

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL held on THURSDAY 25 JUNE 2009 at the King Edward Hall, Lindfield.

Present: Mr. W. Blunden (Chairman)  
Mr. M. Allen (from 7.50 p.m.)  
Rev. M. Davies  
Mr. A. Gomme  
Mr. S. Henton (following co-option – minute 295)  
Mrs. M. Hersey (from 7.47 p.m.)  
Mr. R. Pickett (from 8.04 p.m.)  
Mrs. V. Upton

Also Present: 4 members of the public

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

293. WELCOME AND EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS.

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

294. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

294.1 Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. Leach, Nicolle and Willcox and the reasons accepted. Apologies had also been received from County Councillor Mrs. Christine Field who was unable to attend this and the next Full Council Meeting due to prior commitments. However she had sent a report and Members had been very pleased to see Cllr. Field at the Planning and Traffic Committee meeting the previous week.

295. CO-OPTION OF A NEW COUNCILLOR

295.1 Councillor Snowling declared a personal interest in this item as he had been well acquainted with the proposed co-optee, Mr. Henton, for many years.

295.2 Subsequent to Councillor Derrick Johnson's resignation from the Council which had taken effect from 1 June, the prescribed procedure for advertising the vacancy had been followed. It had now been confirmed by MSDC that no representations had been made to the Monitoring Officer demanding a bye-election and the Council was free to co-opt. One person, Stephen Henton, had come forward for co-option to the Council and Members had received a short biography. It was RESOLVED that Stephen Henry Henton be co-opted as a Member of Lindfield Parish Council. The Chairman then welcomed Councillor Henton to the Council and invited him to take his place at the table.

296. TO RECEIVE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE OF NEWLY CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR.

296.1 Councillor Henton made and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was then also signed by the Proper Officer. The Clerk would be advising Cllr. Henton after the meeting regarding the requirement to complete the Notice of Members' Registerable Interests within 28 days.

297. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

297.1 No such declarations were made.

298. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

298.1 Quorum. Mr. N. Kerslake questioned whether there had been a quorum for the first three items and was informed that according to the Council's Standing Orders adopted in October 2008 the quorum was now one third of the total membership as per the NALC Model Standing Orders.

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299. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 12 MAY 2009

299.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 12 May 2009, including the Confidential Minutes. These were AGREED and the Chairman SIGNED the Minutes as being a true record of the meeting.

300. MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD JOINTLY WITH LINDFIELD RURAL PARISH COUNCIL ON 22 APRIL 2009

300.1 The Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held jointly with Lindfield Rural Parish Council on 22 April 2009 had been prepared by the Clerk to Lindfield Rural Parish Council. Two of the Members of Lindfield Parish Council who had attended that meeting were present at this meeting and confirmed that they were satisfied with the Minutes. It was therefore AGREED to receive the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on 22 April 2009.

301. VICE CHAIRMAN'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE.

301.1 NOTED: as she had been absent from the Annual Meeting at which she was elected Vice Chairman, Cllr. Nicolle had made her declaration of acceptance of office in the presence of the Clerk during the following week.

302. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

302.1 Letter in Mid Sussex Times regarding development. The Chairman expressed his dismay on reading a letter published in the Mid Sussex Times on 25 June, expressing the view that the Lindfield Parishes had made no contribution to housing for the last 30 years, that Site K of the Core Strategy was bounded on two sides by Haywards Heath and that development at this site would have an insignificant effect on the appearance of Lindfield. The Chairman stated that during his lifetime Lindfield had expanded from 800 to 4000 homes and that the infrastructure was only just holding up. He conceded that affordable housing for young people was needed, but this did not justify large developments.

303. ACTION LIST

303.1 NOTED that the new website still needed work doing on it before it could be activated and Cllr. Gomme and the Clerk were going to focus on this over the following week. Members were asked to read and revise their biographical details on the existing website as most of them were out of date.

