

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY 11 SEPTEMBER 2014** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

**Present:**

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

**Not present:** Councillors Mrs. J. Chatfield, Mr. R Plass, and Mr. A. Gomme

**Also present:** Councillor Mrs C. Field (WSCC)  
PCSO Erica Baxter

**In attendance:** Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)  
Mr. I. McLean (Deputy Clerk)

The Chairman welcomed those present and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall. He particularly welcomed the Parishes new Police Community Services Officer, Erica Baxter, and invited her to introduce herself to the Council. Erica duly introduced herself as the new PCSO for Lindfield and a number of other neighbouring Parishes. She is very attuned with rural issues, and wants to have a very visible presence in the area. She started Business Watch, and wants to extend this to industrial estate areas, e.g. Lindfield Enterprise Park. She highlighted her work and successes since starting as the PCSO, and would like engagement with the Parishes and the public to be very much a two way process. She would particularly be involved with the Neighbourhood Police Panel. Councillors commented that it was very good to have such an enthusiastic and high profile PCSO operating in the Parish, and looked forward to working with her on any policing issues in the future.

**439. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.**

439.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chatfield, Plass, and Gomme. The reasons for these apologies were accepted.

**440. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

440.1 Councillors Upton and Hersey declared a personal, non-pecuniary, interest in item 10(ii) on the Agenda (the All Saints Church Bells project), as both Councillors were members of the Church and were involved in the fund raising efforts.

**441. MINUTES AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 10 JULY 2014 AND THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 12 AUGUST 2014.**

441.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 July 2014, and the Minutes of the Extraordinary Council meeting held on 12 August 2014. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** both the Minutes and the Confidential Minutes of 10 July 2014, and the Extraordinary Minutes of 12 August 2014 as being a true record of those meetings.

**442. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.**

442.1 There were none, as no members of the public were present.

**443. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

- 443.1 The Chairman wished to put on record that at a recent family event, a number of people who were visiting Lindfield from afar, commented very positively on the image of the Village, and said that Lindfield presented itself as a very vibrant, thriving Parish in which to live and work.

**444. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE PANEL REPORT.**

- 444.1 Councillor Allen had circulated the minutes of the last Panel meeting, but stated that he had nothing to add to PCSO Erica Baxter's comprehensive report given at the start of the meeting.

**445. REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.**

Councillor Mrs C. Field (WSCC) reported as follows:

- 445.1 Dukes Road/Brushes Lane. Southern Gas Networks will begin work in mid-October to replace the gas main. This will not require a road closure and the work is scheduled to be finished by the end of the year. The parties have been asked to liaise with the Parish Council to ensure that there is no effect on the usual diversion for the Village Christmas Festival night on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. The re-surfacing has been entered into the Balfour Beatty schedule, and should happen in the spring of 2015, as soon as the weather allows.
- 445.2 Denmans Lane. Questions continue to be raised about re-opening the road to through traffic, in order to alleviate the increased pressure on Hickmans Lane. A discussion needs to be held with the Parish Council. It would need supporting through the County Local Committee, but there are doubts about its viability, and it would be a very expensive option. Councillor Allen asked Councillor Field to provide copies of all the correspondence she had received concerning the matter to the Clerk, and this was agreed.
- 445.3 Buxshalls Hill. An enquiry has been made as to the possibility of extending the 30 mph limit from the Village entrance on Town Hill up towards Stonecross. This is to alleviate safety issues with residents safely entering and exiting their properties, and also regarding pedestrians. This would need to be the subject of a Traffic Regulation Order, and the Parish Council is asked to consider whether it would support such a proposal when the list is reviewed in the New Year.
- 445.4 Residents Survey. WSCC has launched a 6 week survey (closes on 12<sup>th</sup> October) to gain residents' views about priorities for next year's budget and the level of Council tax. It is called – What matters to you? It can be accessed on the website, and hard copies are available at libraries, or on request. It is important that everyone can have their say, and responses from families and people in younger age groups are particularly encouraged. Councillor Allen asked how people would know about it, and Councillor Field outlined the publicity efforts being made (communications to Parish Councils and news features).
- 445.5 Operation Watershed. Grants are still available for schemes to alleviate local flooding. If the Parish Council is aware of any appropriate projects, it would be a shame to miss out on this funding.
- 445.6 Monitoring WSCC. WSCC has launched a web based tool to enable anyone to track its performance on services and financial targets. It is accessed at <http://performance.westsussex.gov.uk> and is well worth a look.

