

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2017** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

The meeting commenced at 8.00 p.m.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)
Mr. M. Allen
Mr. R. Pickett
Mr. R. Plass
Mr. C. Snowling

Also present:

Approximately 20 members of the public
Mr. M. Damsell (Co-opted Councillor)
Mrs. S. Richmond (Co-opted Councillor)
Councillor Andrew Lea (MSDC & WSCC)

In attendance:

Mrs. C. Irwin (Parish Clerk)
Mr. A. Funnell (Parish Clerk Designate)

Absent:

Parish Councillors Mrs. J. Durrant, Mr. S. Henton, Mrs. M. Hersey, Mr. S. Hodgson, and Mrs. V. Upton (Vice Chairman),

325. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

325.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Durrant, Councillor Henton, Councillor Hersey, Councillor Hodgson, and Councillor Upton, and the reasons were accepted.

326. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

326.1 Councillor Snowling declared a personal, interest in Agenda item 14vi, as he is a member, and officer of the Lindfield Branch of the Royal British Legion, he advised that he would remain in the meeting, but would not participate in any discussions, or voting on the item.

327. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 11 MAY 2017 AND THE MINUTES OF THE ADDITIONAL MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 29 JUNE 2017.

327.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held on 13 July 2017. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being true records of those meetings.

328. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

328.1 DM/17/3068 - Former Tavistock and Summerhill School, The Chairman advised that he was aware that a number of residents wished to speak regarding the site. The public were advised that they were able to make their comments, but any future development of the site cannot be discussed as this would prejudice any comments the Council may wish to make if and when an application to develop the site is received.

Comments from the members of public related to the demolition and the potential development of the site. Points raised included:

- The Council's response to the Application for Prior Notification of Proposed Demolition,
- Potential future development of the site,
- The character of the existing property and that it featured in the Village Design Statement.

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The Chairman advised that as the Council received late notification of the proposed demolition it could not be placed on the agenda of the meeting dated 08 August 2017. Councillor Plass raised the item under any other business and therefore the item could be noted but not debated by Councillors. The Chairman advised that the proposed demolition was not a planning application that was submitted to the Council to comment on. The Chairman stated that the Council has tried very hard to adhere to the Village Design Statement. The Chairman stated that the Council is trying to protect the whole of the village and had previously challenged a number of applications including Birchen Fields, Barrington Woods, the Limes, the Little Cote development and the Wates development on both Gravelye Lane and Scamps Hill. The Chairman reaffirmed that until a formal application to develop the site is received the Parish Council cannot comment further. The Parish Council does not wish to prejudice any comments the Council may wish to make if and when a formal application is received and considered through the statutory planning process. Councillor Snowling supported the Chairman's comments and advised that public comments are welcome on formal applications from all areas of the community.

Councillor Plass advised that the Council as a statutory body is not consulted about demolition notices as it is not responsible for commenting on such matters. The Council were only made aware of the proposed demolition by residents. The Council established that a Conservation officer would attend the site to see if there was any merit in opposing the demolition. Councillor Plass advised that MSDC are the relevant authority for public concerns relating to demolition notices.

- 328.3 Traffic Study, A member of the public suggested that the Traffic Study was a series of wish list items that lacked sufficient data to support or oppose any of the suggestions. The member of the public expressed concern at the amount that the Council had spent on the study so far.

The comments were **NOTED** by the Chairman.

- 328.3 Denmans Lane – Potential for reopening. A member of the public suggested reopening Denman's Lane. The individual sought clarification as to how to raise the item for discussion at the relevant Planning & Traffic Committee meeting.

The comments were **NOTED** by the Chairman and the procedure by which a member of the public can ask for an item to be included on the relevant committee agenda was explained.

- 328.4 After 15 minutes the Chairman called an end to Questions/Comments from members of the public. At this point the majority of the members of the public left the meeting.

329. **CASUAL VACANCIES: TO CONSIDER APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED COUNCILLORS TO FILL TWO VACANCIES**

- 329.1 There had been no public demand for a by election following the resignation of Alan Gomme, and Stewart Shortland, so the Council was free to co-opt. Four candidates had come forward: Susan Baker, Matt Damsell, Janet Irwin, and Sarah Richmond. The Chairman introduced Mr. Damsell and Mrs. Richmond who were present at the meeting and presented Susan Baker's and Janet Irwin's apologies as they were unable to attend. The four candidates had each written to express their interest in becoming a member of Lindfield Parish Council and Members had received copies of these letters.

