

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 8 JUNE 2017** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00.

Present:

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

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)

Absent: Parish Councillors: Mrs. J. Durrant and Mrs. M. Hersey

233. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

233.1 The Chairman of Council, Councillor Blunden, 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 Blunden was **ELECTED** as Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee for the Council Year 2017 / 18. Councillor Blunden then took the Chair for the meeting.

234. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.

234.1 The Chairman called for nominations for the office of Vice Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee. Councillor Pickett was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Snowling and **SECONDED** by Councillor Upton and there being no further nominations, Councillor Roger Pickett was **ELECTED** as Vice Chairman of the Environment and Amenities Committee for the Council Year 2017 / 18.

235. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

235.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Durrant and Hersey and the reasons were accepted.

236. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

236.1 Item 15 - Denmans Lane Allotments. Councillor Blunden declared a personal interest in item 15 as he was a plot holder. Councillor Allen also declared an interest in item 15 as his wife was a plot holder.

237. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

237.1 Maintenance of posts - Common and Pond. Mr. N. Kerslake congratulated the Chairman and Council for their part in achieving the recent maintenance of the posts around the Common and the roadside near the Pond. He suggested that now that Mr. Gomme, who had taken a particular interest in the wrought iron litter bins was no longer a Councillor, another Member would need to oversee the upkeep of these bins.

237.2 Gravel Drive to the Denmans Lane Allotments. Mr. Kerslake stated that he understood that the Parish Council did not own the private road leading to the Allotments but had the right to pass and repass over it and had to be prepared to share in its upkeep. He made the following points: that all parties with the same rights would have to agree when work needed doing on the road and that gravel was purely an aesthetic top dressing applied by residents and had nothing to do with the upkeep of the road. There was therefore no legal obligation for the Parish Council to contribute to adding more gravel and the Council had to be aware that to do so would be using public money on a private road.

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238. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 APRIL 2017.

238.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 6 April 2017. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

239. APPOINTMENT AND MEMBERSHIP OF WORKING GROUPS.

239.1 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**

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

- **Wilderness Field Working Group**

Councillors Blunden, Henton, Pickett and Snowling together with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk

- **Responsibility for Village Archive Collection**

Councillors Blunden and Upton.

240. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

240.1 Village Day. The Chairman wished to record how pleasant it was to see the Common so completely clear of litter the day after Village Day: this was a credit to the volunteers.

241. ACTION LIST.

241.1 It was **AGREED** to remove the following items from the Action List.

28.2 - Brushes Lane street lights. No reply had been received to the email sent to the resident who had offered to contribute towards the heritage upgrade of these lights.

54.5 - Paving slabs in front of the snow plough shed. This had been deferred due to the high cost quoted and a cheaper solution needed to be sought.

242. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET PROGRESS 2017/18

242.1 Budget progress 2017 / 18: payments made to 30.04.17. **NOTED:** as at 30.04.17, £2,325 had been spent from the in-year budget of £47,750 and there had been no expenditure from the designated reserves.

242.2 Lindfield Leaflet: re-print. It was **NOTED** that the Clerk had obtained a quotation for the reprint of the Lindfield leaflet, for which £500 had been budgeted, as it was anticipated that a reprint would be needed before the end of the financial year. The cost for 5,000 was £995 (the same as for the 2014 reprint) but the saving for smaller quantities was proportionately higher: £925 for 3,500 and £875 for 2500. This item was therefore under-budgeted and the authority for the additional expenditure would need Full Council's approval.

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243. REVIEW OF UNSPENT BALANCES AND RESERVES ALLOCATED TO THE E&A COMMITTEE.

243.1 A spreadsheet had been circulated, setting out the calculation of funds at the start of the new Financial Year and the Chairman's proposals for increases to a number of headings in the E&A reserves due to there being an amount of surplus money available either to be allocated to designated reserves or to the General Reserve.

