

## BERKSWELL PARISH COUNCIL – ORDINARY MEETING 19 NOVEMBER 2020

Clerk to Berkswell Parish Council  
Mr R Wilson  
PO Box 6379  
Coventry  
CV6 9LP

Tel: 07801 042623

Email: [clerk@berkswellparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@berkswellparishcouncil.org.uk)

### TO ALL PARISH COUNCILLORS

**Sir/Madam**

**You are hereby summoned to attend the Ordinary Meeting of the Parish Council of Berkswell to be held virtually using the Zoom video conferencing facility on Thursday 19 November 2020 at 7:00pm for the purpose of transacting the following business. Instructions to Councillors and members of the public wishing to attend this meeting are available on the Berkswell Parish Council website.**

Mr R Wilson  
Clerk to Berkswell Parish Council

13 November 2020

### **Guidance on How to Join this meeting**

#### On-line Access

To Join the Meeting from any suitable device (e.g. laptop, smartphone, tablet etc) click on the following link and follow the instructions. **Please allow sufficient time to register as the meeting will start promptly at 7:00pm**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87382747618?pwd=RW5Jb2EySmYvcW40SFdIN3lseDBEdz09>

When requested to do so enter the following:

Meeting ID: 873 8274 7618

Password: 262083

#### By Phone

To join the meeting by telephone please call any one of the following numbers:

+44 203 051 2874 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5237 United Kingdom

+44 203 481 5240 United Kingdom

+44 203 901 7895 United Kingdom

+44 131 460 1196 United Kingdom

When requested to do so enter/provide the following:

Meeting ID: 873 8274 7618

Password: 262083

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcrqL6cCFA>

### **Guidance and tips for participation:**

We ask all participants to keep their microphones on Mute unless they are speaking. Our microphones pick up a lot of background noise and when everyone has the microphones unmuted, it can get really noisy.

**Agenda**

- 1. Attendance**
- 2. Apologies for absence**
- 3. Acceptance of apologies for absence**
- 4. Declarations of Interest**
  - a. To receive declarations of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda
  - b. To receive written requests for disclosing pecuniary interests
  - c. To consider any requests for dispensations as appropriate
  - d. Councillors are reminded to update their Notice of Registrable Interests'. It is a requirement that councillors update the Register within 28 days of a change to any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest. Councillors to note that the current register is available via the following link <http://eservices.solihull.gov.uk/mgInternet/mgParishCouncilDetails.aspx?ID=235&LS=3>
- 5. To approve Minutes of the following meeting:**  
Ordinary Meeting of the Council held on 11 September 2020
- 6. Matters arising from the previous meeting requiring attention**
- 7. Open Forum**  
Parishioners of Berkswell are invited to address the Council on any relevant matter for a maximum of three minutes
- 8. Borough Councillor's Report.**
- 9. Planning Applications**
  - a. Planning violations
    - i. Hawkhurst Moor - alleged unauthorised change of use of waste processing facility:  
Council to note correspondence between Cllr Lloyd, local residents and Solihull Planning Enforcement of 15 October, in which SMBC says that no new planning application is required, notwithstanding that the current use involves chipping "brown" waste while the extant permission is for composting "green" waste, and that Cllr Lloyd has recommended a careful review of the compliance of the current operation with the approved plans, the original assurances, and the planning conditions, in particular, restriction of noisy operations to 0900 to 1700 Mon - Fri.
  - b. Council to note the status of correspondence the Clerk has had with SMBC on behalf of the Council during lockdown (as circulated). Council to agree to share the log of correspondence still awaiting a reply with Dave Cuthbert (SAC Chair) and Ward Councillors.
  - c. Planning applications relating to Berkswell are routinely forwarded on to Parish Council Members by the Clerk for their consideration and their individual response if required. Any councillor may request an application should be included on an Ordinary Meeting agenda or apply to the Chairman for an Extraordinary Meeting to consider an application requiring discussion and possible Parish Council comment. There have been no requests to consider an application at this meeting.
- 10. Financial Matters**
  - a. The following is a list of payments made using NatWest Bankline since the last meeting of the Council on 11 September 2020:

| <b>Payment made</b>                                    | <b>Date</b> | <b>Approval</b> | <b>Payment Method</b> | <b>Gross Amount<br/>£</b> | <b>VAT<br/>£</b> |
|--|-------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Royal Mail Finance – annual renewal PO Box Service     | 09/09/20    | Annual Admin    | Direct Debit          | 352.50                    | 58.75            |
| Berkswell School – COVID 19 Grant                      | 24/09/20    | Grant           | Bank Transfer         | 7,000.00                  | 0                |
| Balsall & Berkswell Hornets – grant for new goal posts | 24/09/20    | Grant           | Bank Transfer         | 2,694.00                  | 0                |

