

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held on **26 NOVEMBER 2015** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 8.00 p.m.

Present:

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

Also present: 1 member of the public (until 9.05 p.m.)

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)

Not present: Parish Councillor Mrs. E. Hinze.

59. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

59.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hinze and the reasons were accepted.

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

60.1 Item 16 – 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 and she had submitted a paper for the Committee's consideration which was on the agenda for this meeting.

60.2 Item 18 – Budget 2016/17. Councillor Snowling declared a personal interest in this item in respect of the budget item for the maintenance of the King Edward Hall clock as he was a Trustee of the King Edward Hall. Councillor Blunden also declared a personal interest in this item as Chairman of the KEH Management Committee.

61. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

61.1 There were no questions or comments from members of the public.

62. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 1 OCTOBER 2015.

62.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 1 October 2016. The Minutes were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

63. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

63.1 The Chairman had no announcements to make.

64. ACTION LIST.

64.1 Map panels Minute 14.1 **NOTED:** MSDC had been asked for their initial comments and advice as to the permissions required, particularly for the map proposed for the Common and a response was awaited.

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64.2 Public Rights of Way 55.1. Further to information passed to the Access Ranger prior to her inspection, it had since been reported that the footpath from Francis Road into the fields was very overgrown. The Access Ranger had been informed, but in case this did not meet the intervention criteria, the Committee was asked to consider alternative action. It was **AGREED** first to ask Haywards Heath Town Council whether this was a task they could undertake or instruct KPS. It was **AGREED** that the payment should come from the maintenance budget.

65. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET 2015/16.

65.1 Budget progress 2015/16: payments made to 31.10.15. The budget progress spreadsheet to 31 October 2015 had been circulated. **NOTED:** that £41,067 had been spent out of the budget of £75,400. It was also **NOTED** that during the month of November the payment of £13,143 plus VAT to SSEC for the Parish Council's contribution towards the WSCC street lights heritage upgrade and that payments for the paving on the corner of Lewes Road and the High Street (£28,070 plus VAT) and the Christmas lights (£6,783 plus VAT) would be due shortly.

66. REPORT ON CURRENT MAINTENANCE.

66.1 Horse Gin. **NOTED:** a quotation for minor repairs by the contractor who had previously refurbished the horse gin had been requested, but was still awaited.

66.2 Seats and bus shelters. **NOTED:** that most of the seats around the village had last been painted four years previously and were in need of further attention, as were the bus shelters. It was **AGREED** to budget for this work to be done in 2016/17.

66.3 Public toilets. **NOTED:** it was six and a half years since the public toilets had been refurbished. The cubicles were still in good condition, but the service area was in need of attention as the painted walls were peeling. The wooden doors also needed cleaning and re-oiling. It was **AGREED** to provide for this in the 2016/17 budget.

66.4 Litter bins. It had been the intention to replace a number of old wooden slatted bins with the same commercial model as had been installed in a number of other locations in the last few years. However it was **NOTED** that the oldest of these which were now five and a half years old were not surviving as well as expected. The paint was peeling, not only round the base which could be blamed on strimmer damage, but also round the openings near the top. This had been referred back to the suppliers, but the Committee would need to reconsider the type of bin to be used for replacements.

66.5 Additional maintenance work which could be carried out by Haywards Heath Town Council's Grounds staff. The Clerk's report was considered. The Clerk had discussed with the Town Clerk a number of maintenance tasks that the Town Council's Grounds Staff might be able to carry out on behalf of the Parish Council, as an extension to the grass cutting contract. These were jobs that were not covered under the Highways Contract. The estimate, based on the routine jobs being done twice a year would be £1,300 a year, excluding materials such as paint. The suggested jobs on which the estimate had been based were as follows:

- Polycarbonate bus shelter near The Welkin – cleaning twice a year
- Litter and salt bins – cleaning twice a year
- Large Welcome to our Historic Village signs – cleaning twice a year
- White posts by the Pond – cleaning twice a year
- White posts by the Pond - painting (one-off task, subject to agreement by MSDC)
- Edge of Pond – weeding as needed
- High Street verges – reseeding bare patches (as needed)
- Seats – painting (one-off task)

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should confirm this arrangement with the Clerk at Haywards Heath Town Council.

