

LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the **MEETING** of **LINDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL** held on **THURSDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER 2020** using Microsoft Teams.

The meeting commenced at 19:00.

Parish Councillors:	Mr. W. Blunden (Chair)	Mrs. M. Hersey	Mr. R. Plass
	Mrs. V. Upton (Vice-Chair) *	Mr. M. Leach	Mr. J. Stevens *
	Mrs. L. Grace	Mr. A. Matthews	Mr. I. Wilson
	Mr. S. Henton	Mr. R. Pickett *	Mr. C. Wood

(*) Denotes absence

Also present: Cllr Andrew Lea (WSSC & MSDC) attended for 195.1 only

In attendance: Mr. A. Funnell (Clerk)

190. TO RECEIVE AND ACCEPT APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

190.1 Apologies had been received from Cllrs Pickett, Stevens, & Upton, the apologies were accepted.

191. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

191.1 Cllrs Blunden and Matthews declared personal interests in the item 199 i) Denmans Lane Allotments as they are both allotment holders

191.2 Cllr Hersey declared a personal interest in item 198 i) due to a family interest in the former Tavistock and Summerhill site. Cllr Hersey left the meeting whilst item 198 i) was reported.

192. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 16 JULY & 25 AUGUST 2020.

192.1 The Chairman called for approval of the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 July & 25 August 2020. These were **AGREED** and the Chairman would sign the Minutes as being a true record of that meeting at a later date.

193. QUESTIONS/COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC.

193.1 No members of the public were present.

194. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

194.1 The Chairman **NOTED** that the concern from Lindfield residents regarding the potential closure of Mid Sussex District Council. The Chairman suggested that interested parties could register the site as an asset of community value. Cllr Grace advised that she had been contacted by a resident suggesting that there was a covenant condition on the site.

195. REPORTS BY COUNTY COUNCILLOR / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS.

195.1 Apologies had been received from Cllrs Jonathan Ash-Edwards.

West Sussex County Council – Cllr Andrew Lea reported the following:

- The Lewes Road TRO is still progressing
- He is actively perusing the proposed cycle routes between Scaynes Hill and Lindfield
- A WSSC meeting will take place next week. Two important items for consideration at the meeting will be new planning consultation paper & the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the council.

Mid Sussex District Council - The following statement had been received from Cllrs Jonathan Ash-Edwards:

- **Reopening of leisure centres** - Mid Sussex's three leisure centres reopened on 1st September after the Council agreed a financial support package of around £2.5 million this financial year. Social distancing will significantly reduce the capacity of leisure centres and so public subsidy is being required to underwrite the reduced revenue at most leisure centres nationally. Places Leisure are working through a phased reopening plan with additional activities reopening each week in September. The gym, lane swimming and most classes are now back open.
- **Budget & Corporate Plan** - a revised Budget & Corporate Plan is being considered at the moment, such is the impact that the pandemic has had on the Council's finances and service plans since the spring. We currently forecast that the impact of Covid-19 will be around £6 million this financial year as a result of increased costs and reduced income, of which we may get around £3.9 million of Government support, leaving around £2.1 million to be found locally. We are

refreshing the service plans to respond to the impact of the pandemic and the changing needs of the community and economy as a result.

- **Haywards Heath College** - the new college opened this week after three years without post-16 educational provision to serve the area. MSDC played an important role in securing the support and funding from Government for this project. Initial feedback is that student enrollment numbers have been good. Significant refurbishment of the site has taken place over the summer.

196. ACTION LIST

196.1 The Action List was **NOTED**.

197. CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

197.1 The Chairman **NOTED** that MSDC Site Allocations Development Plan. The Chairman suggested that the Parish Council respond no comments on the plans themselves however LPC is concerned that the Highways / School / Hospital / Doctors / Railway services are in normal times fully utilised / overburdened and consequently site development must be properly coordinated with the necessary improvements to these services.

Members queried whether any sites were located in neighbouring parishes or towns. Cllr Hersey advised that she would speak to colleagues on Lindfield Rural Parish Council

Members **AGREED** that the Deputy Clerk, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning & Traffic Committee submit the above response subject to any necessary amendments required.

198. PLANNING AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE

- Report by Planning and Traffic Committee Chairman/Vice Chairman on matters considered at the meetings held on 14 July, 4 August and 25 August 2020. Cllr Plass reported the following:

Since my last report to Full Council on 16th July, the Planning & Traffic Committee has met on three occasions using Microsoft Teams Meeting.

During this period, 22 applications have been considered of which; nine were in respect of trees and four were seeking Lawful Development Certificates. No objections were made although P&TC members were concerned at DM/20/2025/35 – 55 Meadow Lane where an ancillary dwelling/caravan was proposed to assist in the care of the owner. These were subsequently approved by MSDC.

Notable MSDC decisions or issues included:-

- AP/20/0028 – Tremains Farm, Tremains Road, Horsted Keynes. An appeal had been made to the Secretary of State following MSDC's refusal to allow various new constructions underpinned by waste disposal, to which LPC had previously objected
- DM/19/0260 – Tavistock and Summerhill School, Summerhill Lane MSDC had refused permission for the development of this site, citing DP26 and Policy 7 of the LLRNP (Character and Design, valued townscape), alongside DP20 (infrastructure) and DP31 (affordable housing).

