

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY 17 SEPTEMBER 2015** 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. A. Gomme
Mrs. M. Hersey
Mr. S. Hodgson
Mr. S. Shortland
Mr. C. Snowling

Also present: Councillor Mrs. C. Field (WSCC)

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)

Not present: Parish Councillors Mrs. J. Durrant, Mr. S. Henton, Mrs. E. Hinze, Mr. R. Plass and Mrs. V. Upton

63. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

63.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Durrant, Henton, Hinze, Plass and Upton and the reasons were accepted.

64. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

64.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members in respect of any items on the Agenda.

65. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 16 JULY 2015 AND THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON 10 SEPTEMBER 2015.

65.1 Minutes of the Meeting of Lindfield Parish Council held on 16 July 2015. A correction to Minute 49.1 (last bullet point) was **NOTED** and **AGREED**: the deadline for the consultation on the MSDC Community Infrastructure Levy was amended to read '18 September 2015'. The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the meeting of Full Council held on 16 July 2015. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes, as amended, as being a true record of that meeting.

65.2 Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council held on 10 September 2015. The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Full Council held on 10 September 2015. The Minutes were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

66. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

66.1 There were no members of the public present.

67. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

67.1 Civic Service. The Chairman reminded Members about the Lindfield Civic Service to be held on Sunday 20 September.

67.2 Community Service Award. The Chairman had attended the MSDC Chairman's Garden Party on 13 September and had accepted the award for the Parish Council's nominees, Alan and Wendy Stamford, recently retired from the Post Office, as they had been unable to attend.

The Chairman stated that Christopher Snowling had been nominated by Councillor Mrs. Hersey for an award for his long years of service as a Mid Sussex District Councillor, but he had also been unable to attend. At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Hersey presented him with his award and read out the citation from the programme: "Christopher Snowling was a District Councillor for 40 years plus. This year he took the decision

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to stand down as District Councillor for Lindfield and so I believe this is one way we can say thank you Chris for all your hard work for Lindfield and the District as a whole. Although Chris is no longer a District Councillor he remains a Parish Councillor and I am sure will continue to give his all for the community. Thank you Chris." Councillor Hersey added that the Chairman of MSDC had also expressed thanks on behalf of MSDC.

The Chairman reported that Katherine Alcock had also been presented with an award, nominated by Lindfield Rural Parish Council for her work in the community, particularly in respect of the King Edward Hall committee, Village Day, the Village Runs and the Lindfield Primary School PTA.

67.3 County Local Committee. The Chairman reported that he, Councillor Snowling and the Clerk had attended the meeting of the WSCC Central Mid Sussex County Local Committee (CLC) on 15 September, at which representatives of the Lindfield Preservation Society had been present to progress their application for a Traffic Regulation Order.

68. POLICE / NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICE PANEL REPORT.

68.1 The Chairman read out the relevant paragraph from the Minutes of the meeting of the Police Neighbourhood Panel held on 3 September, which the Parish Council's representatives had been unable to attend. The following matters had been reported: vehicle fuel theft; damage to fence panels in Newton Road; criminal damage caused by the cutting of barbed wire in Snowdrop Lane; five incidents of fraud or attempted fraud, including computer scams, antisocial behaviour involving motorbikes in the Scrase Valley LNR and bins being overturned in Hickmans Lane. The Panel had also noted the campaign by the Lindfield Preservation Society to address the problem of large lorries using routes through the village.

Councillor Allen expressed thanks to PCSO Erica Baxter for keeping the Parish Council up to date and it was noted that her 'beat' area had been extended.

69. REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

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

County Local Committee. Attendance by the Parish Council representatives at meetings of the CLC was greatly appreciated. Councillor Field stated that it had been important for the Haywards Heath Transport Study to have received 'air-time' at that meeting.

Public Rights of Way Routine Maintenance. In response to Councillor Field's enquiry, the Chairman confirmed that an email regarding the forthcoming inspection of the footpaths had been received.

Appointments. Gulu Sibanda had been appointed as Principal Community Officer for the Central Mid Sussex area and, as previously reported, Richard Speller was the Area Manager Highways (Mid Sussex). It was hoped that there would now be a more settled period. Mr. Speller had taken up a number of the more difficult issues.

