

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY 20 JUNE 2013** at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield

The meeting commenced at 7.30 p.m.

Present:

Lindfield Parish Councillors: Mr. W. Blunden
 Mr. M. Allen
 Mr. M. Amor
 Mrs. J. Chatfield
 Mr. A. Gomme
 Mr. S. Henton
 Mr. R. Pickett
 Mr. C. Snowling

Not present:

Mrs. M. Hersey
Mr. S. Hodgson
Mr. R. Plass
Mrs. V. Upton

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

In attendance: Mrs. C. Irwin (Clerk)
 Mrs. S. Kolien (Responsible Financial Officer)

The Chairman welcomed those present to the meeting.

283. APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

283.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hersey, Hodgson, Plass and Upton and the reasons were accepted.

284. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

284.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members in respect of any items on the agenda.

285. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

285.1 There were no members of the public present.

286. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON 9 MAY 2013.

286.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes and Confidential Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 9 May 2013. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman **SIGNED** the Minutes and Confidential Minutes as being a true record of that meeting.

287. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

287.1 Interview by Year 6 pupils at Lindfield Primary School. The Chairman reported on his visit to Lindfield Primary School on 19 June to be interviewed by Year 6 pupils. He had given a presentation with slides on three aspects of Village life: the Parish Council, Village Day and Bonfire Night. The children had given positive feedback on the way the Council organised the Christmas Festival Night, which the majority attended. They had also expressed their thanks for the Council's input to the playground equipment installed a few years previously and asked whether the equipment in the Hickmans Lane playground could be improved. The Chairman had referred to the proposed public conveniences on the Common and received resounding approval from the children.

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287.2 Village Day. On behalf of the Council, the Chairman wished to record appreciation to the organisers of this year's Village Day, which had been a great success.

287.3 Haywards Heath Town Council Civic Service. The Chairman had attended the Civic Service at which the anniversary of HM the Queen's coronation had been commemorated.

287.4 SALC Chairman's Networking Day. The Chairman and Councillor Gomme, as Chairman of the Planning and Traffic Committee, had attended a recent Networking Day for Chairmen, organised by the Sussex Association of Local Councils, at which Nick Boles, the Planning Minister had given a presentation. Delegates had been given the opportunity of putting pre-notified questions to the Minister. The importance of all towns and parishes having a Neighbourhood Plan in place had been particularly evident in Mr. Boles' presentation and it had become apparent that a number of Councils had been unable to act on this because of insufficient financial reserves. Councils unable to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan were at great risk if the District Plans failed to be approved.

288. REPORT ON POLICE PRIORITIES.

288.1 It was understood that PCSO Nicola Green was arranging a meeting of the Police Neighbourhood Panel and encouraged people to attend. Councillor Allen stated that this meeting had been arranged at very short notice and he had been unable to attend due to a prior commitment. It was **AGREED** that PCSO Green should be asked to give more notice for future meetings.

289. REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

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

289.1 Road resurfacing. Councillor Field hoped that Members were pleased with the recent resurfacing of the High Street (between Lewes Road and Backwoods Lane) and also The Welkin and Pickers Green. Councillor Field was in discussion with MSDC regarding the release of Section 106 funds from the Limes development, originally earmarked for the mini roundabout at the Lewes Road/High Street junction, to resurface Newton Road, Dukes Road and Brushes Lane. She acknowledged that the lack of a Section 59 agreement, which should have been put in place by the Highways Department before the development began, may be an impediment but she would pursue this as the money would be repaid to the developer if not used.

289.2 Lindfield Primary School. Councillor Field had recently visited Lindfield Primary School to talk about traffic and the extension due to be built. Parents were concerned about the impact of the increased pupil roll on traffic and road safety and innovative ways would be sought to improve pedestrian access to the school. In response to a Member's question, Councillor Field confirmed that the extension work was due to start on 1 July.

Councillor Snowling (MSDC) reported as follows:

289.3 Community infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule. Councillor Snowling reported that this schedule had been formally adopted at the Full Council meeting the previous evening and recommended that a copy should be obtained for the Parish Office.

