

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council of Berkswell, held in  
The Reading Rooms, Berkswell on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at 7.45pm**

**1. Attendance**

Cllrs S Cooper, A Cambage, D Hitchcock, R Lloyd, and G Lock (Chairman).

Mrs S Butterworth (Clerk).

Cllr L Macdonald (Balsall PC).

8 members of the public including Ms C Sullivan and Messrs A Dymond, R Hubbard, K Tindall, D Felthouse, J Cairns.

Mr A Duke, Solihull Community Housing and Mr A Milne, Aspect Developments.

**2. Apologies**

Cllr D Bell, Mr M Hickin.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Lloyd declared an interest as Chair of the Local Action Group HHAG.

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 24 July 2014 confirmed as accurate by all present, and signed by the Chairman.

The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 19 August 2014 confirmed as accurate by all present, and signed by the Chairman.

The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Parish Council held on 4 September 2014 confirmed as accurate by all present, and signed by the Chairman.

**5. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered elsewhere on this Agenda**

None.

**6. Proposed Housing Development at Lavender Hall Farm**

Mr A Duke, Solihull Community Housing and Mr A Milne, Aspect Developments (a wholly owned subsidiary of SMBC) presented to the meeting details of a proposed housing development at Lavender Hall Farm. Mr Duke explained the need for affordable housing within the Borough - meeting housing need and improving existing land. The land in question being used for commercial storage at present. The landowner would be looking to sell land in the near future and the views of the Parish Council were sought.

Cllr Cooper expressed concerns regarding the noise implications of the development next to the West Coast Mainline and HS2. Mr Duke confirmed acoustic buffering would be provided.

Cllr Cambage asked what proportion of the development would be accommodation suitable for the elderly. Mr Duke confirmed 50-60 units in total, 20-25% suitable for the elderly, to be assessed at a later date.

Cllr Hitchcock expressed the following concerns: development within the greenbelt; narrow road, railway bridge; listed building; distance from schools; road prone to accidents; country location; poor facilities.

It was suggested that this development would set a precedent on how close properties could be located in relation to HS2 and the question asked as to why it was not included in the Local Plan. Mr Duke confirmed the land was not available at the time the Local Plan was set up.

Mr Duke thanked the meeting for hearing the proposals and would take away concerns. Paper plan of development left for BPC and BCPC.

#### **7. Public Opinion, Borough Councillor's Report and Parish Councillor's Opinion**

Mr Tindall asked whether an objection to planning application 2014/1212 Solar Farm at Nailcote Hall had been lodged as it did not appear on SMBC website. Cllr Lock confirmed an objection had been lodged by the Parish Council, including the opinion of their planning consultant.

Mr Dymond proposed thanks and congratulations to Mr Hickin as Berkswell had won a prestigious Gold Award and the Best in Large Village Category at the recent RHS Heart of England in Bloom Awards.

Cllr Hitchcock confirmed work would shortly commence in The Spinney to remove holly and generally tidy the area. Cllr Hitchcock requested the flexibility to negotiate with workmen, advising the Clerk to ensure work is within the budget agreed. Clerk to check the budget agreed.

Cllr Lock stated the island within The Spinney car park was in need of improvement. RHS judges had suggested a wildlife area and Cllr Lock suggested working with the scouts to maintain.

Cllr Lock confirmed SMBC was currently replacing gullies on Lavender Hall Lane and Coventry Road but requested 'Flooding' be kept on the agenda with individual areas of concern itemised. Cllr Cooper stated she had been contacted by a resident of Duggins Lane regarding flooding and had subsequently contacted SMBC direct.

#### **8. Planning Applications**

- ***2014/1353 - Lower Farm Barn***

Cllr Lloyd confirmed this application had been withdrawn. This was a derelict farm building where planning applications had been rejected several years ago and three years ago. The current application stated it was a building currently in use but it was in fact redundant. Cllr Lloyd suggested writing to the agent reminding them of the need to ensure factual accuracy in planning applications. Cllr Cooper agreed. Cllr Lock stated the correct procedure had been followed with the initial objection but wrong doing should not be implied. Cllr Cabbage agreed.

It was agreed Cllr Lloyd would produce a draft letter and present at the next meeting.

- ***2014/1386 - Beechwood Cottage, Hodgetts Lane, Berkswell  
Conservatory link extension***

Cllr Lloyd confirmed this was a glass link between two buildings and questioned the building regulations with this type of application.

Cllr Lock confirmed 'No comment'.

