Finance Committee, the question has been raised if investigation should be carried out regarding winding up this dormant charity. The RFO advised that the current balance is £1,904.95, there is no activity on the account other than interest payments and this has been the case for at least thirteen years. The RFO advised the charity was believed to have been set up sometime in the late 1800's and it was classified as a charity to aid the poorer residents of Bickenhill and provide them with fuel. Previously a member from Birmingham City Council had sat on the charity as a trustee but again it has been sometime since Birmingham City Council has nominated anyone as a trustee.

The committee agreed that the RFO should investigate further to see if the charity could be wound up. The RFO asked the Parish Council about the possibility to winding up the charity? Discussion about where the funds would then be distributed could be held once the Parish Council had a clearer picture on the possibility and timescales. The Parish Council agreed to investigate the winding up of the charity.

Proposed: Cllr Wayne Hadley

Seconded: Cllr Karen Dunn

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council agreed to investigate the winding up of the charity.

Action item: The RFO to investigate the matter

Minute No 646 – Christmas Donation for Food Bank

The Finance Committee debated whether the Parish Council would consider the option of a donation for the local food bank this Christmas. The RFO stated that the Parish Council must follow the Act 137 in order to cover the donation. The Committee proposed the donation and recommended a budget of £500 which is in line with the yearly £500 donation for the grass cutting of the churchyard in Bickenhill. The RFO also stated that it is worth noting that no donation was given this year to support the Gardening Club with a donation towards the hanging baskets and Annual Show. The Committee agreed that the donation should be food and that Cllr Kim Wallace is happy to do the shopping.

The RFO asked the Parish Council for their agreement

Proposed: Cllr Wayne Hadley

Seconded: Cllr Karen Dunn

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council, following the Act 137, approved the £500 in food donation for the local food bank.

Minute No 647 – Goodman Nash

The RFO confirmed that following the work carried out so far by Goodman Nash Solihull MBC had paid £19,168.86 into the Parish Council's account on the 5th November 2020. The RFO reminded the members that Goodman Nash's fee is 25% and this equates to £4792.21 of the savings.

The RFO, on recommendation of the Finance Committee, has asked the Parish Council, due to this repayment and the high balance of the treasurers account, to consider transferring £30,000.00 from the Treasurers Account into the BMM account. The Parish Council has agreed this proposal.

Proposed: Cllr Karen Dunn

Seconded: Cllr Kim Wallace

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council agreed to transfer £30,000.00 from the Treasurers Account into the BMM account.

Minute No 648 – Poppy Donation

The RFO advised that the Poppy Appeal this year had changed the system of ordering the wreaths and payment was requested prior to despatch. In previous years the Parish Council had received an invoice and added a donation, so the total donation had been £125.00. This year so far, the Parish Council had only purchased the wreaths at a cost of £38.50, therefore, the RFO was asking if, on recommendation of the Finance Committee, wished to donate a further £86.50 to bring the donation for 2020 to £125.00. the Parish Council has agreed this proposal.

Proposed: Cllr Kim Wallace

Seconded: Cllr Peter Tennant

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council agreed to donate a further £86.50 to the Poppy Appeal, bringing the donation for 2020 to £125.00.

Minute No 649 – Budget 2021/21

The RFO stated that the Finance Committee reviewed the current budget and said that the figures were in line with the current budget position. The RFO advised that the current budget is in a healthy position and maybe the Parish Council would wish to consider this along with the current economic position when discussing the Precept application. The RFO advised that once the Parish Council had the Tax base figures from Solihull MBC, she would produce the charts to aid the budget and precept final discussions for the next meeting.

The Finance Committee had also proposed the review of the Parish Council assets, such as buildings and machinery, and the RFO confirmed that she was planning a review of the asset list. The main asset item to be replaced is the Pick-Up vehicle and perhaps this should be replaced in the current year. The RFO suggested, on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, to allocate a budget of £10K so that the Parish Council can research what is available. Cllr Michael Kay and Cllr Wayne Hadley have offered to look into the implications of leasing a new vehicle and shall inform the Parish Council of their findings.