289.4 Lindfield Cricket Club extension. Councillor Snowling reported that the MSDC Cabinet had agreed to grant a lease to the Lindfield Cricket Club for the site of the new extension. A number of conditions would be attached to the lease and MSDC would endeavour to give advance notice to the Council and affected residents about what would be happening and when. The Planning and Traffic Committee was aware of recent issues which had arisen relating to site access during work carried out with planning permission and the Committee, when looking at plans that could involve infringements of neighbours' rights, would add comments asking for a detailed plan to be drawn up and shared with occupants of neighbouring properties beforehand.

290. ACTION LIST.

290.1 The Action List was noted without comment.

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291. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS.

- 291.1 It was **NOTED** that the Planning and Traffic Committee had delegated the response on the Draft District Plan consultation to the Deputy Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and a letter of support had been sent. Councillor Snowling welcomed the fact that this letter had been submitted before the deadline to help give a proper balance to the consultation.
- 291.2 There were no other current consultations.

292. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

Councillor Blunden reported on the meeting held on 6 June as follows:

- 292.1 Street map of Lindfield. The Committee had considered whether the street map should be deferred pending the mapping of the road layout for the Wates development but had decided to proceed.
- 292.2 Litter bins. The model of litter bin previously selected for the footpath alongside King Edward Hall had been discontinued. The Committee had therefore considered further options and decided on an open top Valley model from Iles Waste Systems. It had also been agreed not to replace the bin at the Lewes Road end of the footpath as there did not appear to be a need.
- 292.3 Compton Road Lime Trees. WSCC Highways department had informed the Parish Council that the Compton Road trees would be pollarded between mid-June and mid-September and had asked the Council to state its preference. The Committee had agreed that this should be done as soon as possible because the foliage was hanging low and there had been a complaint. The Highways Officer had since confirmed that this would be done in the week commencing 24 June.
- 292.4 WSCC Street Lighting PFI – Capital Replacement Programme. The Committee had set up a Working Group to prepare for discussions with WSCC and / or Scottish and Southern Electric Contracting regarding their Capital Replacement Programme of street lights (Lindfield: September 2014). The Working Group would be assessing the existing stock, any need for extra lights and suitable types and styles of lighting for particular locations, particularly the Conservation Area. The Clerk had written to SSE Contracting to find out what elements of the programme were negotiable.
- 292.5 Allotments. A number of unusual recent queries relating to allotment tenancies had been considered but not supported:
- A request from a tenant for her daughter to be named on the agreement as joint tenant
 - a suggestion for a joint plot for homeless people
 - a request from the next person on the waiting list for disabled people to be allowed to work on her plot
- 292.6 Request to MSDC for a licence to sell food and drink from a mobile food unit on the Common. MSDC had invited the Parish Council's views about this request which the Committee agreed not to support on the grounds that it would compete with local shops and might lead to further food vans on the Common Car Parks.
- 292.7 Christmas Lights. A meeting with Paul Compton from Blachere had been held earlier that day regarding additional Christmas lights in the High Street trees. Mr. Compton would be sending a quotation in due course.
- 292.8 Ban on drinking in streets and public open spaces in Haywards Heath. This proposal was being considered by Haywards Heath Town Council and one of their members had asked informally whether Lindfield should be included. The Committee had agreed that Lindfield should not be included and that the time to address this would be if a problem arose in Lindfield.
- 292.9 Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 6 June 2013. **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 6 June 2013 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

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293. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE.

Councillor Gomme reported as follows:

293.1 Wates Development. The application for 230 dwellings at Gravelye Lane had been approved by MSDC on 21 May.

293.2 Appeal - land adjacent to the Witch Inn. This appeal had been dismissed on the grounds of flood risk and inappropriate design. It was noted that the Inspector had referred to the Village Design Statement in terms of the appropriateness of design to location. The Inspector had stated that although the proposed development met the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development, it would not meet the environmental dimension which he considered to be a sufficiently substantial concern for refusal notwithstanding the lack of a five year land supply in Mid Sussex District.

