

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 4 AUGUST, 2016** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

Present:

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

Also present: 1 member of the public (until end of Minute 140.1 only)

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk_

Not present: Parish Councillors Mr. S. Henton and Mrs. M. Hersey

The Chairman welcomed those present and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

138. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

138.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Henton and Councillor Hersey and the reasons were accepted.

139. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

139.1 Denmans Lane Allotments. Councillor Blunden declared a personal interest in this item as he was a plot holder. Councillor Allen also declared a personal interest in this item as his wife was a plot holder.

140. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

140.1 South East in Bloom. Mrs. Heather Martin was invited to speak about her thoughts on entering the competition, having approached the Parish Council by email (item 16 on the Agenda; Minute 153.).

Mrs. Martin explained that, in her capacity as a judge for Sussex in Bloom for the last three years, she had visited local towns and neighbourhoods and had judged three villages which were very similar to Lindfield and felt that maybe it was time Lindfield considered entering. There were several entry levels: from whole towns to individual roads or small neighbourhoods. The entry would depend on the number of volunteers willing to take part. For example just a few volunteers could help plant and maintain flower beds.

Members made the following comments:

- it would not be enough for members of the community to state that it would be a good idea to enter: their personal involvement would be needed.
- A number of GP practices in the South East encouraged and supported gardening initiatives for their health benefits
- The U3A Gardening Group would be one of the best community groups to approach; to get them on board would be easier than going out cold to the community

In response to a Members' question about what would be required in terms of the number of volunteers and what end result could be expected, Mrs. Martin stated that in the case of a neighbourhood entry a road of neighbours could be looking after verges, planting bulbs and maintaining hanging baskets; a larger scale entry could involve community groups (WI, nursery schools etc); village residents may be maintaining planters with businesses contributing money.

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South East in Bloom was also about more than just the horticultural aspect and could address environmental issues such as management of street furniture, graffiti and dog fouling.

The Chairman thanked Mrs. Martin, who then left the meeting.

141. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 2 JUNE 2016.

141.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 2 June 2016. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

142. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

142.1 There were no Chairman's Announcements.

143. ACTION LIST.

143.1 Minute 53.2 – beech tree on the allotments. It was **NOTED** that KPS had adjusted the brace on this tree and removed some dead wood.

143.2 Minute 133.2 – Spring Clean. It was **NOTED** that the 2017 Spring Clean had been arranged for 8 April.

144. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET PROGRESS 2016/17.

144.1 Budget Progress 2016/17 - payments made to 30.06.16. It was **NOTED** that up to 30 June a total of £5,900 had been spent from the E&A budget of £51,600 and there had been no expenditure from the reserves. It was estimated that the total expenditure in July would be in the order of £6,160, which, as well as routine payments, included the annual charge of £3,901 from Healthmatic for maintaining the public toilets, work on the sheds (£821) and the tree work on the allotments (£150).

144.2 **NOTED:** the RFO had negotiated a new two year agreement for the electricity for the public toilets with the existing supplier: the unit charge had been reduced from 17p to 12p.

145. REPORT ON CURRENT MAINTENANCE.

145.1 Bulb planting in the High Street verges. The crocus display in Spring 2016 had been poor due to the digging of the verges that had occurred during the replacement of the streetlights. Haywards Heath Town Council had provided a quotation, priced per 1000 bulbs, which had been circulated with the agenda. It was **AGREED** to order 4,000 at the cost of £480 including labour and delivery and that this should come out of the grass cutting budget.

146. STREET LIGHTS.

146.1 West Sussex street lights upgrade. **NOTED:** that work on the heritage upgrade was still outstanding on a number of columns in Compton Road, the High Street, Brushes Lane and Denmans Lane. Email and phone messages had been sent to the contact at SSEC, but no reply had yet been received. It was **AGREED** that County Councillor Christine Field and the Chairman of the WSCC Central Mid Sussex County Local Committee should be asked to exert pressure for a response from WSCC's contractors.

146.2 Parish Council street lights – West View / Lewes Road. **NOTED:** the order for five heritage lanterns had been placed with Streetlights early in June. There was a long lead time on the lanterns, but they were expected the following week.

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147. HIGH STREET / LEWES ROAD CORNER: ADDITIONAL BOLLARDS.

- 147.1 Further to the repaving and installation of additional bollards in 2015, quotations had been requested and received from three contractors to add three further bollards to prevent access by vehicles. These had been forwarded to Members and a short report was tabled. It was **NOTED** that the invitation to quote had been for Broxap Kingston bollards, but the extra bollards installed in 2015 had in fact been the CIB 108 from CIS Street Furniture. Members considered the quotations from Contractors A, B and C and it was **AGREED** to place the contract with Contractor A, subject to receiving a revised quotation for the CIB 108 that came within the budget figure.

148. DENMANS LANE ALLOTMENTS.

- 148.1 Sheds. This matter had been prompted by a recent request from a plot holder for a shed which had to be refused because of the size of the proposed shed. This had drawn attention to the fact that the Council did not have a written policy on the size and positioning of sheds to be applied when considering requests from plot holders.

Hitherto, this matter had been dealt with on an informal basis: on the criteria that tenants could only have small sheds (maximum size 6' x 4') with the agreement of the Council and they were only allowed on the outer edges of the site, not on individual plots, to avoid a "shanty town" appearance. The procedure followed was that requests were passed by the Clerk to the Chairman, who would then look for a position near to the tenant's plot and advise that the shed should not exceed 6' x 4'.