Action item: *Cllr Michael Kay and Cllr Wayne Hadley to look into the implications of leasing a new vehicle and to feed back their findings to the Parish Council.*

3034 Wildflower Planting on Blackfirs Lane Roundabout

The Clerk stated that Wildlife Ways confirmed that they are looking to plant some flowers on the Blackfirs Lane roundabout and asked the Parish Council if they would have any preference over wild flowers and bulb plants, such as crocuses. The Parish Council agreed to have a mixture of the proposed plants if available and asked the Clerk to communicate this decision to Wildlife Ways.

Proposed: Cllr Peter Tennant

Seconded: Cllr Wayne Hadley

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council agreed to Wildlife Ways planting a mixture of wild flowers and bulb plants on the Blackfirs Lane roundabout.

3035 Parish Council Mobile Phone

The Clerk stated that she is still using Frank Bunce's mobile phone, which he lent the Parish Council in March due to the pandemic. The Clerk asked the Parish Council for it to be returned. Cllr Kim Wallace suggested purchasing another mobile phone within a £50 budget, perhaps on a PAYG basis, for Parish Council use. Cllr Clive Hill proposed reimbursing Frank Bunce for the 9 months usage, subject to providing the bills. The Parish Council agreed to have Frank Bunce's mobile phone returned,

reimburse him for the 9 months use subject to proving the bills and to purchasing a PAYG phone within a £50 budget for Council use.

Proposed: Cllr Trevor Wills

Seconded: Cllr Karen Dunn

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council agreed to have Frank Bunce's mobile phone returned, reimburse him for the 9 months use subject to proving the bills and to purchasing a PAYG phone within a £50 budget for Council use.

Cllr Peter Tennant also proposed to have the office phone diverted to the new mobile. The RFO to investigate the contract and cost implications.

Proposed: Cllr Peter Tennant

Seconded: Cllr Wayne Hadley

All in favour

It was resolved that the parish Council agreed to have the office phone diverted to the new mobile

Action item: The RFO to investigate the contract and cost implications

3036 CIL Matters

The Parish Council agreed to send the agreed CIL Application Form to the Baptist Free Church and the Clerk to investigate whether the previously submitted documents and quotation are still valid. The Parish Council agreed to follow the agreed process, namely that all CIL applications should be discussed at the Committee level first then by the Parish Council and that the agreed CIL matrix is to be completed.

Action item: The Clerk to send the approved CIL Application Form to the Baptist Free Church and to investigate whether the previously submitted documents and quotation are still valid.

3037 Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr Jonathan Horton said that the draft Bickenhill Neighbourhood Area Application was sent to all Parish Councillors for review and asked the members for their agreement to have the document formally submitted to Solihull MBC for consideration and feedback.

Proposed: Cllr Jonathan Horton

Seconded: Cllr Karen Dunn

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council agreed to have the Bickenhill Neighbourhood Area Application document formally submitted to Solihull MBC for consideration and feedback.

3038 Broadband

Cllr Jonathan Horton stated that things in Bickenhill are progressing, the residents are waiting for the formal contract from Openreach. Openreach and Warwickshire County Council are still looking at options for Marston Green and the next meeting is scheduled for the 8th of December 2020.

3039

3039.1 Finance – Approval of Invoices for Payment

The proposal was to authorise the payments detailed in the October expenditure reports.

Proposed: Cllr Karen Dunn

Seconded: Cllr Jonathan Horton

All in favour

It was resolved to accept the expenditure payments detailed on the reports

3039.2 CPRE Annual Membership Renewal

The RFO stated that the annual membership of £50 is due for renewal. For the last 10+ years the Parish Council always paid £50 but there is an option now to pay £75. Cllr Jonathan Horton said that at previous M42 JC Bickenhill meeting with the Planning Inspectorate, a representative from CPRE had strongly defended the village and supported the Parish Council and the residents throughout the consultation period. Cllr Jonathan Horton also added that generally speaking, CPRE lobbies for many worthwhile projects relating to greenbelt, the safeguarding of the countryside and such like. Based on the good work CPRE is providing, the Parish Council was of the opinion that the £75 membership fee is justifiable.