Councillor Mr C Snowling (MSDC) – nothing to report.

Councillor Mrs M Hersey (MSDC) – nothing to report.

**446. ACTION LIST.**

- 446.1 The Action List was **NOTED**. All matters are in hand.

**447. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS.**

- 447.1 Travellers Site Allocations document – consultation draft. Details of this consultation had been circulated to Members. It was noted that no sites are being proposed for this Parish, and that the two sites that are being put forward would be

the subject of more authoritative comment from those areas more directly affected. It was therefore **AGREED** not to send a response from the Parish Council at this stage.

#### 448. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

Councillor Henton reported as follows:

##### 448.1 Parish Offices-

- sale of 6 Denmans Lane.  
Completion of the sale of 6 Denmans Lane took place on 15 August and the sum of £84,170 (sale price less the estate agent's and solicitors' fees) is in the bank. F&GP will be looking into the best use for this money, with advice from the RFO about the limitations on the spending of capital income. Councillor Allen proposed a vote of thanks to the staff for successfully steering the sale through, and this was endorsed by the Council.
- vehicle impact damage to the entrance door of the Clock Tower House.  
The entrance door frame was hit by a manoeuvring lorry on the fourteenth of August causing some damage to the brick pillar and the door frame. There is no safety or security risk but the door frame is distorted and the door is quite difficult to open and close. Two quotations have been received for replacement of the door and frame as a unit and a claim form has been submitted to the Council's insurers along with photographs and the French lorry driver's insurance details. The Council has been advised to claim from its insurance and Zurich may pursue a recovery from the Motor insurance for the vehicle in question.., Zurich's approved contractors have undertaken a desk top validation and quoted a lower figure for a like-for-like replacement. This has been challenged as they did not inspect on-site and an appointment has been made for the following Tuesday. The two local firms who have quoted have been asked to make a small change to the door by adding a catch operated by a handle to keep the door closed when unlocked.  
Local Firm A – quoted £2,502.00 including VAT. Local Firm B - £3,442.00 including VAT. Zurich's Contractor (C) - £1,529.40

Unless Zurich's contractors amend their quotation, £1,529.40 is the limit of Zurich's liability, so it would seem prudent to use them. An additional charge is anticipated for the catch and handle. If their quotation is increased after the inspection visit, in line with the other quotations, it is suggested that quote A is used. The Council accordingly **AGREED** the course of action recommended above.

##### 448.2 Grants and Donations - All Saints Church Bells project.

At the Council meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July, it was agreed to refer this grant application back to F&GP with a view to considering a higher amount than the £200 agreed by F&GP at the meeting on 22 May. This will be on the agenda for the meeting of F&GP on 25 September. The remaining sum in the grants budget stands at £850 and other applications are anticipated before the end of March, so to approve a higher sum for the bells project it is likely that it will be necessary to vire from another budget heading. The new Financial Regulations should be in place after approval at this Council meeting and these require all virements to have the approval of Full Council. To avoid any further delay if F&GP does decide on a higher award at the next meeting, the Council is asked to give provisional authorisation for the virement of the appropriate amount from the Denmans Lane Sinking Fund, which stands at £4,600 and will no longer be needed following the sale of the old parish office. It must be stressed that the intention is only to facilitate a possible future decision of the F&GP Committee and is not to be taken as agreement to approve a higher grant.

Councillor Allen commented that the report should contain more figures, so as it could be more readily seen how much money was being considered. Councillor Blunden responded that a paper should be going to the next F&GP meeting, which would set all the figures out. This action was simply a contingency measure. Councillor Snowling said that he has a supporting paper from Councillor Allen, which he is working on.