It was **AGREED** that this policy should be formally adopted:

- Prior approval for erection of sheds by plot holders must be obtained from the Parish Council
 - Sheds may be permitted but on approved sites around the edge of the allotment site only
 - Sheds will not be permitted on individual allotments: to preserve the appearance of the site
 - Sheds must not exceed 6' x 4'
 - On receipt of a request, a site will be sought on the outer boundary of the allotment site as near as possible to the tenant's plot, subject to the space available.
- 148.2 Damage to plot holder's fruit frame from falling branch and subsequent action taken. **NOTED:** during a windy period in June, a couple of boughs from an ash tree in a neighbouring garden had fallen, causing damage to a plot holder's fruit frame. The owners of the property had immediately been contacted by the Clerk and they had subsequently compensated the plot holder. The plot holder had also been concerned for her safety when working under the tree so the owner had had all their trees on the boundary with the allotments surveyed and had then had a considerable amount of work done on them to reduce the risk.
- 148.3 Tree Inspection. **NOTED:** the Arboricultural Consultant, Peter Thurman, was due to carry out his periodic inspection of the allotment trees on Monday 8 August.
- 148.4 Request to extend a plot. The Chairman reported that a tenant had recently asked for permission to extend his plot. It was **NOTED** that a few years previously the Parish Council had agreed to divide 5 rod plots into two 2½ rod plots when re-letting them. This particular 5 rod plot had been reduced to 3¾ rods plot and the rest of the land had been taken back to extend the outer border slightly, to improve safety when manoeuvring the sickle scythe while tending that part of the site. The scythe operator had confirmed that the wider border needed to remain for this reason. It was therefore **AGREED** that the request to extend the plot in question should be refused.

149. WINTER MANAGEMENT PLAN.

- 149.1 The Plan had been revised and circulated by email. The changes were mainly to update the contacts list, the salt bin list and maps and to incorporate the latest information from WSCC about their commitment.

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It was **AGREED** to approve the revised Winter Management Plan as drafted for publication on the Council's website and submission to WSCC and other relevant parties.

- 149.2 Salt audit. WSCC required the salt audit to be completed and submitted before 5 September, after which they would not accept any further requests for bins to be refilled. Haywards Heath Town Council's CIC team were in the process of checking the bins to meet this deadline.

150. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS.

- 150.1 Quotation for additional lights in three trees. The estimate of £1,265 for dressing the tree outside the Manor House and the two furthest ones at the top of the High Street, which was received on 3 August, was tabled. It was **NOTED** that this was a ball park figure subject to confirmation. It was **AGREED** to authorise the additional work.

- 150.2 Licence application to WSCC. It was **NOTED** that the Council needed to apply for a new licence from WSCC this year. The Clerk would submit the application to meet the required 12 weeks' notice period.

151. HICKMANS LANE PLAYGROUND.

- 151.1 At the last Liaison Meeting with David Terry, MSDC's Landscape Contracts Manager, he had stated that he and David Harper (Business Unit Leader: Waste and Outdoor Services) were looking into whether the way forward may be for the Parish Council to purchase the new equipment for installation in the playground rather than simply making a contribution.

During a recent conversation with the Clerk, Mr. Harper he had suggested that representatives of the Parish Council could meet with Mr. Terry and Mark Hayler to look at what type of equipment could be bought with the money available and get an estimate of the installation costs. Mr Harper had agreed to check whether he and Mr. Hayler would be able to attend the next Liaison Meeting along with Mr. Terry on 14 September, particularly as there were also other issues about which he would like the Parish Council's views.

Mr. Harper had advised the Parish Council to engage with local stakeholders such as disabled access groups in order to identify any specific needs.

152. ZIPPER CLUB NOTICEBOARD.

- 152.1 It was **NOTED** that the Zipper Club Noticeboard in Denmans Lane did not appear to have been in use for some time and it was understood that the Zipper Club as such was no longer in existence. It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council should make enquiries about taking the board over for community use.

153. SOUTH AND SOUTH EAST IN BLOOM.

- 153.1 An email had been received from Mrs. Heather Martin, who had already addressed the Committee at the beginning of this meeting about her thoughts on Lindfield entering South and South East in Bloom in Summer 2018. During discussion Members acknowledged that this initiative would involve a considerable amount of work and needed firm commitment from volunteers. It was suggested that people involved in the Lindfield Arts Festival could be approached as well as schools and that a feature in Lindfield Life could be used to test the water.

It was **AGREED** that Councillor Durrant, assisted by Councillor Snowling should form a Working Group to act as liaison between Mrs. Martin and the Parish Council and that it should be suggested that the High Street could be the area to focus on as there was already a considerable amount in place which could be made use of. The Working Group should aim to report back to the next meeting of the Committee.

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154. RISK MANAGEMENT.

154.1 There was nothing further to report under this item.

155. ANY OTHER BUSINESS,

155.1 Wilderness Field. Councillor Snowling requested an item to be put on the agenda for the next meeting of the E&A Committee in order to establish a small group of members to look into a drawing up a scheme for transferring the Wilderness Field from MSDC's ownership that would ensure its protection for the future.

The meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.