

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY 10 MARCH 2016** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)
Mr. M. Allen
Mrs. J. Durrant
Mr. A. Gomme
Mr. S. Henton
Mr. S. Hodgson
Mr. R. Pickett
Mr. S. Shortland
Mr. C. Snowling

Also present: Councillor Mrs. C. Field (WSCC)
5 members of the public

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)

Not present: Councillors Mrs. M. Hersey, Mr. R. Plass and Mrs. V. Upton

The Chairman welcomed all those present and announced the emergency procedures for the King Edward Hall. For the benefit of members of the public attending for the item regarding the Sussex Bus service, it was **AGREED** to bring that item forward, to be taken after item 5 (Chairman's Announcements).

121. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

121.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hersey, Plass and Upton and the reasons were accepted.

122. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

122.1 Councillor Allen declared a personal interest in item 10 iv (Allotments) as his wife was a plot holder. Councillor Blunden also declared a personal interest in item 10 iv as he was a plot holder.

123. MINUTES AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14 JANUARY 2016 AND THE EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL MEETINGS HELD ON 12 JANUARY AND 4 FEBRUARY 2016.

123.1 Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Council meeting held on 14 January 2016. The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Council meeting held on 14 January 2016. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes and Confidential Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

123.2 Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 12 January 2016. The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 12 January 2016. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes and Confidential Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

123.3 Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 4 February 2016. The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Council held on 4 February 2016. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes and Confidential Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

124. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

124.1 Neighbourhood Plan. Mr. N. Kerslake commented on the Neighbourhood Plan which was due to be "made" by MSDC on 24 March. In his view the plan was weak as it did not address issues of housing need and

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affordable housing and it was open to legal challenge because MSDC's post-examination amendments to the Plan had not been in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations regarding the built area boundary..

124.2 Lindfield Common. Mr. N. Kerslake could not understand why the Council had considered the proposal to erect a beacon on the Common, as it would be a highly visible permanent feature. He spoke against the pathway to Lindfield Primary Academy which would cut across part of the Common, contrary to the Scheme of Management under Act of Parliament, as the Common was for 'users' of the Common. A footpath for access to the school would set a precedent for other paths.

124.3 Sussex Bus - 30 service. Mrs. A Shergold spoke on behalf of residents from the Backwoods Lane and Appledore Gardens area which would no longer be served by the new bus service 29 which was to replace the 30 from 4 April. The bus company had justified the change on the basis of low usage; however the bus was used by a number of elderly and disabled people in this area who would suffer as a result of the withdrawal of the bus from this route. The bus company received a refund for the journeys made using bus passes. Mrs. Shergold had been in contact with The Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Soames MP and County Councillor Mrs. Christine Field to express her concerns.

Mr. G. Wood stated that the bus was a life-line for himself and other less able people. He had spoken with the Manager of Sussex Bus who had confirmed that there were insufficient passengers to make a profit and the service via Appledore Gardens could no longer be run. Mr. Wood was sure that change would not increase the number of passengers from West Common but it would disadvantage people who currently caught the bus on the Appledore Gardens route. Mr. Wood hoped that the Parish Council would agree to make representations to Sussex Bus.

125. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

125.1 On behalf of the Council the Chairman wished Councillor Upton a speedy recovery.

126. SUSSEX BUS: CHANGES TO THE LINDFIELD BUS SERVICE (30).

126.1 The Sussex Bus service 30 was to be replaced by the 29 with an altered route omitting Appledore Gardens and going to the Princess Royal Hospital on two early morning journeys only, necessitating a change of bus at other times. It was noted that the Appledore Gardens route had been appreciated by residents in that area and that this Council together with County Councillor Mrs. Field had been instrumental in having double yellow lines put in Backwoods Lane to make the passage easier for the bus. Members recognised that the bus service was a life-line, supporting people with no transport of their own to be independent.

Councillor Field stated that she shared the concerns and offered to facilitate a joint letter to be co-signed by the Rt. Hon. Sir Nicholas Soames, herself and the Parish Council, to put the concerns on record, although there was nothing any of these parties could do directly. It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council should accept the suggestion to be a co-signatory to this letter. Councillor Durrant offered to approach Lindfield Life about a "use it or lose it" campaign encouraging people to make use of the bus service.