293.3 Councillor Gomme highlighted the following applications to which the Committee had agreed to object:

P&T meeting held on 30 April 2013.

- 13/00184/FUL & 13/00190/LBC – 89 High Street - construction of storage buildings
- 13/01124/FUL – 61 Denmans Lane: bungalow conversion
- 13/01190/FUL – 42 Sunte Avenue: first floor extension

P&T meeting held on 21 May 2013 (Chaired by Councillor Hersey)

- 13/01190/FUL – 42 Sunte Avenue (amended plans): first floor extension
- 13/01346/FUL & 13/01348/LBC – The Turret House, Old Place: garden room extension.

P&T meeting held on 11 June 2013

- 13/01600/FUL – 32 Luxford Road: dormers in front roof and construction of barn end to roof (third application)
- 13/01607/CND - Development site, Blackthorns Close: variation of conditions requiring submission of details relating to traffic regulation order prior to occupation.

293.4 Neighbourhood Plan. Councillor Gomme reported on the progress being made by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, highlighting the following:

- A review of progress had taken place at the Steering Group meeting held on 15 May.
- “Pop in Sessions” had been held on 20 May (Scaynes Hill) and 23 May (Lindfield) as part of the community involvement programme. Both events had been well attended and interesting ideas had been proposed by visitors.
- A Neighbourhood Plan mini-stand had been present at the Lindfield Arts Festival and Village Day.
- A “State of the Parishes Report”, commissioned from Action in rural Sussex (AirS) had been published during May and contained statistical data from sources which included the 2001 and 2011 Census.
- The work of the Focus Groups was now completed and Councillor Gomme wished to record thanks to the 30 plus volunteers. They would be asked to carry out an initial peer review of the first draft of the plan.
- Councillor Gomme expressed thanks to the residents who had returned their Housing Needs Survey forms. – a return rate of 25%. The analysis of the survey had been uploaded to the Parish Council’s website and the results were largely in-line with recent surveys done in other Mid Sussex parishes. 60% were in favour of additional affordable housing to meet local need and 41 new cases of householders in need of such accommodation had been identified.
- The winner of the “Lucky Dip” organised by AirS among the respondents to the survey would be presented with a Gift Card in due course.
- During the next couple of months, AirS, in consultation with members of the Steering Group would write a draft Neighbourhood Plan for the two parishes. A meeting had been held with Neil Homer of AirS and Claire Tester of MSDC to discuss the post-Wates new housing situation, the Steering Group’s review of possible ideas to meet local housing need as identified through community involvement, activities and surveys and the timetable for submission of the draft plan to MSDC.
- The Steering Group intended to publish the initial draft to the community in September to seek views on the policies contained therein. The Steering Group was on schedule to produce a plan that could proceed through the legal stages leading to a referendum towards the end of 2014.

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293.5 Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 30 April, 21 May and 11 June 2013. **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 30 April, 21 May and 11 June 2013 be received and their recommendations confirmed.

294. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE.

294.1 Councillor Henton reported that the Committee had met on 23 May and among other items of business Members had discussed matters relating to the Denmans Lane property and the lease for the first floor at the Clock Tower House, both of which were commercially sensitive and would be raised under the confidential item at the end of the meeting.

294.2 Lindfield Parish Directory and Year Book 2014. Of the nine companies invited to quote for printing the Directory, four had responded with a quotation. These had been set out in a spread sheet tabled at the meeting. It was **AGREED** to ratify the recommendation to accept the quotation from Nordic Press.

294.3 Local Government Pension Scheme: Employer Discretions. As an employer within the WSCC Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) the Parish Council was required to make decisions on a number of discretions available to employers under the relevant legislation and to publish the policy on certain of these. Councillor Henton had made recommendations on each discretion for Members' consideration and drew particular attention to the following:

B18 (1) & (3) – Flexible Retirement – discretion to consent to a reduction in hours or grade of post and waiving of any actuarial reduction that would apply. Although he was in favour of flexible retirement per se, Councillor Henton considered that in the Parish Council's circumstances it would not be possible to cover the work with the number of staff if flexible retirement was permitted.

