

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 4 APRIL 2013** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)
Mr. M. Allen
Mrs. J. Chatfield
Mr. S. Henton
Mr. R. Pickett (Vice Chairman)
Mr. R. Plass
Mrs. V. Upton

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin

WELCOME AND EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

239. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

239.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hodgson and Hersey and the reasons were accepted.

240. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / DISPENSATIONS GRANTED.

240.1 Councillor Blunden declared a personal interest in item 13 (Allotments) as he was a plot holder. Councillors Allen and Pickett also declared personal interests in this item as their wives were plot holders.

241. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

241.1 There were no members of the public present.

242. MINUTES OF THE MEETING THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 7 FEBRUARY 2013.

242.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 7 February 2013. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

243. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

243.1 The Chairman had no announcements to make.

244. REPORT ON ACTION LIST.

244.1 The Action List was noted.

245. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET

245.1 The spreadsheet for March was not yet available. Members **NOTED** the figures to 28 February, which had been received at the Full Council meeting on 14 March.

- From the in-year budget of £66,050, £37,778 had been spent.
- A further £10,803 had been spent from the outstanding projects and reserves of £32,905.20.

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- Payments made during March totalled £6,432 which included routine expenditure and payments for the refuse freighter, grass cutting, pond netting, posts at Hickmans Lane field, dog bin emptying and emergency tree work.

246. REPORT ON CURRENT MAINTENANCE.

246.1 It was **NOTED** that an order had been placed with Jakk Country Furniture for renovating the large finger post in the High Street and two finger signs attached to lampposts – a total of £395 plus VAT.

246.2 The Chairman reported that two weeks previously, emergency action had been taken to make the Brushes Lane footpath safe after a huge tree had fallen across leaving a gap that people could walk under and was considered to be a risk to public safety. The ownership of this footpath was unknown and, after ascertaining that neither WSCC nor MSDC were responsible for it, the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, had arranged for KPS to cut the tree up at a cost of £400 + VAT. It was **AGREED** to endorse this action.

On 3 April the Clerk had taken a telephone call from a resident complaining about the condition of the entrance to Brushes Lane after this work had been done and suggesting that the contractors should be required to make good. However it was noted that the path was already extremely muddy and there was no proof that it was the Parish Council's contractors' vehicle that had left tyre ruts. The Chairman reported that dog walkers he had spoken to had confirmed that the path was already in a bad state and that the contractors had in fact improved it by making the path wider. It was **AGREED** that no action should be taken further to this complaint.

246.3 **NOTED:** the Blacksmith had now started work on renovating the bus stop poles.

246.4 **NOTED:** the temporary repair to the road at the Backwoods Lane mini roundabout was breaking down again and WSCC had confirmed that they would carry out a further repair for safety by 10 of April. Their Asset Management Team had also assessed the site for planned works and the site had been added to the carriageway patching list. This site would need a lane closure and 3-way temporary traffic signals due to its location, which would need to be scheduled in. The Parish Council was to be notified when a date had been arranged for this work.

247. POTENTIAL HAYWARDS HEATH CLUSTER – DEVOLVED HIGHWAY WORKS .

247.1 The Chairman reported on a meeting with the Haywards Heath Town Clerk, held on 4 April attended by himself, the Clerk and Deputy Clerk of Lindfield and the Clerk of Lindfield Rural Parish Councils. Ardingly Parish Council had not been represented at the meeting

- The Chairman of Ardingly Parish Council had communicated by email on some amendments to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town and Parish Councils, the latest version having been sent the previous evening and these changes were considered to be acceptable. The Deputy Clerk had been thanked for his work on drafting the MoU.
- The parties present at the meeting had signed the Memorandum of Understanding and Mr. Trice would make the arrangements for Ardingly Parish Council to sign.
- There would be a five week lead in period starting on 15 April.
- The full year's money for all parishes in the cluster would be transferred to Haywards Heath and interviews for extra staff would be taking place on 15 April with a view to having the new staff fully trained within a month following.
- A vehicle and some extra equipment were to be bought which would bear the logos of the cluster parishes.
- The two existing members of staff who were already fully trained for highway work would set up the contract and visit each of the parishes to discuss their particular requirements.
- A reporting procedure would be put in place to log details of every job. Job sheets would be sent to WSCC monthly, with copies to the parishes.

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- The Love West Sussex website would still be a means for members of the public to report potholes and they could also be reported directly to Haywards Heath Town Council who would effect a temporary repair, report back to WSCC and monitor the hole until it had been permanently repaired by WSCC within an certain period of time.
- Haywards Heath Town Council had agreed to set up a Community Interest Company to deliver the service. The CiC would be owned by Haywards Heath Town Council with ten of their Councillors as directors. This arrangement would enable the accounts to be kept separate from those of the Town Council. The cluster Parishes would be statutory observers of the CiC.
- At the appropriate time the Town and Parishes would issue a press release.
- Existing potholes were a matter of concern and Parishes had been asked to conduct an audit within the next two weeks of the outstanding potholes to enable Haywards Heath and WSCC to come to an agreement about what work would be completed by Balfour Beatty beforehand.

