

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2014** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

Present:

Lindfield Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)
Mr. M. Allen
Mr. S. Hodgson
Mr. R. Pickett
Mrs. V. Upton

Also present: 1 member of the public

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin

Not present: Councillors Mrs. J. Chatfield, Mr. S. Henton, Mrs. M. Hersey and Mr. R. Plass.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

326. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

326.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Henton, Hersey and Plass and the reasons were accepted.

327. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

327.1 Councillor Blunden declared a personal interest in item 12 (Denmans Lane Allotments) as he was a plot holder. Councillors Allen and Pickett also declared personal interests in this item as their wives were plot holders.

328. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

328.1 Mr. D. Macmillan made the following comments on behalf of the Lindfield Preservation Society:

- Item 13: proposal to install posts around the Black Hill section of the Common. White posts and black rails would be more suitable in this location than unpainted posts as installed at Hickmans Lane. There should be some demountable posts to allow access to authorised vehicles, including Village Day parking and HGVs delivering portable WCs for the London to Brighton Bike Ride.
- Paving at the Post Office corner. Mr. Macmillan stated that the paving was a disgrace, with damaged stone having been repaired with area of concrete and to reinforce the area just to allow parking for the Post Office van was ludicrous. He suggested a raised planter in the area of York Stone, with the removed stones to be used for repairs.

329. MINUTES OF THE MEETING THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2013.

329.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 5 December 2013. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

330. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

330.1 SE Water road closure. Comments from MSDC regarding temporary signs and banners were **NOTED**.

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331. ACTION LIST.

331.1 Upgrade of WSCC street lights by SSE Contracting. It was **NOTED** that this upgrade was due to take place in 2014 and the Parish Council needed to be prepared for the consultation. A small working group would be meeting in due course.

331.2 Litter bins removed from bus stop poles. As agreed, the Clerk had written to the Lindfield Preservation Society to inform them of the decision not to reuse these as litter bins but would be supportive if the Preservation Society wished to convert them to decorative planters. A reply had been received from Mr. Macmillan on behalf of the Preservation Society, after the agenda had been published, stating that the Society would like to progress the idea and would appreciate suggestions from the Parish Council as to sites where these units could be located and cared for.

It was **NOTED** that planters had been introduced into the Village many years ago by the Preservation Society and looked after by the late Mrs. Calderwood and a team of helpers, but these planters had gradually deteriorated and been removed. It was increasingly difficult to find volunteers for work of this nature and it was **AGREED** to reply to the Preservation Society in the first instance regarding the on-going maintenance if new planters were to be introduced. Replacement of the wooden trough near the notice boards in Denmans Lane was considered to be a suitable option, subject to the necessary permissions and a sustainable plan for ongoing maintenance.

332. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET PROGRESS 2013/14.

332.1 The budget progress report for January was not available. It was **NOTED** that to 31 December 2013, a total of £25,020 had been spent from the in-year budget of £64,150 and £4,301 from the designated reserves and outstanding projects. Approximately £1,000 had been spent in January from the E&A budget.

333. CURRENT MAINTENANCE.

333.1 **NOTED:** orders had been placed for the installation of the seat in the Welkin footpath, the posts to protect the grit bin in Denmans Lane and the new litter bins but these were still outstanding.

334. RISK MANAGEMENT.

334.1 There was nothing to report under this item, other than that risk assessment was ongoing.

335. WINTER MAINTENANCE PLAN

335.1 WSCC feedback form. A feedback form had been received from WSCC for completion regarding the planning and delivery process for delivery of salt and a further form would be sent in the Spring for comment on how successful the measures had been. The Clerk would complete the form and return it to WSCC.

335.2 Salt supply. Members considered the long term storage of the reserve bags of salt which had not been used to date (8 tons on the Common and 6 in Hickmans Lane). Haywards Heath Town Council currently had no room to store any salt for the parish cluster partners, but this would be a matter for discussion at a meeting soon to be arranged. At a recent meeting with MSDC representatives, it was understood that MSDC might be able to store some additional salt, but not in the near future. Members considered the possibility of a short term measure in terms of a temporary poly-tunnel on the allotments site, which would have to be set up carefully, with tarpaulins on the ground to prevent spoilage of the salt and contamination of the ground. The southern corner was considered to be the most suitable location as there was a patch of ground which was unsuitable for letting as an allotment due to nearby trees. The owner of the adjacent property had been consulted and had no objection and any run-off would drain away from allotment plots. Members **AGREED** that this solution could be used if any

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other possibilities failed and provided that arrangements could be made for moving the bags. This problem would first be referred to WSCC and if the bags then had to be moved to another location locally, the Community Support Team from WSCC may be asked to assist the Haywards Heath CIC Team.

336. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS.

336.1 High Street lights. The Council's concerns regarding the way the Christmas lights had been installed had been referred to the contractors with a request that the correct lengths for the particular trees be identified and labelled for future years and that a detailed wiring plan be drawn up to correspond with these labels.

