

## Berkswell Parish Council – Ordinary Meeting 07 December 2017

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council of Berkswell held in the Jordan Room, St John Baptist Church, Berkswell on 07 December 2017 at 7.15 PM.

Topic	Action by
<p><b>1. Evacuation Procedure</b> – the Chairman instructed those in attendance of the evacuation procedure</p> <p><b>2. Open Forum</b> Parishioners of Berkswell were invited to address the Council on any relevant matter for a maximum of three minutes. Cllr Archie Taylor (Burton Green Parish Council) commented as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He thanked BPC for negotiating new stop signs on Waste but unfortunately one is facing the wrong way. Cllr Burrow recommended that residents should contact ‘Solihull Connect’ to report such matters;</li> <li>• He reported that there will be a consultation on the A46 interchange in March 2018;</li> <li>• He advised that Parishes should be aware of wider implications of Local Plans when contemplating responses to any consultations</li> <li>• He has arranged to meet Michael Bing (consultant), who has reservations about the design of the Berkswell HS2 viaduct (and other aspects of the scheme), to look at the likely cost of expert advice. BPC will be invited to a meeting on January 11 at 6:00pm – 7:00pm Cllr Burrow indicated that a representative will attend.</li> </ul> <p>Keith Tindall commented on an article in the Bugle in which a number of criticisms were made about the conduct of Solihull Council and in particular its Planning Committee. KT asked if Berkswell Parish Council shared these views. Cllr Burrow confirmed that BPC do not share the view represented in the article.</p> <p>It was announced that Coventry is to be the City of Culture in 2021.</p> <p><b>3. Attendance:</b> Cllrs Burrow, Howles, Cambage, Drake, Lloyd, Hitchcock, Edwards; the Clerk, Cllr Bell (SMBC) and 15 of the public</p> <p><b>4. Apologies for Absence:</b> David Felthouse,</p> <p><b>5. Acceptance of Apologies:</b> Accepted</p> <p><b>6. Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>a. Council received the following declarations of interest from Councillors with respect to items on the agenda.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllrs Burrow and Cambage own lands adjacent to Allocation 1 and as such would leave the meeting if the topic was discussed</li> <li>• Cllr Cambage declared she is married to the person making the grant application for Heart of England School under Item 12c.</li> <li>• Cllrs Lloyd &amp; Hitchcock are Trustees of Jubilee Project and declared an interest in the payment to the Jubilee Project under Item 12a</li> <li>• Payment of expenses for Cllr Burrow under Item 12a (Cllr Drake agreed to chair this item)</li> </ul> <p>b. There were no written requests for disclosing pecuniary interests</p> <p>c. Cllr Cambage requested dispensations regarding Item 12c as she is married to the person making the grant application for Heart of England School. Council agreed unanimously that she could take part in the discussion and be allowed to vote.</p>	

- 7. Confirmation of Minutes**  
The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 9 November 2017 were agreed and duly signed by the Chairman.
- 8. Matters arising from the previous meeting for attention** There were no matters arising.
- 9. Borough Councillor’s Report and Parish Councillor’s Opinion.**  
Cllr Bell reported that he had discussed with Director of Planning the Parish Council’s concerns regarding planning application compliance at Truggist Farm. It was suggested that Cllr Lloyd has a meeting with the Director of Planning and Cllr Bell agreed to facilitate this.  
Cllr Drake reported that a resident had complained about the rubbish at the back of the Masala Club on Station Road with the suspicion that it is attracting vermin. Cllrs Burrow & Drake agreed to talk to the resident and if needed, the Clerk will write to SMBC requesting action. Cllr Hitchcock commented that there are always rats around and they will find any scraps of food. It’s a minefield over who’s responsible. Cllr Hitchcock stated he has the knowhow and skills to get rid of them.
- 10. Committee Appointments** – nothing to report
- 11. Planning Applications**
- a. The following list of planning applications were discussed by the Council:

Ref	Location	Proposal	Response Date
2017/03126	Land To The Rear Of Edwards Cottage Church Lane Berkswell	Fell to ground 1 No. conifer tree (T1) on land to rear of Edwards Cottage	15.12.17
2017/03115	Eardley Cottage Meriden Road Berkswell Solihull	Conservatory to rear of property.	18.12.17