- 329.2 The Chairman suggested suspending Standing Orders and that voting be conducted by signed ballot instead of show of hands. This suggestion was seconded by Councillor Snowling and **AGREED** by Councillors. The voting papers would be retained and would be available for inspection.

Members were given the opportunity to ask questions of candidates for clarification, but no questions were asked. The Clerk outlined the voting procedure and the voting papers were distributed bearing the names of the four candidates.

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- 329.3 Voting for the first new Councillor resulted in the required absolute majority:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Susan Baker | 0 |
| Matt Damsell | 3 |
| Janet Irwin | 0 |
| Sarah Richmond | 2 |
- 329.4 It was **RESOLVED** that Mr. Matt Damsell, having confirmed that he was qualified to serve, be co-opted as a Member of Lindfield Parish Council.
- 329.5 Voting for the second Councillor resulted in the required absolute majority:
- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Susan Baker | 1 |
| Janet Irwin | 1 |
| Sarah Richmond | 3 |
- 329.6 It was **RESOLVED** that Mrs. Sarah Richmond, having confirmed that she was qualified to serve, be co-opted as a Member of Lindfield Parish Council.
- 329.7 The Chairman gave Councillor Damsell, and Councillor Richmond, a warm welcome on behalf of fellow Members.
- 330. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF NEWLY CO-OPTED COUNCILLORS OR, IF NOT THEN DELIVERED, TO RESOLVE FOR THIS TO BE DONE AT A LATER DATE.**
- 330.1 Declarations of acceptance were received from co-opted Councillors Damsell and Richmond.
- 331. TO APPOINT THE NEWLY CO-OPTED COUNCILLORS TO COMMITTEES.**
- 331.1 It was **NOTED** that Standing orders state a minimum of 6 members for each of the three main committees. The Chairman advised that there were vacancies on both the Finance and General Purpose Committee and the Planning and Traffic Committee.
- It was **AGREED** that Councillor Damsell and Councillor Richmond would be appointed to both the Finance & General Purpose committee and the Planning & Traffic committee.
- 332. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.**
- 332.1 The Chairman **NOTED** that the Clerk would be retiring at the end of September. The Chairman made a presentation and the Council thanked the Clerk for her 21 years of service to the Council. The Chairman expressed the difficulties of the Clerk's job and how diligent and dedicated the retiring Clerk's service had been.. The Clerk received warm applause from all those in attendance.
- 333. REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.**
- 333.1 Councillor Mr. Andrew Lea (WSCC). Councillor Lea reported to the Council the following items of note.
- Mid Sussex District Council – The District Plan is slowly progressing and that there had been a further scrutiny meeting earlier in the week. The next major stage is that the Plan goes back to the inspector for review. It is hoped that the inspector will approve the Plan which will result in a 5 year land supply. The existence of a 5 year land supply will be enormously useful. It was commented that currently Neighbourhood Plans without land supply do not carry as much weight.
- West Sussex County Council - Councillor Andrew Lea reported that:
- West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service will remain in the County Council.

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- The County Council is starting its annual corporate planning cycle which will eventually turn into financial planning.
- He sits on both the Audit, and Performance and Scrutiny Committees.

Councillor Andrew Lea also thanked the outgoing Clerk on behalf of the County and District Councils.

333.2 Councillor Mrs Margaret Hersey (MSDC). Councillor Hersey was not present, in her absence the Clerk reported the following items:

District Plan. Following its enquiry in public, the Scrutiny Committee for planning considered the “Main Modifications” at their meeting on Tuesday 12th September which the inspector considers are required to make the Plan sound. The main modification are around housing numbers, that is the 876 per year for next 5 years and 1090 per year for the plan period. After a very in depth scrutiny of these modification the Committee agreed they should go forward for Full Council approval on the 27th September and would expect and hope these will be approved so modifications can go out for consultation.