B30 (5) - discretion to waive actuarial reduction of pension on compassionate grounds where pension benefits are paid early in accordance with regulation 30 (2) of the Benefit Regulations. Councillor Henton explained that if such a reduction was waived, the employee would receive the same pension payments as they would if they had continued in employment until their retirement date, paying their full contributions, but the cost of waiving the actuarial reduction would be borne by the employer. It was therefore suggested that this discretion may only be exercised in cases of early retirement on grounds of ill health.

6 – discretion to award lump sum compensation of up to 104 weeks pay in cases of redundancy, termination of employment on efficiency grounds or cessation of a joint appointment. Councillor Henton suggested that the Council's policy should be to consider an award of up to 26 weeks' pay in these circumstances.

It was **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the decisions as listed in the table and to publish the policies as required. It was **NOTED** that due to a forthcoming change in the regulations, the discretions would have to be reviewed again in 2014.

294.4 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 23 May. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 23 May be received and their recommendations confirmed.

294.5 Statements of Account/Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the period 01.04.13 to 30.04.13. It was **NOTED** that the reports for May were not yet available. **RESOLVED:** to approve the Statements of Account / Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the period 01.04.13 to 30.04.13. **NOTED:**

- From a total budget of £242,025, the sum of £21,247 had been spent.
- The Finance and General Purposes Committee had spent £19,139 from the budget of £119,675
- From the Administration Budget of £104,675, £17,351 had been spent.
- The Environment and Amenities Committee had spent £1,919 from the budget total of £64,150
- The Planning and Traffic Committee had spent £188 from the budget total of £20,200.

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294.6 List of cheques for approval: cheques drawn since Council meeting of 9 May 2013. 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 £671.33. The Petty Cash balance as at 20.06.13 was £88.40. **RESOLVED:** to approve the list of cheques numbered 105195 to 105221, totalling £12,127.85. The Chairman **SIGNED** the list of cheques which is appended to the signed copy of these Minutes as Appendix A.

Councillor Allen asked that the word “can” be deleted from the description “petrol can” of cheque number 105216 as the purchase had been for petrol only (for the allotment mowers).

295. REPORT ON THE ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE COUNCIL'S INTERNAL AUDIT AND INTERNAL CONTROL PROCEDURES.

295.1 On the recommendation of the F&GP Committee it was **RESOLVED** to approve the report on the Annual Review of the Effectiveness of the Internal Audit and Internal Control Procedures.

296. YEAR END ACCOUNTS FOR 2012/13.

296.1 Members had all received a copy of the Accounts and Annual Return to be agreed and signed at this meeting.

NOTED:

- the Receipts and Payments account showed receipts of £468,709.79 and payments of £477,954.18,
- The closing balance, as at 31 March 2013, was £170,744.39 which included petty cash in hand of £111.42.
- The figures this year were much greater than usual, due to the loan obtained from the Public Works Loan Board for the purchase of Clock Tower House.
- The accounts had been inspected by the Internal Auditor on 17 June, and he had confirmed that he was satisfied that they were correct.

No queries were raised by Members on the Accounts.

RESOLVED to **APPROVE** the Year End Accounts for 2012/13. **RESOLVED** that the Supporting Notes for the Statement of Accounts and the Balance Sheet should be **SIGNED** by the Chairman of Council and the Responsible Financial Officer.

297. ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013

297.1 Section 1 - The statement of accounts. Members **NOTED** that, following discussions with the Internal Auditor and the previous External Auditor (Mazars), the RFO had produced the accounts on a receipts and payments basis only. The Council had minimal prepayments or accruals and converting to Income and Expenditure was unnecessary extra work, which was not merited.

RESOLVED to **APPROVE** the Statements of Accounts for 2012/13 and **AGREED** that Section 1 of the Annual Return should therefore be **SIGNED** by the Responsible Financial Officer and the Chairman of Council.

