

Berkswell Parish Council - Ordinary Meeting 16th June 2016

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of the Parish Council of Berkswell held in the Meeting Room, Berkswell on 16th June 2016 at 7.45 PM.

Item	Topic	Action by
1.	<p>Open Forum - Parishioners of Berkswell were invited to address the Council on any relevant matter for a maximum of three minutes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charles Jagger – commented that the Well is becoming a stream and getting worse. Stagnant water is coming into the Well. Also ditches at top of Bentley Green Lane are overflowing and need clearing out. STW said it was a council problem. Cllr D Bell agreed to look into this. • John Ebbans - complained about speeding traffic and asked if speed traps could be set up. The attendant Police Constable informed the Council that there are only 3 speed camera vans available but agreed to take the matter back for action. • Malcolm Hitchin - raised a question about the fencing off of the Partco building and asked if this was infringing a pedestrian right of way. Cllr Bell agreed to look up the Planning Application to see if a Right of way had been established. • Sheila Cooper – asked about the extent of the Partco development. Cllr Bell commented that the plan was to convert the building into apartments with three additional houses and 22 parking spaces. • Keith Tindall – commented that land by the Catholic Church hasn't been mowed. Cllr Burrow responded that it was his understanding that this is deliberate to discourage its use for ball games as it could be used for development in the future. 	<p>DB</p> <p>SN</p> <p>DB</p>
2.	<p>Attendance: Cllr Burrow (Chairman), Cllr Howles, Cllr Hitchcock, Cllr Edwards, Cllr Lloyd, Cllr Drake, Cllr Cambage; Cllr D Bell (SMBC), and 20 members of the public (including the community constable Simon Harrison).</p>	
3.	<p>Apologies for Absence: None received</p>	
4.	<p>Acceptance of Apologies: None</p>	
5.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declarations of interest were made by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Lloyd regarding Planning Application no 2016/01261 (Item 10) and item 17 h (HS2) as chair of HAAG. • Cllr Burrow regarding item 16 f. • No written requests for disclosing pecuniary interests had been received • No requests for dispensations needed to be discussed 	
6.	<p>Confirmation of Minutes</p> <p>Annual Meeting of the Council held on 12 May 2016 – these minutes were signed by the Chairman as an accurate record</p>	
7.	<p>Matters arising from the previous meeting for attention: The Clerk reported that he had received a reply from SMBC regarding his letter passing on concerns expressed by residents on the use of Berkswell School as a Polling Station. In essence SMBC would consider an alternative that meets their criteria. Cllr Burrow agreed to talk to the church to see if they could provide suitable accommodation.</p>	<p>AB</p>
8.	<p>Borough Councillor's Report and Parish Councillor's Opinion: No reports were received.</p>	
9.	<p>Committee Appointments:</p>	

10.

Planning Applications

- Planning Committee Chairman – Cllr Burrow nominated Cllr Howles until the Planning Committee next meets and formally elects a chairman. This was duly seconded and approved.

- Council discussed the following planning applications:

Ref	Location	Proposal	Deadline
2016 - 01261	21 Meeting House Lane, Balsall Common, Solihull, CV7 7FX	Remove 1 No. Oak tree located to front of property	17.06.16
2016 - 01233	Truggist Hill Farm, Truggist Lane, Berkswell Solihull	Construction of a commercial building and associated hard standing for the running of a civil engineering and property development business and for the storage and general maintenance of commercial vehicles, plant and equipment due to the loss of the existing commercial building and hard standing owing to HS2	16.06.16
2016 - 01334	10 Benton Green Lane Berkswell Solihull CV7 7DB	Conservatory style extension to rear elevation with part solid roof.	16.06.16
2016 - 01306	Barn, Barretts Lane Farm, Barretts Lane, Balsall Common	Conversion of an agricultural barn to 2 No. residential dwellings	24.06.16

- 2016 – 01261 – A resident commented that Meeting House Lane is defined by its oak trees – another suggested that for every tree felled new saplings should be planted. Cllr Hitchcock reported that he had spoken to the tree officers regarding this application. The consensus is that the tree is part of an ancient hedge, but the issue is, should the trees have priority over housing. SMBC’s Urban Tree Policy document is due soon, therefore, Cllr Hitchcock believes it would be premature to fell the tree. There is a fungus on this tree and the tree does not have a TPO on it. Cllr Hitchcock also commented, if the existing trees don’t fit in with a modern townscape then other trees should be planted. He advised to do nothing at the moment as there is a need to understand what is best for the owners and the community. Council concluded that they wished to object to the application on the basis that Meeting House Lane is defined by its oak trees and a decision would be premature. The Council agreed to abide by Urban Tree Policy once published.