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67. PAVING AT THE CORNER OF HIGH STREET AND LEWES ROAD.

- 67.1 **NOTED:** the work had now been completed and, as reported to Full Council, there would be an additional charge for three further bollards additional to the ones first quoted for. The total cost for the job would be £28,070.
- 67.2 Attention had been drawn to one of the paving slabs which appeared to be a different type of stone and did not match the majority. Although it was considered that this might weather down, it was **AGREED** to lodge the query with the contractors.
- 67.3 **NOTED:** that vehicles were still able to gain access via the pedestrian crossing point and there was also a gap in the bollards north of the crossing. The contractors had suggested adding another bollard part way along the north side of the path leading from the road to the butcher's shop, making a matching pair with the one already installed. It was **AGREED** to make arrangements for this work to be done as soon as possible.

68. STREET LIGHTS.

- 68.1 West Sussex Street lights upgrade. A report had been considered at the Full Council meeting on 12 November, further to which it had been agreed to authorise payment for the heritage treatment of some additional lights in Lewes Road and Hickmans Lane which SSEC had considered to be necessary to meet standards. A discrepancy in the number for Lewes Road had now been resolved and the revised quotation had been received: £13,143.35 plus VAT for a total of 10 full columns and 7 pole mounted heritage lanterns. A cheque had been issued for this as advance payment was required before SSEC would order the equipment.
- 68.2 Height of the High Street lights. The columns in the High Street, initially installed as standard, were currently being converted to heritage style, but they had not been reduced in height. SSEC had stated that taller lights were more effective in lighting the street and would be less effective if reduced. It was understood that even if they were reduced they would still have to be taller than the lights in Denmans Lane. It was **AGREED** to accept this professional advice and not request a reduction in height.
- 68.3 Parish owned street lights - part night illumination. Councillors Snowling and Blunden declared a personal interest in this item as they both lived in a private road with Parish Council owned part-night street lighting.

Further to an enquiry from a resident about the timing of the part-night lighting in Oak Bank which were going out an hour earlier since the end of British Summertime, Streetlights had advised that photocells worked from dusk and on the amount of light, with a tolerance of about 15 minutes either side of midnight. Streetlights considered that these lights were behaving normally. This equipment had been in place for at least four years and must have been switching off in this way during this time. Adjustments could not be made to the existing equipment and to change them to photocells that switched off at 1 am instead of midnight would be subject to a minimum order quantity of ten (£530 plus £27.50 to fit each one). It was **NOTED** some other roads had no street lighting at all. It was **AGREED** to take no further action on this.

- 68.4 Parish Council owned street lights in West View and the footpath behind the King Edward Hall. The lights in West View had been upgraded in recent years and at the time, the Parish Council had agreed that the lanterns should be standard, not heritage. However as Parish Council had agreed to pay for the WSCC lights alongside the Common to be heritage style, it was **AGREED** to budget to upgrade the lights in West View and the footpath behind the King Edward Hall to heritage style for conformity. A quotation obtained approximately a year previously had given a cost of £1,135 for a lantern and swan neck bracket.

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69. REQUEST FOR A BONFIRE BEACON ON LINDFIELD COMMON.

- 69.1 A quotation from a contractor, recommended by Burgess Hill Town Council, who had offered to cost the complete job was still awaited and a reminder has been sent. It was understood that a beacon installed by Haywards Heath Town Council in Victoria Park ten years previously had cost just under £1,300 for the basket and pole and the Town Council's grounds staff had installed it. The company that had made the brazier basket had this week quoted £680 for a basket one metre in diameter at the top. A quotation had also been requested from a company in Nottingham who manufactured braziers complete with poles.

An email had been sent to Chris Coppens and David Harper at MSDC seeking views and their advice on the various permissions that may be required.

70. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS.

- 70.1 The lights were being installed that week. The contractors had replaced all the spark lights free of charge following discussion in September with the previous Project Manager about a number of concerns which had arisen when the lights had been removed for tree pollarding. It was noted that the replacement bulbs being used for the festoons were different from the existing ones in that they had coloured globes instead of being clear with the coloured light coming from the LEDs. This had been taken up with the Project Manager; however it was unlikely there was a choice.

71. CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL NIGHT.

- 71.1 **NOTED:** arrangements were nearing completion – the Road Closure Order had been granted, advance warning signs had been put up, stall bookings were coming in and Wilbar Associates were dealing with the road closure on the night. The Chairman asked Members to assist in the afternoon and evening: as relief /back-up for Wilbar personnel if needed; overseeing the setting up of stalls, managing parking and litter picking at the end. A room at the United Reformed Church was being reserved for the Parish Council to use as a base.

72. DROPPED KERBS.

- 72.1 The Chairman re-iterated the request made at the last meeting for members to check possible locations for dropped kerbs and take photographs, before presenting the proposals to WSCC.

73. DOG BIN COLLECTIONS: EXPANSION OF SERVICE.

- 73.1 Further to Minute 48 of the E&A Committee meeting held on 01.10.15, it was **AGREED** to respond to MSDC with the following suggestions:
- A new dog waste bin between Lewes Road and the Common playground to replace one that had been removed a few years previously
 - A larger bin at the entrance to the Eastern Road Nature Reserve – this was a well-used area for dog walkers, including professional dog-walkers with several dogs at once.
 - A new bin near Pelham House – to address a dog mess problem in front of the Pond. There was no suitable place on that side of the road to put a bin, but it was considered that outside Pelham House would be more visible than the existing bins on the Common for people walking down the High Street. It was suggested that a letter should be sent to the adjacent householders as a courtesy.
 - Consistent and professional signs or none at all. Currently there was a cheap paper sign on a litter bin on the Common directing people to use the dog bins instead of litter bins for dog waste.
 - Increased frequency of emptying throughout.

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74. ALLOTMENTS.

74.1 Councillors Blunden and Allen, having declared personal interests in this item (Minute 60.1) remained present.

74.2 Request for a hose pipe. This matter had been raised at the E&A Committee meeting on 30 July 2015 and the suggestion had not been supported. A report had been received on 26 October from Mary Allen, a member of the Allotments Working Group, in which she had requested reconsideration of this matter and presented a case for a hose pipe to be provided by the Parish Council for use by allotment holders, having received a number of requests from plot holders for replacement of the hose on the central water tank.

Members reconsidered the case presented in the report for a like-for-like replacement of the previous hose:

As set out in the report: "...

- A replacement hosepipe is being requested i.e. it is replacing a previous hosepipe
- The suggestion [*in the minutes of the meeting on 30 July*] that allotment holders bring their own hosepipes to the allotment would generally mean a journey by car to transport a hosepipe (not all allotment holders have cars or would choose to drive to the allotments – parking can be difficult)
- The allotments at the top (west side) of the site are uphill and I [*Mrs Allen*] have paced some distances to allotments from the central water tank and the further allotments are 60/100 of my paces. Quite a challenge when carrying water cans, particularly as over half the tenants in this top area are female
- I personally have not been aware of water being wasted
- When the original hosepipe was in place at the central water tank I [*Mrs Allen*] was not aware of any damage to other allotments by careless use. If damage is deemed to be a concern there would be no difference between an allotment hosepipe being used or an allotment holder's own hosepipe!..."

Mrs. Allen had set out data in the report from local rainfall statistics provided by the Met Office (centred on Wakehurst Place: the nearest weather station to Lindfield), which showed that the first two months of 2015 had been significantly drier than the first two months of 2014. March, April and May 2015 had also been very dry. Mrs. Allen had stated that most allotment holders used water wisely, but there were times when watering was necessary – particularly in spring when sowing seeds of getting plants established and Spring 2015 had been one of those times.