2017/03126 – Council stated they were happy to leave this to the tree officer as this is in the Conservation area. Council agreed that Cllr Hitchcock will look at the tree and if there’s a problem the Clerk will be requested to write to SMBC

2017/03115 – Council agreed not to comment

- b. Council briefly discussed the apparent lack of planning enforcement at commercial premises developed in the Green Belt. Cllr Burrow proposed that a documented report (with photos) should be compiled to take to the meeting with SMBC as offered by Cllr Bell (see Item 9 above). Sheila Cooper stated there are issues which cannot be discussed on a public platform and a meeting with SMBC is the best approach. Cllr Howles agreed to attend the meeting with Cllr Lloyd.

**12. Financial Matters**

- a. Cllr Burrow left the meeting and Cllr Drake took the chair. Council noted that the following invoice payments had been examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which each invoice relates had been received, carried out, examined and

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represents expenditure previously approved by the Council. Council approved all the following payments:

<b>Invoices for Payment</b>	<b>Approval</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Gross Amount £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>
R Wilson - Clerk's Salary December 2017	Admin	002011	562.00	0
R Wilson – reimbursement of postage costs	Admin	002019	29.12	0
Cllr Allowances Oct to Dec 2017	Admin	002012 to 002017	866.28	0
HMRC PAYE Oct to Dec 2017	Admin	002018	587.98	0
The Bugle – Winter Edition	Admin	002020	100.00	0
Jubilee Project – Room Hire	Admin	002021	20.00	0
St John Berkswell PCC – Room Hire	Admin	002022	125.00	0
A Burrow – reimbursement: 1. Agenda Item 17 Sept 2017 – paint for Kelsey Lane bus shelter 2. Agenda Item 17 Sept 2017 – more paint for Kelsey Lane bus shelter (as authorised by the Clerk) 3. Printing for NDP (as authorised by the Clerk) 4. Additional printing for NDP (as authorised by the Clerk) <b>Total</b>	Admin	002023	74.81 64.33 58.32 28.26 <b>225.72</b>	12.46 10.72 9.72 0 <b>32.90</b>
A Burrow – reimbursement of NDP printing costs	Admin	002024	14.86	0
F Weetman & Son – Xmas Trees (Item 17k - 12/10/17)	Admin	002025	282.00	47.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>2,812.96</b>	<b>79.90</b>

In addition, the following payment was authorised under Financial Regulation 5.2 and approved.

<b>Invoices for Payment</b>	<b>Approval</b>	<b>Cheque No</b>	<b>Gross Amount £</b>	<b>VAT £</b>
S Ebbans – reimbursement of cost of Xmas lights	Admin	002026	133.98	22.33

b. Payments received - none

c. Grant Applications

- Balsall & Berkswell Hornets Football Club – a grant application was considered by Council for the purchase of a new set of portable goalposts for the 9 by 9 Football Pitch to the value of £2,643. This will facilitate cricket being played on the football pitches. Cllr Edwards asked if the Hornets were applying to Balsall PC for funding to which the Hornets representative (Steve Tidy) said there was no plan to do so. Steve Tidy assured Cllr Hitchcock that the goal posts were robustly made and were covered by a manufacturer's guarantee. A resident commented that the Hornets do sterling work for the community but felt they need to address a litter problem both in the grounds and