- ***Berkswell Estate Tree Felling***

Cllr Hitchcock confirmed he had inspected and photographed the site. Residents were concerned re the extent of tree felling. Trees are a crop which need to be cut and replanted but this is within a conservation area and if trees are to be cropped planning permission should be sought.

Cllr Lloyd stated, SMBC had conceded some trees were within the conservation area and an offence may have been committed. He suspected there would be a retrospective planning application and replanting would be instructed.

Cllr Lock confirmed 'No action at present'.

- ***Harpers Fields, 724 Kenilworth Road, Balsall Common***

It was confirmed Mrs C Spelman MP had responded at the last meeting.

Mr Tindall confirmed this application would not be called in to the Secretary of State or overturned and would be carried forward.

Cllr Lock requested the item be removed from the agenda.

## **9. Highways and other SMBC issues**

### ***Repair to fingerpost – Berkswell crossroads***

Refer to SMBC.

### ***Lorry traffic and planning enforcement - Truggist Hill Farm***

There was currently a planning application in place for a menage. It was agreed to arrange a planning meeting to discuss further. At this meeting an interim Planning Committee Chair would be appointed in the absence of Cllr Howles.

### ***Traffic calming in Berkswell Village***

It was agreed to write to Cllr K Allsopp and Mr A Prior to reiterate the problems. There had been two recent accidents at the crossroads. Mr Prior to be made aware of outstanding repairs to two lampposts.

### ***School parking issues***

It was agreed to include details of discussions between the school and Parish Council in the letter to SMBC.

### ***Greenway***

Cllr Lloyd reported on investigations carried out by Mr D Keaney. Cllr Lock requested this item be carried forward.

### ***Street cleansing in Berkswell Village***

The Clerk informed the meeting of communications to date with SMBC. Mr Tindall to forward contact details for Street Cleansing Manager to Clerk.

### ***Truggist/Hodgetts Lane condition of island***

Carry forward – contact SMBC.

### ***Truggist/Hodgetts/Spencer's Lane damaged road signs***

Carry forward - contact SMBC.

Cllr Lloyd reported on the poor condition of Baulk Lane signs – contact SMBC.

### ***Ragwort Lavender Hall Park and verges***

Cllr Lloyd reported the lower part of the park had been mown. Ragwort was still growing. He suggested writing to 'Green Flag', cc K Hemmings, suggesting the award be rescinded due to the poor condition of the park.

Cllr McDonald reported flooding around a drain in Lavender Hall Park – contact SMBC. Mr Tindall reported flooding close to new houses on Lavender Hall Lane – contact SMBC.

### ***A452 trimming***

Cllr Lloyd reported the Marsh Lane tarmac footpath was unusable due to overgrown foliage. He continues to contact SMBC re overgrown trees and foliage to no avail.

### ***The Bear Inn car park***

Cllr Cooper suggested contacting the owners and SMBC re the poor condition of car park.

## **10. Heritage and Community**

### ***RHS Heart of England in Bloom Awards***

Thanks expressed to Mr Hickin for his work in securing the award. It was agreed to take actions from the RHS Report and add to the agenda for future meetings.

Berkswell Society will arrange publicity regarding the awards, which are displayed in Berkswell Village Store.

### ***Lant Trust Representation***

Cllr Cambage reported she had attended a meeting with The Lant Trust. The Lant Trust constitution states there should be two representatives from the Parish Council but the Trust is happy with one representative at the present time. Cllr Lock proposed the matter be carried forward until the Council is at full strength.

Cllr Cambage reported the Trust had commissioned a survey on the Reading Rooms and work was required on the roof. A leak under the building had been resolved. Cllr Cambage raised concerns at the meeting regarding the museum.

### ***Berkswell Museum***

An article in the Parish Magazine seeking volunteers to save the museum had been unsuccessful. The listed building is owned by Berkswell Charities and the Parish Council funds electricity costs. Negotiations were to take place with the metal detecting group regarding use of the building. Cllr Hitchcock suggested National Trust involvement.

It was agreed to carry forward to the next meeting.

### ***Grass Cutting***

Cllrs Cambage and Cooper agreed to look at current contracts and tendering, in consultation with the church and school.

### ***Berkswell Telephone Box***

Suggestion to buy a defibrillator – carry forward.

### ***Table Tennis Table for Community Use***

Cllr Cooper to investigate opportunity.

### ***Land at Meeting House Lane***

Awaiting update from Berkswell Charities – carry forward.