The Council accordingly **AGREED** the provisional authorisation for virement of an appropriate sum from the Denmans Lane sinking fund, should it be required, pursuant to any decision which may be made at a subsequent Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting, to award a more substantial grant towards the All Saints Church Bells Project.

[Note: In accordance with their declarations of interest above, Councillors Upton and Hersey left the room for the duration of the discussion of this item.]

448.3 Matters raised at the SSALC Legal and Finance Day.

The RFO attended a SSALC training day in July and highlighted in a short report a number of matters that the Council needs to be aware of under the main headings of the Local Government Transparency Code, the Planning Code or Protocol, Governance and Accountability for Local Councils, and the Electoral Process. The Governance and Accountability Practitioners' Guide has been received and it is also available on the finance page of SSALC's website. The report of the RFO was **NOTED**, and the Council **AGREED** the recommendations set out in it. This document is on the record.

448.4 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 July 2014. **RESOLVED:** that, subject to correcting the mistake on page 3 (minute 387.2 reference 14.2 – the threshold should be £1,000 not £250), the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 17 July 2014 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

448.5 Statements of Account/Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the periods 01.05.14 to 31.05.14, 01.06.14 to 30.06.14 and 01.07.14 to 31.07.14. The August 2014 reports were not yet available. **NOTED:**

- From the overall budget of £263,220, £57,251 had been spent.
- The F&GP Committee had spent £45,668 from its budget of £123,020.
- From the Administration budget of £108,520, £41,995 had been spent (the error in the figure for the budget set out in the report was noted and corrected).
- The E&A Committee had spent £11,564 from the budget total of £70,000.
- The P&T Committee had spent £18 from the budget total of £40,200.
- There had been no expenditure to date from the reserves and outstanding projects of £224,982.

448.6 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 £983.38 and that the Petty Cash balance as at 11.09.14 was £107.33.

**RESOLVED:** to approve the list of cheques numbered 105446 - 105468, totalling £12,861.27. The Chairman **SIGNED** the list of cheques which is appended to the signed copy of these Minutes as Appendix A.

**449. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.**

Councillor Blunden reported as follows:

449.1 West Sussex PFI street lighting upgrade: update

The Council is still awaiting a quotation from Simon Bushell of SSEC for the amount we will have to pay towards the upgrade to get the heritage lights we have proposed. Simon Bushell is also looking into the possibility of getting sockets fitted to the High Street columns for the Christmas Lights. Hopefully the Council will have confirmation of the cost and an answer about the sockets before the next E&A Committee meeting.

449.2 Paving at corner of High Street and Lewes Road: to consider action to be taken following receipt of quotation from contractors.

The Council has received a quotation from a contractor for the paving and extra bollards. To comply with contract procedures it should be getting three quotations, and for this reason the amount of this quotation has not been recorded in the minutes. Council considered whether to proceed with seeking extra quotations or to arrange with WSCC for their contractors to install the extra bollards and repair the paving to the standard specification without the reinforcement.

A number of Councillors stated that there had been too much delay in progressing this project already. However, if the Council is to commission the work, the need for three quotes was an important factor. The Clerk was therefore asked to check whether in these particular circumstances it was permissible to accept one quotation.

It was **AGREED** that if it is permissible, the Council would accept the quote, and if not, the matter would be referred back to WSCC.

449.3 Street map panels – to consider approval of additional expenditure in respect of planning application documentation.

E&A had agreed to get Goulds to help with the planning application required for the map panels, particularly the scale elevation drawing. They have indicated that they would charge an hourly rate and the total is unlikely to be over £500. The Council **AGREED** the additional expenditure as recommended.

- 449.4 To receive and consider a recommendation for virement of the sum of £7,500 from the budget for tree pollarding, comprising £2,500 from the in-year budget and £5,000 from the designated reserve, to be put to the refurbishment of the Hickmans Lane playground.

Jonathan Ullmer at WSCC has confirmed that Parish Council will not after all be required to contribute towards the pollarding of the High Street and Compton Road trees. The Council has been building a fund for this which will not now be required and E&A have agreed that a good use for this total of £7,500 would be towards the upgrade of the Hickmans Lane playground. In accordance with the new Financial Regulations, the Council **AGREED** the virement as recommended.

