

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2015** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 8.05 p.m.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)
Mr. M. Allen
Mrs. J. Durrant
Mr. S. Henton
Mr. S. Hodgson
Mr. C. Snowling
Mrs. V. Upton (Vice Chairman)

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin

Not present: Councillor Mrs. M. Hersey

This being the first meeting of the Committee following the Annual Meeting of Council, the Chairman of Council, Councillor Blunden, opened the meeting and presided for the first item. He welcomed new Parish Councillor Mrs. Judy Durrant.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

1.1 The Chairman of Council called for nominations for the office of Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee. Councillor Blunden was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Snowling and **SECONDED** by Councillor Upton. There being no further nominations, Councillor William Blunden was duly **ELECTED** as Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee for the Council year 2015/16. Councillor Blunden then took the Chair for the meeting.

2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.

2.1 The Chairman called for nominations for the office of Vice Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee. Councillor Upton was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Blunden and **SECONDED** by Councillor Snowling. There being no further nominations, Councillor Upton was duly **ELECTED** as Vice Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee for the Council year 2015/16.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

3.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Hersey and the reasons were accepted.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

4.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members in respect of any matter on the Agenda.

5. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

5.1 There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 APRIL 2015.

6.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 9 April 2015. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

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7. APPOINTMENT OF WORKING GROUPS.

7.1 It was **AGREED** that the following Working Groups should continue with the membership as stated:

- **Christmas Festival Night/Christmas Lights Working Group**

Councillors Blunden, Durrant, Henton and Upton.

- **Denmans Lane Allotments Working Group**. (Councillor Allen declared a personal interest in this item as his wife had an allotment and was a non-councillor member of this Working Group).

Councillors Allen, Blunden, Henton and Snowling (with Mary Allen and Richard Powell).

- **Responsibility for Village Archive Collection**

Councillors Blunden and Upton

7.2 Street lights Working Group. It was **AGREED** that this Working Group should be discontinued: any further matters arising from West Sussex County Council's street lighting upgrade and the Parish Council's own lights would be dealt with directly by the E&A Committee.

8. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

8.1 Village Day. The Chairman stated that there had been a record attendance at Village Day on 30 May: there had been a hundred and fifty eight stalls, plus fairground rides and the Common was heaving with people. It was a fantastic day with good family entertainment - what this village does best. The following day there had been no evidence that it had taken place as the organisers had thoroughly cleared everything from the Common. It was **AGREED** to send a letter of appreciation to the Village Day Committee.

9. ACTION LIST.

9.1 Third aerator for the pond (minute 179.1). It was **AGREED** to delete this action; there being no budget for it. The Action List was **NOTED**.

10. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET

10.1 Budget progress 2015/16 – payments made to 30 April 2015. The budget progress had been circulated. **NOTED**: that £19,307 had been spent from the Environment and Amenities Committee's in-year budget of £75,400, the main items of expenditure being for the UK Power Networks fee of £17,305 for the Brookway street lights replacement and £1,840 for the annual contract with Calabash for nappy bins etc in the Denmans Lane toilets.

It was further **NOTED** that during May as well as routine payments, the annual maintenance charge of £3,839.77 had been paid to Healthmatic for servicing the public toilets equipment, £9,625 to Streetlights for the new columns in Brookway and £740 to the Blacksmith for the repair of the railing at the corner of the High Street and Hickmans Lane.

10.2 Allotments sheds. The Chairman reported that one of the smaller sheds on the Allotments had been broken into a few weeks previously. The Clerk and Chairman had discussed this with the former Vice Chairman of this Committee and agreed that the Clerk should use emergency powers to have the repairs carried out and preventative measures to protect other property. This work had been completed at a cost of £445.83 plus VAT. It was **AGREED** to endorse this action.

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11. REPORT ON CURRENT MAINTENANCE.

11.1 Parish Council's notice boards in Denmans Lane. At the last E&A Committee meeting, a quotation from a cabinet maker had been noted, for refurbishment of the two Parish Council notice boards. A further quotation had since been received from the contractor who had attended to the allotments sheds, which was considerably less and it was **AGREED** to confirm the order with this second contractor for £195.

11.2 Litter bins. Councillor Plass had reported that the bin opposite Brookway in Hickmans Lane was deteriorating: the bottom was rusting and at the top the paint was peeling with the metal underneath becoming rusty. This bin was just under five years old and was one of the first batch the Council purchased. It was **AGREED** that all the bins of this type should be inspected and photographs taken before following this up with the supplier. Councillors Blunden and Upton agreed to do this inspection.

Councillor Allen brought up the matter of the wrought iron litter bin in the High Street which was seated on the grass, its stanchion having disappeared during the work on the street lights. The Chairman stated that this had been reported at the time. It was **AGREED** that a further letter should be sent with a copy to Councillor Field (WSCC).