127. POLICE / NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE PANEL REPORT / INFORMATION FROM SERGEANT J COLLEN REGARDING THE LOCAL POLICING PROGRAMME.

127.1 Police Neighbourhood Panel. Councillors Allen and Hodgson confirmed that the Panel had not met since the last Council meeting and there was nothing further to note.

127.2 Local Policing Programme. An email from Sergeant J Collen was **NOTED**, in which he had explained that changes were being made to the way in which Neighbourhood Policing Services were to be delivered in the future. Members were disappointed that PCSO Erica Baxter had been moved to East Grinstead. A note of appreciation had been sent to her on behalf of the Council. Sergeant Collen was holding a meeting to brief Councillors from all Towns and Parishes on Thursday 24 March at 7.30 at Haywards Heath Town Hall.

128. REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

128.1 There were no District Councillors present. Councillor Field (WSCC) reported as follows:

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- Budget matters. The WSCC budget setting had been very time consuming.
- Sussex Bus service 30. Cllr. Field had been in correspondence with Bluebird Community Transport, who would be willing to help, but they would have to make a charge.
- Police changes. Cllr. Field supported the comments made at item 127.2 and stated that she would be interested in receiving feedback from the meeting on 24 March. The PCSOs currently in post were assigned to Haywards Heath and villages on the far side of the town, so it would be hard to see how there could be coverage in Lindfield.
- Central Mid Sussex County Local Committee. The next meeting of the CLC was to take place on Tuesday 15 March at 7.30 p.m.

128.2 The Chairman thanked Councillor Field for her report and for the work she did on behalf of the Parish.

129. ACTION LIST.

129.1 **NOTED:** the actions arising from the last meeting had been completed.

130. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS.

130.1 The updated register of consultations received was **NOTED**. There was one consultation for consideration.

130.2 Taxi policy amendment: consultation by MSDC. The amendment was for a condition to be added to the policy regarding the introduction of an English Language Proficiency Test. It was **AGREED** to respond that the Parish Council welcomed the proposal for the introduction of an English Language Proficiency Test for all new drivers (at last).

131. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

Councillor Blunden reported further to the meetings held on 26 November 2015 and 4 February 2016.

131.1 Horse Gin maintenance. The report in the Minutes regarding the painting of the wooden structure by contractors working on the Red Lion was **NOTED:** the greyish coloured paint would be difficult to remove due to the deep cracks and crevices in the wood and the Committee had been minded to let it weather down.

Three quotations had now been received for the repairs to the horse gin roof. The Clerk and Chairman, in accordance with Financial Regulations had selected the lowest estimate.

131.2 Beacon on the Common (request from Lindfield Bonfire Society). **NOTED:** the E&A Committee had agreed not to proceed with installing a permanent beacon for the Queen's 90th birthday but may reconsider if a suitable site could be proposed that would not require Planning and Commons Act Permission.

131.3 Allotments: to note rent increase agreed for 2017/18. *Councillors Blunden and Allen declared personal interests in this item as recorded at Minute 122.1; they remained present.* **NOTED:** The E&A Committee had agreed to raise the allotment rents for 2017 / 18 by 20p to £3.50 per rod (an increase of approximately 6%). The Council was required to give allotment tenants a year's notice of rent increases and this notice would be included with the renewal documents for 2016 / 17 which were to go out shortly.

131.4 Report on meeting with MSDC officers on 24 February 2016 regarding works on the Common. The meeting had been called by David Harper and David Terry to discuss various projects on the Common. The Chairman and Clerk had been advised that work on the Common such as the maps, the beacon and possibly the school footpath would have to be treated in the same way as the public toilets in terms of the formal permissions that would have to be sought. They had suggested a combined application for planning permission and Commons Act consent. The E&A Committee had agreed not to proceed with the Beacon, but the maps would be considered further at the next E&A meeting.

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- 131.5 Minutes of the meetings of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 26 November 2015 and 4 February 2016. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 26 November 2015 and 4 February 2016 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

132. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE.

