

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council of Berkswell,  
held in the Jubilee Centre, Balsall Common, on  
5th September 2013 at 7:45 pm**

**1. Attendance**

Cllrs Benton, Burrow, Hitchcock, Howles, and Lloyd. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice-chairman Cllr Howles presided.

Borough Cllr Diccico

13 members of the public.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Lock and Meeson.

**3. Declarations of interest**

None.

**4. Confirmation of minutes**

Confirmation of the minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 5 August 2013 was held over till the next meeting due to the absence of the Chairman.

**5. Accounts for Payment**

The following payments were approved:

	Cheque	Amount	VAT
SMBC, Speed Visors	1602	£1152.78	£192.13
AJ Bailey, Padlocks for stocks	1603	£38.29	
Cllr Lloyd, 3 folders for Minutes	1604	£12.00	£2.00

Cllr Benton reported that the Council had received £80 compensation from the NatWest Bank for mishandling of changes to the account details, and £18.45 to cover related expenses.

**6. Matters arising from previous minutes not covered elsewhere on this agenda**

None.

**7. Public opinion and Borough Councillor's reports**

Members of the public from Meeting House Lane and Oxhayes Close attended to express their concern about proposals by the company C-Zero to build houses on the field adjacent to the Blessed Robert Grissold Church. The news of the proposal had not been widely known. Cllr Lloyd explained that he had e-mailed a limited number of residents, and that we should be grateful to Mr Cairns for distributing leaflets to raise awareness.

Cllr Howles explained the developer had asked to make a presentation to the Council, and this would be considered under item 10 below. She had reservations about meeting the developer as the site was Greenbelt and the Council had always been very protective of the Greenbelt. The Council was not opposed to the provision of "affordable" houses.

The draft Local Plan required all large developments to include 40% of them, and envisaged other would be provided on exception sites in groups of 2 or 3.

Cllr Burrow added that the Government's changes to the Planning Laws had created a window of opportunity for developers, and the delay in approving the Solihull Local Plan was leading to further uncertainty.

Mr Cairns expressed concern that the developer was claiming support for the scheme from the Balsall Common Village Residents' Association and various individuals, all of whom denied that such support had been expressed.

Mr Green pointed out that Solihull MBC had refused the earlier Planning Application 91/ 1154 for the site, and that this had been upheld at appeal on the grounds that it was important open space and supported national policy for recreational uses on urban fringes. Cllr Diccico added that his party continued to be against further major development in Balsall Common.

Mr Dymond said he recognised the need for affordable housing, but it was undesirable to concentrate it in block developments.

Mr Green raised again the issue of litter in Balsall Common centre. He said it needed removal with brush and shovel, rather than with mechanical sweepers, and noted that some businesses were cleaning their own frontages. A bin still needed replacement. Cllr Howles believed that signs might be used to encourage civic pride and increase the numbers of people who were already clearing litter themselves. **Cllr Diccico undertook to discuss the quality of cleaning with SMBC. Cllr Howles agreed to write to Balsall PC about the litter around Lea Francis House.**

## **8. Heritage and community**

### **8.1 *Berkswell Museum***

Discussion of relations with the Museum was deferred due to the absence of Cllr Lock.

### **8.2 *Grass/hedge cutting arrangements***

The Working Party looking at future expenditure has reviewed the work being done and will be making recommendations.

### **8.3 *Signs - Carol Green***

Cllr Burrow reported that Mr Tovey said the new signs would be erected in the next 4 weeks.

### **8.4 *Notice Board - Balsall Common centre***

Renewed efforts will be made to obtain a key as notices are still having to be stuck on the outside of the glass.

### **8.5 *Pony patrol - update***

Discussion deferred to the next meeting.

### **8.6 *Packhouse Way logo***

Cllr Lloyd has presented a number of options for the waymark to councillors. The sign is rectangular, based on a stylised outline of the packhorse bridge produced by Mr Bailey. **Cllr Lloyd to discuss with Hampton in Arden PC and reach agreement.**

## 9. HS2

Cllr Lloyd reported that he had just been to a meeting of the Solihull MBC HS2 Working Party. He was disappointed that Solihull MBC had refused to do a proper design study of a realignment that would take advantage of a tunnel through our parish to move the route to the east. Without this, the northern tunnel portal would cause a great deal of damage, and the environmental benefits of a tunnel would not be as large as they could be.

A consultation on Property Compensation is in progress, and a further consultation on the "formal" Environmental Statement would start when it was submitted to Parliament. The Council could then petition the Bill Committees on any issues that remained unresolved.

Cllr Hitchcock said the full environmental impact of HS2 was not yet known, and judging by the disruption caused by current works near his house, the potential disruption during the construction phase of HS2 was very large. It was noted the Council had asked for HS2 Ltd to fund a local Environmental Health Officer.

Cllr Burrow posed the question of how the Council should prepare for the next Environmental consultation. It was agreed we should discuss with SMBC Cllr Courts the way that Solihull MBC intended to proceed.

## 10. NDP update

Cllr Howles reported recent discussions with Solihull MBC. It would not be possible to have the parish designated as the Plan area, as the boundary cut through the Balsall Common conurbation. Councillors expressed concerns that a Plan would entail considerable cost and time without a clear benefit. It was agreed that Sarah James of Solihull MBC would be invited to discuss the matter with representatives of both parish councils.

Also discussed under Neighbourhood Planning was the proposal by C-Zero for a housing development on the field adjacent to the Blessed Robert Grissold Roman Catholic Church. The representations made by the public (see item 7 above) were noted. After discussion, the Council voted 3:2 **to invite the developer to make a presentation at the next meeting of the Council.**

## 11. Administration

### *11.1 Complaints Procedure*

The Council approved the draft Complaints Procedure dated 1 July 2013.

### *11.2 FOI Procedure*

The Council approved the FOI Procedure dated 2nd July 2013

### *11.3 Data Protection and IT Procedure*

The Council approved the revised Data Protection and IT Procedure dated September 2013

### *11.4 Financial Procedures*

The Council approved the revised (draft 2) Financial Procedures dated September 2013

**11.5 Working Party on Cost Savings**

Working Party investigating cost savings in 2014-15 (Cllrs Benton, Burrow, Howles, and Lloyd) had met on 3 September. It was reported that about half the annual budget had been reviewed, and some potential for reductions had been found.

**11.6 Risk reduction**

The actions identified by Cllrs Burrow and Hitchcock to mitigate Risks had been passed to the Working Party on Costs who would recommend what work should be done, and when.

**11.7 Localised Council Tax support**

The email from Solihull MBC was noted. There was likely to be a small reduction in the support received by the Council as the total budget would reduce from £155k to £151k. It was agreed the Council had no particular comments to make in response to the consultation.

**11.8 CPRE (Warwickshire) AGM**

It was decided the Council would not be represented at the AGM of CPRE on 11 September.

**11.9 Administration manual**

It was agreed Cllr Burrow would hold the new copy of *Local Council Administration*

**11.10 Traffic - Truggist Lane**

Representations had been received by a resident concerned about the volume of heavy vehicle movements to Truggist Hill Farm. It was agreed **Cllr Burrow would refer the complaint to Planning Control at Solihull MBC.**

**12. Next meeting**

The next Ordinary Meeting of the Council will be held on 17 October 2013 at 7:45 pm in the Reading Room, Berkswell, preceded by a meeting of the Planning Committee at 7:15 pm.

The meeting closed at 10:02 pm.

Cllr K Howles  
Vice-chairman of Berkswell Parish Council  
Howard Cottage  
Kenilworth Road  
Hampton in Arden  
B92 0LW

17 October 2013