

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE** held on **THURSDAY 7 AUGUST 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
Mrs. J. Chatfield
Mr. S. Henton
Mr. S. Hodgson
Mr. R. Pickett (Vice Chairman)
Mr. R. Plass
Mrs. V. Upton

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin

Not present: Councillor Mrs. M. Hersey

384. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

384.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mrs. M. Hersey and the reasons were accepted.

385. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

385.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members in respect of any items on the Agenda.

386. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

386.1 There were no members of the public present.

387. MINUTES OF THE MEETING THE ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 JUNE 2014.

387.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 5 June 2014. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

388. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

388.1 The Chairman referred to a letter received from a resident regarding litter control. Members had all seen this letter and were not in support of his suggestions.

389. ACTION LIST.

389.1 Allotments mower (Minute 373.2). The purchase of a new mower, as agreed at the meeting on 5 June 2014, had not been necessary as it had been possible to repair the old one.

390. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE BUDGET.

390.1 Budget Progress 2014/15 - payments made. **NOTED:** the budget progress to 30 June 2014, at which date £9,810 had been spent from the £70,000 budget.

390.2 Budget Progress 2014/15 - review of variances. **NOTED:** according to the new Financial Regulations the RFO was expected to provide receipts and payments statements at least quarterly, which compared the actual expenditure with the budget with explanations of material variances (15% of the budget). The RFO had therefore circulated a statement with figures and comments relating to the budget progress up to 30 June 2014. Members noted and discussed the following headings as recommended by the RFO:

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- Gardening (in year budget). This budget had originally been set up to pay the incidental expenses of volunteer gardeners who had tended flower tubs and the beds in the Tollgate car park. MSDC were now taking the planted areas in the Tollgate car park into their landscape contract. The grass cutting in this car park would continue to be arranged by the Parish Council from the maintenance budget. Extra crocus bulb planting was also to come from this heading. It was **AGREED** that this heading could be removed in the budget spreadsheet for 2015/16 and any such expenses could be covered under the maintenance heading.
- Tree Pollarding. This would be discussed at Agenda item 16.
- Post and rail fencing (Pond and Common) (in-year budget). This was for ongoing maintenance of the post and rail fencing and would be discussed with MSDC at the next liaison meeting.
- Upgrade of Hickmans Lane Playground (in-year budget). This would be discussed further with MSDC at the next liaison meeting.
- Posts around MSDC open spaces (designated reserve). This was to deter unauthorised access to the Common. It was noted that white painted oak posts would cost in the order of £10,000 and softwood would be between £7,150 and £7,720 but would probably only last about half as long (10 – 12 years). It was **AGREED** that the better quality posts should be used.
- Dropped kerbs (in-year budget and designated reserve). This fund was being built up to enable several dropped kerbs to be done at the same time (Dukes Road, Sunte Avenue, West View/Lewes Road).

391. CURRENT MAINTENANCE.

- 391.1 High Street Grass Verges – extra crocus bulbs. Members considered a scored list prepared by the Chairman in February 2014, further to a survey of crocus coverage of the verges in the High Street. It was **AGREED** to arrange for Haywards Heath grounds-staff to plant new bulbs in all areas with a score of 6 out of 10, or less, to be funded from the gardening budget: verges from the Kitchen People to the Manor House inclusive, the Well House to Barnlands, 113 to Seckhams, 94 to 72 and the Toll House to the United Reformed Church.
- 391.3 Railing at the corner of Hickmans Lane and High Street. It was **NOTED** that the order had been placed for the Blacksmith to repair and the railing. He had been advised to discuss this with a Highways Officer in terms of public safety during the absence of the railing.

392. WEST SUSSEX PFI STREET LIGHTS UPGRADE

- 392.1 The proposal agreed at the last meeting had been sent to Kevin Moss (WSCC) Simon Bushell of SSEC for costing. On receiving Mr. Bushell's response, which did not yet include costings, the Clerk had referred a few discrepancies back to him. Mr. Bushell had also been asked to clarify the cost of possible options for Finches Gardens so that the Freeholders' Association could be informed.

