

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY 13 March 2014** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting began at 7.30 p.m.

**Present:**

Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)  
Mr. M. Allen  
Mrs. J. Chatfield  
Mr. A. Gomme  
Mr. S. Henton  
Mr. S. Hodgson  
Mr. R. Plass

**Also present:** Mr. J. Smith and Mr. L. Corp, Comber's Trust (until end of 6<sup>th</sup> item)

**In attendance:** Mrs. C. Irwin

**Not present:** Councillors Mr. M. Amor, Mrs. M. Hersey, Mr. R. Pickett, Mr. C. Snowling, Mrs. V. Upton (Vice Chairman)

The Chairman welcomed those present and announced the emergency procedure for the King Edward Hall.

For the benefit of Mr. Smith and Mr. Corp it was **AGREED** to bring forward item 15: Combers Trust which was now taken as item 6.

**364. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

364.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Amor, Hersey, Pickett, Snowling and Upton and the reasons were accepted. Apologies from Councillor Mrs. Christine Field (WSCC) were also noted.

**365. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS.**

365.1 Councillor Blunden declared a personal interest in Agenda item 12 (Allotments) as he was a plot holder. Councillors Allen also declared a personal interest in this item as his wife was a plot holders.

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

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

**367. MINUTES AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2014**

367.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 January 2014. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

**368. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

368.1 The Chairman had no announcements to make.

**369. COMBER'S TRUST: APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES.**

*(This item was taken out of order for the benefit of the representatives of Comber's Trust who were present)*

369.1 A letter had been received from the Chairman of Comber's Trust proposing the transfer of the power to appoint the trustees of this parish parochial charity to Lindfield Parish Council, which had not previously been enacted due to an oversight which had endured since LPC was created in 1987.

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

From 1895 until 1934 the power to appoint three trustees had been vested in the original Lindfield Parish Council, which covered a land area now within the Parishes of Lindfield, Lindfield Rural and Haywards Heath. In 1934, Lindfield Village was removed from the Lindfield Parish and formed part of Cuckfield Urban District Council without its own Parish Council. From that date, the power to appoint two trustees was transferred to Cuckfield Urban District Council and the Council for the remainder of the Lindfield Parish, which later became Lindfield Rural Parish Council, retained the power to appoint one trustee.

In 1974 Cuckfield UDC's power in respect of two trustees was transferred to Mid Sussex District Council following the merger of several districts further to Local Government reorganisation. Lindfield Rural Parish Council continued to hold the right to appoint one trustee. Lindfield Parish Council was created in 1987, but the right to appoint trustees to Comber's Trust was not returned to this Parish Council.

Since 1995, with the approval of the Charity Commission, the geographical area in which Comber's Trust operated had been reduced to that of Lindfield Parish Council only. Lindfield Rural Parish Council had relinquished its right to appoint one trustee by resolution in 1999, with the intention that this be transferred to Lindfield Parish Council but Lindfield Parish Council had not adopted or exercised that right.

The current Trustees of Comber's Trust believed that the exercise of the right to appoint Trustees of parochial charities was, and remained, by principal law, exclusively vested in Parish Councils except when the Parish was without an elected Parish Council. An extensive briefing had been sent by the Trustees to Mr. Danny Kington, Senior Membership Services Officer of MSDC with recommendations that MSDC's right to appoint three trustees to Comber's Trust should cease and that Lindfield Parish Council should have the sole right to appoint these trustees. To effect this transfer, both Mid Sussex District Council and Lindfield Parish Council were required to make formal resolutions.

Members expressed appreciation to the Trustees for the full and clear briefing.

Further to a question from a Member, the Chairman invited the Trustees present to outline the work of Comber's Trust:

In the 1990s, four parochial charities were merged as Comber's Trust. These charities had existed to provide pensions for widows, tools for working men and bread for the poorest residents. Following the merger the welfare activities had ceased and Comber's Trust had become a general charity for hardship and need in the Parish, for the benefit of individuals and organisations and was moving towards supporting the ethos of the village by making contributions to organisations and activities which might be endangered without financial support. Donations had been made to disadvantaged young people towards their education and to the Bonfire Society.

