

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY 15 SEPTEMBER 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. Hodgson
Mr. R. Pickett
Mr. R. Plass
Mr. S. Shortland
Mrs. V. Upton (Vice Chairman)

Also present: Councillor Mrs. C. Field (WSCC)
1 member of the public

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)

Not present: Parish Councillors: Mr. S. Henton, Mrs. M. Hersey, , and Mr. C. Snowling.

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

197. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

197.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Henton, Hersey and Snowling and the reasons were accepted.

198. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

198.1 Councillor Blunden declared a personal interest in item 9 iii (Allotment trees) as he was a plot holder.

199. MINUTES AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 14 JULY 2016.

199.1 An error in Minute 192.8 (Statements of Account) was **NOTED** and the following amendment was **AGREED**: the figure of £27,897 (expenditure from the reserves) was corrected to £91.25.

The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes, as amended, and the Confidential Minutes of the Meeting of Council held on 14 July 2015. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the amended Minutes and the Confidential Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

200. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

200.1 Village Maintenance. Mr. N. Kerslake referred to his recent letters to the Chairman and commented that the Parish Council should take a fresh look at village maintenance because funding for the partnership agreement, whereby Haywards Heath Town Council carried out certain highway works on behalf of WSCC in the town and for partner Parish Councils, would be discontinued at the end of the financial year. The Parish Council may find itself needing to fund the Town Council for work such as weed control.

200.2 District Plan. Mr. Kerslake stated that, subsequent to the consultation on the Pre-Submission Documents, material changes had been made to the District Plan Submission Documents which were currently with the Inspector; these included changes to the percentage of affordable homes required. Mr. Kerslake had written to the Inspector to state that changes such as these, which were policy changes, could not be slipped in under the carpet and needed a further 6 weeks consultation period.

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201. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

201.1 There were no Chairman's Announcements.

202. REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

Councillor Field reported as follows:

202.1 County Local Committee (CLC). Councillor Field thanked the Chairman and Clerk for attending the meeting of the Central Mid Sussex County Local Committee on 13 September and stated that it was good to see Parish Council representatives at these meetings.

202.2 Proposed changes to CLCs. At the CLC meeting on 13 September, it had been reported that the proposed changes had been modified resulting in Lindfield and Horsted Keynes remaining in the same CLC as Haywards Heath, to be named the South and Central Mid Sussex CLC, which would be a large committee. Councillor Field felt that parishes should be treated on a par with the towns as they had equal status and hoped they would have the same degree of public engagement.

202.3 Electoral Boundary Review. Councillor Field acknowledged the success of the representations submitted by the Clerk regarding the proposals which would have affected the area of Lindfield around Gravelye Lane.

202.4 Education. Changes in policy were anticipated but their nature was as yet unknown. The campaign for fairer funding settlements for schools was continuing. Councillor Field had been invited to visit Lindfield Primary Academy.

202.5 Infrastructure. The decision on the airports' runway capacity was awaited and the delay was causing problems in respect of the Infrastructure Plan.

There was enormous development pressure around Lindfield which highlighted a lot of highway issues. There was considerable frustration due to the inability of WSCC to object on the grounds of highways impact as planning law did not provide for looking at the incremental impact of multiple development schemes. Unless an application for a particular development was considered to have a severe impact, it was very difficult to object. WSCC would therefore have to concentrate on getting improvements funded by developers rather than blocking the granting of permission.

202.6 Highways Agreement with Towns and Parishes. Councillor Field clarified that the reason for the withdrawal of funding from Haywards Heath Town Council was due to an oversight when the Balfour Beatty contract was let, whereby the work the Town Council was doing for the cluster had also been included in the Balfour Beatty contract, so WSCC was paying twice for this work. The contract would be coming up for renewal in the future and the Towns and Parishes may want to try and get involved at that time.

202.7 Health Service. A lot of work had resulted from the poor reports on the Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals Trust and the Patient Transport Systems.

203. ACTION LIST.

203.1 The Action List was noted without comment.

204. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS.

204.1 MSDC Draft Policy: Licensing of Sex Establishments. It was **NOTED** that, in order to meet the deadline for this consultation, a response had been sent by the Clerk, having circulated the draft to all Councillors. The response had been generally in support of the draft policy, but attention had been drawn to an apparent inconsistency.

204.2 WSCC Boundary Review. As referred to by Councillor Field in her report, it was **NOTED** that the Boundary Commission had taken into account the Parish Council's arguments against the proposed re-arrangement of

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divisions which would have resulted in a substantial area around Gravelye Lane being included in the Haywards Heath East Division. The Lindfield and High Weald Division would now remain unchanged.