<p>11.</p>	<p>Financial Matters</p> <p>a. The following payments were approved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 – 01233 – Council heard that huge lorries are dominating the lanes and are dangerous to other road users. The site was cleared of heavy plant some time ago but now it is building again. Cllr Lloyd commented that the existing building will be taken down under plans for HS2. It was also commented that Truggist Lane is officially restricted to vehicles under 2m width. The Police should be taking action. Cllr Bell commented that the best way to influence the current situation is for the public to complain. Cllr Hitchcock commented that if the proposed new building is put in there could be more flooding of the Greenway. It was also commented that the permission given last autumn to an earlier application required them to remove the existing building. This has not happened and now this application is asking for this not to happen. Council agreed to object in principle and object to any change to conditions applied to previous applications. The impact of heavy goods vehicles on the lane and on visuals is a big concern. The Clerk was also asked to write to council asking for a new restriction sign on Truggist Lane. • 2016 – 01334 – Council has no objection to this application • 2016 – 01306 – Council has no objection to this application provided that access is by a new path through fields. • Mr & Mrs Cashmore presented their thoughts on a possible development of land between Oakwood House and Lavender Hall Park on Lavender Hall Lane. Jane and Simon were seeking initial feedback to the plan. An Application is planned in outline for up to 2 dwellings fronting on Lavender Hall Lane. There are mature trees in the area, many with TPOs. A tree survey has been carried out to look at the impact of new dwellings. The land lies in the Greenbelt and the Cashmore’s believe that limited infilling is acceptable in Greenbelt depending on the perception on how the parcel of land currently contributes to the purposes of the Greenbelt. Cllr Edwards asked what sort of properties were being planned and the Cashmores thought family sized homes. Cllr Lloyd asked how this application would sit with the current Local Plan review? This application was thought to be too small (windfall) to impact the Local Plan. The Cashmores confirmed that remaining trees would stay in the Family Trust. Keith Tindall commented that this whole site was originally one dwelling and with the proposed development would become 4 dwellings. Other concerns expressed included; the site is a natural wildlife haven; and the site is immediately adjacent to access to Lavender Hall Park which could raise safety issues. Cllr Burrow said he would like real assurance that the trees won’t be taken down. Cllr Hitchcock commented that a footpath used to go through the site (Heritage Path) and that he would want to preserve natural habitat and was concerned that the proposed development would be detrimental to this. Consequently, Cllr Hitchcock would be against any changes in that area. The Chairman advised the Cashmores to continue with a planning application and that the Council will consider the application further in due course. 	<p>Clerk</p>
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Invoices for Payment	Approval	Cheque No	Gross Amount £	VAT £
Clerk's Salary – June 2016	Admin Costs	001808	532.56	-
Clerk's Expenses	Admin Costs	001809	45.85	7.64
HMRC	Admin Costs	001810	759.76	-
The Bugle	Admin Costs	001811	100.00	-
2GeeDesign	Admin Costs	001812	20.00	-
Greenline	Contract	001813	187.50	-
Councillor Allowances (April to June 2016)	Admin Costs	001814 – 18	759.76	-
Marsh Lane Nature Reserve	Admin Costs	001819	51.00	-
HTM Highways Traffic Management	Village Fete	001820	50.00	
Thistle Loo Hire	Barbecue	001821	168.00	28.00
PJ Roberts (Jazz Band)	Barbecue	001822	360.00	-
Total			2,709.07	35.64

The Clerk advised Council that the following payment was authorised under Item 22a of the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 12 May 2016.

Payee	Cheque No	Amount
HMRC (PAYE Costs (Feb – Mar 2016))	001806	403.92

The Clerk reported that it has since transpired that this payment is a duplicate of an earlier payment. Council noted that this payment has been cancelled.

- b. Payments received: - Council noted that the Clerk had received a cheque for £20 from National Grid in recompence for damage to a grass verge.
- c. Grant Applications – No applications had been received
- d. Internal Audit Report – There was nothing new to report

12. Annual Accounts 2015/16 – The Clerk presented the accounts for the year 2015/16 using ‘accruals accounting’ which measures the financial performance and position of the Council by recognising the 2015/16 financial events regardless of when the cash transactions occurred. This view of the accounts will facilitate improved budgetary control. Council noted the report.