248. LITTER BINS

- 248.1 Replacement litter bins for the footpath between the King Edward Hall and the White Horse. The Chairman reported that he had consulted with the Chairman of the Management Committee of the King Edward Hall about fixing a bin to the wall but had been advised that there were structural issues with the wall. To attach a heavy wrought iron bin to it was therefore not an option as there was a risk of worsening the stability of the wall. The E&A Committee, at the last meeting, had expressed a preference for a 50 litre "Victoriana" bin which on subsequent measurement - 700mm (h) 305mm (w) and 305 (d) - had been found to be too deep for the footpath. Two further options were considered (both post mounted): a "Valley" open top 40 litre metal bin from Iles Waste Systems, measuring 525mm (h); 400mm (w) and 210mm (d) and a smaller version of the "Victoriana" from Wybone – a 25 litre black metal closed top bin, measuring 375mm (h); 275mm (w); 235mm (d). It was **AGREED** to order two 25 litre "Victoriana" black metal closed top post mounted bins from Wybone (from £110.61 plus VAT).

There was no further discussion at this meeting about the semi-circular wrought iron bins which were being removed from the bus stop poles.

249. RISK MANAGEMENT.

- 249.1 Councillor Blunden agreed to look at the Spring Clean Risk Assessment with Councillor Upton, prior to the Spring Clean event on 20 April, in Councillor Hodgson's absence

250. HIGH STREET BOLLARDS.

- 250.1 Update by Cllr. Pickett. Councillor Pickett had been unable to arrange a meeting with the officer at WSCC and it was **AGREED** that he should liaise with the Clerk to send letter to WSCC.

251. ALLOTMENTS.

- 251.1 Councillors Blunden, Allen and Pickett, having declared personal interests in this item, as recorded at Minute 240.1, remained present and participated in discussion.

- 251.2 Replacement of fence along boundary with Allen's Wall. Members considered the three quotations (A, B and C) which had been received for this work. Contractors had been asked to quote for replacing the fence with 1.2m (4 foot) high chain-link fencing on concrete posts for a length of 112 metres (367 ½ feet or 122 yards). Subject to confirmation of the arrangements for clearing the fence line and that the price included the replacement of all the concrete posts, it was **AGREED** to confirm quotation A and that the fence should be 4' as 6' was considered to be too high because of the trees lining the boundary.

- 251.3 Improvement work to the footpath through the Denmans Lane Allotment site. A representative of an insurance company at a recent Council conference had advised Councils to check the condition of their land for safety, including footpaths following the wet weather over the last year. The Chairman had subsequently

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inspected the footpath linking Denmans Lane and Pondcroft Road, the surface of which had worn down and had become uneven. A quotation had been requested from KPS for grinding the stumps on four trees alongside the footpath and to mulch the path with bark. It was **AGREED** to instruct KPS to carry out this work - £260 + VAT.

- 251.4 Structures on allotment plots. Councillor Allen declared a personal interest in this item as the tenant involved was his neighbour. The Chairman reported that a tenant had recently had three substantial raised beds built onto her plot. The tenancy agreement required prior written permission from the Council for structures which had not been requested. Although the tenant had mentioned her plans to a member of the Allotments Working Group, she had not indicated that the raised beds would be any different from the others on the site. The work had been done by KPS during a very wet period and in moving heavy wood beams and topsoil to the plot, they had made a mess of the paths and the outer grassed areas. The Chairman and Clerk had met with a representative of KPS on site and secured an agreement from him that KPS would top dress and seed the affected areas and then cut the grass for the first month of growth.

The Clerk had written to the tenant who had replied that she had been horrified when she inspected the work. She had agreed to get the beds lowered when the ground was suitable as they were much higher than she had thought they would be. As well as the effect of the beds on the appearance of the site, there was concern in terms of safety: the tenant would have to climb onto the beams to reach the centre when working on the beds and there was a risk that children would use the beams as a jumping platform. It was therefore **AGREED** that the tenant should be asked to lower the height of the raised beds by two of the four beams. The Clerk had asked her how the space between the beds would be filled, pointing out that gravel or other hard material would not be permitted. The tenant had responded that she was considering planting roses along the bank side and filling in between the beds with soil. Members **AGREED** that roses were unsuitable for the Allotment site because of the thorns alongside the path and because shrubs were not permitted other than soft fruit bushes. The Clerk was asked to reply to the tenant accordingly

- 251.5 Allotment Tenancy Agreement. To address policy on the retention of plots when tenants moved out of the Parish and on erecting structures, further to the matter discussed at Minute 251.4, the Tenancy Agreement had been revised according to a recent model policy from NALC but incorporating a number of clauses from the Council's current agreement. It was noted that the model agreement referred to plots as Allotment Gardens. The draft was considered clause by clause.

There was some discussion regarding the enactment of Clause 6: "The tenant shall reside within the Parish of Lindfield (urban) during the tenancy. Tenancies for existing tenants living more than one mile outside of the Parish of Lindfield (Urban) will be by agreement of the Council". However it was **AGREED** that this wording should stand as the Council had adopted a policy that only residents of the Lindfield Parish would be added to the waiting list and there were now only two or three who had been on the list before that decision was made who were not Lindfield residents.

The new Allotment Tenancy Agreement was **AGREED** as drafted. It was suggested and **AGREED** that the covering letter sent out with the Agreement should make it clear that allotments must not be sublet and that it was the tenant's responsibility to ensure that anyone helping on their allotment must abide by the rules.

252. **SPRING CLEAN – 20 APRIL 2013.**

- 252.1 Members were reminded of the arrangements for the Spring Clean and encouraged to attend to help with the organisation. They were also asked to look out for areas needing attention. It was **AGREED** to invite the Highway Rangers who had been helpful in the past for transporting bulky items.

253. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

- 253.1 No other items of business were raised.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 p.m.