

LINDFIELD PARISH MEETING

The annual **Lindfield Parish Meeting** was held at King Edward Hall, Lindfield on **Tuesday, 23 April 2009**, chaired by the Chairman of Lindfield Parish Council, Mr. William Blunden.

Present: Lindfield Parish Councillors: Mr. M. Allen, Mr. W. Blunden, , Mr. A. Gomme, Mr. M. Leach, Mrs. M. Nicolle, Mr. C. Snowling, Mr. S. Willcox and Mrs. V. Upton

Mr. G. Upton, Mr. G. Irwin, Miss. C. Jones, Mr. E.M. Turner, Mr. N. Kerslake and Mrs. C. Young

Also present: Sara Grimes – The Greening Campaign

Apologies: Lindfield Parish Councillors Hersey, Johnson, and Davies
West Sussex County Councillor Mrs. M. Johnson

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk, Lindfield Parish Council)

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

1. WELCOME

1.1 The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting. He briefly explained his two legal duties in respect of the Parish Meeting:

- 1) to call a meeting of local government electors in the parish each year, to discuss parish affairs, which he had done by means of a notice displayed on the Parish Council's notice board and a feature in the Lindfield Times. Any matters raised would be considered by the Parish Council at its annual meeting to be held on 12 May 2009.
- 2) to take the Chair at that meeting.

2. MINUTES OF THE PARISH MEETING HELD ON 15 APRIL 2008.

2.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 15 April 2008. These were agreed and the Minutes were signed as being a true record of that meeting. Thanks were recorded to the Clerk for providing a clear record of the meeting.

3. CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION.

3.1 The Chairman stated that this had been his second year as Chairman and the first year with the new Parish Clerk, Christine Irwin, and new Deputy Clerk, Vera Grainger, supported by the former Parish Clerk, Sue Kolien, who still held the position of Responsible Financial Officer. During this time there seemed to have been one challenge after another.

3.2 Development at Newton Road. After a well fought fight the battle to prevent the building of 120 homes on the land parcel at Newton Road was lost. The Parish Council together with the Lindfield Preservation Society and the Local Action Group had spent many hours on this. The next step in this continuing saga was awaited but it was hoped that it would be many years before the builders arrived on site.

3.3 High Street Lime Trees. After last year's Parish Meeting a lot of time had been spent on consulting residents on the management of the High Street Lime trees. An exhibition had been organised on how the Limes should be treated giving 3 options for our residents to choose, with photographs of each tree showing the preferred option, which most residents had agreed with. The trees had now all been pollarded, which allowed a better view of the High Street's historic buildings. However there had been several complaints about the present appearance of the trees and some members of the public had asked why the Council did not consult the residents before such drastic action was taken, despite the publicity and consultation.

3.4 Core Strategy. The Core Strategy Document posed a potential threat to Lindfield as it identified a site for the building of some 500 homes on land between Scamps Hill and Gravelye Lane. Although the site was not in the Lindfield Parish, development there would have a huge impact on the village. The previous evening there had

been an Extraordinary Meeting of Lindfield Rural Parish Council and Lindfield Parish Council to discuss this issue.

- 3.5 Controlled Parking Zones. This was another subject to which a lot of time and attention had been given. The original proposals for a Lindfield wide CPZ had not been popular with many people in the Village but WSCC had taken comments on board and the revised proposals were for parking restrictions in Denmans Lane only, which most people accepted needed some restrictions. The formal consultation stage was due to start on 30 April.
- 3.6 Denmans Lane Public Toilets. The Parish Council was now close to re-opening the public toilets in Denmans Lane after their complete refurbishment. It had been a long journey to reach this stage and the Chairman expressed thanks on behalf of the Parish Council to Cllr Roger Pickett and the Clerk for their time and effort on this project.
- 3.7 As with most other local government bodies, the real work of the Parish Council was done in standing committees of which the Council had three. The Chairman introduced the Chairmen of the Committees who shouldered much of the work load and thanked them for their commitment.

4. THE GREENING CAMPAIGN

- 4.1 The Chairman introduced Sara Grimes, Greening Campaign Co-ordinator who had been invited to the meeting to explain the work of the Greening Campaign which had been set up to encourage and help communities respond to the challenges of climate change by reducing their energy consumption. The Campaign was the brainchild of Terena Plowright; it had started in Petersfield and had later been taken up by other communities.

To solve climate change issues globally was a massive challenge. There was a lot of information about the dangers of climate change, but the solutions were unclear, with mixed messages and the impression that remedies were expensive and that people taking part were not visible. The small changes people could make such as insulating their homes and changing to energy efficient light bulbs and insulating would make a difference, but without support, knowing that others were also making this commitment people became discouraged. Communities wanted and needed a structured route to follow, which the Greening Campaign sought to provide.

