

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting
Wednesday, 6 March 2024 at 19:30
The Elmdon Lounge, Parish Hall, Elmdon Road, Marston Green

Present:

Cllr Clive Hill (Chairman)
Cllr Mark Noblet
Cllr Mike Kay
Cllr Paul Powell
Cllr Philip Clover

Clerk: Julie Brennan

Public: 2

C 24 - 044 Chairman's welcome

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

C 24 - 045 The Public

A member of the public asked if the Parish Council were able to confirm if the financial issues at Birmingham City Council were likely to impact on SMBC. Cllr Clive Hill advised that there could be some impact but it was difficult to tell at this time and noted that SMBC were having to make difficult financial decisions and find savings themselves.

C 24 - 046 Apologies

Apologies had been received and accepted from Cllr Carole Pearce, Cllr Claire Kelly, Cllr Leigh Trevis and Cllr Wayne Hadley.

C 24 - 047 Declaration of Interest and Dispensations

Cllr Mike Kay declared an interest in item C 24 – 057 as a resident of the area.

C 24 - 048 Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 7 February 2024

The Chairman asked those members present at the 7 February 2024 meeting if they had read the minutes and if they could confirm these as a true and accurate record. Save for an amendment to correct item C24 – 041g to remove the word two, the minutes were approved as a true and accurate record.

Resolved: *that the minutes were a true and accurate record save for the amendment to remove the word two from item C 24 – 041g.*

C 24 - 049 Matters arising from the Parish Council Meeting held on 7 February 2024:

- a) C 24 – 029 - Birmingham Airport Owned Property in Bickenhill - the Clerk confirmed that she had contacted the Airport and a reply was awaited. Cllr Mike Kay confirmed that he had an ACC meeting coming up and would raise the matter at that meeting.
- b) C 24 – 030 – Flooding in Bickenhill Village – Cllr Mike Kay stated that, following notification to SMBC, operatives had attended to clear a gully which had helped to ease the flooding in the area by the pond on Pitt Lane.
- c) C 24 – 034 – Taxis parking on Clock Lane – Cllr Mike Kay confirmed that SMBC were aware and

were dealing with this matter.

C 24 - 050 Recreation Committee

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2024 were noted.
- b) The budget/expenditure report was noted.
- c) Members discussed the request for a polytunnel and tool store to be located on the Elmdon Lane allotments and approved the request.
Resolved: *that the request for a polytunnel and tool shed to be located on the Elmdon Lane allotments was approved.*
- d) Members discussed the request for a plastic greenhouse to be located on the Elmdon Lane allotments and approved the request.
Resolved: *that the request for a plastic greenhouse to be located on the Elmdon Lane allotments was approved.*
- e) Members discussed the tenders received for the Grounds Maintenance Contract and noted that the costs had ranged from £7,456 to £22,881.18. The recommendation to award the contract to Fairways at a cost of £7,456 per year for a term of three years was approved.
Resolved: *that the Grounds Maintenance Contract be awarded to Fairways at a cost of £7,456 per year for a fixed term of three years.*

C24 - 051 Boundary Commission Working Group

Members reviewed and approved the suggested wording for the response on ward boundaries.

Resolved: *that the Clerk should submit the response to the Boundary Commission on the proposed changes to ward boundaries in Solihull as drafted.*

C 24 - 052 Finance & General Purpose Committee

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2024 were noted.
- b) The budget/expenditure report was noted.
- c) Members discussed the request from the Clerk for her SLCC membership fee of £298 to be paid by the Parish Council.
Resolved: *that the Clerk's SLCC membership fee of £298 be paid by the Parish Council.*
- d) Members reviewed the following new/amended policies which were approved:
 - Financial Regulations;
 - Health & Safety Policy;
 - Equality Policy;
 - Dignity At Work Policy; and
 - Internal Controls Policy**Resolved:** *that the Financial Regulations, Health & Safety Policy, Equality Policy, Dignity at Work Policy and Internal Controls Policy were approved.*

C 24 - 053 Planning Committee

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2024 were noted.
- b) Members discussed application number PL/2024/00097/PNTC relating to the installation of a 20m telecommunications mast. It was noted that the comments had been submitted and a decision was awaited.

C 24 - 054 Events Committee

- a) The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2024 were noted.
- b) D-Day 80th Anniversary 6 June 2024 – Cllr Paul Powell advised that Cllr Claire Kelly was designing banners and posters and it was hoped to order these shortly. Cllr Powell confirmed that the beacon had been ordered and that nominations would be sought from residents for someone to light the beacon on the night. Cllr Powell asked Councillors to help on the day of the event if possible as volunteers would be needed to ensure the safe running of the event.
- c) Community Day event - 14 September 2024 – Cllr Paul Powell confirmed that the event would be advertised on the Facebook page and that the format would be similar to last year's event.

C 24 - 055 To approve the Finance Approval List & list of urgent payments made

The payments detailed on the expenditure report were considered and approved.

Resolved: *that the expenditure payments detailed in the reports were approved.*

C 24 - 056 Direct Debits

Members reviewed and approved the list of direct debits set up on the Treasury bank account.

