

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **ANNUAL MEETING OF LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY 15 MAY 2014** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden
Mr. M. Allen
Mr. M. Amor
Mrs. J. Chatfield
Mr. S. Henton
Mrs. M. Hersey
Mr. S. Hodgson
Mr. R. Pickett (from 7.40 p.m.)
Mr. R. Plass
Mrs. V. Upton

Not present: Councillors Mr. A. Gomme and Mr. C. Snowling

Also present: 3 members of the public

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)
Mrs. S. Kolien (RFO)

Councillor Blunden opened the meeting, welcomed those present and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

381. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

381.1 Councillor Blunden called for nominations for the office of Chairman of Council. Councillor Blunden was **NOMINATED** by Councillor Upton and **SECONDED** by Councillor Plass. There being no further nominations, Councillor William Blunden was duly **ELECTED** as Chairman of Lindfield Parish Council for the Council year 2014/15.

382. DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF CHAIRMAN

382.1 Councillor Blunden read aloud and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chairman of Lindfield Parish Council, including an undertaking to observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council, and then took the chair for the meeting.

383. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN.

383.1 The Chairman called for nominations for the office of Vice Chairman of Council. Councillor Upton was **NOMINATED** by Councillor Blunden and **SECONDED** by Councillor Hersey. There were no further nominations and Councillor Valerie Upton was therefore duly **ELECTED** as Vice Chairman of Lindfield Parish Council for the Council year 2014/15.

384. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

384.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gomme and Snowling and the reasons were accepted. Councillor Field had also sent her apologies.

385. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

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

385.2 Members were reminded that they should check their register of interests forms regularly and update them as necessary.

386. MINUTES AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 13 MARCH 2014.

386.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held on 13 March 2014. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes and Confidential Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

387. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES.

387.1 **RESOLVED:** that the four standing and statutory committees should continue: Environment and Amenities Committee, Finance and General Purposes Committee, Planning and Traffic Committee, and Complaints Committee.

387.2 **RESOLVED:** to approve the Terms of Reference of the four Committees with no changes.

387.3 **RESOLVED:** that the membership of the Committees should be as follows:

- **Environment and Amenities Committee:**
Councillors Allen, Blunden, Chatfield, Henton, Hersey, Hodgson, Pickett, Plass and Upton
- **Finance and General Purposes Committee:**
Councillors Allen, Amor, Blunden, Henton, Pickett, Plass and Upton.
- **Planning and Traffic Committee:**
Councillors Amor, Blunden, Chatfield, Gomme, Hersey, Hodgson, Snowling and Upton.
It was **AGREED** to confirm the request from Councillor Plass to stand down from this Committee to which he had been appointed for the duration of Councillor Hodgson's absence.
- **Complaints Committee:**
Councillors Allen, Blunden, Snowling and Upton.

388. ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.

388.1 **NOTED:** the new Model Financial Regulations had been published and were more detailed than the current version. Draft Standing Orders and Financial Regulations documents were being prepared for consideration by the Finance and General Purposes Committee at the meeting on 17 July and for presentation to Full Council for approval on 11 September.

389. REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES.

389.1 **RESOLVED** that the following representatives be appointed to outside bodies:

- Two representatives to the Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils/Sussex Association of Local Councils. **Councillors Blunden and Gomme**
- One representative to liaise with the Police - Police Neighbourhood Panel. **Councillor Allen**
- One representative to the Scrase Valley LNR Steering Committee. **Councillor Amor**
- One representative to the Mid-Sussex Older People's Council. **Councillor Upton**
- One representative to the River Ouse Stakeholders Group. **Councillor Plass**
- Four representatives on the Lindfield Neighbourhood Plan Joint Working Party. **Councillors Gomme, Blunden, Hodgson and Plass**
- Lindfield Enterprise Park Shareholders. **The Clerk and the RFO**
- Gatwick Aripport Town and Parish Liaison Group. **Councillor Hersey**
- Lindfield Primary School Traffic Group. **Councillor Blunden**

Councillor Allen, who was also a governor of Lindfield Primary School, asked for it to be recorded in the Minutes that he was disappointed not to be a member of this group. The Chairman stated he had been invited to join the

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Lindfield Primary School Traffic Group as Chairman of Council and that it was not in the gift of the Parish Council to appoint further members.