During discussion it was **NOTED**:

- that the service area of the Denmans Lane toilets and the outsides of all the doors needed maintenance for which the in-year budget figure may not be adequate.
- that the two faces of the King Edward Hall external clock, of which the Parish Council had previously agreed to fund the maintenance, were not currently synchronised. Although the mechanism was mainly accessible from the inside and scaffolding would probably not be required, it was considered that the repair or replacement of the clock was likely to exceed the present reserve of £500.
- that a number of the black steel litter bins were deteriorating and may need replacing.
- that the in-year budget for Christmas lights might not be enough to cover work to improve the Pond lights.

There was also discussion about the upgrade of the Hickmans Lane playground, which was now a long-standing joint project with MSDC on which there had been no progress. It was **NOTED** that playground equipment was costly and the £15,000 currently held in reserves, would not go very far, in even with the Parish Council only paying 50% of the total. The Chairman stated that this playground, which was used mainly by younger children of nursery school age, was long overdue for refurbishment. It was **AGREED** to increase the reserve as proposed, but to review the situation at the end of the Financial Year if no progress had been made.

It was **AGREED** that the following list of reserves under the E&A Committee should be recommended to the F&GP Committee and onto Full Council for final approval:

Street Map of Lindfield	£4,000	(no change)
Posts around Open Spaces	£4,000	(no change)
Emergency Equipment (including purchase of salt bins	£1,250	(to include £750 the
		unspent balance from 2016/17, as agreed during the budget discussions
Joint project with WSCC - dropped kerbs	£12,500	(no change)
Denmans Lane toilets - maintenance sinking fund	£2,000	(increase of £1,000)
Repair/maintenance of community assets - sinking fund	£4,000	(increase of £1,000)
Maintenance of King Edward Hall clock	£2,000	(increase of £1,500)
Replacement of litter bins	£4,000	(increase of £2,000)
Upgrade of Hickmans Lane playground	£20,000	(increase of £5,000)
Christmas lights	£4,000	New reserve

244. REPORT ON CURRENT MAINTENANCE.

244.1 Replacement by WSCC of roadside posts by the Pond and painting by Haywards Heath Town Council. It was **NOTED** that WSCC had replaced ten of the badly rotting posts and the Haywards Heath Town Council Highways Team was working on painting them including the metal rails. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should arrange for strimmer guards to be put round the base of the posts to prevent damage.

244.2 Painting of the older black iron bollards. It was **AGREED** to arrange for the black bollards to be painted by Haywards Heath Town Council's Highways Team.

244.3 Seats at the north end of the Pond. The Chairman reported that the Clerk had taken a couple of calls about these seats being covered with bird droppings and had arranged for them to be cleaned. One of the

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callers had suggested moving the seats to stop this happening. It was **NOTED** that the seats were well used in their present position and that this was probably a short term seasonal occurrence. It was therefore **AGREED** not to pursue this suggestion.

- 244.4 Replacement planter for Denmans Lane. Further to discussion at the meeting held on 6 April, a quotation for two rectangular heavy duty plastic "Scilla" planters from Hahn Plastics, to be placed in an L configuration, was considered and it was **AGREED** to place the order: £1,198.00, plus £84 carriage and £256.40 VAT, which was reclaimable.

245. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS: QUOTATION FOR 2017.

- 245.1 A quotation had been received from Blachere for installing, testing, removing and storing the Christmas Lights this year. The Clerk had queried the quotation as the increase was almost 50% and further advice was awaited. It was **AGREED** that this matter should be brought back to a later meeting.

246. REVIEW OF SPRING CLEAN 2017 / DATE FOR 2018 SPRING CLEAN.

- 246.1 The Chairman reported that there had been one of the best ever turn-outs at the 2017 Spring Clean. There were no particular issues for consideration. This event was well supported by the Community and it was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Snowling and **SECONDED** by Councillor Upton that the 2018 Spring Clean should go ahead. Members **VOTED** 4 in favour with 3 Members abstaining. It was therefore **AGREED** that the 2018 Spring Clean should go ahead and it was further **AGREED** that it should take place on Saturday 14 April 2018.