Police Community Support Officer. Councillor Field commended PCSO Erica Baxter for doing an excellent job and for demonstrating that by being accessible rather than visible she was able to give good service to the community.

Footpath from Backwoods Lane to School Lane. Councillor Field was deeply disappointed that the work due to be carried out at the weekend by a volunteer work party had been postponed because the tripartite agreement required by MSDC for ongoing maintenance was not yet in place. The volunteer scheme was in great demand throughout the County and it was unlikely that the work could be rearranged before November/December and only then subject to suitable ground conditions and the availability of the volunteers. Councillor Field paid tribute to all the individuals in Lindfield who had been prepared to do this work: a great community effort.

Traffic Regulation Order. The Lindfield Preservation Society had taken their proposal to all eight Councils which would be affected by the scheme and had received support from all of them in varying degrees. It was understood that Mr. Jesson would complete the application and hand it to Councillor Field to deliver to County Hall. A considerable amount of discussion about the lorry problem had already taken place at WSCC and Councillor Field was trying to facilitate a meeting between the Cabinet Member for Highways and representatives of the Lindfield Preservation Society. The initial reaction from the Police Traffic Section

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Commander had been that Police would not support the proposal as they would not be able to enforce this TRO and it was likely that they would raise objections during the consultation. Enforcement would carry a burden of proof; a considerable amount of evidence would be required to take action in each case of a breach, such as whence the lorry originated; the parent company and details of the route.

TROs were normally dealt with through CLCs but this one would cover two other CLC areas and it was not yet clear whether it would be dealt with through the CLCs or by Highways as there may be other ways to address the problem, for example:

- more assiduous enforcement of the Advisory Lorry Route
- liaison with the haulage companies and encourage operators to install commercial satellite navigation
- working with the planning departments of the District Councils in the area regarding traffic and highway related planning conditions

Lorries were currently moving material from the Haywards Heath Station redevelopment site and Councillor Field suggested that a weight restriction may not have the desired effect in the case of local development.

Following a recent High Court decision it was understood that planning conditions resulting from Wealden District Council's policy regarding the Ashdown Forest Protection Zone could now be challenged.

Councillor Field emphasised that if the TRO application was taken up by WSCC, it would not be a quick process because of the large area and the number of people this would cover; there would have to be full consultation and all objections would have to be investigated.

69.2 Councillor Hersey (MSDC) reported as follows:

District Plan. The period of consultation had ended and responses were in the process of being analysed. This would then go before the Scrutiny Committee in October and then to Full Council.

Community Infrastructure Levy: Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule. The consultation on the draft Charging Schedule was to end on 18 September.

Budget 2016/17. Work was in progress on preparing the budget for the next financial year.

Lindfield Primary School footpath. Councillor Hersey was deeply disappointed and embarrassed about the postponement of the work on the footpath and would be asking questions.

70. ACTION LIST.

70.1 The Action List was **NOTED**.

71. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS.

71.1 No new consultation documents had been received since the last meeting of the Council. However the report of the Planning and Traffic Committee (Agenda item 12 i) would include a recommendation, in accordance with Standing Order 7(a), to comment on the MSDC Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule, reversing the decision made at the meeting of Full Council on 16 July not to submit comments.

72. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

72.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9 July 2015. A verbal report had been made at the Council meeting held on 16 July, when the Minutes were not yet available. **RESOLVED:** to receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9 July 2015 and to confirm their recommendations.

72.2 Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 10 September 2015. These Minutes were not yet available.

72.3 Procedure for document receipt, circulation, response, handling and filing. It was **NOTED** that the draft procedure had been approved for recommendation to Full Council for adoption. **RESOLVED:** to **ADOPT** the Procedure for document receipt, circulation, response, handling and filing, as drafted.