304. TO NOTE ANY CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS RECEIVED.

304.1 No consultation documents had been received.

305. REPORT BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

305.1 County Councillor Mrs. Field had sent a written report which was read out for the benefit of members of the public present. Cllr. Field had stated that she was delighted to have been elected to represent the Parish at WSCC and would do all in her power to work hard and effectively on its behalf and she looked forward to working closely with the Parish Council. Her specific responsibilities to date were: Member of the Policy and Resources Select Committee, Member of the Planning Committee, Chairman of the Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee and Members of the Northern and Central Mid Sussex County Local Committees. The first major issue would be consideration of the County Strategy for the next four years which had four themes: opportunity for all; better place to live; better health for all and staying and feeling safe, with the overall promise "with you, for you". The Chief Executive had informed Members that, in his view, the era of doing public service to people had passed and that for the future, they must look towards local communities and use the County Council as a lever to stand up for individuals and communities. However all of this fell within a scenario of needing to find savings of £50m over the next two years from an annual budget of around £1bn.

Councillor Hersey joined the meeting during the course of the following item.

305.2 Councillor Snowling reported as follows:

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- The Annual Meeting of Mid Sussex District Council had taken place and there had been some changes of post: Cllr. Mrs. Hersey was now the Chair of the Better Lives Advisory Group. Cllr. Snowling continued as Cabinet Member for Health and Community.
- Having taken Counsel's advice the District Council was not challenging the South East Plan, which required 17100 new dwelling units to be built during the period up to 2026. MSDC did not accept that such a large figure was feasible and was anxious to find out if it was possible to meet the requirement for a five year supply of housing land without having to allocate sensitive sites for development .
- Hitherto, Members involved in consideration of planning applications had been advised not to appear to have predetermined the proposals before them by indicating prior to the meeting where a decision was taken what their views were. However a new term had been introduced with the advice that Members could reveal a predisposition, provided it was clear that they would not make up their minds until the actual meeting.
- The work of the District Council's Health Panel was developing pace by pace. A useful meeting had taken place earlier in the day with the Dolphins Practice PPG (Patients Participation Group) and the Panel was anxious to have links with all organizations in Mid Sussex with the common aim to improve NHS Services. There was a new system of issuing reports from the Health Panel via the Members' Information Service, which was also circulated to Town and Parish Councils.

Councillor Allen joined the meeting at this point.

### 306. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE MEETINGS OF 5 MAY AND 26 MAY 2009 (AND 16 JUNE 2009

- 306.1 NOTED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June were not yet available and would be received at the next Council meeting.
- 306.2 RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on 5 May and 26 May 2009 be received and their recommendations confirmed.
- 306.3 NOTED: that the matter of the mini roundabout for the corner of Lewes Road and the High Street was likely to be considered at a special meeting of the Planning and Traffic Committee still to be arranged.
- 306.4 NOTED: that the Planning and Traffic Committee, at the meeting held on 16 June, had not supported a suggestion that there should be signs by the Pond warning drivers to slow down because of the possibility of there being ducks in the road but that the Traffic Study Joint Working Party would be asked to consider the suggestion of reducing the speed limit to 20 mph at this location.

Councillor Pickett joined the meeting during the course of the next item.

### 307. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

- 307.1 Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 28 May 2009. As Councillor Davies had not been present at the meeting of the Committee held on 28 May and Cllr. Willcox was not at the present meeting, Councillor Gomme reported on the main points arising from that meeting as follows:
- 307.2 Establishment of Administration Sub Committee (F&GP Minute 251.3) - This new Sub Committee was to replace the Office Workload Working Party and it would have a wider remit to include staffing and matters to do with the Parish Office including setting up the office in the new premises. It was noted that Council or its Committees could delegate functions to Sub Committees, but not to Working Parties or other informal groups.
- 307.3 Grants (F&GP Minute 254) The Committee had agreed to make a donation of £300 to Streetmate to help enable them to continue the good work they were doing in the Village.
- 307.4 Insurance (F&GP Minute 258) - the Insurance and Risk Management Sub Committee in 2008 had studied the insurance schedule and concluded that cover was low for certain items. Enquiries had been made of Clerks to other Councils which had confirmed that the Council was slightly under insured. A revised schedule had now

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been received and the increased premium of £28.79 was AGREED. The Council would be seeking two alternative quotations from other providers of this type of insurance prior to the next renewal date.