BERKSWELL PARISH COUNCIL – ORDINARY MEETING 19 NOVEMBER 2020

| Payment made   | Date     | Approval    | Payment Method | Gross Amount<br>£ | VAT<br>£      |
|--|----------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| PKF Littlejohn LLP – 2019/20 External Audit  | 30/09/20 | Statutory   | Bank Transfer  | 240.00            | 40.00         |
| ICS Print & Reprographics – printing of Local Plan   | 30/09/20 | Admin       | Bank Transfer  | 218.25            | 0             |
| RD Wilson – reimbursement for annual subscription cost of Norton Anti-Virus for Council laptop | 02/10/20 | Admin       | Bank Transfer  | 74.99             | 12.50         |
| J Hickin – Invoice No 397 – Grass cutting contract September 2020                              | 02/10/20 | Contract    | Bank Transfer  | 223.13            | 0             |
| ICO Licence fee 2020/21  | 08/10/20 | Statutory   | Direct Debit   | 35.00             | 0             |
| RD Wilson - Clerk's expenses – Warwickshire Records Office fee                                 | 19/10/20 | Admin       | Bank Transfer  | 8.00              | 0             |
| J Hickin – reimbursement for turf (Telephone box)  | 19/10/20 | Maintenance | Bank Transfer  | 42.00             | 6.99          |
| RD Wilson – Clerk's October salary   | 22/10/20 | Admin       | Bank Transfer  | redacted          | 0             |
| DM Payroll Service Ltd – 1 <sup>st</sup> half 2020/21 fees                                     | 02/11/20 | Admin       | Bank Transfer  | 75.00             | 0             |
| J Hickin – Final Grounds maintenance instalment  | 02/11/20 | Contract    | Bank Transfer  | 223.13            | 0             |
| GR Dawson – Burial ground maintenance Jul to Sept 2020   | 10/11/20 | Contract    | Bank Transfer  | 774.00            | 129.00        |
| R Drake – reimbursement for Remembrance Day Wreath   | 10/11/20 | Admin       | Bank Transfer  | 25.00             | 0             |
| RD Wilson – tinsel for 2020 Xmas trees   | 10/11/20 | Admin       | Bank Transfer  | 27.42             | 4.65          |
|  |          |             |                |                   |               |
| <b>Total (excluding Clerk's salary)</b>  |          |             |                | <b>12,012.42</b>  | <b>251.89</b> |

- b. The following invoice payment presented for approval has been examined, verified and certified by the RFO to confirm that the work, goods or services to which the invoice relates, has been received, carried out, examined and represents expenditure previously approved by the Council.

| Invoices for Payment                            | Approval | Payment Method | Gross Amount<br>£ | VAT<br>£ |
|---|----------|----------------|-------------------|----------|
| D Edwards – Expenses claim re Zoom subscription | Admin    | EBP            | 43.17             | 0        |
|   |          |                |                   |          |
| <b>Total</b>                                    |          |                | <b>43.17</b>      | <b>0</b> |

- c. Payments received – Council received the sum of £15 on 29 October 2020 from Cllr Drake as a contribution to a Remembrance Day wreath in 2019/20.
- d. Bank Account balance – Council to note that the council's bank balance as at 13 November 2020 was £63,929.
- e. New Bank Account
- i. Council to note that NatWest Bank, as part of a government led initiative, have offered the Parish Council a cash incentive of £1,250 to move its account to another bank as part of their Business Banking Switch initiative. The Clerk has received offers from the Co-Operative and Metro Banks but only the Co-Operative has been proactive in engaging in a possible switch, making the Co-Operative Bank the favoured choice. The service offer from the Co-Operative Bank appears on paper to be superior to the current service provided by NatWest, in particular it will allow for two councillors to authorise on-line payments.
  - ii. Council to consider whether to switch to the Co-Operative Bank, if so, we need to apply to our chosen participating bank by **28th February 2021** at the latest.
  - iii. Council to authorise the Clerk, working in conjunction with the Chairman, to progress the account transfer
- f. New Finance System
- i. Council to note that, to date, no suitable system for a parish council of our size has been identified. The current, Excel based approach, is very much fit for purpose. However, the

## BERKSWELL PARISH COUNCIL – ORDINARY MEETING 19 NOVEMBER 2020

Clerk is very experienced in using this tool and the Council faces a risk in the event that the Clerk becomes suddenly indisposed. In such an event, the Chairman is of the view that Council's accounts are simple enough that they could be re-created from bank statements and support documentation if necessary.

ii. Council to agree that no further action should be taken at this time.