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72.4 Proposed public conveniences on the Common. The notes of the meeting of members of the Working Group with David Harper and Councillor Pru Moore of MSDC held on 15 July 2015 were duly **RECEIVED**. It was **NOTED** that further advice had since been received from a Planning Officer who considered that the site to the right of the bowls club car park would not meet the test of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area as the proposed building was likely to look prominent and out of place. However an application for the site to the left of the car park could be considered and the Council had been advised to address the potential impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties by including measures such as locking the toilets in the late evening to lessen the likelihood of noise. It was **AGREED** that the Council should move towards carrying out a public consultation with a 3D model, prior to submitting a planning application, and that in preparation, the Working Group should ascertain the amount of funding already in place (£106) and obtain a realistic estimate of the cost of the project and the ongoing maintenance once completed, to give a realistic idea of the impact on the precept.

72.5 Parish Office matters. **NOTED**:

- Repair to the tower clock. The F&GP Committee had agreed to accept the quotation from the clock repair specialist to service the clock and fit a new type of automatic resetting mechanism.
- Business Rates. Confirmation had been received that a refund of £2,377.38, had been negotiated by Goodman Nash and the annual charge had been reduced, due to application of Small Business Rate Relief. Their fee, an agreed percentage of the total saving, would be paid on receipt of an invoice.

72.6 Budget 2016/17. The Committee had noted the timetable for budget setting beginning with each of the Committees and the Admin Sub Committee putting together their particular budgets over the next three months.

72.7 External Audit. **NOTED**: the report of the External Auditor (PKF Littlejohn LLP) had been received on 16 September and 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 the section headed “other matters not affecting our opinion which we draw to the attention of the Council” PKF Littlejohn had stated:

“in the completion of Section 4, the Annual Internal Audit Report, and their detailed report, the internal auditor has drawn attention to weaknesses in relation to risk assessment monitoring and the introduction of new procedures. The Body must ensure that action is taken to address these areas of weakness in a timely manner.”

It was **NOTED** that most of the Internal Auditor’s comments had been addressed and the point raised about Risk Assessments was in hand.

Members commented on the unfortunate misinterpretation by the External Auditor of the Internal Auditor’s report which had not in fact included the word “weaknesses” in relation to risk assessment monitoring.

72.8 Statements of Account/Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the periods 01.06.15 to 30.06.15, 01.07.15 to 31.07.15 and 01.08.15 to 31.08.15. The Financial Statements were **RECEIVED** and **NOTED**. To 31 August 2015:

- from the overall in-year budget of £203,620, the total of £82,370 had been spent
- from the F&GP budget of £128,020, £43,290 had been spent
- from the Admin Budget breakdown, from the total of £112,520, £40,070 had been spent
- from the E&A budget of £75,400, £39,319 had been spent
- there had been no expenditure from the P&T budget of £200,
- £158 ha been spent from the reserves

72.9 List of cheques for approval: cheques drawn since the Council meeting held on 16 July 2015. The list of cheques drawn since the meeting held on 16 July 2015 was tabled. **NOTED** that the expenditure during this

period under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 totalled £100 and that the Petty Cash balance as at 17.09.15 was £148.01.

It was **NOTED** that there were two incorrect entries in the VAT column, which also affected the total of that column. However this did not affect the other details on the list.

Subject to amendment of the errors referred to above, it was **RESOLVED**: to approve the list of cheques, numbers 105637 - 105662 inclusive, totalling £13,545.26. It was **AGREED** to authorise the Chairman to sign the revised list of cheques after amendment by the RFO.

73. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

Councillor Blunden reported as follows:

- 73.1 Christmas Lights. A meeting had been arranged with the Project Manager for the following week to discuss the requirements. Councillor Blunden had checked the sparklights and would be bringing some matters to his attention.
- 73.2 Post office corner paving. Chris Sharman from Balfour Beatty had informed the Clerk that he was expecting to receive the date for road space from the licensing team by the end of the week and would then issue a date for the work to start.
- 73.3 Footpath to Lindfield Primary Academy. A short report was tabled. There had been a long discussion prior to the start of the recent liaison meeting with David Terry (MSDC) about the last minute postponement of the work to install the footpath from Backwoods Lane to School Lane, which was attributed to poor communication between representatives of MSDC and the school regarding the requirement for a tripartite legal agreement to be in place for ongoing maintenance before the work could begin. It appeared that after a failed attempt to hold a meeting of stakeholders in July, nothing further had been done on drafting the agreement and it was believed there had been some misunderstanding, in that the school representative was not aware that she was expected to contact WSCC to obtain their formal consent to their participation in the legal agreement and she was also not made aware that the consent of MSDC for the work to take place was conditional on this agreement being in place beforehand. MSDC on the other hand had assumed that the work had been postponed, which it had not.