297.2 Section 2 – Annual Governance Statement.

NOTED: Members were required to acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring that there was a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. Members therefore considered their responses to each of the statements listed at Section 2 (Annual Governance Statement), read aloud in turn by the Clerk and confirmed the statements to the best of their knowledge and belief

RESOLVED to enter YES to each of Statements 1-8 and N/A to question 9.

RESOLVED that Section 2 (Annual Governance Statement), duly completed as stated, should be **SIGNED** by the Chairman of Council and the Clerk.

297.3 Section 3 – External auditor's certificate and opinion. **NOTED** that the External Auditor's Certificate and Opinion would be completed in due course by the External Auditor (Littlejohn).

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297.4 Section 4 – Annual internal audit report. **NOTED** that the Annual Internal Audit Report had been completed and signed by the Internal Auditor, together with a copy of his written report, following his examination of the Accounts on 17 June. It was not anticipated that the comments he had made would raise any concerns with the External Auditor.

297.5 The Annual Return, duly signed, would be sent to the External Auditor the following day.

298. ANNUAL REPORT.

298.1 The draft Annual Report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the Annual Report for publication in the August edition of Lindfield Life and the Parish Council's website with printed copies to be available at the Parish Office.

299. PROPOSED PUBLIC CONVENIENCES ON THE COMMON: TO CONSIDER THE SKETCH PROPOSALS RECEIVED FROM THE SURVEYOR.

299.1 The Clerk had met with Godfrey Baker and Nicholas Rowe from Gould and Co. on 14 June to receive the sketch proposals for the public conveniences, following which they had inspected the proposed site.

Four variations of roof style on the same traditional, rectangular building were being offered, plus a further more imaginative design. The traditional building was a simple design to reduce the risk of vandalism – no windows, brick rather than render walls (as being less likely to encourage graffiti) and a slate roof. The brickwork could be done in such a way as to break up the plain expanse of wall.

The fifth option had rendered walls with an anti-graffiti finish and a sloping zinc roof. The slope was intended to discourage people walking on it and zinc was said to be less likely to be stolen than lead.

Mr. Baker and Mr. Rowe were going to provide a further set of drawings showing the toilets in situ, both on the site to the left of the Bowls Club car park and on the grassed area to the right of the car park, where there was more space and where the WCs would be further from houses and the memorial hedge.

During discussion Members considered that the options presented as scale drawings were too large for the site and that the roof designs added to the bulk. They felt that the footprint should be kept as small as possible and that the building should be in keeping with the location and neighbouring buildings, including the cricket pavilion, which had a hipped roof that reduced the bulk. It was suggested that a WC block based on the one in Cuckfield, but larger, may be appropriate.

It was **AGREED**:

- to invite Mr. Baker and Mr. Rowe to meet the Working Group to discuss the designs in the context of the location and site limitations
- to ask Mr. Baker and Mr. Rowe to produce a scaled detailed drawing of option 5 and add a version with a brick finish instead of render.
- to consult David Harper of MSDC regarding the alternative suggestion for the location

300. LINDFIELD ARTS FESTIVAL

300.1 The Council acknowledged a letter from the Arts Festival Director expressing thanks for the grant and support for the event.

301. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

301.1 No other items of business were raised.

The confidential part of the meeting started at 8.40 p.m.

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302. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

- 302.1 Because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted 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 advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded.

Councillor Field left the meeting.

303. MATTERS RELATING TO PARISH OFFICE.

- 303.1 Matters relating to the former Parish Office at 6 Denmans Lane were discussed and it was **AGREED** that as the next scheduled meeting of Council was 12 September, an extraordinary meeting of Council would be convened as necessary to discuss this further.

304. PROCEDURAL MATTERS.

- 304.1 At the request of the Clerk, a procedural matter, on which an agreement had been made at the Council meeting held on 25 August 2011, was reconsidered. It was **AGREED** to **CONFIRM** the procedure as previously set out.

The meeting concluded at 9.00 p.m.