The Chairman suggested that the Parish Council should press hard for sockets for the Christmas lights to be installed on the High Street columns, which would simplify the Christmas Lights installation considerably. He also suggested involving County Councillor Christine Field in this.

393. PAVING AT CORNER OF HIGH STREET AND LEWES ROAD

- 393.1 Councillor Pickett reported that he had exchanged text messages with Mr. Read from Edburton who had promised the quotation by the end of the following week. It appeared that Edburton were not quoting for work they could not fit into their full schedule. It was **AGREED** that if this was not received by the promised date that the original plan for 3 extra bollards and repair of the paving should be pursued with WSCC.

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394. WINTER MAINTENANCE PLAN.

394.1 Salt bins and hippo bags audit. This audit had been requested by WSCC. An inspection had taken place and the form completed and returned to Helen Card. It was **NOTED** that the salt in 14 of the 32 bins was in very poor condition, some unusable (one waterlogged, the others caked). The salt in 7 bins was considered to be acceptable, with lumps able to be broken up with a hand trowel. The salt in just 8 bins was free-flowing, in the condition in which it was delivered. Inspection of three bins was outstanding due to difficulties with access.

The salt in 5 of the 6 hippo bags in Hickmans Lane car park had appeared to be acceptable with hard caking on the surface of the sixth. However it had proved difficult to access all of the bags as they were stacked two deep. The salt had leached out and killed some of the grass in the grass-crete hard surface of the car park. The tarpaulin was missing but the pallet base was strong.

5 bags stored on the Common seemed to be acceptable and 3 were poor. The tarpaulin was not covering the bags. The pallet base was strong.

A small amount of rubbish had appeared in one or two unlocked bins and one of the bags in Hickmans Lane.

The condition of the bins was mainly good. All those over a year old needed cleaning. The locks were oiled during the inspection. The lid on the bin near the surgery was warped and had let in water. The hasp on the bin by the public WCs needed straightening. The strengthening bar on the bin by the barrier in Denmans Lane was out of place. The bin in Portsmouth Wood was old and faded and there was a crack in the lid. However the salt was in good condition and the bin was the property of the residents association. The bin in Portsmouth Wood Close was also old and faded, but still appeared to be fit for purpose.

It was suggested that the Parish Council had been pressured into accepting a bulk supply of salt which had created significant problems. However it was argued that without sufficient reserves of salt and mid season refilling by WSCC the Parish Council would not be able to meet its commitment in the Winter Maintenance Plan. Long term storage was still to be resolved and would be discussed further with WSCC and at the next meeting of the MSDC Emergency Planning Liaison Group. A hard standing on the Allotments was suggested, but this would have to be checked with the Planning Department and the risk of soil contamination assessed.

It was **AGREED** to purchase three replacement bins for the two in Denmans Lane and the one by the Surgery. The bins to be replaced could be used on the Allotments site for reserve supplies.

395. CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL NIGHT - 2 DECEMBER 2014

395.1 Stall Fees. It was **NOTED** that the stall fees had last been increased in 2011 and it was **AGREED** that they should not be increased this year (£7.50 for charities and £15 for commercial stalls)

395.2 Gas main replacement in Dukes Road and Brushes Lane. **NOTED:** Southern Gas Networks had submitted a notice to WSCC for the replacement of the gas main in Duke Road and Brushes Lane, which would require traffic control. As a result the resurfacing which should have taken place recently had been postponed. The period within which this work was to be done, included Christmas Festival Night which could be a problem as this was one of the two diversion routes. This had been pointed out to WSCC Officers and to Councillor Field. The Deputy Clerk would apply for the road closure for Christmas Festival Night earlier than usual to allow time for negotiation. Meanwhile plans would proceed unless it became clear that the event could not proceed.

395.3 Refurbishment of the snowman. Mr. Turner had completely refurbished and painted the snowman, for advertising Christmas Festival Night, and he had provided a report giving full details for future reference.

It was **AGREED** that a letter of thanks should be sent to Mr. Turner with an appropriate small gift as a token of appreciation (from the Chairman's Fund).

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396. LINDFIELD MAP PANELS.