- 307.5 Newsletter (F&GP Minute 262) The latest Parish Council newsletter had been published in Lindfield Life July edition.
- 307.6 Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 28 May 2009. RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 28 May 2009 be received and their recommendations confirmed.
- 307.7 Statements of Account/Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the periods 01.04.09 to 30.04.09 and 01.05.09 to 31.05.09. RESOLVED to approve the statements of account / budget progress and bank reconciliation for the period 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2009.
- 307.8 List of cheques for approval. AGREED: the list of cheques for the period 13 May to 25 June 2009, cheques numbered: 104227 to 104256 totalling £35,954.58. It was noted that this included the payment due on completion of the work on the public toilets, less the retention sum. NOTED:
- that a payment of £300 had been made under Section 137 of Local Government Act 1972
  - the Petty Cash balance was £192.57, as at 25 June 2009
- 307.9 Appointment of a new Deputy Parish Clerk. The Chairman of Council thanked the Interview Panel for their diligence on the day the interviews had been conducted, and stated that all of the candidates interviewed would have been capable of doing the job, but that Pieter Hemsley had stood out as having a range of appropriate skills and experience. Mr. Hemsley had accepted the offer of appointment and would be starting work in the afternoon of 6 July.
308. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.
- 308.1 Minutes of the Environment and Amenities Committee Meeting of 4 June 2009 Before proposing that the Minutes be received, Cllr. Blunden reported as follows:
- 308.2 Greening Campaign (E&A Minute 242.1). It was NOTED that Sara Grimes, who had given the presentation on the Greening Campaign at the Parish Meeting was leaving the Greening Campaign for a new job in Bath. She would be replaced by Fiona Wellings who would be making contact with the two Lindfield Champions in due course.
- 308.3 Public Toilets – maintenance contract for the installation, with Premier Hygienic Ltd (E&A Minute 256.2). The Environment and Amenities Committee had agreed to take out a maintenance contract with Premier for servicing the installation. As this was specialist equipment Members had considered it to be good sense to have it serviced by the company that had installed it. The cost would be £3,500 a year plus VAT and it would come under the E&A budget heading for maintenance of the toilets. AGREED to confirm the decision of the Environment and Amenities Committee to place a contract with Premier Hygienic Ltd for maintenance of the installation of the newly refurbished public toilets.
- 308.4 Christmas Festival Night (E&A Minute 244.3) The Committee had agreed the date for this year's Christmas Festival Night which would be held on Wednesday 2 December. It had been reported to the E&A Committee that the Parish Council would have to pay a professional traffic consultancy to organise the road closure in the future, as the existing legislation (hitherto overlooked but now being enforced) required those operating temporary road closures to undergo specific training and hold the required certificate as well as £10 million of Public Liability insurance. CERT could no longer do this: CERT was a charity made up of volunteers who would not be doing the training. The budget for Christmas night would not cover the fee for this so the Committee was recommending that this should be met from the general reserve. It was understood that Haywards Heath Town Council had received a quotation in the order of £500 for a traffic consultant to operate the road closure for the Town Day procession. AGREED to confirm that the amount needed for fees for the road closure should be taken from the reserves.

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308.5 Future maintenance of the High Street and Compton Road trees, including removal of epicormic growth E&A Minute 249). The E&A Committee had agreed with the recommendations from the meeting on 17 March with Jonathan Ullmer, summarised as follows:

- Compton Road. the tree outside Little Compton and the one opposite, at the entrance to Compton Road from Hickmans Lane, should be left as full size trees. The remaining Highway trees in Compton Road should be pollarded or repollarded in the Autumn of 2009 and repollarded thereafter on a three year cycle.
- High Street. The decision was to be deferred until the Autumn to monitor how the trees responded during the Summer months to the recent pollarding. A maintenance programme in line with that for Compton Road could then be considered.
- Funding. As WSCC would only be able to pollard every four years on a twelve year cycle, the Parish Council was given the option of taking responsibility for routine maintenance with a percentage contribution from WSCC who would still carry out major work. It was proposed that WSCC should retain the responsibility for the trees and the Parish Council should make a contribution to allow pollarding every three years.