- Wates Development Local Liaison Group. **Councillor Blunden (& Hersey and Snowling**

389.2 Arrangements for reports by representatives on outside bodies. Representatives would report to Council or the relevant committee as and when appropriate.

390. ARRANGEMENTS FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF INVENTORY OF LAND AND ASSETS INCLUDING BUILDINGS AND OFFICE EQUIPMENT.

390.1 The Asset Register was available at the Parish Office for inspection by Members and a summary was included in the Annual Accounts papers. It was **AGREED** that an annual review should be added to the tasks of those Councillors from the F&GP Committee who carried out periodic financial control inspections and that this should be done prior to, and reported at, the Annual Meeting of Council.

391. REVIEW AND CONFIRMATION OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR INSURANCE COVER IN RESPECT OF ALL INSURED RISKS.

391.1 **NOTED** that a full review of the insurance cover had taken place and a revised insurance policy had been approved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 6 March 2014 and noted by Full Council on 13 March 2014.

392. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S AND/OR EMPLOYEES' MEMBERSHIP OF OTHER BODIES AND TO CONSIDER THE PAYMENT OF ANY SUBSCRIPTIONS FALLING TO BE PAID ANNUALLY

392.1 **RESOLVED** that the following annual subscriptions to the following organisations be confirmed for 2014/15:

- Surrey and Sussex ALC Ltd (formerly SALC) includes subscription to National Association of Local Councils. Annual Subscription - £1,559.43 plus VAT (April 2014).
- Association of Small Historic Towns and Villages. Annual membership - £35.00 (May 2014)
- Mid Sussex Association of Local Councils. Voluntary annual contribution - £10.00 (February 2014)
- Action in Rural Sussex (formerly Sussex Rural Community Council). Annual Membership - £50.00 (September 2013).
- Society of Local Council Clerks. (Clerks' membership). Annual membership - £184.00 (January 2014).
- The Open Spaces Society. Annual membership - £45.00 (August 2013)
- Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE). Annual membership - £36.00 (June 2014)
- West Sussex Archives Society Annual membership - £25.00 (January 2013)
- Local Council Advisory Service (LCAS). Annual subscription - £95.00 including VAT (May 2013)
- British Toilets Association. £50 plus VAT (August 2012)
- Ramblers' Association. Annual membership - £55.00 (February 2013)
- South East Employers. Annual membership - £194.25 plus VAT (April 2013).
- Information Commissioner's Office. Data Protection Registration – Annual Registration Fee £35 (Feb 2013)

393. REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE.

393.1 A revised draft had been circulated to Members. **RESOLVED:** that the Complaints Procedure be approved as drafted. Members expressed appreciation to the Deputy Clerk for the considerable amount of work he had done to produce this excellent draft.

394. ARRANGEMENTS TO ESTABLISH/REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING REQUESTS MADE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 AND DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998.

394.1 **AGREED:** that this be referred to the F&GP Committee.

395. ARRANGEMENTS TO ESTABLISH/REVIEW THE COUNCIL'S POLICY FOR DEALING WITH THE PRESS/MEDIA.

395.1 **AGREED:** that this be referred to the F&GP Committee.

396. ARRANGEMENTS FOR SETTING THE DATES, TIMES AND PLACE OF ORDINARY MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR AHEAD.

396.1 **RESOLVED:** that there should be no change to the frequency and times of meetings and that the Clerk should make the bookings at the King Edward Hall as soon as practicable.

397. TO CONSIDER ARRANGEMENTS NECESSARY TO REVIEW THE PAY AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE OF EXISTING MEMBERS OF STAFF

397.1 **RESOLVED** that this matter be delegated to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. It was **NOTED** that a related matter was to be raised under the staffing item during the confidential session at this meeting.

398. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

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

399. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

399.1 Civic Service The Chairman reported that the Civic Service had originally been planned for 21 September but at the request of the Church, this had now been changed to 28 September, 11.15 am at All Saints Church.

400. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE PANEL REPORT.

400.1 Councillor Allen reported that the Neighbourhood Police Panel had not met since the last Council meeting.

401. REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

401.1 A written report from Councillor Mrs. C. Field (WSCC) was read out by the Clerk:

“Local Issues

SE Water work

I am delighted that the traffic lights were finally removed on 9 May as scheduled and that the High Street has returned to normal.

The delay caused by the hand digging for this section has meant that the next section of work, on Park Lane, cannot be completed within the time granted for the road closure. This work will now be delayed and a new application made to WSCC for a road closure in Park Lane, probably in the autumn.

Gas Networks

You will have noticed that there are now 3 way traffic lights in College Lane, Ardingly, affecting the junction with Copyhold Lane. This is another long term project (circa 18 weeks), to install a new gas main. The contractors have been told that the lights must be removed for the period of the South of England Show. I know that this is not strictly in the Parish, but thought that you may receive comments.

Major planning applications and their impact on local life

I am in contact with, and supporting, a number of residents in the Portsmouth Lane/Brook Lane/Finches Park Road area about the impact of the proposed development off Birchen Lane. The queries cover ecological concerns (newts and dormice) and the potential for downstream flooding.

Wilderness/Dukes Lane trees

I am following up on a residents' enquiry about the verge area where several trees fell victim to the storms earlier this year. Initial indications are that there are no plans to remove the stumps since this is regarded as an informal 'scrub area' (not my words!) and pose no highway danger. One is sufficiently close to the neighbouring fence, that this would have also to be removed and replaced as part of the process. Helen Card is fully aware and it may be appropriate to have a conversation with her.”

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401.2 Councillor Mrs. M. Hersey (MSDC) reported as follows:

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council had taken place on 8 May. Membership of the Cabinet remained unchanged. Councillor Robert Salisbury was now the Chairman of Planning Committee B, previously chaired by Councillor Andrew McNaughton, who was now just Chairman of the District Wide Planning Committee.

Wivelsfield Neighbourhood Plan

The Lindfield Rural Parish Clerk had received a copy of the Wivelsfield draft Neighbourhood Plan in which it was proposed to put forward sites for new development adjacent to the border with Scaynes Hill.

401.3 Councillor Mr. C. Hersey (MSDC) added to the MSDC report on behalf of Councillors Snowling.

Budget

Reduction in funding was making it difficult to maintain frontline services while keeping the Council Tax down.

District Plan

The District Plan had been withdrawn and MSDC would be working on overcoming the issues regarding the Duty to Co-operate and endeavouring to agree on a set of criteria for taking the Plan forward.

Housing Supply Document

MSDC was updating the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and had written to Parish Councils asking for details of any potential sites not already in the existing Assessment document.

Gatwick Airport LT: Consultation on Runway Options

MSDC had drafted a response based on comments submitted by local councils following a very good meeting with representatives of town and parish councils and had circulated the response for general agreement as to its content.

402. ACTION LIST.

402.1 The Action List was **NOTED**.

403. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS.

403.1 There were no outstanding consultations.

404. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

404.1 Statements of Account/Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the periods 01.03.14 to 31.03 and the quarterly Receipts and Payments Summary. The April 2014 reports were not yet available. **NOTED:**

- From the overall budget of £242,025, £173,081 had been spent
- The F&GP Committee had spent £121,906 from its budget of £119,675
- From the Administration budget of £104,675, £110,422 had been spent
- The E&A Committee had spent £30,969 from the budget total of £64,150.
- The P&T Committee had spent £ 14,113 from the budget total of £20,200.
- From the reserves and outstanding projects of £166,689, £8,461 had been spent

404.2 List of cheques for approval. The list of cheques was tabled. **NOTED:** that expenditure during this period under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, totalled £969.90 and that the Petty Cash balance as at 15.05.14 was £162.28.