- 204.3 Proposed Changes to County Local Committees. The proposal to reduce the CLCs in Mid Sussex from three to two, originally would have placed Lindfield in the North Mid Sussex CLC, with East Grinstead, with which Lindfield had little in common, whilst Haywards Heath was to be in the South Mid Sussex CLC. The Parish Council had written to object to Lindfield being separated from Haywards Heath for the purposes of the CLCs. As reported by Councillor Field, in the amended proposals reported at Tuesday's Central Mid Sussex CLC, Lindfield was now included in the (renamed) South and Central CLC along with Haywards Heath. The County Council would be making the final decision in October.

205. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

Further to the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 4 August 2016, Councillor Blunden reported as follows:

- 205.1 Christmas Lights (Minute 150). The E&A Committee had agreed to authorise the additional work to dress the tree outside the Manor House and the two furthest ones at the top of the High Street, having received a ball park estimate of £1,265. Subsequently this figure had been confirmed, broken down into £805 for dressing the trees and £460 for collecting and testing spark lights which had been retained by the Parish Council after removal for pollarding and the subsequent replacement by Blachere. The figure of £805 had been queried because the cost of re-dressing the Manor House tree would have been included in the previous year's charge for re-installing the lights after pollarding. A revised quotation had been received today for £437 and an order would now be placed for the extra work.
- 205.2 Allotments trees (Minute 148.3). Having declared a personal interest in this item (Minute 198.1) Councillor Blunden remained present and took part in the discussion. The Arboricultural Consultant, Peter Thurman, had carried out his routine inspection on 8 August and the E&A Committee would be receiving the report at the next meeting. Mr. Thurman had recommended work on several trees, none of which was marked as urgent in his report, but he considered most of it to be essential work to be carried out within the next 9 to 12 months and his covering letter stated that the Beech Tree with the sling brace, on the boundary with a neighbouring property, had severely declined over the last three years; the problems were terminal and irrevocable, so the recommendation was to fell the tree to 5m to leave a "monolith" for wildlife.

A quotation (tabled) had therefore been obtained for this and the other recommended work, the total cost of which was £1,320 plus VAT. The cost felling of the beech, included in this total was £950. The contractor had agreed to cut the wood into manageable lengths for disposal; a suggestion from a Member to sell this wood was not taken up because there may be VAT implications.

Members discussed whether to proceed with the quoted work during the current financial year, taking into account the fact that the balance in the Allotments budget was £1,345 and there would be other charges against this budget before 31 March. It was **AGREED** to go ahead with all the work recommended by Mr. Thurman as soon as possible but that the Clerk should first check with the contractor about the price quoted for felling the beech. It was also **AGREED** that the overspend in respect of the Allotments budget heading would be met from the General Reserve.

- 205.3 Extra bollards – High Street / Lewes Road corner (Minute 147). At the last meeting, the E&A Committee had considered three quotations received to install three extra bollards with repositioning of existing ones to even out the spacing. It had been agreed to place the contract with Edburton whose quotation was well within budget. The work was due to start on 16 September and was expected to take a day and a half. The contractors had been made aware that it was the weekend of the Arts Festival and they had agreed to leave the site tidy for the weekend and return on 19 September.
- 205.4 South and South East in Bloom (Minute 153). The E&A Committee had considered an approach from Mrs. Heather Martin about entering Lindfield for the South and South East in Bloom competition in 2018 and it had been agreed to appoint a Working Group (Councillors Durrant and Snowling) to liaise with Mrs. Martin and report back to the Committee.

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205.5 Wilderness Field (Minute 155). Under Any Other Business at the meeting held on 4 August 2016, Councillor Snowling had requested an item to be included on the Agenda for the next meeting to establish a small group of members to look into drawing up a scheme for transferring the Wilderness Field from MSDC that would ensure its protection for the future.

205.6 Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 4 August 2016, **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 4 August 2016 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

206. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE.

Councillor Gomme reported as follows, further to the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 1 August and 23 August 2016. As the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 September had only recently been circulated, these would be reported on at the next meeting of Full Council.

206.1 Planning Application DM/16/1138 – 34 Dukes Road (Minute 170.4). The P&T Committee had objected to the proposed alterations to this property as being unneighbourly. A subsequent application had been withdrawn after inclusion on the Agenda for the meeting on 13 September, so it had not been considered at that meeting.

206.2 Planning Application DM/16/2913 – 20 Sunte Avenue (Minute 170.7). The P&T Committee had objected to this application because of concerns about the effect on the area, which had been designated in the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan as an Area of Townscape Character, and non-conformity with the Village Design Statement.

206.3 Planning Application DM/16/2333 – Land at Barrington Close (east of High Beech Lane) (Minute 172.). The Committee had noted and confirmed a strong letter of objection, on a large number of grounds, to this application for 49 new dwellings, which had been submitted by the Deputy Clerk under delegated authority.

206.4 Planning Application DM/16/2937 – The Old Forge, Denmans Lane (Minute 179.8). The Committee had objected to the alterations to the roof, as the nature of the roof was a particular feature cited in the listing for this Grade II Listed Building.