Planning Application for housing off Beech Hill Lane. This was considered at last Thursday's District Planning Committee meeting and after positive objections by herself (speaking as a LPC/LRPC Councillor) and Lin Stockwell as local member and Chris Hersey as Local and Committee Member, the committee accepted the MSDC Officers / WSCC Highways recommendation to approve (5 for 2 against) even though strong cases were put forward on highway safety grounds, the desecration of High Beech Hill, sustainability and flooding, not forgetting the made Neighbourhood Plan which did not identify this site for development in the area of development constraint.

Scamps Hill, Wates development. The Secretary of State has written to inform MSDC that he will not be in a position to make a decision about the Wates development by the original date of 23 October 2017 as new policies need to be taken into consideration which have wider than local significance, coming from Natural England. He therefore amended the date to on or before 14 December 2017.

334. ACTION LIST.

334.1 The Action List was **NOTED**.

335. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS.

335.1 It was **NOTED** that South East Water Draft Drought Plan 2018 - 2023 had been received and circulated to Councillors by email. The closing date for comments was stated as 29 October 2017.

The Council considered whether to provide a response, and refer the item to either the E&A, or Consultation Committees. It was **AGREED** that the Council will not provide a response.

336. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE.

In the absence of Councillor Hodgson, Councillor Snowling, as Vice Chairman reported on matters considered at the meetings held on 18 July, 8 August and 29 August 2017. There were no comments in respect of the meeting held on 18 July.

336.1 DM/16/4857 - White Horse Inn, 22 High Street – It was reported that the Committee had no objection to change of use from public house to restaurant however objections were raised to the retrospective planning permission. The application has been approved by MSDC with a number of conditions. It was stated that the conditions no doubt will be well monitored by residents and the relevant authorities.

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DM/17/3135 – 39 High Street – It was reported that the Committee had consider an application for a single storey extension. The Committee has no objection to this application. Safety concerns were noted in regard to visibility on the staircase that provides access to the first floor flats. The Council believes that installation and maintaining of adequate lighting for the staircase is a necessity.

336.2 Traffic Study. The Clerk Designate reported that:

Richard Speller (WSSC) had been provided with a copy of the report. The report has also been made available to Councillor Andrew Lea. The Clerk, Clerk Designate, Deputy Clerk, & Richard Speller took part in a conference call on the 4 September:

- It was explained that the Council would be looking for funding from multiple sources. The Council would need though to identify which projects we would like to develop further. S106 funding could be sought through a community highway application. The S106 funds would not necessarily cover the cost of the works. Whether the projects would qualify as sustainable transport solutions was also raised. It was suggested that if any new housing developments occurred within the Parish then they could be linked to implementation of traffic calming measures (Infrastructure Delivery Plan).
- It was suggested that some of the works may require a Traffic Regulation Order.
- Public expectation of what can be achieved and in what time needs to be carefully managed. S106 funded projects would have at least a two year lead in phase (1 year for design & 1 year implementation).
- Richard Speller suggested that before recommendations are put to the public a meeting should take place involving representatives of the Parish Council, WSSC. The meeting would aim to review the report, look at what recommendations could be achieved and explore how these could be funded. Once this had been done then recommendations could be made available for public consultation

Councillor Snowling clarified that the process will involve a public exhibition as this would be very helpful for the community. It was stated that the Traffic Study report is very comprehensive and covers a number of emotive areas, such as Denman's Lane. The Chairman advised that public exhibition would explain how the Council has arrived at this position. This will include providing the briefing notes to the consultant, sources that the Council obtained information from such as; the Neighbourhood Plan, the Village Design Statement, the Village Plan, comments from public groups and individuals. It was **NOTED** that the intention is that this will proceed after meetings with the main stake holders.

It was **NOTED** that Councillor Andrew Lea declared a personal interest in Denman's Lane as he is a resident of The Glebe.

336. Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 18 July, 8 August, and 29 August. It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 18 July, 8 August, and 29 August 2017 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

337. **ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.**

Councillor Blunden reported as follows, further to the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 8 June 2017:

337.1 Christmas lights. It was **NOTED** that Blachere had quoted £6,805 for installation and removal services for this year. This quote amounted to almost a 50% increase, which was queried by the Clerk. The project manager confirmed the price stating that this was the first increase since 2012, which was incorrect as prices had been increased in 2015. The Clerk challenged this and copied in the Chief Operations Officer. A revised quotation for £4,560 (£55 less than last year) was received. It was agreed by the E&A Committee to proceed with the quote.