- 449.5 Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 7 August 2014. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 7 August 2014 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

## 450. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

Councillor Gomme was not present at the meeting, but Councillor Hersey reported on the planning application (14/01448/COU) for the change of use at 44A, High Street (The Bookstop). This was from A1 (shop) to mixed A3 (restaurant/café) and A5 (hot food/takeaway) uses. In the light of the objections which P&TC had made, it was noted that a further application had been lodged (14/02918/COU) from A1 to dual use of B1 and D1 (business) usage. Even so, there remained concerns over the loss of an A1 retail unit in the High Street. Councillor Hersey also referred to the ground works being carried out by the Lindfield Cricket Club in order to commence its planning consent for the improvements to the pavilion, and emphasised the assurances, which had been given by the Club that the appearance of the Common in that area would remain unaffected.

- 450.1 Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 01 July, 22 July, 12 August, and 01 September 2014. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 01 July, 22 July, 12 August, and 01 September 2014 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

## 451. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE.

- 451.1 The Deputy Clerk reported that following the health-check by MSDC, prior to formal submission of the Plan to the Planning Authority, some concern had been expressed about the statutory consultation process carried out under Regulation 14(b) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. In the light of this development, the formal submission would have to be delayed, whilst the issues raised were considered. It may be that wider consultation, particularly with those statutory bodies where no response was received at all, will be required.

- 451.2 It was **AGREED** that in accordance with the recommendations of Mid Sussex District Council in its health-check report, Lindfield Parish Council should be the lead Council and qualifying body for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan. It was noted that Lindfield Rural Parish Council had agreed to this at their meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> August 2014.

## 452. STANDING ORDERS.

- 452.1 The draft has been circulated with a covering paper highlighting the significant changes and any items requiring specific confirmation. The Chairman took Councillors through each proposed change set out in the paper. All the changes were noted and agreed in turn, but there was discussion on the following:-

3c. Recommendation: (minimum periods of public notice for meetings) – to omit “unless the meeting is convened at shorter notice”. Councillor Snowling was concerned that the wording was in fact mandatory. The Clerk clarified the position, and it was therefore agreed to retain the wording, but to continue the Council’s practice of not calling meetings at shorter notice in any event.

3j. Recommendation: (speaking at meetings) - retain existing Standing Order. It was noted that members of the public and Councillors can stand when speaking, if they so wished, but there should be no compunction to do so.

3m. Recommendation: (reporting by filming, recording, etc.) - adopt the Standing Order drafted by the Clerk supported by the policy. It was noted that the policy would be drafted and presented to the next meeting of F&GP Committee on 25<sup>th</sup> September for approval.

Standing Order 23 – Councillor Snowling said that the word “unitary” should be deleted.

Subject to F&GP Committee’s approval of the policy, and the other matters referred to above, it was **AGREED** to accept the recommended changes and to formally **ADOPT** new Standing Orders in the approved form.

By way of observation, Councillor Snowling said that with the elections coming up in May 2015, it was very important that new Councillors knew and understood Standing Orders, and that time needs to be set aside for appropriate familiarisation and training. Councillor Allen very much supported this view, and referred to the need for new members to undertake a proper induction process.

At the conclusion of the item, Councillors thanked the Clerk for all the hard work put into the revision of Standing Orders.

**453. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.**

453.1 F&GP Committee has examined the working draft and agreed the threshold amounts to be inserted. Members have received the final draft with the Agenda. In accordance with the recommendation from F&GP Committee, it was **AGREED** that the financial regulations be formally **ADOPTED** in the form presented.

**454. PROPOSED PUBLIC CONVENIENCES ON THE COMMON - UPDATE.**

454.1 A letter has been received from Mr Alex Mackenzie, setting out his objections to the proposed site for the public toilets. The Working Group has agreed a detailed response drafted by Councillor Plass and this has been posted. It was noted that the Working Group would be re-visiting the question of alternative sites, and considering a range of views. Councillor Henton asked all Councillors to let him have any ideas and thoughts regarding the matter.

**455. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**

455.1 No other items of business were raised.

The meeting concluded at 8.47 p.m.