During discussion the following points were made:

- The original hosepipe had been a total of 30 metres in length, which had been difficult to manage, did not fit on the drum and frequently became kinked.
- To reach the furthest plots the hosepipe would need to be 70m in length which would be yet more unmanageable to re-wind.
- The hosepipe would need to be guided round corners to avoid it being dragged across other plots. Posts at the corners of plots to assist with this could present a further risk to the public.
- Previously some plot holders whose plots could not be reached with the 30m hose had brought their own hose and kept it on their plot.
- Plot holders could perhaps share their own hosepipe.
- Concern about damage to other plots would apply whether the hosepipe was owned by the Council or individual plot holders,
- A 70m hosepipe would need a wheeled cart to transport it around the site.
- A good quality 70m length of hosepipe would cost in the order of £100. Cheaper hosepipe was available, but would not last and would become kinked in use.
- In response to a question from a Member, the Chairman suggested holding a meeting of plot holders and put it to them that if they wanted a second tap that they form a work party to dig a trench for a new pipe. However a second tap was likely to have the effect of reducing the water pressure.

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Having considered the matter, it was **PROPOSED** by Councillor Henton, **SECONDED** by Councillor Hodgson and **AGREED** not to support the request for a hosepipe, leaving the arrangements as they currently were. *Councillor Allen abstained from voting on this matter.*

- 74.3 Maintenance of sheds. It was **NOTED** that one of the sheds appeared to be letting in water. It was **AGREED** that this needed urgent attention and the Clerk was authorised to arrange for this to be dealt with as soon as possible. It was also **AGREED** to arrange for the remaining sheds to be treated with wood preservative and the roofs to be checked and repaired as necessary. This would be built into the budget for 2016/17.

75. WINTER MANAGEMENT PLAN.

- 75.1 Snow plough service and training for volunteers. It was **NOTED** that the snow plough had been serviced and training for volunteers had yet to be arranged.

- 75.2 Volunteers for snow clearing. It was suggested that a request for volunteers could be published in the local column in the Mid Sussex Times as well as in Lindfield Life magazine.

76. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE'S BUDGET 2016/17.

- 76.1 A spreadsheet and a paper giving details of each budget item had been circulated. Members discussed the budget proposals under each of the separate headings and it was **AGREED** to recommend to the Finance and General Purposes Committee that the E&A Committee budget for 2016/17 should be as follows:

		£	Comments
1a	Street lighting – energy/maintenance costs	4,300.00	£550 increase - contingency for faults
1b	Street lighting – Upgrading street lights	7,000.00	Allowance for changing lanterns in West View to heritage style
1c	Christmas Lights	6,000.00	New contract 2015 (approx. £4,700 pa) Allowance for servicing of Pond lights
2	Maintenance / gardening (including Spring Clean). NEW 2016/17 addition of extra maintenance work to be carried out by Haywards Heath Town Council	7,500.00	Increase to cover new arrangements being made with Haywards Heath Town Council for maintenance work such as cleaning bus shelters, bins, pond posts and repainting seats etc.
3	Allotments	3,000.00	Increase to cover tree inspection due and subsequent work, plus maintenance of sheds
4	Christmas Festival Night	1,000.00	No increase proposed
5	Village Archives	300.00	No increase proposed
6	Mobile Civic Amenity Freighter	2,000.00	No increase proposed
7	Denmans Lane toilets – running costs	12,500.00	Small increase – service area repainting
8	Replacement of litter bins	0.00	Ongoing project – unspent balance to be retained as a reserve
9	Digital Mapping	250.00	No increase proposed
10	Joint project with MSDC/WSCC – post and rail fencing – Pond and Common	2,000.00	For planned maintenance to be agreed with WSCC and MSDC.
11	Grass cutting (High Street	2,000.00	Decreased by £600 – not expected to cost more than £2,000
12	Emergency equipment	750.00	Small budget for unforeseen items - no increase proposed
13	Joint project with WSCC: dropped kerbs	0.00	Outstanding project – unspent balance to be retained as a reserve
14	Joint project with MSDC - Upgrading of Hickmans Lane playground	0.00	Outstanding project with MSDC
NEW 2016/17	Extra bollards in High Street, north of the crossing from the Co-op	3,000.00	
	TOTAL	51,600.00	decrease of £23,800

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Reserves. The reserves would be reviewed after the year end accounts had been compiled. However for the purpose of calculations for funding the budget it was anticipated that the total amount held in reserves under E&A Committee headings would be in the order of £43,000 (a reduction of £27,250).

77. RISK MANAGEMENT.

77.1 There was nothing to report under this item.

78. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

78.1 No other items of business were raised.

The meeting concluded at 9.15 p.m.