**11. 2021/22 Budget** – Council is reminded that a meeting has been scheduled for 14 January 2021 to set the Council's 2021/22 Budget and Precept. In order to facilitate the budget process Councillors are asked to provide the Clerk with any budget items/assumptions they wish to have considered when agreeing the budget. These should be provided to the Clerk by 1 December 2020 to enable the Clerk to prepare an Options paper for consideration on 14 January 2021.

### **12. Guide to Risk Management**

a. Council to note that the Clerk has reviewed our insurers', Zurich Insurance, 'Guide to Risk Management' (previously circulated) designed to help councils identify and manage potential risks. Council to agree the Clerk's recommendation that this document should be used for reference when planning risk assessments and asset inspections going forward.

### **13. Policies and Procedures**

a. Reserves Policy – Council to note that the Clerk has revised the Reserves Policy to reflect the Council's financial position at the end of the financial year 2019/20 (a copy is available on the Council's website)

b. Equality and Diversity Policy – Council to consider the draft Equality Policy (previously circulated) and agree the following motion: *"This Council agrees to adopt the draft Equality Policy with immediate effect"*

c. Grant Awarding Policy – deferred to a future meeting

**14. Website Accessibility** – Council to note the Report on the "Accessibility of the Berkswell PC web site to those using 'Google Read Aloud'" (circulated previously). Council to agree in principle to move towards implementing the proposed actions contained in the report.

### **15. Risk Management**

a. Council to discuss any new finance and risk events

### **16. Actions Arising from Previous Meetings**

a. Council to note the status of agreed actions from previous meetings as circulated (a copy is available on the Council website)

### **17. Correspondence**

a. Complaint from a resident regarding the Berkswell Project

i. Council to note the complaint

ii. Council to ask the Clerk to advise the resident that issues of visual amenity and light pollution will be considered by the project team when designing the pedestrian crossing, and that no illumination other than the flashing beacons is required, and beacons with low light spillage, night-time dimming, and small silhouette are available.

### **18. Ongoing References**

a. Review of inventory of land and assets

i. Kelsey Lane Bus Shelter – the Clerk is still awaiting a response from HMLR.

b. Balsall Common Village Centre Master Plan

i. Council to note that 20 consultancies have submitted a response to the joint Invitation to Tender issued by the Balsall PC clerk on behalf of both Parish Councils. Evaluation of tenders have been undertaken and short-list interviews are scheduled to take place on 19 & 20 November.

ii. Council to agree the joint agreement with Balsall PC regarding the responsibilities and commitments for the Balsall Common Centre project.

iii. Council to delegate to the Clerk the authority to authorise the placement of an order with a consultant to prepare a Village Centre Master Plan, through Balsall Parish Council, that will not exceed the approved project budget.