## **11. External Representative Reports**

### ***Airport***

Cllrs Cooper and Lloyd had attended the ACC meeting and expressed concerns regarding the reconstitution of the Committee and disproportionate representation. The Committee had suggested there should be one representative for Berkswell and Balsall Common. Cllr Lock noted the Parish Council should await consultation.

## **12. HS2**

### ***Appointment of Counsel, budget and other resources necessary for Select Committee Hearing.***

Cllr Lock thanked all for their representation at the HS2 meeting on 4 September. Cllr Lock proposed an Extraordinary Meeting be arranged to pass resolutions to enable appointment of Counsel.

Mr Tindall suggested counsel be made aware that there are other petitioners and other parish councils, societies etc. in need of advice.

Cllr Lock stated the Parish Council would be asked to agree or disagree on what counsel presents and that would form the basis of instruction.

***SMBC signing confidentiality agreement with HS2 Ltd.***

Cllr Cooper expressed concern that SMBC had signed a confidentiality agreement with HS2.

Cllr Lloyd confirmed matters could be clarified at Petition Management Meetings.

***Meeting with Junior Barrister - 22 September 2014.***

Cllrs Lock, Lloyd and Cooper were to attend a ‘fact-finding’ meeting with prospective counsel on 22 September. Apologies from Cllrs Hitchcock and Cambage for non-attendance. Cllr Lock thanked Cllr Cooper for researching and obtaining someone interested in meeting with the Parish Council at no initial charge. Cllr Cooper refuted the comment that there would be no initial charge and stated she had every expectation that there would be a charge.

The purpose of the meeting with counsel was to establish a working relationship for representation at Hearing.

It was agreed to arrange an Extraordinary Meeting to discuss the outcome of this meeting.

***Officially authorise Cllr Richard Lloyd, in his professional capacity as a Chartered Engineer, to instruct the Barrister on behalf of the Parish Council.***

Cllr Lloyd confirmed he would instruct in his capacity as Chartered Engineer and all agreed. Cllr Lloyd to seek assurance from Bill Robinson regarding the legality.

***Confirm date of workshop for local petitioners.***

It was agreed to look at budget allocation and discuss at the Extraordinary Meeting.

***Additional support for Clerk.***

Agreement had been received from Bill Robinson to support Clerk as and when necessary with HS2 matters.

**13. Accounts for Payment**

It was resolved to approve the following payments:

<b><i>Payee</i></b>	<b><i>Cheque</i></b>	<b><i>Amount</i></b>
Mrs S Butterworth (Expenses June & July)	001667	190.79
Solihull MBC (April – June)	001668	2080.08
Balsall Common Village Hall (3.7.14)	001669	14.00
Balsall Common Village Hall (19.8.14)	001670	14.00
Berkswell Charities (Annual Museum Rent)	001671	5.00
Balsall Common Bugle CIC (Autumn Edition)	001672	100.00
G R Dawson (Spinney Hedges)	001673	480.00
Cllr Hitchcock questioned this expense – it was confirmed work was undertaken following an accident at the crossroads and in preparation for the RHS judging.		
Berkswell Reading Room (Meetings 2013/14)	001674	200.00
Bircham Dyson Bell (June & July)	001675	1962.00
G R Mowing (1.9.14)	001676	522.00

**14. Correspondence**

***HS2 Property Consultation*** closes 30.9.14. Cllr Lock proposed a response that the Parish Council had previously responded and the views remained unchanged. Carry forward to next meeting.

***SMBC Overhanging foliage – public footpath M214***

The foliage was overhanging from The Rectory and it was agreed to contact Mrs Bratton, Rector’s Wife.

**15. Administration**

***Berkswell PC Asset List – Maintenance of PC Assets***

Agreed to carry forward.

***Community Asset List***

Agreed to carry forward.

***Berkswell PC Bank Accounts***

Agreed to carry forward.

***Berkswell Village Tea Room – Annual Contribution and Use by Parish Council***

It was agreed to pay the agreed annual contribution of £500 plus £200 for weekly use of the Tea Room by Clerk.

It was agreed the Clerk would continue to be available at the Tea Room on Mondays but would not continue at the Library on Tuesdays.

***Councillor Vacancy***

It was agreed to encourage applicants as a matter of urgency.

**16. Next Meeting**

Ordinary Meeting of the Council, Thursday 16 October 2014 at 7.15pm, The Jubilee Centre, Station Road, Balsall Common.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Mrs S Butterworth  
Clerk to Berkswell Parish Council  
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16 October 2014