13. Review of Clerk’s Salary Scales – Council considered the paper proposing a change to the Berkswell PC salary scale following a review arising from changes to the NALC salary scales and approved the implementation of the new Salary scale backdated to 1st April 2016 and the payment of monies to the Clerk in accordance with the new scale. The Chairman was authorised to confirm the new salary and scale in writing to the Clerk..

14. Risk Management – There was nothing new to report

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<p>15.</p>	<p>IT Policy – Council agreed to rename the Policy ‘IT and Social Media Policy’ and referred the item to the Finance Working Group.</p>	
<p>16.</p>	<p>Correspondence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Council considered a letter from Paul Carpenter regarding what he considers to be a dangerous junction between Hodgetts Lane and Waste Lane – better signage on the approach to the junction might be the solution as the road still looks like it goes straight across. Cllr Burrow suggested the Council should write to SMBC demonstrating the problem. The Clerk was asked to write to SMBC accordingly. b. Council considered a letter from Mr R Cooper in reply to the Clerk’s letter regarding access to the area around The Pound for the removal of a tree and future maintenance. Mr Cooper had given permission to access the area. The Clerk was asked to go ahead and obtain quotations for the work. c. Council considered a letter from Anne Brereton (Places Directorate – SMBC) in response to the Clerk’s letter regarding Berkswell Parish Council's view on the idea of a 'bypass' through the Berkswell Parish. Council noted the response and agreed to publish it on the Council web site d. Council considered a letter from Barry & Pauline Lupton regarding the safety of pedestrians on Meriden Road, Berkswell, at the brow of the road just north of Home Farm. They requested that the white line be put back after resurfacing. The Clerk was asked to write to SMBC with this request. e. Council considered an email from Mark Johnson re the Jubilee Project in response to the Clerk’s letter requesting an update on how the project are satisfying the conditions of the 2015 grant. Council noted the content of the email and expressed concern that the Jubilee Project were not complying with the conditions of the grant. It was agreed that Cllr Burrow will discuss the matter with Mark Johnson.. f. Council considered letters from Ms Jagger and Ms Rooke regarding a complaint. After a vote Council agreed by 2 votes to 1 to discuss the matter in private session. 	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>AB</p>
<p>17.</p>	<p>Ongoing References</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Review of inventory of land and assets – The Clerk gave a progress update that he and Cllr Edwards had met local solicitors to scope out how best to approach the task of Registering all Council Land. The Council have been advised of an approach which will involve gathering together evidence asset by asset and liaise with the Land Registry to ascertain if the evidence is sufficient to support a Registration. Due to the effort required this will be a medium term exercise. The evidence for Title to the Pound is greatest so this will be the focus of initial efforts. b. Neighbourhood Development Plan – Council were informed that the Joint NDP Committee has decided to set up a working group to look at the Solihull Plan and come up with a priority list of sites which might be acceptable to the resident of Berkswell and Balsall parishes. A consultant will be employed to help with the assessment of site suitability. The first step will be to draw up criteria for suitable sites followed by an analysis of possible sites against the 	<p>Clerk/DE</p>