12. STREET LIGHTS

12.1 West Sussex Street lights upgrade. The Clerk had received an update that day by telephone from Mick Smith at SSEC. There were 110 units in Lindfield at different stages of completion – some heritage, some standard. In the case of the heritage lights the problem appeared to be the availability of the parts as large quantities were required. Members expressed surprise at the apparently piecemeal approach to the heritage modifications with only the lights in Denmans Lane having been done.

Mr. Smith had reported that some standard light replacements had been delayed because SSEC had to apply to UK Power Networks and then give notice along with a traffic management plan to West Sussex Highways for their agreement before the work could go ahead. Highways had turned them down in some cases because they were not satisfied with the traffic management arrangements. However Mr. Smith had given assurance that the work was still in the programme. It was **AGREED** to refer this to Councillor Field to see if she could get more action from the contractors.

12.2 Parish Council owned street lights. The street light columns in Brookway had now been replaced. The cost would take this project over budget because of the charge from UK Power Networks for disconnection and reconnection of the power supply. UKPN had charged £17,305 and the Streetlights invoice was £9,625, making a total £26,930 plus VAT; an overspend of £1,930, which would be taken from the designated reserve or the general reserve, subject to the impending review of the reserves by the F&GP Committee.

13. LIAISON MEETING WITH MSDC OFFICER DAVID TERRY(LANDSCAPE CONTRACTS MANAGER) ON 13.05.15.

13.1 The notes of this meeting, which had been tabled, were in draft form subject to confirmation by Mr. Terry. The Chairman highlighted the main issues discussed and gave further updates as appropriate:

- Pond valve. Mr. Terry had reported that a specification had been drawn up for the replacement valve and the work was expected to take place during June and July. Members expressed disappointment with the lack of progress as this work had been promised for September 2014 and deferred for budgetary reasons until the new financial year. A further email had been sent earlier in the week to Mr. Terry requesting an update and this had been copied to Mark Fisher, Head of Leisure and Sustainability. The question was asked during discussion that as the valve had been damaged due to contractor error, why was the repair/replacement dependent upon MSDC funding it. It was suggested that this matter should be taken to member level with a letter being sent from the Parish Council's Chairman to the Cabinet Member, Pru Moore, stating that the Parish Council was at a loss to understand why an error which occurred over a year ago had still not been repaired. This was **AGREED**.

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- Weeds at the edge of the Pond wall. Complaints to MSDC about the weeds had been made over a considerable period of time. Recently there had been an attempt using a weed-killing product which had only partially killed the weeds: they had withered but still remained, looking untidy. There was concern about the use of weed-killer solution adjacent to the Pond and although special aquatic weed-killers were available, it was not known whether these were used. It was noted that the fact that different authorities were responsible for the areas around the Pond complicated matters and it would be better if a single contractor could do both. It was **AGREED** to make enquiries as to whether Haywards Heath Town Council's grounds-staff could take over weeding alongside the edge of the Pond when they did the grass cutting at the roadside and triangle at the north end of the Pond, provided they could do this safely. The question was raised about double taxation, but it was felt that this could be justified as the Pond was one of the main features of the Village and the weeds were an embarrassment.
- Railing – roadside fence by the Pond. A member raised the matter of the missing post and rail from the fencing alongside the road. The Chairman stated that this had been reported to WSCC, when it occurred but no action taken; the post had become rotten and collapsed about two weeks after the WSCC Highways Officer had inspected and assured the Parish Council that the posts were sound. The resin fillers which held the rails in place had come out of most of the others. It was noted that the rail was in storage at Haywards Heath Town Council's depot. It was pointed out that this had created a gap in the fence next to the crossing patrol, which was a safety concern. It was **AGREED** that this should be followed up and Councillor Field copied in to any communication with WSCC Highways.
- Aeration pumps. At the Liaison Meeting, the Chairman had suggested that the power may have been cut off during the replacement of the nearby street light. He now reported that there was in fact power in the kiosk, so the fault was either with the pumps themselves or the timer and this would be relayed to MSDC. It was noted that as the water level in the Pond was dropping, the stench on hot days was considerable; lack of ducklings this year may also be attributable to the water quality. It was **AGREED** that this matter should be included in the letter to Councillor Moore.
- Drainage in the Common playground. Mr. Terry had reported that drainage work had been done to get the flow of water away from the playground, but there were still problems with the drainage. A more solid surface may be put in so that the playground equipment was more accessible in damp conditions. The Chairman had made enquiries about resin bound bark which he had seen being used elsewhere and appeared to stay in place. This would be particularly useful under the swinging roundabout. Mr. Terry had been asked to look into this. Concern was expressed that the because bark under this swing wore out unevenly, a child could find themselves with a long drop to a hard surface, having swung round from their starting point. The Chairman stated that it was understood from a presentation by a representative of ROSPA that a soft surface was not required if the highest point was within 2 metres of the ground, however this was a matter for MSDC and playground inspectors.
- Lindfield Primary School Safety Route proposals. It was noted that everything appeared to be in place for the path alongside the bowling green, except approval from the Charity Trustees, which Mr. Terry had been following up as urgent action.
- Ice cream van. Posts had been installed by MSDC to prevent access to the grass at the corner of Backwoods Lane/School Lane, but the gaps were wide enough to allow the vans to go between them. This had been reported to MSDC.
- Drain at the corner of the Bowls Club car park. MSDC had been asked to look again at this drain: it was not certain whether it was connected to the mains.
- Litter bins on the Common. MSDC had been asked to make sure the bins were emptied on Fridays so that they were empty before the fish and chip van's Friday evening session in Backwoods Lane. The new contract included bin emptying between Fridays and Mondays, but this was discontinued during the winter months.
- Dog bins. A member raised the matter of dog bins, particularly the one which had not been replaced in the path to the playground from Lewes Road, resulting in dog waste being put into litter bins. It was noted that MSDC had stated in the past that the collection contract was at its limit and no further bins could be installed. It was pointed out that dog waste was commonly found in litter bins and people could not be forced to use the dog bins.