The four phases of the campaign were: to engage the community; address sustainable living as a community by undertaking projects; adaptation (developing solutions specific to the community, creating a plan to reduce the community's contribution to climate change and plan its vulnerability to the risks of climate change) and a new start, whereby the community would adopt a new mind set in living sustainable lives, carry out ongoing review and development of climate change solutions and network with other communities.

During the first phase, households would be encouraged to take a branded information card, giving a list of measurable ways to save energy at home and at work and undertake to put into action a number (eight) of these ideas and display the card in a front window. The messages could be reinforced by film shows, public meetings and displays in shops etc. The next step would be to evaluate success by a combination of public surveys and card counts. From this information the annual carbon dioxide saving for the community could be estimated and publicised and there could be a public event to celebrate success. Petersfield had saved 23 tons of CO₂ (a single ton of CO₂ being about the size of a four bedroom house

Having completed this first step, residents of Petersfield, in consultation with the Director of the Campaign, had then considered what the next step might be, looking at larger projects that had worked elsewhere, such as growing own food, community mini bus to be use for the school run, shopping during the day and taking people to the cinema in the evening. The third step would be to consider climate adaptation and what it would take to enable a village to prosper under a worsening scenario.

The campaign needed local champions to form a committee that would lead the community in the challenge, particularly by organising publicity which might include a launch event and to engage different community groups and schools which could be asked to choose one item to publicise. Funding was available from District and County Councils to help with publicity events.

The first tasks would be to form a committee and organise a public meeting, contact village groups and publicise widely. The challenges to list on the card for distribution would be selected at the public meeting and then a launch event would be organised.

There was general feeling from residents present at the meeting that there would be support in Lindfield for the campaign and it was encouraging that the challenges in the first phase were practical and achievable.

Following the presentation, there were two offers to help take the campaign forward.

The Chairman thanked Ms. Grimes for her enthusiastic presentation and stated that he looked forward to the campaign being taken forward in Lindfield.

5. PROPOSED MERGER OF LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL AND LINDFIELD RURAL PARISH COUNCIL

- 5.1 The Chairman reported that at the Annual Parish Meeting of Lindfield Rural Parish, which had taken place in Scaynes Hill recently, the question of a merger of the two parishes had been put to members of the electorate present. Informal feedback had been that residents of Scaynes Hill were not in favour. The Chairman stated that it appeared to be unlikely that a merger would be achievable in the foreseeable future and it was noted that an alternative might be to consider a boundary change to bring into the Lindfield (urban) Parish the residents whose homes were in the area immediately adjacent to this parish. However this had not been discussed by the Council. The Chairman pointed out that the area around Gravelye Lane, which may be developed in the years to come, lay in the Rural Parish which would benefit from the additional Council Tax, although those living there would see themselves as Lindfield residents.

Mr. N. Kerslake stated that this issue had got off on the wrong foot: the whole idea had been pushed by the urban Parish but without analysing what the issues were – the advantages and disadvantages for the two parishes. The Chairman of Lindfield Rural Parish Council had been asked by a number of residents what the advantages and disadvantages of a merger would be, but instead of answering he had invited them to make suggestions. Again, the suggestion of a boundary change was likely to fail if a decision was taken without analysis. It was unclear what could be achieved by a merger or a boundary change. Councillor Snowling stated that there was as yet no mandate to begin negotiations for a boundary change. The Chairman stated that it had been proposed at the last meeting with representatives of Lindfield Rural Parish Council that a letter should go to residents of both parishes seeking their views, but Lindfield Rural Parish Council had not yet responded since discussing this in Council.

6. GENERAL SESSION TO RECEIVE VIEWS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC INCLUDING CONSIDERATION OF ANY RESOLUTIONS THAT MAY BE PUT FORWARD

- 6.1 Mr. G. Irwin commented on reports in the press that people attending meetings of Mid Sussex District Council did not always feel welcome. Mr. Kerslake added that the layout of the Council Chamber with the public gallery, from which it was difficult to hear, gave an unfriendly impression, when compared with other District Councils where members of the public sat with Members at the table.

7. CHAIRMAN'S CONCLUDING REMARKS

- 7.1 The Chairman commended Caroline Young, who was present at the meeting, for offering to be Community Editor for the new Lindfield Life magazine which promised to be a very useful publication.
- 7.2 The Chairman thanked all those present for attending and for their contributions during the meeting. He also thanked the Parish Office Staff and fellow Councillors for their support.

The meeting concluded at 9.15 p.m. and members of the public were invited to stay for a glass of wine with Members of the Council.