RESOLVED: to approve the list of cheques numbered 105387 - 105417- , totalling £31,070.54. The Chairman **SIGNED** the list of cheques which is appended to the signed copy of these Minutes as Appendix A.

404.3 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 6 March 2014. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 6 March 2014 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

405. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

Councillor Blunden reported as follows:

- 405.1 Replacement of West Sussex County Council-owned street lights. A great deal of work had been done on surveying the existing street lights to inform discussions with WSCC Officers and SSE Contracting, particularly about the areas with heritage style lighting equipment. Members who had assisted with this research were thanked. A report from the Working Group would be considered at the next meeting of the E&A Committee.
- 405.2 Christmas lights. The contractors had accepted the complaint regarding the installation of the lights in November 2013 and would be replacing the affected garlands.
- 405.3 Damage to the allotment shed. The cheque from the insurance company for the replacement shed had been received that day.
- 405.4 Paving at the Post Office corner. The Committee had noted the estimated costs from WSCC and it had been agreed that Councillor Pickett should make enquiries about suitable contractors who could be asked to advise on different solutions with approximate costs.
- 405.5 Minutes of the meetings of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 2 February and 3 April 2014. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 2 February and 3 April 2014 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

406. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

In Councillor Gomme's absence, Councillor Mrs. M. Hersey, Vice Chairman of the P&T Committee, reported as follows:

- 406.1 Fullingmill Farm. The application for earth works had been granted by MSDC on 14 April, subject to a number of conditions, some of which addressed the road and traffic concerns expressed by the Parish Council. The MSDC Planning Committee had added further conditions to control the close down of the works and the number of lorry movements per day.
- 406.2 Proposed development on land north of Birchen Lane. The P&T Committee had previously deferred consideration of this application pending further information on certain environmental issues. This had been duly considered at the meeting on 29 April, which a large number of residents had attended. The Parish Council had received in the order of 70 objections from residents. The Committee had resolved to object strongly to this application on a number of planning grounds.
- 406.3 Footpath creation order – Brushes Lane to the corner of the Wilderness Field. The Committee had not raised any objections to this order; subject to re-assurances, duly received from WSCC regarding the character and make-up of the footpath, this had been welcomed by members.
- 406.4 Proposed development on land at Penland Farm. MSDC had refused this application, to which the Parish Council had objected, and Councillor Mrs. Hersey had supported these objections at the MSDC Planning Committee.
- 406.5 Gatwick Airport Liaison Group. The P&T Committee had fed back to the Liaison Group its comments in respect of the proposal for a second runway at Gatwick Airport.
- 406.6 Developments at Buxshalls A new planning application had been submitted, with the previously refused application being simultaneously appealed. The P&T Committee had reiterated its previous comments about traffic management and road use relating to the consequential effects around Lindfield.
406. Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 18 March and 7 April. **NOTED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 29 April would be presented to the next Council meeting. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 18 March and 7 April 2014 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

407. REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

407.1 The Internal Auditor had carried out his second and final inspection for the 2013/14 Financial Year on 12 May and signed the Internal Auditors' sheet of the Annual Return. A copy of his report had been circulated in which he had noted that the Financial Regulations and Standing Orders were in the process of being reviewed and to be agreed in Council shortly. He had also pointed out that the Councillors designated to carry out periodic checks on the bank reconciliations should sign the related paperwork. This was **NOTED** and would be implemented in future.

408. YEAR END ACCOUNTS FOR 2013/14.

408.1 Members had received a copy of the Accounts and Annual Return to be agreed and signed at this meeting.

NOTED:

- The Receipts and Payments account showed receipts of £184,168.91 and payments of £192,201.53
- The closing balance, as at 31 March 2014 was £162,711.77 which included petty cash in hand of £122.65.
- The accounts had been inspected by the Internal Auditor on 12 May and he had confirmed that he was satisfied that they were correct.

No queries were raised by Members on the Accounts.