247. DENMANS LANE ALLOTMENTS.

- 247.1 Councillors Blunden and Allen, having declared personal interests in matters relating to the Allotments, as recorded at Minute 236.1, remained present for the following items and took part in the discussions.
- 247.2 Trees overhanging 21 Denmans Lane. It was **NOTED** that this item related to trees on the allotment site adjacent to the property at 21 Denmans Lane: earlier in the year, a bough of a Douglas Fir had come down and landed on the conservatory and a hedge some distance away. The Chairman and Councillor Allen had both inspected the trees and reported that three of the trees contained a certain amount of dead wood that needed to be removed and there was a dead bough on an oak. The Fir was completely unbalanced and growing into a nearby Lime; its top had been taken out previously and one of the upper boughs was larger than the lower ones. It was **AGREED** to arrange for the Douglas Fir to be felled and the lower limbs removed from other trees.
- 247.3 Gravel drive. Councillor Allen had submitted a report to the Committee for consideration, setting out briefly the background to this matter and a proposal for remedial work to potholes and re-shingling the surface of this drive which was the approved access to the allotments. In common with others having rights to access their properties over this land, the Council had a liability "to contribute "a fair proportion according to user of the expense of keeping the said roadway in repair..." The proposal was for the Council to take the lead in respect of the work needing to be done and to request a combined contribution of 80% of the total cost from the other parties.

Points made during discussion included:

- Although the Council was bound by the terms of the conveyance, it was doubtful that it had the legal powers authorising it to take the lead
- If the Parish Council did take the lead and organise the work, it would be responsible for overseeing the work, for which it did not have the capacity, and be liable for any problems
- If the residents wanted to carry out these repairs it was up to them to organise it (it was however noted that the resident who had taken the lead in recent years had passed away several months previously)
- The road to the allotments was used a lot by plot holders
- It was questionable whether putting more shingle down counted as "repair" which more likely should apply to the hard surface beneath the shingle

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- The footpath from Denmans Lane to Pondcroft was used by the public and this was maintained by the Council by simply spreading wood chippings
- In the interests of tax payers at large, the Council should ensure that it contributed no more than a fair share along with the other seven parties: a contribution of an eighth of the total rather than a fifth as previously and as currently recommended. Councillor Allen pointed out that there were 50 allotment plot holders against the small number of residents with access rights so the rate of contribution should reflect that.
- Councillor Allen stressed the duty to repair and stated that there were 15 potholes and the roadway needed restoring to a sound condition; he felt that the use of the word shingle etc obfuscated the conversation. He added that the matter could be resolved by engaging an umpire or the RCIS.
- It was reasonable to ensure that the right of way was maintained for safety, but the Council did not own it and taking the lead in effecting the repairs would be a departure; however the Council could perhaps take some sort of role in making sure something was done, by spurring the other parties to take action without agreeing to take the reins. A letter could be sent to residents reminding them of their historical obligations and the expectation that all parties would come together to organise the work and stating that the Parish Council would be willing to contribute its fair share.
- The roadway to the Denmans Lane allotments was sheer luxury compared with the access path to the Gravelly Lane allotments
- The Parish Council should not suggest anything that indicated that it would do more than in the past, which would raise expectations that it could not meet.

It was **AGREED** that the residents with access rights should be informed that the Council's E&A Committee had considered a report from one of its members and was aware of the potholes that had been appearing. The Council would be interested in hearing if residents will be coming together to arrange repairs necessary and the Parish Council, being in mind of the previous decision to make a contribution, would of course consider make a contribution based on a fair proportion of the cost.

247.3 Purchase of a mower. The Chairman reported that after consulting with the Clerk he had purchased a second hand Mountfield SP 464 for £182.50 plus VAT, for use by allotment tenants. It was self-drive so easy to manoeuvre and it was hoped that it would solve the problem with mowers on the allotments. The Committee **APPROVED** the action taken.