Pond lights. The lights on the Pond were all in place and working. Removal of vegetation had made a vast improvement to the lights and arrangements would be made with the Pond Warden to cut back any vegetation that obscured the lights during the course of the year.

337. DENMANS LANE ALLOTMENTS

337.1 Councillors Blunden, Allen and Pickett, having declared personal interests in the items under this heading, remained present.

337.2 Damage to sheds caused by falling branch. A short report had been circulated with the agenda regarding the damage caused to the Council's cedar shed. It was **NOTED** that the branch had now been removed and the roof had been covered with tarpaulin. An insurance claim form would shortly be submitted to Zurich. Details of sheds from three suppliers had been considered and the proposal to replace the damaged shed with the 12' x 8' Alfriston apex shed in cedar from Tates (approximate cost £2,429) was **AGREED**. The possibility of not recovering the full cost from Zurich was accepted and it was **AGREED** that the Council should fund the difference if necessary. It was **NOTED** that a local workman had been asked to carry out the roof repair to a second Council shed which had been damaged to a lesser extent.

337.2 Damage to fence on boundary with Allens Wall caused by fallen tree. It was **NOTED** that a tree from a neighbouring property on the western boundary of the Allotments site had fallen at the end of December, damaging the new boundary fence. A close inspection of the repair to the fence would be made when the ground conditions improved and remedial action would be taken as required.

337.3 Tree work. The tree surgeons had, the previous day, completed the agreed work further to the 2013 survey report. Cuttings had been chipped and would be used along the path from Denmans Lane to Pondcroft Road, which had become extremely muddy, as a temporary measure. The tree that had damaged the shed had been significantly reduced in height and it had been agreed that the cost would be shared with the adjacent property owner, but it was **NOTED** that the Parish Council would not be funding the additional cost of cutting the wood into small sections which had been requested by the other party.

337.4 Footpath. Further to the reference to the footpath in the previous item, it was **NOTED** that the recent rains had caused a considerable amount of water to drain to Ivy Cottages. It was suggested that there may have been a drainage grid at the bottom of the path which had disappeared. The Chairman stated that this would have been a soakaway and would not have discharged into the main drainage system; a ditch had existed at one time but had since eroded and disappeared. It was **AGREED** that a dressing of MOT aggregate should be applied to the southern section of the path.

337.5 Policy regarding visits by nursery school groups to the allotment site. At the previous meeting of the E&A Committee a policy had been agreed by which visits by groups of pre-school and school aged children would not be authorised. A further request regarding plot holders bringing their own children to the site had been deferred pending advice from the Council's insurers. The reply from Zurich had confirmed that, provided that risk assessments were in place and checks made to keep the site as safe as possible, there was no reason for plot holders not to take their children to the site. It was **AGREED** that plot holders should continue to be allowed to

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take children from their immediate family to their allotments. It was also **AGREED** that the policy not allowing visits by nursery school groups would remain in place

- 337.6 Rents per rod 2015/16. Councillors Blunden, Allen and Pickett, having declared interests, abstained from voting on this item.

It was **NOTED** that plot holders had to be given 12 months' notice of rent increases and that the Council's policy was to review the rent every three years, the last increase having taken effect on 1 April 2012. It was **AGREED** to increase the rent per rod by 10% and the price per rod effective from 1 April 2015 would be £3.30.

338. MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED WITH MSDC AND WSCC.

- 338.1 Proposal to install posts around the Black Hill section of the Common to deter unauthorised access (MSDC). Members discussed this proposal and **AGREED** that if posts were to be put in at this location, they should be of the same type as the existing ones nearby, ie. white wooden posts with black metal rails. Further discussions would be held with MSDC regarding possible joint funding and costings were to be obtained for the available options.

- 338.2 Drainage on the Common (MSDC). It was **NOTED** that the Common had been particularly affected by the recent heavy rains and the Chairman proposed discussing with MSDC whether anything could be done to improve the drainage. It was suggested that this might have been a freak event and it was understood that drainage was present beneath the upper football pitches. This would be raised with Rupert Browning for his opinion.

- 338.3 Post and rail fence on road side in front of the Pond (MSDC / WSCC). It was **AGREED** that a maintenance programme for the posts around the Common and the Pond should be put in place. It was **NOTED** that the posts on the road side near the Pond were in need of painting and repairing as the resin put in to hold firm the iron rails had come out, which would accelerate the rotting of the wooden posts. This would be raised with WSCC.

339. PAVING AT CORNER OF HIGH STREET AND LEWES ROAD.

- 339.1 It was **NOTED** that an on-site meeting with WSCC Officers had been arranged but later cancelled. However the Officers had since visited the site independently. A further date for a meeting would be arranged.

340. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

- 340.1 Arts Festival Event. A letter from a Director of the Lindfield Arts Festival regarding an event proposed for the evening of Saturday 13 September had been received. Members considered the timings to be reasonable and they were generally supportive of the event taking place, on condition that proper controls would be put in place: marshals for security and crowd management, litter picking and the provision of portaloos.

The meeting concluded at 9.00 p.m.