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- 337.2 Wilderness Field: update. It was **NOTED** that the Working Group met on 31 July 2017 to discuss advice offered by MSDC's Property Lawyer and the details in the transfer document from the developer to MSDC. This raised a series of questions which the Clerk sent to MSDC's Property Lawyer, some of which he and a colleague had answered. There are some matters that still need clarification. It was **NOTED** that the Working Group intend to meet again to consider the information received.

It was **NOTED** that ROSPA - (the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) provide a service whereby they will conduct an initial assessment of the site before we agree to take it over, costing £450 plus VAT and an annual inspection at the prevailing playing field rate of £66.60 plus VAT. It was **AGREED** to proceed with the initial assessment, once permission from MSDC, as landowners, had been obtained.

- 337.3 Winter Management Plan: to note adoption of revised Plan. It was **NOTED** that E&A agreed the revised plan which had been updated with contact details and the latest information from WSCC. Our latest newsletter renews the plea for volunteers.

- 337.4 Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 3 August 2017. It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 3 August 2017 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

338. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

Councillor Henton reported on matters considered at the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 7 September 2017 of which the Minutes were not yet available.

- 338.1 Bank Mandate. It was **NOTED** that the Clerk and RFO has spent considerable time establishing from the bank the necessary procedure in order to enable the registering of the RFO and the new Clerk for the purpose of withdrawing cash using pre-signed cheques and for the RFO to be the officer cleared for security for giving instructions to the bank, without making them into full signatories. The process now appears to have been completed with the submission of the appropriate form. Upon the bank accepting this form, the present Clerk will be removed from the mandate.

- 338.2 Investment of funds. It was **NOTED** that an account has been set up with Nationwide Building Society with a deposit of £85,000 which is now operational. The RFO and Councillor Henton are looking for another suitable account to deposit further funds into and hope to come back to the Council with a proposal shortly.

- 338.3 Asset register: to confirm adoption of the new policy. The RFO presented a report with a short draft policy to comply with the guidance that councils should ensure that a consistent policy is followed in respect of asset registers. F&GP considered whether to apply a minimum value for items listed in the asset register and it was agreed to recommend to Full Council that this should be set at £50. It was **AGREED** that the policy be adopted and that the minimum value for an item to be recorded on the asset register would be £50.

- 338.4 Clock Tower House: to authorise expenditure on new water heater for cloakroom sink

It was **NOTED** that the water heater in the office cloakroom does not work and there is no direct source of hot water. A quotation to replace it has been received and this is £98. As this is lower than the £100 threshold limit in our Financial Regulations, further quotations are not required. It was **AGREED** to approve this expenditure.

It was **NOTED** that a small leak had been discovered in the Cloakroom. The Clerk and Clerk Designate identified that the leak originated from the joint attaching the water pipe to the base of the tank. A plumber will be called out to carry out the required work. The tank appeared to be in poor condition with

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corroded bolts. The plumbing is all enclosed within the panelling so access is difficult. It would be better if the panelling could be removed and the wall tiled leaving the plumbing accessible. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk Designate in consultation with the Committee's Chairman or Vice Chairman, arrange for replacing the tank, removing the panelling and tiling the wall, subject to advice from the plumber and reasonable quotations being received.

- 338.5 Remembrance Sunday Service and Parade: to consider an approach from the President of the Lindfield Branch, Royal British Legion, requesting the Parish Council's involvement in the direction of the stewards and marshals.

Having previously declared a personal interest (item 326.1) Councillor Snowling remained present but did not participate.

It was **NOTED** that further to discussion at F&GP, the Clerk Designate had arranged a meeting with representatives of the RBL for the 11 September. The meeting was attended by Councillor Plass, the Clerk & Clerk Designate. It was understood that the main reason help was being sought from the Parish Council related to the Royal British Legion's insurance policy, which only covered RBL Members. RBL ideally wanted a partnership arrangement with the Parish Council so that the Council's Public Liability insurance would cover the general public. After the meeting enquiries were made with the Council's insurers who confirmed that they would not insure an event organised by a third party and that there would be difficulties trying to establish the responsibilities and chain of command in the case of a joint arrangement.