The recommendations as agreed by the Environment and Amenities Committee were CONFIRMED.

The Environment and Amenities Committee had also discussed the removal of the epicormic growth which had proved to be to large a job to expect volunteers to take on, particularly because of the amount of spoil that had to be disposed of. It was understood that Mr. Ullmer was expecting the Parish Council to take this over from next year, and preferably earlier. It was therefore suggested that the Parish Council should obtain quotations from contractors. There was no specific budget heading for this, but depending on the cost it could come under planned maintenance if the Parish had to pay for this work during the current financial year. Since the E&A meeting an email had been received from a resident of the High Street who was keen to be part of a volunteer group to do this work and it was AGREED that, having checked the Parish Council's insurance cover for volunteers undertaking this kind of task and having drawn up a specification for the work to be done, to fix a date and make arrangements for the removal of the spoils and then to advertise in Lindfield Life for volunteers to form a task force for the day.

308.6 Spring Clean (E&A Minute 250). NOTED: the next Spring Clean was to be on Saturday 17 April. The KEH Library and main kitchen had been booked.

308.7 Dropped kerbs (E&A Minute 253.1) Members were asked to consider a recommendation from the E&A Committee to fund from the reserves two pairs of dropped kerbs in Compton Road and one in Hickmans Lane at the twitten from Savill Road. WSCC had agreed to do nine kerbs in Newton Road, Eastern Road and Luxford Road with a contribution of £4000 from the Parish Council. Jonathan Ullmer had pointed out that the cost of a pair of kerbs was significantly higher than the estimate given by Neil Smith, but that WSCC would honour the agreement made on the basis of that estimate for the ones in the Newton Road area. WSCC could install additional pairs in Compton Road and Hickmans Lane if the Parish could contribute two thirds which would be in the order of £3800 on the basis of the revised estimated cost given by Jonathan Ullmer. It was noted that the E&A Minutes mistakenly stated the current budget figure to be £1,500, which should have stated £1,900. To pay for this a further £1400 would have to be found from the reserves. The Clerk had emailed Jonathan today to ask what WSCC would accept from the Parish Council to get these extra kerbs done this year. It was AGREED that the additional sum required to make a contribution for kerbs in Compton Road and Hickmans Lane should be met from the reserves.

308.8 Tree Wardens (E&A Minute 246.2). NOTED that the E&A Committee had approved two new Tree Wardens: Lisa Offer and Ray Wicks and WSCC would be notified. They would be working with the existing Tree Wardens but would be concentrating on the Rural Parish and would be liaising with the Rural Council.

The Chairman had received a letter from Hilary May, stating that she wished to step down as Tree Warden to concentrate on her other commitments. Hilary had worked hard in her role as Tree Warden and had been the

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main contact for several years. Members wished to record thanks and appreciation to Miss May for her significant contribution.

308.9 Allotments – request from residents for the Parish Council to contribute towards maintenance of the gravel drive in Denmans Lane (E&A Minute 251.2). The E&A Committee had considered a request from residents at 21 Denmans Lane for a contribution towards the reshingling of the surface of the gravel drive leading to the Allotments site. This had arisen before and the Parish Council at that time declined to contribute on the basis that the shingle could be seen as purely cosmetic. NOTED that the Clerk was going to take legal advice from Hedleys Solicitors through SALC on this before a final decision was made.

308.10 NOTED that new notice board was now in place and that the new light column at the bottom of the Common had been installed.