Members unanimously **AGREED** with the proposal.

**RESOLVED:** to inform Mid Sussex District Council that Lindfield Parish Council had no objection to the proposal to transfer to Lindfield Parish Council the right to appoint trustees to Comber's Trust.

**RESOLVED:** to adopt the transfer to Lindfield Parish Council of the right to appoint three trustees to Comber's Trust, subject to Mid Sussex District Council's resolution to relinquish their right to appoint two of those trustees, the right in respect of the third trustee having been relinquished by Lindfield Rural Parish Council by resolution in May 1999.

*Mr. Smith and Mr. Corp left the meeting at the conclusion of this item.*

### 370. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE PANEL REPORT.

- 370.1 PCSO Nicola Green had visited the Parish Office earlier that day and had nothing of significance to report other than that she had been in attendance outside Lindfield Primary School at arrival and departure times because of the parking problems which had been exacerbated by the current building work on site. Councillor Allen added that Lindfield Primary School had been very grateful to the Parking Enforcement Officers and the Police for attending at short notice to resolve parking issues outside the school.

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

371.1 Councillor Field (WSCC) had sent her apologies and the following report which was read out by the Chairman.

“Denmans Lane. I have been contacted by 4 or 5 people asking that WSCC consider the re-opening of Denmans Lane. I think this has been prompted by the road closure and resultant pressure on Hickmans Lane. The initial response from Highways is that this would be an extremely costly project and would need to be considered in the full context of traffic flows throughout the village.

The road is very narrow. Foot ways would have to be created not least to allow for safe passage for children and parents accessing school and pre-schools. This would require the acquisition (probably by Compulsory Purchase) of land from a number of private owners. I have passed this information on. If the Parish Council does consider a traffic survey of any sort, then it might be appropriate to consider this suggestion as a part of that.

Lindfield Primary School. Traffic management to accommodate the increasing size of the school has now been included in the Community Issues List by Central Mid Sussex CLC and the Traffic Regulation Order to restrict parking in the area has been supported for implementation. There is no firm timetable but it should happen within the year.

A new School Crossing patrol person has been appointed and should very soon be in place at the Backwoods Lane crossing. Hopefully this will help to stem the current parking problems.

SE Water mains replacement work. There continues to be concern about trading levels in the High St but I have not received any direct contact about it for over 2 weeks. I think that we now have to rely on SE Water to manage the situation. A planned visit by BBC was cancelled last Saturday. SE Water are taking further advertising in the Middy to encourage shoppers to visit”.

371.2 Denmans Lane. Members commented that the feasibility of re-opening Denmans Lane could be picked up by the Traffic Study and it might work if part of a one way system. However it would be likely to add complications to Lewes Road and to the High Street / Lewes Road junction.

371.3 There were no District Councillors present.

**371. ACTION LIST.**

371.1 The Action List was **NOTED**.

**372. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS - TO NOTE / CONSIDER ANY DOCUMENTS RECEIVED.**

372.1 The closing date for comments on the Haywards Heath Draft Neighbourhood Plan - 'Our Bright Future' - was 23 March. The Parish Council's response would be considered by the Planning and Traffic Committee on 18 March.

**373. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE.**

373.1 Councillor Gomme reported as follows:

- 4 February 2014 – planning application LR/13/03948/FUL – Fullingmill Farm. Members of the P&T Committee had attended a site meeting prior to consideration of the application and had been generally supportive of the aims to improve the farm and eliminate flooding, but there had been concerns regarding traffic, particularly following the implementation of a similar application at Hill House Farm which had generated a large number of lorry movements bringing material to the site.
- 4 February 2014 - planning application 14/00087/FUL – Land adjacent to The Witch Inn. A letter of objection to the latest proposal for 4 semi detached dwellings had been sent to MSDC on the grounds of flood risk, building line, loss of parking for The Witch Inn, design of the windows and overdevelopment.