- 132.1 Councillor Gomme noted the incorrect date references printed on the Agenda and reported on matters dealt with at the meetings held on 26 January and 16 February 2016.

26 January 2016.

- DM/16/0023 - land opposite 1 Grahams Cottages, Spring Lane. The Committee had agreed to object to the proposal to convert a detached garage into a one bedroom dwelling. This application had recently been refused by MSDC.

16 February 2016

- DM/15/4457 – land to the south of Scamps Hill, Scaynes Hill Road. Revised plans had been considered and the Committee had repeated the previous objections, adding further objections to the amendment to increase the proposed school from ½ to single-form entry, in terms of the traffic that would be generated, about which a convincing case did not seem to have been made.

- DM/16/0119 – Chimney Corner, High Street. The revised application for an extension had been considered unneighbourly. Further revised plans had since been submitted, which had been considered at the meeting on 8 March and had still been found to be unneighbourly.

- DM/16/0192 – 30 Savill Road. The Committee had agreed to object to the proposed extensions to an already large house as being unneighbourly.

- DM/16/0282 – The Barn, Hickmans Lane. Although this house was not openly visible, it was nevertheless a Listed Building and the Committee had objected as the proposed changes were considered to be out of keeping and would not enhance the existing building.

- 132.3 Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 26 January and 16 February 2016. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 26 January and 16 February 2016 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

- 132.4 Traffic Study update Councillor Gomme reported that the traffic study was under way and traffic counts were currently being conducted.

- 132.5 Neighbourhood Plan update. Councillor Gomme had nothing further to report, pending the MSDC meeting to “make” the Neighbourhood Plan.

133. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

- 133.1 Councillor Henton noted the incorrect date of the March meeting as printed on the Agenda and reported on matters dealt with at the meetings held on 7 January and 3 March 2016. The Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March were not yet available.

- 133.2 Report on the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the Council’s Internal Audit and Internal Control Procedures. The Council was required to make a statement on the Governance Sheet of the Annual Return that “we maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption and reviewed its effectiveness”. The report submitted by Councillor Plass after carrying out the annual review was **NOTED**. His recommendations in the report relating to accounting and risk assessment procedures would be addressed in due course.

RESOLVED: to approve the report on the Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit and Internal Control Procedures for the financial year 2015/16.

- 133.3 Proposed public toilets on the Common: consultation arrangements. The notes of the meeting of the Working Group held on 3 February, which had been circulated to all Councillors had been considered by the F&GP

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Committee. Preparations for the public exhibitions were in progress: a scale model had been ordered and Councillor Plass had drafted "story boards".

The plans would be displayed at the Parish Meeting on 28 April, on dates still to be arranged at the King Edward Hall, and the Community Room at Lindfield Primary School in May and on Village Day subject a firm commitment from enough Council members to staff the stall. However, it was **NOTED** that several Councillors had other duties at Village Day

- 133.4 Premises Licence for local events: a letter from the Senior Licensing Officer at MSDC regarding licensing for local events and a verbal request from the Lindfield Arts Festival for the Parish Council to hold a premises licence for Lindfield High Street to cover the Arts Festival, Christmas Festival Night and two further events as a contingency

The Deputy Clerk had set out the issues and options in a paper which had been circulated with the Agenda and had previously been considered by the F&GP Committee on 3 March. F&GP had agreed to recommend to Council not to apply for a premises licence covering the Arts Festival because of the responsibility involved in holding a licence for an event run by another organisation which the Council would have no control over.

The Environment and Amenities Committee together with the Christmas Festival Night Working Group would be reviewing the arrangements for Christmas Festival Night. A premises licence would be required if the number attending over the whole evening was 500 or over and if alcohol was sold and / or there was regulated entertainment. The entertainment on Christmas Festival Night was understood to be exempt as it was incidental to the event. If the sale of alcohol was not permitted there would be no need to apply for a premises licence. The pubs and retail outlets would have to check that their own licence covered what they intended to do on the night.