As previously reported, the commitment asked of the Parish Council was to contribute a third of the cost of ongoing maintenance, estimated at no more than £1,000 a year after the first two or three years after installation. It was understood that the legal agreement could be ready to sign at short notice and to avoid any further delay, it was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Clerk to commit the Council to this agreement, subject to the terms and conditions being acceptable.

- 73.4 Liaison meeting with David Terry, MSDC. The notes of the meeting held on 16 September would be circulated in due course. Councillor Blunden summarised the main points.
- Pond valve - this was proving to be a difficult job in engineering terms: the replacement was to be a sluice valve but the pipe to the centre of the Pond had to be capped off somehow. Contractors had indicated that they would be sheet piling into the base of the Pond instead of creating a clay coffer dam as specified and Mr. Terry had stopped them doing this, delaying the start of the work. It was understood that the work would still be done this year. Mr Terry was asked to try to co-ordinate with WSCC to get the wall inspected and repaired while the water level was lowered.
 - Small island replacement – Mr. Terry was supportive of the Pond Warden's latest plans for the replacement of the small islands and would arrange for removal of the material from the old islands by contractors.
 - Fencing - Mr. Terry was asked to work with the Parish Council on a programme of proactive maintenance of the fencing round the Pond, with a proportional contribution from the Parish Council.
 - Drainage – issues of drainage in the playground and the bowls club car park were reiterated
 - Litter bin emptying – the ongoing problems with emptying of bins on the Common during the summer months were pointed out.
 - Request for bonfire beacon – Mr. Terry agreed to discuss this request with the Property Legal Officer at MSDC.

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- Layout of Common – Mr. Terry gave advance notice that MSDC were going to investigate the potential for improving the layout of the Common to accommodate various uses.
- Transfer of Wilderness Field and the buffer zone - the transfer was currently in progress and excluded the playground, the mound and the footpath running along the back of the development.
- Possible joint projects: Mr. Terry agreed to get a price for additional white-painted tantalised wood posts for the Black Hill strip of Common and to liaise with a colleague about developing a plan for upgrading the Hickmans Lane playground.

73.5 Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 30 July 2015. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 30 July 2015 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

74. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE.

Councillor Gomme reported that the Committee had met on 21 July, 11 August and 1 September and drew attention to the following:

74.1 Planning application DM/15/2926: The Holman Building rear of 115 High Street. At the meeting held on 1 September, the Committee had been unable to support the application for the change from commercial to residential use of the Holman building to the rear of 115 High Street because there had been no detailed application giving information about physical changes to the building which was situated at the rear of a Listed Building.

74.2 Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 21 July, 11 August and 1 September. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 21 July, 11 August and 1 September be received and their recommendations confirmed.

74.3 Councillor Gomme also gave the following updates:

- Land north of Birchen Lane. A second application had been submitted and the first was still under appeal. This would be considered at the next meeting of the Planning and Traffic Committee as part of the site was within the Lindfield Parish and the possible effects of the development on the village infrastructure needed to be considered.
- Traffic Study. One of the three firms of traffic consultants that had been invited to quote had declined and a fourth had now been approached.

74.4 MSDC – Community Infrastructure Levy – Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule. As stated in Minute 71.1, the Planning and Traffic Committee on 1 September had agreed to recommend to Full Council that, further to Full Council Minute 49.1 (meeting held on 16 July 2015), the decision not to comment on this consultation document should be reversed and that comments should be submitted to MSDC expressing concerns regarding the low CIL rate being proposed.

Standing Order 7 (a) made provision for reversal of a Council resolution by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or sub-committee. It was therefore **AGREED** that it was in order to reconsider the decision made by the Council on 16 July.