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- 25 February 2014 - outline planning application 14/ 00209/OUT - development on land north of Birchen Lane. The P&T Committee had agreed to defer consideration of the application, which was to be invalidated pending further Ecology Survey reports on the presence of Greater Crested Newts.

373.2 Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 14 January, 4 February and 25 February 2014. **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 14 January, 4 February and 25 February be received and their recommendations confirmed.

373.3 Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group. Councillor Gomme reported the Steering Group had met in public on 3 February, further to publication of the pre-submission draft Neighbourhood Plan and the comments received in response to the public consultation. However, because of the Planning Inspector's determination that MSDC's Duty to Co-operate in respect of the Draft District Plan had not been met., the Steering Group had suspended making any decisions until there was clarity about the status of the District and Neighbourhood Plans. Councillors Gomme and Plass and the Deputy Clerk had attended a recent Neighbourhood Planning workshop at MSDC, but the way forward was still unclear and members of the Steering Group felt disillusioned. It was also noted that there was now a requirement for Sustainability Appraisals and Environmental Assessments to be carried out and Neighbourhood Plans had to comply with both the old Mid Sussex Local Plan and the new emerging District Plan. Concern was expressed that the Neighbourhood Plan process could turn out to be a very expensive waste of a lot of people's time. Members wished to record appreciation to Councillor Gomme for the work he was doing and the huge amount of time he was spending on the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Group would be meeting informally to consider the way forward and then a public meeting was being arranged to take place in May.

373.4 No waiting order – Backwoods Lane. This had been referred to in Councillor Field's report (Minute 371.1) and a public notice was anticipated in due course.

### 374. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

374.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9 January 2014. The main points from this meeting had been noted at the last Council meeting. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9 January 1 2014 be received and their recommendations confirmed. It was **NOTED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March were not yet available and would be received at the next Council meeting. Councillor Henton reported as follows:

374.2 Lindfield Parish Directory and Year Book. The Committee had considered an approach by Lindfield Rural Parish Council who had agreed to pay for an extra 500 copies of the Directory for delivery in Scaynes Hill. They were also considering extra pages for Scaynes Hill information. The Committee had no objection to the extra copies, but had not supported integrating Scaynes Hill information as this would increase the overall cost create extra work. Members of the Committee had agreed that the Directory should remain as a Lindfield publication. Lindfield Rural could if they wished print a separate insertion to be slipped into the covers but this should not be part of the main printing. A number of Members expressed disappointment at this decision and suggested that there should be further discussion on the matter, but it was **AGREED** that the decision of the Finance and General Purposes Committee should stand as the Directory came within its remit.

374.3 Parish Office matters. It was **NOTED** that the Village Archive was now accommodated at the Clock Tower House and the Denmans Lane office had been decorated. An agent had been instructed to arrange renting it to a tenant but there were some issues which were to be raised during the confidential session.

374.4 Insurance – renewal of policy. It had been agreed to renew the insurance policy with Zurich Municipal for a three year term, with some appropriate adjustments to the cover provided.

374.5 Statements of Account/Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the period 01.01.14 to 31.01.14 and 01.02.14 to 28.02.14. The financial reports to the end of February were tabled. **RESOLVED:** to approve the Statements of Account/Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the periods 01.01.14 to 31.01.14 and 01.02.14 to 28.02.14. **NOTED:**

- From a total budget of £242,025, £158,854 had been spent.
- The Finance and General Purposes Committee had spent £109,703 from its budget of £119,675

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

- From the Administration Budget of £104,675, £ 99,175 had been spent.
- The Environment and Amenities Committee had spent £28,964 from the budget total of £64,150.
- The Planning and Traffic Committee had spent £ 14,095 from the budget total of £20,200.
- From the reserves and outstanding projects of £166,689, £4,681 had been spent