Resolved: *that the direct debits set up on the Treasury account were approved.*

C 24 - 057 The Pond, Pitt Lane

Members reviewed the notes from SMBC regarding the pond and the letter from a resident. Cllr Mike Kay confirmed that people did attend to monitor the Great Crested Newt population in the pond but it was not known who did this. The issues with silting up and the invasive water fern, Azola were noted and the Clerk was asked to obtain a quote from SMBC to test the water. Cllr Phil Clover let members know that it was thought that there was a natural spring located not far from the pond which caused water to run down Church Lane. However, the Groundsmen had checked a map of the area and advised that the spring was not shown so the Clerk was asked to request that Severn Trent attend to take a look in case it was a leaking pipe.

Action item: *Clerk to obtain a quote from SMBC for testing of the pond water and to ask Severn Trent to look into the possible spring/leaking pipe on Church Lane.*

C24 - 058 Councillor Vacancies

The Clerk asked for approval to advertise the vacancy caused by the resignation of Cllr Sue Rogers.

Resolved: *that the Clerk should advertise the vacancy that arose following the resignation of Cllr Sue Rogers.*

C 24 - 059 Easter Fun at Millennium Wood

Members reviewed the request from the Scouts to hold a Kids Easter Fun event at the Millennium Wood over the Bank Holiday weekend. The request was approved subject to the provision of a risk assessment and valid insurance certificate.

Resolved: *that the Easter Fun event proposed for the Bank Holiday weekend was approved subject to a risk assessment and valid insurance certificate being provided.*

C 24 - 060 Interment Fee

Members considered a request for an interment fee to be charged at the resident's rate rather than the out of area rate. The request was approved as the resident's late wife had lived in the village for more than 40 years and had been required to move into residential accommodation due to health issues.

Resolved: that the request from a resident for the interment fee to be charged at the resident's rate for his late wife's interment was approved.

C 24 - 061 SMBC Natural Capital Investment Strategy Consultation

Cllr Philip Clover outlined SMBC's Natural Capital Investment Strategy Delivery Plan and updated members following his email correspondence with Jenni Blakeman of SMBC. Members were asked to submit any comments they wished to make to the Clerk who would make the submission on behalf of the Parish Council.

Resolved: that Cllr Philip Clover would draft a reply on behalf of the Parish Council taking into account any comments provided by other Councilors and the Clerk will submit the response to SMBC.

C 24 - 062 Parking and Traffic Measures within the Parish

Cllr Paul Powell outlined a number of issues that had been raised with him by residents, in particular regarding parking on Elm Farm Avenue and in the area next to the Doctors' surgery. Residents' concerns include existing restrictions not being observed and a lack of enforcement by traffic wardens. Members discussed the issues and agreed to seek a meeting with Paul Tovey of SMBC and to contact Dr Sagoo at Chelmsley Lane Surgery to enquire if it would be possible for staff at the surgery to park at the Marston Green Tavern car park (with permission of the owners) thereby leaving the spaces at the surgery for patients to use.

Action item: The Clerk to seek a meeting with Paul Tovey to discuss the issues raised and also write to Dr Sagoo at the Chelmsley Lane Surgery to enquire if it would be possible for the staff at the surgery to park on the Marston Green Tavern car park.

C24 - 063 External Committee Reports

- a) **Parish Hall Trustees** – Cllr Clive Hill advised that the trustees were currently dealing with some changes to staffing arrangements.
- b) **Marston Green Village Charitable Trust** – Cllr Clive Hill advised that the trustees were sorting out some issues with banking and hoped to be in a position to distribute funds soon.
- c) **Airport matters** – Cllr Mike Kay advised that he would have an update for the next Parish Council meeting as the next ACC meeting was scheduled to take place on 7 March 2024.
- d) **HS2 updates** – Cllr Mark Noblet advised that the next HS2 meeting would take place on 25 March 2024 and he would provide an update at the April Parish Council meeting.
- e) **M42 J6 updates** Cllr Mike Kay confirmed that a meeting had taken place with Skanska and that the slides used in the meeting were due to be shared in the next few days.
- f) **Village Hall, Bickenhill** – Cllr Mike Kay advised that both Andy Street and Saqib Bhatti MBE MP had offered their support and that matters were ongoing. Applications for a grant had been made and a meeting was expected to try to move matters forward.
- g) **Broadband in Bickenhill** – Cllr Mike Kay confirmed that Broadband had now been installed and that a note had been delivered to each resident to let them know.

C 24 - 064 Correspondence

The Correspondence was noted.

C 24 - 065 Date of the next meeting: 10 April 2024 at 19:30

Venue: The Elmdon Lounge, Parish Hall, Elmdon Road, Marston Green

C 24 - 066 Confidential Matters

Resolved: To close the meeting to members of the public via the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings)

Act 1960, to allow for discussion of confidential matters, publicity of which would be prejudicial to the public interest.

C 24 - 067 Extension to deadline to meet to discuss complaint

Members considered the email correspondence and timescales and agreed that the deadline to meet to discuss the complaint would not be extended.

Resolved: *that the deadline to meet to discuss the complaint would not be extended.*

C 24 - 068 SMBC Lease:

Members considered the heads of terms provided by SMBC and agreed to take on the new lease. The Clerk was asked to obtain a quote for legal advice in relation to the new lease.

Resolved: *that the Council will enter into the new lease with SMBC*

Action item: *Clerk to obtain a quote for legal advice in relation to the new lease with SMBC.*

The meeting closed at 21:35