RESOLVED: to confirm the recommendation of the Finance and General Purposes Committee not to proceed with a Premises Licence covering the Arts Festival and two unspecified events as a contingency and that the Environment and Amenities Committee should make appropriate arrangements for Christmas Festival Night.

- 133.5 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 7 January 2016.
RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 7 January 2016 be received and the recommendations confirmed.

- 133.6 Statements of Account/Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the periods 01.12.15 to 31.12.15 and 01.01.16 to 31.01.16. The financial reports for February were not yet available. **NOTED:** to 31 January:

- from the in-year budget of £203,620, the total of £147,238 had been spent
- from the F&GP budget of £128,020, £97,579 had been spent
- from the Administration Budget breakdown, from the total of £112,520, £88,161 had been spent
- from the E&A budget of £75,400, £49,658 had been spent
- nothing had been spent from the P&T budget of £200,
- from the outstanding projects and reserves £21,740 had been spent

- 133.7 List of cheques for approval. The list of cheques drawn since the meeting held on 14 January 2016 had been tabled. **NOTED:** that expenditure during this period under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 totalled £2,828.50 and that the Petty Cash balance at 10.03.16 was £231.90. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of cheques, numbers 105725 – 105762 inclusive, totalling £55,946.42 *The list of cheques is appended to the signed copy of these Minutes (Appendix A).*

134. **"ASK THE PARISH COUNCIL": SUGGESTION FROM THE EDITOR OF LINDFIELD LIFE FOR A REGULAR FEATURE IN THE MAGAZINE.**

- 134.1 The Editor of Lindfield Life magazine had made a suggestion which he thought would make the Parish Council more accessible and provide an opportunity to share knowledge. He would put questions (which may submitted by readers) to the Council and the answers would be published. Points made during discussion included:
- this would be an interesting feature but the answers would have to be well researched to be as accurate as possible which would take up staff time and possibly the time of officers of other authorities. T
 - it was not the function of Local Government to provide trivia for a magazine

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- it would need a panel of people to answer the questions, perhaps involving the Parish Council's Archivist
- the functions of the different tiers of local councils were not well understood by residents, so a lot of the questions were likely to be based on the work of the District and County Councils
- there was a kernel of a good idea and not all of the questions would have to be answered
- the issue for the Council was about better ways of communicating with the public and other means could be considered
- other ways of engaging with the public should be sought instead and it was suggested that Councillors Hodgson and Plass could be tasked with looking into this
- ways of seeking information from the Council already existed, including attendance at meetings and people were able to find out what they wanted to know
- the Council had a good relationship with Lindfield Life through publication of a quarterly newsletter and notices and short articles at other times.

It was **AGREED** not to proceed with the suggested regular feature in Lindfield Life, but to explore other possible routes for keeping the public informed. *Councillor Allen abstained.*

135. INVITATION TO TAKE OUT MEMBERSHIP OF THE GATWICK CONSERVATION CAMPAIGN (GCC) AND TO NOTE SSALC ADVICE ON SUBSCRIPTIONS TO PRESSURE GROUPS AND CAMPAIGNING ORGANISATIONS (EMAIL FROM GCC AND ADVICE FROM SSALC).

- 135.1 Members considered the invitation to take out membership of the GCC and the advice from SSALC that there was an issue with using the precept to pay subscriptions to pressure groups and campaigning organisations which could leave the Council open to a challenge of bias. It was **NOTED** that it was for individual members to decide whether to support the efforts of campaigning groups and that public money should not be used for such purposes.

It was **AGREED** that the Council as a body should not take out membership of the GCC.

136. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

- 136.1 No other items of business were raised.

The public part of the meeting concluded at 8.55 p.m.

137. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS]

- 137.1 As the following item related to staff matters, it was **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 Section 1 (2) and the Parish Council's Standing Order 3 (d) that, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted (staffing), it was desirable in the public interest that the public [and press] be excluded.

138. CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 MARCH 2016.

- 138.1 The Minutes were not yet available.

- 138.2 Local Government Pension Scheme: increased employer contributions further to auto-enrolment. A matter concerning membership of the Local Government Pension Scheme was **NOTED**.

The meeting ended at 9.00 p.m.