- 374.6 List of cheques for approval: cheques drawn since Council meeting of 16 January 2014. 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 ££623.30. The Petty Cash balance as at 13.03.14 was £81.34. **RESOLVED:** to approve the list of cheques numbered 105347 - 105386, totalling £18,049.57. The Chairman **SIGNED** the list of cheques which is appended to the signed copy of these Minutes as Appendix A.
375. **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE. TO RECEIVE AND TO CONFIRM THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE (PREVIOUSLY CIRCULATED) AND 6 FEBRUARY 2014 (TO FOLLOW). REPORT BY CLLR. BLUNDEN TO INCLUDE:**
- 375.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 5 December 2013. These Minutes had been approved by the Committee on 6 February and the main points had been noted at the Council meeting on 16 January. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 5 December 2013 be received and their recommendations confirmed.
- 375.2 Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 2 February 2014. It was **NOTED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 February had only just been circulated and it was **AGREED** that these should be received at the next meeting. Councillor Blunden reported as follows:
- 375.3 Allotment fees 2015/16. Councillors Blunden and Allen declared personal interests in this item and remained present. The decision to increase the allotment rents by 10% for 2015/16, bringing the rent per rod to £3.30 was **NOTED.**
- 375.4 Policy regarding children on the allotment site. The Committee had previously agreed a policy of not permitting visits by nursery and school groups to the Allotment site because of the risks. A further enquiry about plot holders bringing their own children to their allotment had been referred to the insurance company for advice and they had replied that they would have no problem with this as long as the site was regularly inspected for any potential hazards. The Committee's decision to continue to allow plot holders to bring children from their immediate family to their plot provided they were closely supervised was **NOTED.**
- 375.5 WS street lighting upgrade. Members of the Council had undertaken surveys of the existing West Sussex lights throughout the village so be fully informed for future discussions with WSCC and SSE Contracting. A meeting with the WSCC Street Lighting Team Leader had been arranged for 26 March to be attended by the Chairman and Clerk to obtain information about the scheme, available choices and the costs of any enhancements the Council may wish to pay for which were outside the PFI scheme. It was understood that the replacements for the cast iron columns would be similar to the new one installed outside Selby's Chemist and that this style would be retained in the Conservation Area, but that plain modern style columns would be used elsewhere. Clarity would be sought on what flexibility there may be within the scheme.
376. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROL PROCEDURES**
- 376.1 The report had been circulated with a recommendation to the Council for approval. **RESOLVED** to approve the report on the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit and Internal Control Procedures.
377. **PROPOSED PUBLIC CONVENIENCES ON THE COMMON**
- 377.2 The notes of the meeting held on 4 February with Councillor Pru Moore, David Harper and Chris Coppens from MSDC were received and **NOTED.** The suggestions made at the meeting were being taken up with the Architects.

It was **NOTED** that there were some local objections to the proposed site, one of which had suggested the other side of the bowls club car park as a more acceptable alternative. However this site had been considered by the Working Group who had felt that the building would be much more visible and obtrusive in that location,

## LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

with an adverse effect on the street scene. It was understood from MSDC that they did not want any development on the main part of the Common. It was pointed out that by nature this project would elicit a degree of objection from a number of residents, but the Council should look at the wider picture. The survey conducted in 2010 had shown that there was a strong wish for public toilets to be re-instated on the Common, which had established a mandate for the Council to go forward. Objections should be dealt with when they arose during the future consultations.

### 378. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

378.1 No other items of business were raised.

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

### 379. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

379.1 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.

### 380. PARISH OFFICE MATTERS

380.1 Letter from Lindfield Enterprise Park Estate Management Company. A matter relating to the management of the Enterprise Park Estate was considered and the draft response to the letter from the Management Company was **AGREED**.

380.2 Matters relating to 6 Denmans Lane. The Council had previously agreed on 14 November 2013 that arrangements should be made with a letting agent to rent 6 Denmans Lane to a tenant. Matters had since come to light which had prompted a reconsideration of this decision.

The decision made on 14 November 2013 could not be rescinded in accordance with Standing Order 11 because six months had not elapsed since that decision was taken and it was therefore **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders in order to amend the decision.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that the Clerk should contact the agent to make arrangements to sell 6 Denmans Lane.

The meeting ended at 8.37 p.m.