Proposed: Cllr Karen Dunn

Seconded: Cllr Jonathan Horton

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council approved the £75 2021 CPRE membership fee.

3039.3 Goodman Nash Invoice

The RFO advised that Goodman Nash's invoice value is £6,269.06. This value is also listed on the circulated November 2020 Expenditure Report for the Parish Councillors' attention.

3039.4 SMBC Precept 2021 Notification dates

The RFO stated that SMBC are currently calculating the Parish Council's provisional council tax base arrangements for 2021/22. Once determined, SMBC shall send the RFO the figures. The provisional figures are to be discussed with the Parish Council as soon as possible as SMBC requires the Parish Council's precept notice with the final precept to be returned by 22 January 2020.

Action item: *The RFO to evaluate the Parish Council's calculated provisional council tax base arrangements for 2021/22 and the date to be discussed at the January 2021 Parish Council meeting.*

3040 External Committee Reports

3040.1 Village Hall

Cllr Clive Hill said that the Village Hall had been finally sold.

3040.2 HS2

Cllr Karen Dunn said that there are lots of road closures forecast for early December and that all notifications of these closures have been circulated by the Clerk. Cllr Karen Dunn also stated that Arup won the WAN Gold Award for their sustainable HS2 Interchange design.

3040.3 Airport

Cllr Jonathan Horton stated that it is expected that in January 2021 the Airport is going to provide some update on noise pollution targets when aircraft are on the ground as currently there is no set guidance on that. Cllr Jonathan Horton will provide feedback after the meeting.

3041 Correspondence

3041.1 Consultation of SMBC's Cycling and Walking Strategy

The Clerk said that a series of virtual webinars have been announced as part of the latest consultation on SMBC's Cycling and Walking strategy. The consultation period will run until the 21 December and those interested in having their say will be able to take part in a series of virtual webinars. Registration via SMBC's website.

3041.2 SMBC/Helping Hands' Emergency Christmas Food Parcel Initiative

The Clerk said that Helping Hands, via SMBC, have offered some emergency food parcels to the Parish Council that will be made available for disadvantaged people over the Christmas period. They asked for a local hub where these parcels could be stored and when a family in the area is identified, be made available. The Clerk and Cllr Clive Hill are in discussion with the Parish Hall to accommodate this request so the Parish Council will not need to be on stand by. Further details on the parcels and delivery dates are to be advised by SMBC.

3041.3 HS2 Survey Requests

The Clerk stated that a student had asked if the Parish Council could promote her online survey on HS2 and its affects on the area on the Parish Council's Facebook page. The Parish Council was of the opinion that although they appreciate the student's initiatives, allowing an external entity to advertise on the Parish Council Facebook page would set a precedent and potentially could create some further issues. Therefore it was suggested to direct the student to the Marston Green Facebook page where they could engage with the administrator to consider their request.

Proposed: Cllr Clive Hill

Seconded: Cllr Karen Dunn

All in favour

It was resolved that the Parish Council did not consent to the student's request, namely to promote their HS2 survey on the Parish Council's Facebook page

3041.4 Training

Cllr Peter Tennant said that a last minute training request was made by him, Cllr Clive Hill and Cllr Jonathan Horton to attend the WALC's Understanding Employment Responsibilities course. The Clerk managed to secure the three space but due to the limited availability no other BMG Parish Councillors could be invited. Cllr Peter Tennant said that the last minute request was unplanned and when the same or similar course will become available in the future, all Parish Councillors will be given the opportunity to attend.

3042 Date of the next meeting – Wednesday 6th January 2021 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom Video Conferencing

Cllr Clive Hill closed the meeting at 8:25 p.m.