248. **CONIFER TREE NEXT TO THE FINGER POST AT THE SUNTE AVENUE/PORTSMOUTH LANE CROSSROADS.**

248.1 A resident had reported this small conifer to be impeding visibility on the approach to the mini roundabout from the Ardingly direction, when other vehicles were emerging from Sunte Avenue. Most Members drove that route regularly and did not consider there to be any problem. It was therefore **AGREED** not to take any action at this time, but to keep a watching eye on it.

249. **CHANNEL 4 VILLAGE OF THE YEAR TV PROGRAMME.**

249.1 The Chairman reported that as Chairman of the King Edward Hall Management Committee he had received an email from the producers of this Channel 4 TV programme inviting an application to participate in their Village of the Year competition. The closing date was within 5 days of receipt of this email, but with the support of fellow members of the Village Day Committee (the producers were keen to film the event because it was an example of community spirit) the lengthy application had been completed and submitted with the required details about the history, infrastructure and local societies. Lindfield had been selected for filming and the Chairman had met with the producers, along with David Tingley and several residents. Filming had taken place on Village Day from morning until late afternoon and had included the procession and taking down of the stalls. The crew had then returned on the following Monday with the presenter, Penelope Keith, to spend time in the Village. They had met a number of traders, observed a keep fit class in the King Edward Hall, interviewed a representative of the WI and met with pupils of Oathall Community College involved with the farm. Richard Bryant had taken them on a walking tour of the High Street, explaining about its history and the Chairman had been interviewed by the Pond wearing his Harbourmaster's uniform. The producers had made positive comments about the community spirit and vibrancy of the village.

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250. RISK MANAGEMENT.

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

Allotments:	Councillors Allen, Blunden and Henton
Spring Clean:	Councillors Blunden and Upton
Christmas Festival Night: Group)	Councillors Blunden and Upton (with members of the Working
Public conveniences:	Councillors Henton, Hersey and Pickett
Winter Management:	Councillors Blunden and Plass
Street lights:	Councillors Hodgson and Snowling
Street furniture (<i>litter bins, bus stop poles and shelters, railings, etc</i>)	Councillors Snowling, Hersey and Upton (with Councillor Plass, <i>who, although not a member of E&A had made an offer to assist with this</i>)
Christmas lights:	Councillors Blunden and Pickett.

It was **NOTED** that not all Members of the E&A Committee had been allocated to assist with risk assessments.

251. WINTER MANAGEMENT PLAN.

251.1 WSCC would be asking Councils to review their Winter Management Plan during the summer months and to notify them of any salt bins needing to be refilled before the onset of winter. In 2016 the deadline was 5 September. It was **NOTED** that the Haywards Heath Highways team would carry out the salt bin survey and there were no outstanding requests from residents for additional bins. The only change to the Plan was to amend contact details. It was also **NOTED** that the labels on the bins needed to be changed and that better arrangements were needed for managing and training the volunteer team in the use of the equipment and working on the public footways. It was **AGREED** to arrange training from the suppliers of the snowplough during the autumn.

252. WILDERNESS FIELD.

252.1 Further to the decision made at the Annual Meeting of Council, the following email drafted by Councillor Snowling had been sent by the Clerk to Tom Clark, Solicitor for Mid Sussex District Council:

"I think that you will be aware that LPC is anxious that, so far as can be arranged, there should be no risk of the Wilderness Field being developed. Suggestions that have been made are either that the Field should be transferred to LPC or that it should be transferred to a Trust. It has been pointed out that just to transfer it to LPC gives no greater security than leaving it under the control of MSDC.

I would be grateful if you would let me know if MSDC has any plan to secure the status of the Field. It would be most helpful if you would let me have a copy of the Transfer from the Developers to MSDC, so that we can see what conditions the Developers were able to impose.

If MSDC has no plan for the future of the Field we would like to explore with you the idea that MSDC transfers the Field to a Trust set up by LPC in conjunction with MSDC. That is why it would assist us to know what conditions now apply".

253. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

253.1 No other items of business were raised.

The meeting ended at 9.08 p.m.