RESOLVED to **APPROVE** the Accounts for 2013/14. **RESOLVED** that the Supporting Notes for the Statement of Accounts and the Balance Sheet should be **SIGNED** by the Chairman of Council and the Responsible Financial Officer.

409. ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2014

409.1 Section 1 - The statement of accounts.

RESOLVED to **APPROVE** the Statements of Accounts for 2013/14 and **AGREED** that Section 1 of the Annual Return should therefore be **SIGNED** by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chairman of Council.

409.2 Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement

NOTED: Members were required to acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring that there was a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. Members therefore considered their responses to each of the statements listed at Section 2 (Annual Governance Statement), as read aloud in turn by the Chairman, and confirmed the statements to the best of their knowledge and belief.

RESOLVED: to enter YES to each of Statements 1-8 and N/A to Statement 9 (which related to trust funds).

RESOLVED: that Section 2 (Annual Governance Statement), duly completed as stated, should be **SIGNED** by the Chairman of Council and the Clerk.

409.3 Section 3 – External auditor's certificate and opinion. **NOTED** that the External Auditor's Certificate and Opinion would be completed in due course by the External Auditor (Littlejohn LLP)

409.4 Section 4 – Annual internal audit report. **NOTED:** that the Annual Internal Audit Report had been completed and signed by the Internal Auditor, together with a copy of his written report, following his examination of the Accounts on 12 May. It was not anticipated that the comments he had made would raise any concerns with the External Auditor.

409.5 The Annual Return, duly signed, would be sent to the External Auditors by the due date.

409.6 Members expressed appreciation to the RFO for amount of work she had done in preparing the paperwork required to show that the Accounts were in order.

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410. PROPERTY AT 6 DENMANS LANE.

410.1 **NOTED** that an offer for the freehold of 6 Denmans Lane had been accepted and the Clerk had instructed the Council's solicitors accordingly. Further discussion on this item was deferred to the confidential session.

411. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

411.1 In the absence of Councillor Gomme, the Chairman reported that the Steering Group had met in public on 8 May 2014. Good progress had been made in producing a draft Neighbourhood Plan document, amended after consideration of the comments received on the pre-submission draft. Before formal submission to MSDC, the updated draft was to be sent for informal scrutiny to Claire Tester at MSDC and an independent examiner, in an advisory capacity.

In response to a question from a Member, it was **NOTED** that the working draft of the Plan was not being published on the website but it could be made available to Members of the Council on request.

412. PARISH MEETING HELD ON 10 APRIL 2014.

412.1 It was **NOTED** that twelve people had attended the Parish Meeting on 19 April, including nine Parish, District and County Councillors. Two matters had been raised during the general session:

412.2 Dog fouling which was increasing. Councillor Lea had agreed to look into the provision of extra dog waste bins with MSDC. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk should follow this up with Councillor Lea.

412.3 Denmans Lane. Councillor Field (WSCC) had received three requests for Denmans Lane to be re-opened to through traffic, which may have been prompted by the temporary road closure at the north end of the High Street. She had made enquiries about the cost to do this, which would be a six figure sum because the road was not wide enough to meet current standards and it was likely that some garden land would have to be compulsorily purchased to enable a footway to be constructed. A scheme of this magnitude would therefore need significant support from the community and the Parish Council. Among the people present at the Parish Meeting there had been no support at this time.

413. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

413.1 No other items of business were raised.

The public part of the meeting concluded at 8.25 p.m.

414. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS.

414.1 It was **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and **AGREED** in accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 Section 1(2) and the Parish Council's Standing Order 1 (c) that in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was desirable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded.

415. STAFFING MATTERS.

415.1 Members considered a briefing note relating to a staffing matter and its recommendation was **AGREED**.

416. PROPERTY AT 6 DENMANS LANE.

416.1 Under this item Members **NOTED** and **CONFIRMED** the details relating to the sale of 6 Denmans Lane, which had been deferred from Minute 410.1 because of their confidential nature.

The meeting concluded at 8.30 p.m.