The following resolution was **MOVED** by Councillor Gomme, **SECONDED** by Councillor Snowling and unanimously **AGREED**.

RESOLVED: that Lindfield Parish Council should submit the following response to MSDC in respect of the consultation on the Community Infrastructure Levy - Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule:

“Lindfield Parish Council has concerns regarding the amount of the proposed CIL rates which do not appear to be high enough: the shortfall is forecast to be £126.4m whereas the amount expected to be received from developers is only £99.3m and that figure is based on the assumption that all development in the Strategic Housing Land Allocation Assessment will actually be delivered. There are already known infrastructure shortfalls and funding from Central Government to bridge the funding gaps cannot be relied upon. We would therefore question the wisdom of setting a low figure at the outset, which may exacerbate this problem over the life of the new District Plan”.

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- 74.5 Neighbourhood Plan update. Councillor Gomme reported that the Examiner's Report had been published two to three weeks previously, together with the accompanying documents. Today confirmation had been received from MSDC that the period of consultation would run for 21 days from 17 September until 8 October 2015. After consideration by Cabinet, MSDC had put forward an alternative modification to the Examiner's proposed amendment to the Built Up Area Boundary, to exclude the area of land for which planning permission had not been granted.

A draft response for submission by Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Parish Councils had been drafted by the Vice Chairman of the Steering Group and it had been approved by Lindfield Rural Parish Council on 14 September. A copy of the draft was tabled. It was **MOVED** by Councillor Gomme, **SECONDED** by Councillor Snowling and unanimously **AGREED** that the response as drafted should be submitted to MSDC:

"The Examiner's report suggests that the Built up area boundary used for the Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan, should include the land to the north of the Barratts Homes development on Gravelye Lane in Lindfield, known as Site 6 and shown in pink on the map. Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) believes that the Built up area boundary should only include land that is either developed or has been granted planning permission for residential development. Lindfield Rural Parish Council agrees with that belief.

By definition, 'Built up Area' means 'an area that has been built upon'. It does not mean land that has not been built upon. The Neighbourhood Plan submitted to Mid Sussex District Council in December 2014 contained a statement to the effect that at some point, the Built up area boundary referred to in the Plan would need to be redrawn to take account of additional approved housing developments. It recognised that if development had been approved outside the current Built up area boundary then at some point the boundary would need amendment to include such development. Since the Barratts Homes development is now underway, the Parish Councils therefore have no problem with, and agrees to, the MSDC proposal to amend the boundary to include all **approved** developments. However, the Parish Councils totally disagree with any proposal to include any area, such as the pink Site 6, which is outside the currently defined Built up area boundary and for which no planning approval has been given.

In his report, the Examiner appears to be intimating that potential housing development areas shown in the recent SHLAA document issued by MSDC, which includes Site 6, were not considered during the Neighbourhood Plan development process. This is incorrect. All sites were considered and all were rejected for one reason or another. Details are contained within the documents associated with the submission and available on the Lindfield Parish Council web site."

- 74.6 Haywards Heath Transport Study. Councillor Snowling referred to Councillor Field's comments about the Haywards Heath Transport Study, made during her report and although the proposals would not directly affect Lindfield, he would encourage colleagues to look at the plans.

75. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY.

- 75.1 It was anticipated that the annual letter from the Poppy Appeal organisers would be received shortly, seeking confirmation that an order should be placed for a wreath to be laid by the Chairman at the War Memorial at the Remembrance Sunday Parade. It was **AGREED** that a donation of £50 should be made from the Chairman's Fund.

76. NEXT COUNCIL MEETING – 12 NOVEMBER 2015.

- 76.1 **NOTED:** Tom Clark, Solicitor to Mid Sussex District Council, had offered to attend meetings of Parish Councils in October or November to discuss Standards and the Code of Conduct, particularly for the benefit of new Councillors. He had accepted an invitation to the Full Council meeting on 12 November. Members were encouraged to attend this meeting. It was suggested that Mr. Clark should be asked for an idea of how long he anticipated this item to take.

77. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

- 77.1 No other items of business were raised.

The meeting concluded at 9.05 p.m.