

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held on **Thursday 8 April 2010** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield

Present: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)
Mr. A. Gomme
Mr. S. Henton
Mrs. M. Hersey
Mrs. M. Nicolle (Vice Chairman)
Mr. R. Pickett
Mrs. V. Upton

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin

The Chairman opened the meeting at 8.00 p.m. There were no members of the public present.

330. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

330.1 Apologies were received from Councillor Allen and the reasons were accepted.

331. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS IN RESPECT OF ANY MATTER ON THE AGENDA.

331.1 Councillors Blunden, as an allotment tenant, and Pickett, whose wife was a plot holder, declared personal interest in item 11 (Denmans Lane Allotments).

332. QUESTIONS / COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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

333. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2010.

333.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 4 February 2010. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

334. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

334.1 Tree work on the Common. MSDC had notified the Parish Council on 24 March that they would be doing some tree work on the Common on 30 March. This involved removing the two remaining willows at West View and lifting the crowns of the line of oaks and limes opposite West View and giving them a formative prune. The area of trees opposite the tennis courts and Rowstile Cottages were to be thinned to allow better specimens to develop and two mountain ash were to be planted on the adjacent area of grass where the path runs down to Meadow Drive. Epicormic growth would be removed as required from the limes along Lewes Road and Black Hill. Two trees which had been vandalised were also to be replaced in the play area. It had been in the long term plan to remove the willows once the line of oaks and limes had become established and they were now well matured.

335. REPORT ON ACTION / PROJECT PROGRESS LIST

335.1 Litter bins. The new litter bins had not yet been ordered as the method of fixing needed to be considered. The model agreed on needed to be bolted down to a hard surface with rawl bolts and there were two options

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for the ones going in grass verges; fill a hole with concrete and then bolt the bin to that, or get the standard Knight bin rather than the Knight QR and set the base of the bin into concrete. The Clerk would be taking advice from Highways before ordering the bins. It was **AGREED** that fixing with bolts was preferable to concreting in the base as the bin would be easier to remove for maintenance, so four Knight QR bins should be ordered. WSCC contractor would be asked to install them.

336. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET PROGRESS: TO REVIEW PAYMENTS MADE TO DATE IN 2009 / 10

336.1 The figures for March were not yet available but it was noted that payments had been made for the civic amenity freighter and the dropped kerbs. Allocation of the unspent sums would be considered at the June meeting of the Committee. It was **NOTED** that at 28 February, £23,355.99 had been spent from the budget of £44,200.00 and that £7,596.34 had been spent from the sum of £29,446.18 for outstanding projects and designated reserves.

337. WARDING: TO RECEIVE REPORTS ON WARD INSPECTIONS.

337.1 Reports had been received from Councillors Gomme and Leach, Councillor Henton, Councillors Nicolle and Upton and Councillor Blunden. Most of the issues raised had been reported to the relevant authorities.

338. MAINTENANCE

338.1 Report on current maintenance. It was noted that Matt Coppard had repainted the seats by the Pond and by the Welkin bus shelter plus six railings in the High Street and up to the Surgery. The invoice for this was £698 and it was agreed that this had been money well spent.

338.2 To agree a maintenance plan for 2010/11 (painting of street light columns and seats, refurbishment of Parish Council notice board). Councillor Gomme had inspected the Parish Council's street lights in February and reported that four columns were badly in need of painting. There was a budget for street light maintenance, and the Clerk had asked Mr. Edmonds at Southern Electric Contracting for a quotation. The current standard cost as at 8 March 2010 for rubbing down applying primer to bare metal and final top coat was £61.84 plus VAT per column. If stripping back to metal was needed, Mr. Edmonds would have to come out and assess whether an additional charge would apply. **AGREED** to place an order to have the four columns repainted. Councillor Gomme was thanked for his thorough report.

The Chairman and Clerk had recently inspected the High Street seats and scored them according to their condition: they all needed attention though some were worse than others. It was **AGREED** to have the seats treated with appropriate products, in batches according to their condition and that this would be paid for from the designated reserve for maintenance of community assets. It was also **AGREED** to authorise the Clerk in consultation with the Chairman, to arrange for the work to be done by Matt Coppard, provided that he quotation was consistent with the work recently completed.

The Parish Council's original notice board was in need of maintenance. It was **AGREED** to ask Ian Duffell whether he would be prepared to refurbish the board and try to achieve a closer match to the new one – to be funded from the maintenance budget.