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- Edging to beds in Chaloner Road. It was noted that the edging to one of the beds had been replaced, but not the other.
- Wilderness Field. A member stated that the Parish Council could expect further outside pressure about the non-movement regarding the transfer of the field to MSDC by Barratts, however it should be made clear that the Parish Council had done all it could.

14. STREET MAP PANELS.

- 14.1 Provision of further maps (on Lindfield Common and Hickmans Lane field). It was **NOTED** that the replacement value of the two existing maps for insurance purposes was £1,158 plus installation. The maps proposed for the Common and Hickmans Lane field would need freestanding frames to suit the location (probably wood). It was estimated that the total cost, including the fee for planning permission, was unlikely to exceed £4,000.
- 14.2 Offer of donation from HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee fund. It was **NOTED** that the organising committee for the celebrations in Lindfield to commemorate HM The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, represented by Councillor Plass, had offered to donate the surplus funds towards further map panels, understood to be in the order of £500 - £600. It was understood that the organisers wished to make the donation as soon as possible.
- 14.3 It was **AGREED**:
- to proceed with two further maps, subject to planning permission being granted and
 - to write to the Diamond Jubilee committee to accept the offer of a donation.

15. SPRING CLEAN.

- 15.1 It was **NOTED** that the Spring Clean held on 18 April had been attended by seventeen members of the public, three members of the office staff and the Chairman (it was recognised that other Council members had good reasons for non-attendance). There was discussion about whether the Spring Clean should continue and if so, how to engage the community. Views were expressed both for and against continuing to hold this event and points included:
- This was discussed every year: if numbers were declining, it should be dropped or pushed a lot more
 - It was not just about cleaning: it created a good community spirit
 - People taking part felt that they were taking ownership of their village
 - The Parish Council used to put a lot of effort into preparing for the Best Kept Village Competition.
 - The Village was a tidy place
 - The Common was not tidy on Saturday mornings
 - The Spring Clean should be publicised a lot more to encourage more people to attend
 - Youth groups such as cubs could be approached (this used to be done but these groups were reliant on adult supervision by their own leaders)
 - The date should be advertised very early
 - Suggestion - use of electronic Survey Monkey to seek views from members of the public.
 - Suggestion - offer incentives to teams of five with prizes donated by traders

After discussion Members voted 4: 2 with 1 abstention in favour of holding the Spring Clean in 2016. The Clerk would liaise with the King Edward Hall Booking Secretary regarding dates in April from the second Saturday onwards.

16. VILLAGE ARCHIVE.

- 16.1 A report from Richard Bryant, the Parish Council's Volunteer Archivist was received and **NOTED**. Members expressed appreciation to Mr. Bryant and were pleased to note that the material in the Archive

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was being well used. It was **AGREED** that a letter of thanks should be sent to Mr. Bryant for supporting this important part of the Council's infrastructure.

17. RISK MANAGEMENT.

17.1 It was **AGREED** to assign the following Members to assist with the Risk Assessments for the E&A Committee:

Allotments	Councillors Blunden and Henton
Spring Clean	Councillors Upton and Blunden
Village Night	Councillors Upton and Blunden (with Working Group)
Public conveniences	Councillors Henton and Hersey
Winter Management	Councillors Blunden and Plass (<i>although Councillor Plass was no longer a member of this Committee he had first-hand experience of operating the machinery</i>).
Street lights	Councillors Hodgson and Durrant
Christmas Lights	Councillors Blunden and Snowling
Street furniture:	
Litter bins	Councillors Snowling and one of the yet to be co-opted members.
Bus shelters	Councillors Hersey and Upton

17.2 Routine inspection of Parish Council owned street furniture and the public conveniences in Denmans Lane. Councillor Allen offered to inspect the public conveniences. It was **AGREED** that arrangements for inspecting street furniture should be considered at a future meeting. The Clerk would provide a list giving locations.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

18.1 No other items of business were raised.

The meeting concluded at 9.16 p.m.