- 396.1 The Planning Department at MSDC had confirmed that planning permission would be required for the two map panels under the Control of Advertising Regulations, although it had previously been understood from MSDC that this would not be required. It was **AGREED** that Goulds should be asked to help with the application as scale plans including elevations were to be included with the documentation.

397. LINDFIELD POND

- 397.1 Assistant Pond Warden. It was **NOTED** that Richard Mason had resigned from his position as Assistant Pond Warden but he had indicated that he was willing to serve the community in other ways. It was **AGREED** that a letter of appreciation should be sent to him for his efforts in this capacity. Brodie Branch, who lived by the Pond, had offered to take his place and had the support of Richard Powell. It was **AGREED** to support Mr. Branch's appointment as Assistant Pond Warden and that David Terry at MSDC should be informed.
- 397.2 Replacement of floating islands – update. Richard Powell, Pond Warden, was arranging to meet a representative of a local company from Ditchling shortly, to view the Pond and discuss possible ideas and costs for replacing the floating islands. It was understood that this company was on MSDC's list of approved contractors. The Chairman and any other Councillor had been invited to attend this meeting.
- 397.3 Update on the repair of the Pond valve. David Terry (MSDC) had reported earlier in the day that work should begin on rebuilding the damaged valve in Lindfield Pond. This would not be a like-for-like replacement: the contractors would be installing a sluice gate, which would be seated at a height that would not allow the pond to empty completely, and the housing would be rebuilt. A request from the contractors to lower the water level again had been refused and a coffer dam would be put in place to allow the work to be carried out.

398. MEMORIAL SEAT ON THE COMMON IN MEMORY OF BRIAN NEWCOMBE.

- 398.1 An emailed request had been received from an representative of the Lindfield Cricket Club explaining a plan to install a seat on the Common in memory of the late Brian Newcombe. His proposal was that the cost of the seat (estimated at £600) could be divided equally between the Cricket Club, the Lindfield Football Club and the King Edward Hall (with all of which Mr. Newcombe had been closely involved) and the Parish Council.

It was **AGREED** that Parish Council should make an equal contribution to the cost of the seat (estimate £150) to be taken from an appropriate E&A budget heading at the discretion of the RFO.

399. TREE POLLARDING - HIGH STREET LIME TREES

- 399.1 Next scheduled pollarding of High Street lime trees. **NOTED** that the next scheduled pollarding of the lime trees in the High Street was January 2015. Jonathan Ullmer (Routine Cyclic Maintenance Team Manager, Highways) at WSCC had been asked to leave pollarding until late January to allow for any delay in taking down the Christmas lights. It had also been drawn to his attention that there were lights wrapped round the trees and asked to inform the Clerk if this equipment had to be removed.
- 399.2 Parish Council's contribution towards pollarding. Jonathan Ullmer had confirmed that WSCC would not be requiring the Parish Council's contribution towards the fourth pollarding in a twelve year cycle in respect of the High Street and Compton Road trees after all, provided the Parish Council managed the epicormic growth.

There was £2,500 in the current year's budget and a further £5,000 in a designated reserve that would not now be called on. Members considered alternative uses for this money and it was **AGREED** to **RECOMMEND** for approval by Full Council the virement of the total of £7,500 from the in-year budget and designated reserve for tree pollarding to add to the joint project with MSDC for upgrading the Hickmans Lane playground with equipment to suit children of mixed ages. This would bring the amount

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available for this project to £12,500. The Clerk would inform the appropriate MSDC Officer who would research the possibilities. The availability of any Section 106 money would also be looked into.

400. RISK MANAGEMENT.

400.1 **NOTED:** the Risk Assessment for Christmas Festival Night would be reviewed by the Working Group at the meeting to be arranged in the near future.

401. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

401.1 Dukes Barn Court. Councillor Allen expressed concern regarding the demolition site: he reported that the lead had been removed from the roof of the building, which in his view left the tiles insecure and at risk of being blown off and harming passers-by. The Clerk agreed to report this to Mid Sussex District Council's Planning Enforcement Officer.

The meeting concluded at 9.00 p.m.