338.3 Mowing of High Street verges. Brian Lambarth, Assistant Highway Manager, WSCC had confirmed that WSCC would only be carrying out seven grass cuts this year, which was two less than previously indicated. The Parish Council had already approached WSCC with the offer to consider paying the difference in price to have the mowing done to a higher standard and eleven cuts a year. Mr. Lambarth had now suggested that the way forward would be for WSCC to issue the Parish Council with a licence to maintain the High St verges which meant that the Parish Council would have to arrange the contract with WSCC reimbursing the

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amount they would otherwise have paid. Grasstex was WSCC's currently approved contractor and their price per cut using a box mower and collecting cuttings would be £87.63 plus VAT. For eleven cuts, this would therefore come to £963.93 a year plus VAT. WSCC would reimburse the sum of £435.74, this being the cost to the County Council for 7 standard cuts. The Clerk had consulted SALC and been advised that this was the right course of action and that it was an appropriate use for the Section 137 power. Other suitable contractors were to be invited to quote according to a specification to be drawn up.

RESOLVED: that the Council, in accordance with its powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, should incur expenditure for the mowing of the High Street verges, which, in the opinion of the Council, is in the interests of the area or its inhabitants and will benefit them in a manner commensurate with the expenditure.

It was noted that some bulb planting was needed to fill bare patches in the verges. Councillor Gomme was asked to note on paper where the gaps were.

338.4 Epicormic growth – High Street and Compton Road – to consider whether to obtain further quotations. It was noted that, on the basis of the quotation received from KPS in August 2009 for removing epicormic growth in the High Street and Compton Road, to do this more than once in the year would cost more than the £1000 threshold in Financial Regulations, above which three 3 quotations should be obtained. Members considered that the epicormic growth, which had been abundant in 2009 because of the recent pollarding, would be slower this year. It was therefore **AGREED** that further quotations should not be sought and that KPS should be used. The timing of the work would depend on the growth. The Committee would monitor the effectiveness of these arrangements and review as necessary.

338.5 Land at Blackthorns. Councillor Nicolle pointed out that the land at Blackthorns, near Hickmans Lane, was in need of maintenance. It was understood that the land remained in the ownership of Crowdace who built Blackthorns. The Chairman suggested that Mr. R. Ledbury, of the Blackthorns Residents Association should be asked whether he could advise about the status of this land before approaching Crowdace.

339. SPRING CLEAN ARRANGEMENTS AND ASSOCIATED RISK ASSESSMENT

339.1 It was noted that the start time for the Spring Clean had been advertised as 9.30 a.m. but Members were asked to help bring supplies from the Allotments shed and set up in the King Edward Hall Library from 8.30 a.m. to make sure everything was organised before volunteers arrived. Members were also asked to contribute by suggesting jobs that needed to be done. SERCO had promised to supply bins on the Common and the Highway Rangers had been invited to take part. A simple ploughman's lunch would be provided. Councillor Gomme offered to clean signs.

An updated risk assessment had been circulated with the agenda and the guidance sheet handed to participants would be cross-checked to make sure everything had been covered. It was suggested that the lone working risk heading should include use of mobile phones.

340. DENMANS LANE ALLOTMENTS

340.1 To receive the notes of the meeting with the Allotment Tenants held on 16 March 2010. Councillor Blunden reported that a large number of plot holders had attended the meeting. Tenants had been reminded of safety and other issues and had been given an opportunity to raise matters for consideration. A request for extra water taps had not been taken forward and tenants were informed that the cost of running the allotments was high for the benefit of a small proportion of the electorate and they were encouraged to work together. The chestnut fencing was now nearly complete and the Chairman thanked Ian Cooper in particular for his help with this.

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340.2 to note the recommendations of the Insurance and Risk Management Sub Committee relating to the Allotment site and to agree any action:

- Protective footwear etc for users of machinery **AGREED** to reimburse Richard Powell for the purchase of boots with steel toe caps for use when operating the sickle scythe.
- Health and Safety Advice Notices in the sheds regarding machinery Laminated notices would be put up. Use of certain equipment was restricted to authorised users. Tenants were to be advised to receive instruction on the operation of the communal mowers from experienced users before using them for the first time.
- Security would be kept under review.

341. STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING CONSULTATION – DEVELOPMENT BY BARRATTS AT THE LIMES, NEWTON ROAD

341.1 The Parish Council was being consulted by MSDC on proposals for naming the roads in the Newton Road development (The Limes). Members considered the suggestions in the context of the draft MSDC policy. It was **AGREED** that of the names put forward:

Luxford, although historically appropriate as the land had belonged to Luxford Farm, should not be used at all as it could easily lead to confusion with Luxford Road

Kempe, Barncroft, Old Orchard and Saxon were considered to be suitable and appropriate.

It was suggested that Kempe would go well with the suffix Road and Way (or Close) was preferred with Saxon.

342. TO CONSIDER NEW EQUIPMENT FOR CLEARING SNOW AND ICE AND NEW GRIT/SALT BINS.

342.1 The report of the Snow Summit held by WSCC had only recently been published and it was hoped that support and guidance would be given to Parish Councils and communities. It was **AGREED** that if the Parish Council was to store salt, a shed should be bought for the purpose to keep it dry. Use of wheeled containers was also being considered and suitable locations for extra bins were being sought.

343. RISK MANAGEMENT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE'S ACTIVITIES.

343.1 Members were asked to review sheets printed from the Local Council Risk System software package relating to their areas of responsibility.

344. CONSERVATION AREA SURVEY OF TRAFFIC SIGNAGE AND STREET LIGHTS (REPORT BY COUNCILLOR GOMME)

344.1 Councillor Gomme had circulated the results of his survey of traffic signage and street lights, which had revealed that most poles were not black. It had been pointed out by a member of the public that street sign poles in the Conservation Area should be black and that this had been agreed with WSCC some years previously. However this did not appear to have been agreed in writing. It was noted that poles in Compton Road predated Conservation Area status. Members discussed the painting of poles and noted that many poles were of plastic construction and would need special primer and that once the poles were painted this would be an ongoing maintenance issue. It was felt that clean bare metal looked better than peeling black paint and that in the current financially constrained times, it would not be appropriate to insist on this. However as a long term policy, WSCC would be informed that the Parish Council's preference for new poles was that they should be powder coated in black prior to installation as this would be more durable than paint applied subsequently. Street light columns in the Conservation Area should be green.

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345. TO CONSIDER ITEMS FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDAS FOR FORTHCOMING LIAISON (“WISH LIST”) MEETINGS

345.1 Liaison meeting with WSCC Officers. No date had yet been agreed for a meeting, but this would be arranged within the next few weeks. **AGREED:** items for the agenda to include:

- Colour of street sign poles and light columns
- Co-operation regarding preparation for bad weather
- Christmas lights (the supporting wires)
- Painting of post and rail fence alongside the road near the Pond
- Footpath from Finches Park Road to Hickmans Lane (to ascertain ownership of the land either side of the entrance and enquire whether the entrance could be widened to take a safety barrier)

345.2 Liaison meeting with MSDC Officers (Rupert Browning). This meeting was arranged for 14 April. **AGREED:** items for the agenda to include:

- Gate at the bottom of the Common due to be repainted
- Painting of post and rail fencing round the Pond and Common
- Thinning of silver birch copse on Backwoods Lane area of the Common and removal of brambles etc
- Adult exercise equipment for Hickmans Lane
- Pond aeration pump – not working
- Pea lights in tree on Pond island for Christmas
- Re-instatement of duck ramp to island on Pond

Members discussed Councillor Gomme’s proposal to form a Lindfield Common Steering Committee comprising representatives of Lindfield Parish Council, regular user groups of the Common and MSDC Officers. Councillor Gomme explained that the suggestion had arisen from the discussions about the Cricket Club’s application for permission to erect an extension and cricket nets to improve facilities and the subsequent correspondence relating to the fenced off area of the cricket square. As Chairman of the Scrase Valley Steering Group he was of the opinion that a group of this nature would create a forum for the various sporting groups and stakeholders to talk to each other about needs, air their concerns and consider possible improvements.

Whilst Members felt that getting people together was a good idea, this should be done within the existing structure, but it was **AGREED** that Rupert Browning should be asked for his views. Mr. Browning should also be asked to ensure that the Cricket Club adhered to the regulations regarding temporary fencing, whereby openings should be left to allow free passage.

346. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, ARISING AFTER THE PREPARATION OF THIS AGENDA, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN AGREES TO TAKE AS URGENT (FOR NOTING OR REFERRAL TO A FUTURE MEETING ONLY)

346.1 No items of other business were raised.

The meeting concluded at 9.25 p.m.