309. YEAR END ACCOUNTS FOR 2008/09 AND THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2009

309.1 Year End Accounts 2008/09. These had been looked at by the Internal Auditor and had been circulated to Members in advance of this meeting. NOTED the small discrepancy of £9.20 on the Income and Expenditure account, which the RFO believed to relate to a previous VAT return. This amount had, therefore, been shown as an adjustment until such time as the discrepancy could be identified. No queries were raised and it was AGREED that the accounts should be signed by the Chairman of Council.

309.2 Annual Return.

Section 1 - The statement of accounts

APPROVED the figures and noted that these had been taken from the income and expenditure account.

Section 2 - Statement of assurance

Members had to acknowledge responsibility for the preparation of the statement of accounts and to consider the response to each of the first 8 statements listed. AGREED that "Yes" should be the response to each of the eight statements and N/A to the 9<sup>th</sup> which related to trusts.

Section 3 – External auditor's certificate and opinion

This would be completed in due course by Mazars.

Section 4 – Annual internal audit report

The RFO had arranged to send the Accounts and the Annual Return to the Internal Auditor who had confirmed she was content to complete and sign Section 4.

AGREED that the Annual Return should be signed and duly sent to the External Auditor.

310. DENMANS COURT: LEASE OF THE PREMISES

310.1 There was no progress to note.

311. LINDFIELD LOCAL ACTION TEAM (LLAT).

311.1 As she was unable to attend this meeting to give her report, Cllr. Nicolle had asked Cllr. Upton to read out a short report: "After a careful discussion of the issues involved, it was concluded that the original purpose of setting up the LLAT in 2005 has now been fulfilled. A better liaison now exists with the local police and other bodies are very much involved with the general issues of anti social behaviour. In addition, the LLAT had achieved considerable success in bringing various street safety and traffic issues to the attention of the Parish Council. Public support of the LLAT has considerably diminished. It was therefore decided to terminate the

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LLAT. A copy of the minutes will be circulated in due course. A statement of the winding up of funds will also follow".

The Chairman stated that he was pleased to note that the winding up of the LLAT reflected the low level of anti social behaviour in the Village.

AGREED to record sincere thanks to members of the LLAT for the work they had done over the period they had been active and to congratulate them for achieving their objective.

### 312. LINDFIELD VILLAGE PLAN JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LVJAC)

312.1 Cllr. Gomme reported that the last meeting of the LVJAC had taken place the previous evening and that the last Annual Report would be sent to the Parish Council in due course. Cllr. Gomme had thanked members of the Committee for the work they had done on the implementation of actions from the Village Plan. A new panel was to be formed to take the Village Plan forward, with Cllrs. Snowling and Gomme as the initial members. It was AGREED that an email should be sent to all the members of the LVJAC, thanking them for the work they had done and inviting them to join the new group, to encourage continuity.

### 313. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

313.1 No items of other business were raised.

This part of the meeting ended at 8.20

There followed a second period for questions / comments from members of the public.

Standing Orders. Mr. N. Kerlake wished it to be recorded that he was appalled that the Parish Council had reduced its quorum.

Core Strategy. Mr. Kerlake spoke in defence of the correspondent whose letter had been printed in the Mid Sussex Times and about which the Chairman had commented in his report. Mr. Kerlake stated that everyone had the right to make their points. The writer had been correct to state that Lindfield had not taken its fair share of housing over the last 30 years as very little had been built over that period: The Welkin and Pickers Green etc had been built before that. Mr. Kerlake believed that the Chairman had been wrong in his verbal attack.

Epicormic growth. Mr. Kerlake pointed out the risks of using volunteers to deal with the epicormic growth on the trees as they would be using sharp tools. He hoped the Council would reconsider and get professional contractors to do this. Mr. C. Tyler stated that Mr. Ullmer had made it clear that volunteers should not be working above chest height.

Denmans Court. Mr. Kerlake stated that renting these premises would cost a lot of money and he would have expected a paper to have been produced balancing the costs and benefits against extending the Parish Office using the flying freehold. Mr. Kerlake would be asking to see a copy of the lease and he could not understand why the length of the lease had not yet been disclosed.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30 p.m.