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	<p>criteria, leading to a proposal. Council agreed this seemed to be the right approach.</p> <p>c. Spinney – Cllr Hitchcock reported that work was continuing to create an open environment along the lines of the wildlife reserve in Coventry.</p> <p>d. Traffic Calming – The Berkswell group had a stall at the village fete to inform residents of options. The plan is to go back to SMBC with various comments with assistance from a Transport Consultant.</p> <p>e. Planning Enforcement issues – covered under item 10 above.</p> <p>f. Aircraft noise monitoring – there was little new to report. The CAA want to trial option 5 again for Non-jet aircraft, but there is no support for this from elsewhere.</p> <p>g. Trimming along A452 – Council noted that there was no improvement evident.</p> <p>h. HS2 – Council noted that ‘Locus Standi’ is being denied to private petitions with HS2 saying that Parish Councils will represent individuals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Council considered the following motions; i) <i>“a working group should be set up to develop the presentation to the Select Committee, with powers given to the Clerk to engage a barrister if thought appropriate”</i>; and; ii) <i>“a written response to the proposed hearing date should be agreed and the Clerk instructed to submit the response”</i>. Council approved both motions. It was agreed to set up a working party comprising Cllr Burrow, Cllr Lloyd, Cllr Drake & Cllr Hitchcock. The Clerk was instructed to write in response to the proposed hearing date. o High Speed Rail - Petition number: 700 – to consider the email received from Matthew Aylwin of HS2 – It was agreed to delegate this matter to the new Working Party. Council authorised the Clerk to accept any concessions on BPC’s behalf. <p>i. Unrecorded Rights of Way – Following a number of requests for information, for which the Clerk had received no replies, it was agreed to submit an FOI request.</p> <p>j. No parking on pavements & verges – Council noted there had been no development but there is recognition of the problem. The police don’t treat enforcement of such offences as a high priority. It was agreed to write to Police Superintendent asking for action to be taken and include an article in the Bugle encouraging residents to report overhanging hedges and trees.</p> <p>k. Damage to the Pound – See Item 16 b above</p> <p>l. Mowing of Berkswell Churchyard – There was nothing new to report</p> <p>m. Traffic on Meeting House Lane – Cllr Cambage highlighted the survey results that the majority of respondents wanted a 20 mph limit (which is not enforceable by law), but there was no appetite for pavements. Cllr Burrow agreed to talk to Cllr Bell is determine a way forward.</p> <p>n. Berkswell Museum Closure</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk AB</p> <p>AB</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The Clerk reported that the disposal of exhibits was going extremely well and that very few items (if any) will fall to the Council to dispose of when responsibility shifts to the Council after 30 June. o Council noted that the Museum Committee have extended the date on which responsibility for the disposal of remaining exhibits reverts to the Parish Council to 30 June 2016. o. Replacement of damaged waste bins – Cllr Burrow agreed to talk to Cllr Bell to find a way forward. 	AB
18.	<p>Removal and additions to Ongoing References</p> <p>Removals: No Change</p> <p>Additions: Replacement of damaged waste bins</p>	
19.	<p>Parish Council Policies – There were no policies to discuss</p>	
20.	<p>Training and Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no reports from attendance at events and meetings 	
21.	<p>Heritage and Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. General condition of the Parish area – verbal complaints have been received regarding the general level of maintenance in the Parish, specifically, the quality of mowing, the Spinney Car Park, bins on the Green, nettles overgrowing, disrepair of the pavement on Meriden Road, and the broken bench on Spencers Lane. Also a problem with the frontage of the Bear on Coventry Road and the hedge between Lavender Hall Lane and Meriden Road. Cllr Edwards proposed the appointment of a handyman for the Parish. Council agreed to tender for a contractor to tidy the Parish up. The Clerk was instructed to draw up a tender document in conjunction with Cllr Burrow. Simon Cashmore offered to help. b. Berkswell Parish Church Projects - Council considered possible projects to be undertaken by church volunteers. c. Footpaths – Council to ratified its response to the proposed diversion of M217/ M229. The Clerk confirmed he had responded to David Kearney. d. Trees – Council considered a possible street-trees survey/planting project. The idea is to preserve the character of the area by planting new trees through consultation/co-operation with home owners. Council agreed to the idea in principle. Details to be drawn up in due course. Cllr Hitchcock suggested this should be part of the SMBC Urban Tree Policy. e. Litter pickers – As a follow up to an item raised at the Parish Assembly, Council considered and approved the following motion: <i>“The Council agrees to the purchase of 3 ranger tong type litter pickers at a cost of £21.62 plus VAT each for community use”</i>. 	Clerk/AB
22.	<p>Council Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Finance and Risk Events – None identified 	
23.	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Ordinary Meeting of the Council, 21 July 2016 at 7.45pm, the Reading Room, Berkswell.</p>	
24.	<p>Private Session (Confidential)</p>	

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	<p>Cllr Burrow left the meeting and Cllr Drake took over the chair. In introducing the matter Cllr Drake informed Council that Cllr Burrow and another individual had been involved in heated discussion with Brownie leaders immediately before the Parish Assembly on 19 May. A representative from the Brownies and the Chairman of the Reading Rooms Committee had written to the Clerk complaining about the individuals' behaviour. Both individuals had written to the complainants offering their person apologies. Cllr Lloyd proposed the Council should write to the complainants and ask if the personal apologies are sufficient and determine if they wish to pursue a formal complaint. If they wish to make a formal complaint, they should attend the next Council meeting to present their grievance. This course of action was agreed.</p>	Clerk
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