The Clerk sought clarification from the Royal British Legion Head Office yesterday morning and their Head of Risk and Insurance confirmed that the Public Liability Insurance held by the RBL covers events run by local branches.

It was **AGREED** that based on the advice given by RBL Head of Risk and Insurances that Parish Council's involvement would not be necessary. It was **AGREED** that the Parish Council would offer the RBL use of their road diversion signs.

- 338.6 Proposed Public Toilets on the Common - update. Councillor Plass reported that no further progress had been made. It was **NOTED** that Councillor Plass would continue to progress the matter forward and submit a report as soon as possible.

- 338.7 Minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 7 September. It was **NOTED** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 7 September were not yet available. The minutes will be received at the next meeting of Full Council.

- 338.8 Statements of Account / Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the periods 01.04.17 – 30.04.17 and 01.05.17 - 31.05.17. It was **NOTED** that the financial reports for August 2017 were not yet available.

The reports to 31 July 2017 were considered and **NOTED**:

- from the total in-year budget of £197,080, the sum of £52,343 had been spent
- from the F&GP budget of £139,130, the sum of £34,989 had been spent
- the Administration Budget breakdown showed that, from the total of £123,130, the sum of £34,989 had been spent
- from the E&A budget of £47,750, the sum of £11,820 had been spent
- from the P&T budget of £10,200, the sum of £2,272 had been spent
- from the reserves £181 had been spent (from the Clock Tower House sinking fund).

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- 338.9 List of cheques for approval. The list of cheques drawn since the meeting of Council held on 13.07.17 was tabled. **NOTED:** that there had been £361.22 expenditure under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 and that the Petty Cash balance as at 14.09.17 was £142.07.
- 338.10 It was **RESOLVED:** to approve the list of cheques, numbers 105983 – 106017 inclusive, totalling £30,254.03, including VAT of £982.37. The list of cheques, duly signed by the Chairman, is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Appendix A.
- 339. OPERATION WATERSHED - SAVILL ROAD: APPLICATION FOR GRANT FUNDING TO ENGAGE CONTRACTOR TO CARRY OUT INVESTIGATION AND PREPARE DESIGN DRAWINGS (to follow).**
- 339.1 It was **NOTED** that on 11th August the Council received a draft application form filled in by a WSCC officer, for Operation Watershed funding for the initial investigation work. This had also been sent to a member of the public on behalf of the Savill Road residents. The correspondence and attachments were all forwarded to Councillors by email. The member of the public replied to WSCC with some points and questions but so far we have not heard that these have been answered. It is suggested that if this moves forward in the next couple of weeks, it should go to the E&A Committee meeting on 5th October for consideration.
- 340. TO CONFIRM MEETING DATES FOR COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2018**
- 340.1 It was **NOTED** that there had been a date change from 23 to 30 October for the Planning and Traffic Committee meeting. It was **AGREED** to confirm the meeting dates for 2018.
- 341. TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF THE ANNUAL THANK YOU PARTY FOR VOLUNTEERS (6TH JANUARY 2018).**
- 341.1 It was **AGREED** that the annual thank you party for volunteers will held on Saturday 6th January 2018.
- 342. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.**
- 342.1 It was **NOTED** our External Auditors, PKF Littlejohn have written to state that they have completed their review of our Annual Return and enclosed their certified Annual Return. Page 3 which is the External Auditor Report and Certificate, has been circulated with the letter. No matters have been drawn to the Council's attention.

The public part of the meeting ended at 9.10 p.m.

- 343. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC [AND PRESS].**
- 343.1 It was **RESOLVED**, in accordance with Standing Order No. 3(d) and the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960 Section 1(2), to exclude the public and press from the following part of the meeting, by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons (staffing matters).
- 344. CLOCK TOWER HOUSE - LEASE**
- 344.1 Councillor Plass reported that negotiations were in progress.
- 345. STAFF APPOINTMENTS.**

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- 345.1 Recruitment of a Deputy Parish Clerk. It was **NOTED** that the Deputy Clerk's contract will be essentially the same as the Clerk's, except for job title, starting date, hours, grade and starting salary, leave (pro rata) and length of notice required. It was **AGREED** that the Deputy Clerk's notice period will be four weeks.

The meeting concluded at 9.16 p.m.