206.5 Planning Application DM/16/3165 – Glebe House, 32 Denmans Lane (Minute 179.9). It had been noted that previous approval for this proposal had expired before the work had begun. The Committee had continued to object on the grounds that the proposal was unneighbourly.

206.6 Planning Application DM/16/3285 – 94 The Welkin (Minute 179.12). The Committee had objected to the proposed fencing off of part of the open area of garden as being detrimental to the street scene. The Welkin had been designated an Area of Townscape Character on account of the open nature of the estate.

206.7 Car Park Direction Signs to All Saints Church (Minute 182). WSCC had consulted the Parish Council about this application from All Saints Church for car park direction signs. The Committee had not been in favour of the proposal as it would increase the signage in the Conservation Area.

206.8 Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 1 August and 23 August 2016. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 1 August and 23 August 2016 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

206.9 Traffic Survey. Councillor Gomme reported that late on 13 September the interim report from the Traffic Consultant had been received. This would be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee prior to release into the public domain. In his covering note the Consultant had made the point that it appeared that the application for land at Gravelly Lane was not in agreement with the development north of Lyoth Lane regarding access for cyclists, which the Deputy Clerk would follow up with MSDC.

207. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

In the absence of Councillor Henton, Councillor Plass reported as follows, further to the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 28 July 2016.

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- 207.1 Proposed public Toilets on the Common (Minute 139). An extensive letter had been written to the Cricket Club with a number of suggestions which unfortunately had not been favoured by the Cricket Club Committee. A plan of the area leased to the Cricket Club had been received from MSDC, which would enable a better understanding of the legal position. David Harper was going to attend the next Liaison meeting with David Terry to talk about the public toilets and other matters. Unfortunately MSDC had postponed the scheduled meeting on 14 September.
- 207.2 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 28 July 2016. **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 28 July 2016 be received and their recommendations confirmed.
- 207.3 Statements of Account / Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the periods 01.06.16 to 30.06.16, 01.07.16 to 31.07.16 and 01.08.16 to 31.08.16 and the quarterly Receipts and Payments Summary. The financial reports to 31 August 2016 were considered and **NOTED**:
- from the in-year budget of £183,580, the sum of £56,581 had been spent
 - from the F&GP budget of £131,780, the sum of £43,420 had been spent
 - the Administration Budget breakdown showed that, from the total of £115,780, the sum of £39,909 had been spent
 - from the E&A budget of £51,600, the sum of £13,112 had been spent
 - from the P&T budget of £200, the sum of £50 had been spent
 - £1,341 had been spent from the General Reserve.
- 207.3 List of cheques for approval. The list of cheques drawn since the meeting of Council held on 14.07.16 was tabled. **NOTE**: that the expenditure during this period under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 totalled £348.00 and that the Petty Cash balance as at 15.09.16 was £196.18.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of cheques, numbers: 105811 – 105834 inclusive, totalling £25,725.70. The list of cheques drawn is attached to the signed copy of these Minutes as Appendix A.
- 208. PARISH OFFICE CLEANER.**
- 208.1 The arrangements for the engagement of a self-employed cleaner, were **NOTED** and the decision made by the Clerk in this regard, under the Clerk's remit for making arrangements for the routine maintenance of the Parish Office, was **CONFIRMED**. The Cleaner would work for one hour a week and payment would be made by cheque on receipt of an invoice. A risk assessment had been carried out and the cleaner had been advised about any health and safety matters arising from it.
- 209. INVESTMENT OF FUNDS.**
- 209.1 This item had been deferred at the last Full Council meeting on account of low attendance. As the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Councillor Henton, was not present at this meeting, it was again **AGREED** to defer consideration of this matter to the November Council meeting.
- 210. LIAISON MEETING WITH MSDC OFFICERS ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2016.**
210. As previously stated, the meeting scheduled for 14 September had been postponed at the request of MSDC officers and had been rescheduled for 28th September at 9 a.m. David Harper would also be attending, along with David Terry, to discuss the public toilets on the Common and other matters .
- 211. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
- 211.1 External Audit Report . The External Auditor's report had been received the previous week and a copy had been handed to Members at this meeting. The public notice and the Annual Return had been published on the notice board and website in accordance with regulations.

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NOTED: the report stated: “on the basis of our review of the annual return, in our opinion the information in the annual return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.”

Under other matters not affecting their opinion but which they drew to the Council's attention PKF Littlejohn LLP had referred to the Internal Auditor's comments about risk assessment and insurance and stated that the Council must ensure that action was taken to address these areas of “weakness” in a timely manner.

It was **NOTED** that hirer's liability/indemnity in respect of the Clock Tower House tenant had been added to the Council's insurance policy schedule. The risk assessment matters would be taken up by the Insurance and Risk Management Working Group.

The meeting concluded at 8.40 p.m.