<p>surrounding areas. Steve Tidy accepted that this was an issue and that the Hornets have asked each team to clear litter after each game. There was also a reported problem with parking on the pavement/verge restricting access to Lavender Hall Park. Cllr Lloyd also asked if the floodlighting could be re-aligned so it doesn't shine into Lavender Hall Park. Cllr Burrow proposed that the full grant be given with a request to the Club to address the above written into the offer. Council agreed unanimously and the grant will be paid in 2017/18. Cllr Burrow thanked Steve Tidy for what the Club do for the youth of Balsall Common and Berkswell.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heart of England School – a grant application for 2018 was considered as follows:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To fund an 'Elevate' project at a cost of £1,800. Elevate are an external agency that works with over 1500 schools internationally. They provide high impact seminars and workshops to help students improve their study techniques, increase motivation, build confidence and lift exam performance.</li> <li>ii. To fund a 'Student Savvy' project at a cost of £740. This project encompasses a series of workshops for pupils and parents which are designed to raise awareness, give key information and deliver broader life skills not contained in the National Curriculum.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>Cllr Drake reminded Council of a point of principle included in the Council's Grant Policy regarding the funding of National Curriculum items. Cllr Drake commented that he did not believe this grant request related directly to the National Curriculum and as such he was happy to approve. Cllr Cambage, on behalf of the school, commented that no grant application for these projects had been made to other bodies but that applications had been made for other support. Concern was expressed by Councillors that other bodies are increasingly required to supplement LEA funding in schools. Cllr Burrow proposed the Council should approve the grant and Cllr Drake seconded. Council agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>The Clerk was asked to write to Dame Caroline Spelman MP again about the apparent underfunding of state schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Standing Orders – Council discussed the issue of "Inspecting Property in respect of Planning Applications" for possible inclusion in the Council's Standing Orders. Cllr Lloyd spoke to this item and suggested that principles in the SMBC Planning Committee Handbook might be noted and referenced in Standing Orders. Cllr Drake advised Council that the Risk Management Framework now included an identified risk of Councillors meeting and visiting with third parties (see Item 16c). It was proposed by Cllr Burrow that the matter should be addressed through the Risk Framework. This was seconded by Cllr Drake and agreed unanimously.</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>13. 2017/18 Outturn Projection of Reserves</b> – Council noted the best estimate of closing reserves as at 31 March 2018 to inform the 2018/19 budget setting process, as presented by the Clerk.</p>	<p>RD</p>

**14. Budget and Precept Setting 2018/19** - Council agreed the arrangements for setting the budget and precept for 2018/19, including the following timetable:

Date	Activity
07/12/17	Cllrs to discuss the 2017/18 projected outturn of reserves at the Ordinary Meeting of the Council
13/12/17	Cllrs to advise the Clerk of any 'big ticket' items that they think may hit us in 2018/19, particularly in the area of Grants, Safety, Professional Advice and Plans
11/01/18	Clerk to circulate a draft 2018/19 budget to Councillors for information. This will include options to facilitate discussion
18/01/18	Extraordinary Meeting of the Council to agree the 2018/19 budget and Precept
26/01/18	Clerk to submit the Precept Request to SMBC (Parish Precept Notice)

**15. 2017/18 External Audit** - Council noted that the Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments Ltd (SAAA) was appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government as "a person specified to appoint local auditors" and as the Sector Led Body (SLB) for smaller authorities. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is less than £6.5 million. Under the Regulations, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all applicable opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms. The firm appointed to Berkswell Parish Council is PKF Littlejohn LLP and the fee will be determined by national table of Income/Expenditure bands.

**16. Risk Management**

- a. There were no new finance and risk events to report.
- b. Council noted that all outstanding actions on the Risk Register have now been completed (copy on the Council Website).
- c. Risk Framework – Council noted the Risk Framework has been the subject of an annual review by Councillors Drake and Cambage. Actions from last year have been completed and some new items have been added for completeness. It is considered that issues are understood and appropriately monitored and managed. Some new actions are carried forward but none are considered urgent (copy on the Council Website). The review has identified a risk to Councillors during meeting and visiting third parties. An action was agreed to draw up a short policy around visiting with reference to the SMBC Planning Committee Handbook. Cllr Drake offered to lead the work.

**17. Correspondence** – no correspondence had been received other than that relating to specific agenda items.

Cllr Drake asked the Clerk to confirm if he had received a request from Balsall PC for Berkswell PC to comment on their NDP consultation. The Clerk confirmed that he had not received such a request.