## BERKSWELL PARISH COUNCIL – ORDINARY MEETING 19 NOVEMBER 2020

- iv. Council to note that a project is being developed with Balsall Parish to provide 6 tree planters in the centre, two of which will be in Berkswell Parish. SMBC Highways have approved the locations via Councillor Burrow and Councillors Keely (from Balsall) and Lloyd (from Berkswell) are nominated to recommend suitable trees. Council to approve costs in due course.
- c. Balsall Common Safety and Security - Council to note the written summary outcome of the Balsall Common safety and security questionnaire conducted by the joint working group with Balsall PC. Council is requested to support an application to SMBC for a 20 mph speed limit in Balsall Common centre from Meeting House Lane to the roundabout on the A452.
- d. Rights of Way
  - i. Section 56 Notice - Council to note that the clerk has issued a Section 56 Notice to SMBC regarding the chronic flooding of footpath M196 near Carstins, as originally agreed at the January 2020 meeting of the Council. SMBC have formally acknowledged receipt (Incident: 201021-000344) but there has been no detailed response to date
  - ii. Council to note the preliminary consultation on a possible diversion of M222 at Hill House Farm and the response of the Open Spaces Society on the matter (copy available on the Council website), and to make a response pointing out that the Council was unaware of any reports of health and safety issues, that the diversion procedure under the Highways Act could not consider the effect of the right of way on land other than that over which the path passes, and that the exposure of path users to potential hazards in the farmyard had been increased by the longstanding unlawful diversion of the path.
- e. Tree Works
  - i. Council to note that the Clerk has placed an order with Midland Forestry to carry out tree works under the categories; Hazard Works within 1 year; and Formative/Nuisance Works within 1 year; as recommended in the Arboricultural Report dated 3 February 2020. The total cost of the work is quoted at £1,905.60 (inc VAT). The 2020/21 budget for this is £3,000. Midland Forestry have advised that they now have the necessary planning consent and will carry out the works on 3rd & 4th of December. The contractors have also advised that the works required do not impact the school or car park. They will be dead wooding one tree near to school site but this will be done when the children are not out playing.
  - ii. Council to ask the Clerk to request a quote from Midland Forestry to carry out recommended year 2 works.
- f. The Berkswell Project – Council to note that progress has slowed on the project. The technical survey of the roads has been completed and the location of the key elements agreed by the working group. Councillor Burrow to give a verbal update on final drawings and cost estimate at the meeting based on the latest information.
- g. Planting programme – Council to note that clearance has been given by WMT for two Society volunteers to replant the station planters during lockdown. HS2 Contractors have agreed to supply free of charge 3 cu metres of chippings for the station roundabout which has been weeded by volunteers in preparation. An informal "budget" of £225 has been advised to the volunteers and plants sourced as part of the volunteers general sourcing for public planting on Station Road. This includes an upgrade to the Masala Club gum tree bed.
- h. Riddings Hill Fruit Trees – Nothing new to report
- i. War Memorial
  - i. Council to consider the Clerk's report entitled "Investigation into the ownership of the Berkswell Village War Memorial" (circulated previously).
  - ii. Council to note the updated recommendations in the Clerk's report to reflect latest developments.

## BERKSWELL PARISH COUNCIL – ORDINARY MEETING 19 NOVEMBER 2020

- iii. Council to authorise the Clerk to commission a condition survey of the memorial by a WMT recommended third party to establish options, detailing the necessary scope of work and estimated costs, together with advice on possible grants.
- iv. Council to approve a budget of £2k for the survey and authorise the Clerk to apply for any grant available toward the cost of such a survey. Council to note that the Clerk has received a quotation from a suitably qualified consultancy to carry out a condition survey of the memorial for a fee of £1,770. This would include a visit to site, production of the report, laboratory analysis for matching the mortar, some historical research into the history of the structure and making pre-application grant enquiries on our behalf.
- j. Christmas trees – Council to note that, further to discussion at the September meeting of the Council, the requirement is now 9 Christmas trees for Balsall Common and one for Berkswell village. The estimated cost of the 2020 Christmas Tree initiative is £567.36 (ex VAT) to include tree purchase, tinsel, and cost of placing and disposal of the trees. There may be some further minor costs which will be accommodated within the approved £450 plus £150 contingency figure of £600 (analysis of costs circulated previously). Council to agree a further £100 for contingency.
- k. Publishing routes of local walks - Council to approve working with the Berkswell Society on publishing routes of local walks to facilitate the mental health of residents during lockdown. Council to note that walk details will be hosted on the Berkswell Society website for technical and operational reasons and publicised using local newsletters and social media.

### **19. Training and Meetings – Nothing to report**

### **20. Heritage and Community**

- a. Airport Consultative Committee – Council to consider reports from Cllr Lloyd on the virtual meeting held on 17 September 2020 and the Noise Subgroup on 21 October. Reports to be circulated in advance of the meeting.
- b. Councillor Don Hitchcock (Dec'd) - Council to note that Solihull MBC hope to be in a position in mid-December to plant a memorial English Elm in the land next to Dengate Drive, but that attendance will depend on the Covid-19 regulations in force at the time. Council to thank Revd Dr Mark Bratton for remembering our late colleague as part of the Remembrance Sunday service.
- c. HS2 - Council to note that the Solihull Implementation Advisory Group met on 29 October 2020 without any invitations being sent out, and agree to write to Cllr Diccico asking that there should be better publicity in future. The next meeting is scheduled for 17 December.

### **21. Next Meetings**

The next scheduled meeting of the Council will be held on 14 January 2021 commencing at 7:00pm and will be a Zoom meeting to set the 2021/22 Budget.

Signed: Mr Richard Wilson



Clerk

**Public and Press are welcome to attend**