**18. Actions from Previous Meetings**

- a. Council discussed the status of agreed actions as circulated (a copy is available on the Council website). Outstanding items include:

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<p>i. Village Green (see Item 19a)</p> <p>ii. Waste Lane bus stops - Cllr Lloyd agreed to have another go at contacting WM Transport to have new hardstandings installed.</p> <p>It was agreed that, other than the above, there were no outstanding items that can be progressed at this time or that are time critical.</p>	<p>RL</p>
<p><b>19. Ongoing References</b></p> <p>a. Review of inventory of land and assets – Council agreed the following motion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Clerk is asked to investigate the registration of the village Green and well area as “Village Green” under the Commons Act 2006 as opposed to seeking to Register Council’s ownership of the land.</li> </ul> <p>b. Neighbourhood Development Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council noted that the NDP Steering Committee has established working groups to analyse the 1000+ comments received to the issues and options questionnaire. The Committee has been using a modified version of the KJ/Affinity technique to categorise the comments/suggestions with a view to outline proposals for the contents of a draft NDP to be discussed at the 18th December meeting of the committee (this will be a public meeting). Every single comment will be published to give total transparency.</li> <li>• The Groundwork grant period has been extended to the end of March 2018 to allow more time for outstanding work to be completed.</li> <li>• The Council approved that the Clerk may continue to incur printing and other incidental costs at his discretion to facilitate the work of the committee.</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p>
<p>c. Solihull Draft Local Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council noted that LUC have been commissioned to undertake the work approved by the PC in November (Item 17c). The original timescale was to have this work completed by mid-December but LUC want to deliver in January due to staffing problems. The Clerk was instructed to agree a mid-January deadline with LUC.</li> <li>• Council discussed whether or not to give approval for the Clerk to commission advice concerning the significance of the issues on the Green Belt SHELLA report uncovered by Wendy Wilson/Barrage. It was suggested that the draft plan, when eventually published, may address issues raised by WW. Council concluded that it would make more sense to wait until the draft version of the Plan is published. Council agreed to consider appointing a consultant again in January following further analysis of WWs findings.</li> <li>• Council have been advised that the timescale for the publication of the Draft Local Plan is likely to slip into the New Year as SMBC need time to consider demands for Solihull to take more housing than originally thought.</li> </ul> <p>d. Governance Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council considered a letter from SMBC Democratic Services dated 30th November 2017 with respect to the parish boundaries (Governance) review. Council had been asked to comment on the</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk</p>

<p>terms of reference and in particular the consultation and publicity element of the review. We are asked "Can you please let me have your suggestions and ideas for the most appropriate method of consultation and communication with residents in both Balsall and Berkswell". Council discussed the request and agreed the following response to allow the Clerk to respond quickly as requested (by Friday 8 December). Council's proposals for consultation and communication were agreed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public meetings in the Parish split between Balsall Common and Berkswell Village, to provide easy access to Parish residents. The choice of venues (subject to availability) are:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Jordan Room, St John Baptist Church (Berkswell Village)</li> <li>○ Reading Room, Meriden Road (Berkswell Village)</li> <li>○ Jubilee Centre, Station Road (Balsall Common)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The use of available email listings and new media relating to the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Berkswell Society distribution list</li> <li>○ The Communicator</li> <li>○ U3A</li> <li>○ The 3 local schools (Balsall Common Primary School, Berkswell CoE School &amp; Heart of England School)</li> <li>○ Parish Council Website</li> <li>○ Berkswell community Facebook and Twitter accounts</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Notices posted on the 3 Parish Council Notice Boards</li> <li>• Council also agreed funding of up to a limit of £250, to underwrite the cost of local engagement events in Berkswell Parish organised by SMBC.</li> </ul> <p>e. Traffic Calming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council agreed the following motion: "This Council confirms that the success criteria for the traffic improvement project, to allow SMBC Highways to give their professional evaluation on the expected effectiveness and value for money of the ARUP proposals, are:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To meaningfully reduce speed of traffic passing through the village</li> <li>▪ To meaningfully improve (or the feeling of) pedestrian safety for residents and other users of village amenity</li> <li>▪ To improve parking and enhance visual amenity as a result of achieving points 1 &amp; 2".</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Council did not receive a report on SMBC Highways' response as it was not available</li> <li>• Council noted that, due to technical reasons, it will not be possible to add the ARUP presentation to the Council's website. Residents will be advised that a copy could be made available on request to the Clerk.</li> </ul> <p>f. HS2 – Council noted that the Greenway Trust want to set up a working committee with HS2.</p> <p>g. Public Rights of Way – the Clerk reported that he had received a response from SMBC to the FOI request but that it didn't answer the points raised. Council agreed that SMBC is statutorily obliged to have a</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
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<p>List of Streets and should have been able to answer the FOI request. Council asked Cllr Lloyd to set out potential next steps for consideration at a future meeting.</p>	<p>RL</p>
<p>h. Ward Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council approved the updated version of the SMBC ward action plan as circulated to Councillors (copy to be available on the Council’s web site)</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>i. Handyperson</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council noted that the advert for handyperson contract services has been posted and the clerk is approved to incur minor costs to advertise it on the one stop notice board. It was also agreed to put a copy of the advert in the Berkswell Village shop.</li> </ul>	<p>Clerk Clerk</p>
<p>j. Review of the Airport Night Flying – Cllr Lloyd reported that community and Airport representatives had met again on 6 December to discuss the Night Flying Policy. He reported the position of the Council to the Airport representatives, and it was now accepted that the increase in night movements to 5% of total movements was just for the current 3-year review period. The Airport proposed the night violation limit would be reduced from 85 dB to 83 dB, but a full review of a reduction to 81 dB would be carried out next year.</p>	
<p><b>20. Removal and additions to Ongoing References</b></p>	
<p>Removals: Trees overhanging the school playground Christmas trees Village Shop</p>	
<p>Additions: Governance Review</p>	
<p><b>21. Training and Meetings</b> – Cllrs Burrow and Drake had attended a WALC seminar entitled ‘Understanding and Responding to Planning Applications’. Both councillors found the training very useful and a number of interesting things came out. It was concluded that the course was well worth going on.</p>	
<p>Cllrs Cambage and Drake had attended a Lant Trust meeting.</p>	
<p><b>22. Heritage and Community</b></p>	
<p>a. Kelsey Lane Bus Shelter - Council noted that work on the Kelsey Lane bus shelter has been completed by volunteers and approved an overspend of £16 excluding VAT on paint. Cllr Burrow reported that the actions in the risk assessment list are now completed plus other works brought to our attention.</p>	
<p>b. Christmas Trees/Christmas Lights - Council noted that the Christmas trees are expected to be delivered and erected in the weekend of 10th December. Council agreed an overspend of £33 in respect of the Berkswell village Christmas lights.</p>	
<p>c. Winter Planting Scheme - Council noted that Caroline Joyner and Jo Smith have replanted the Station planters and the Station Road roundabout. Council authorised the clerk to reimburse Caroline Joyner for the cost, using the extraordinary payments procedure, subject to the cost being within the approved amount of £300 (which includes the cost of a tree) and the normal requirements for an expense form and receipt. Cllr Hitchcock mentioned a scheme to</p>	<p>Clerk</p>

<p>plant trees in honour the Battle of Jutland. Cllr Hitchcock has the details.</p>	
<p>d. General Maintenance – Council agreed to delegate to the Clerk the authority to commission our maintenance contractor, Greenline, to clear the Well area of leaves and to remove vegetation debris from the roof of the Meriden Road bus shelter (adjacent to the Spinney).</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>23. Council Administration</b></p>	
<p>a. Council agreed Councillor Cambage will undertake the internal review of the Cashbook to 31 December 2017 and that Cllrs Drake and Edwards will perform the quarterly inspection of the council’s physical assets.</p>	<p>AC RD/DE</p>
<p>b. Website – Council noted that the Clerk has drafted a specification for the new website which has been shared with our website developer. The next stage is to produce a ‘mock up’ of the new website for consideration. The Clerk reported that the web designer has requested payment for this phase of work. Council agreed that the Clerk can negotiate a fee with the web designer up to the approved budget of £500.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>c. Cllr Burrow stated that he wanted to thank the volunteers who regularly help out in the community and to thank the clerk for his hard work. Cllr Burrow had written a thank you in the Berkswell Parish Magazine.</p>	
<p><b>24. Next Meeting</b> - Ordinary Meeting of the Council, 11 January 2018 at 7.15pm, in the Balsall &amp; Berkswell Hornets Clubhouse, Lavender Hall Lane, Berkswell.</p>	