NOTE - Cllr Hersey left the meeting whilst this item was reported

Lewes Road TRO – a quote of £6,500 has been obtained from the consultant recommended by WSCC Highways to undertake the initial consultation pending a formal application to WSCC's County Local Committee. P&TC recommended taking this forwards recognising that without the work proposed the formal application cannot be progressed and also cognisant of the evident support withing the village towards the TRO, where ~1200 signatures were obtained.

Total costs of implementation are estimated by WSCC Highways to be ~£16k and the Deputy Parish Clerk has identified £9,500 of S106 monies held by MSDC which have now been 'earmarked' for this project pending the consultation and successful application to the CLC. Council is asked to support the expenditure on the consultation which had not been budgeted for, however; it has been discussed at F&GP Committee where it was recognised that these funds can be made available from existing resources. It is, of course, possible that the consultation unearths issues which need to be resolved or would result in CLC declining to take forward the scheme. The Parish Office is working with WSCC Highways to *ensure that the work is undertaken in line with the latter's requirements and minimise the likelihood of potential blockages to success*

DM/20/0979 – Buxshalls, Ardingly Road, redevelopment and new builds to provide 34 dwellings; Lindfield Rural Parish Council had asked LPC to provide its views to MSDC recognising that the development is immediately north of the village

High Street. In view of timescales, comments would be provided under delegated authority by the DPC and Chair/Vice Chair of P&TC; in essence seeking to ensure construction traffic was routed away from the village

- ii) To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the Planning and Traffic Committee held on: 114 July, 4 August and 25 August 2020, and to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the Meetings of the Planning & Traffic Committee held on 14 July, 4 August and 25 August 2020 be received and their recommendations confirmed.
- iii) Lewes Road TRO – To approve the expenditure relating to the services of an external consultant.
Cllr Plass provided members with the background on the proposal. It was hoped that s106 monies would be available for the project should the consultant study and WSCC agree that the proposal is viable.

It was **AGREED** that the council would approve the expenditure of £6,500 on the consultant to undertake the study.

199. ENVIRONMENT AND AMENITIES COMMITTEE.

- i) Report by Councillor Blunden on matters considered at the meeting held on 13 August (Minutes previously circulated), to include any updates.

Hanging Baskets on the High Street. Member considered correspondence from Lindfield in Bloom regarding installing hanging baskets on the Hight Street. While members acknowledged that it would have a good visual impact on the High Street the practicalities mean that this item will not be pursued further.

Wilderness Field – The Clerk has arranged for a tree survey of the Wilderness Field to take place in late September. The bird box and bee boxes for the Wilderness Field have been purchased and are now installed. Members had agreed to a grass cut for the field along with the installation of a new gate. The contractors have also quoted for the following after onsite discussions with the Village Orderly:

- Supply and install chestnut post and rail fencing £350.00 plus Vat
- Supply and install 6x collapsing bollards as discussed – including padlocks, concrete, sundries and labour. £790.00 plus Vat.

Members **AGREED** to the above expenditure.

Denmans Lane Allotment – Members had agreed to the purchase and planting of fruit trees at the Pondcroft Road end of the allotment site. Since the meeting, a group of solitary mining bees have started laying larvae on the edge of one of the allotment plots. A contractor has checked the site and confirmed the bees are not aggressive. The bees do not live in colonies and so cannot be relocated. The contractor advised that once the bees have finished laying the larvae they will move on from the site.

- ii) To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 13 August and to confirm their recommendations. **RESOLVED:** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee held on 13 August be received and their recommendations confirmed.
- iii) Climate Change – To approve the draft plan.
Cllrs Wood & Grace outline to members the purpose and details of the action plan. Cllr Plass thanked the working group for the work that had been undertaken to produce the report. Members supported the objectives of the report. It was **AGREED** to approve the action plan document.
- iv) Denmans Lane Public Toilets – Update
Cllr Blunden advised that the order for the parts for the public toilets has been placed with our contractor. Work had started on the female cubicle. Unfortunately, the hand washer-drier units will not be available until December at the earliest. We understand from our contractor that this is due to demand, order backlog and social distancing restrictions at the factory. As a temporary measure sanitiser units will be installed in both the female and gents toilets. An article will appear in Lindfield Life explaining the current closure and apologising for the inconvenience.

200. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

- i) Report by Cllr Henton on matters considered at the meetings held on 11 July & 3 September 2020 (Minutes to follow, if available).
Cllr Henton **REPORTED** that the minutes were not yet available for the meeting dated 3 September 2020. The following update on the meeting held on 3 September was provided:

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Grants – two grants were awarded; Fairer World Lindfield £50, and Victim Support £100.

Budget 2021/22 – the committee agreed to a timetable for the budget process. A proforma for new projects would also be used when considering new projects.

IT – new screens and webcams will be procured for the office.

Payment Procedures – The current system would need to be refined and additional signatories would be required as at present only two members can authorise internet payments. Cllr Pickett's application for being an authorised signatory will be advanced. Cllr Henton suggested that Cllr Grace could become a signatory. At the next F&GP committee meeting a formal resolution will be proposed to add Cllr Grace as an authorised signatory.

Cllr Henton advised at the next F&GP meeting streamlining the invoice approval procedures would be considered.

- ii) To receive the Minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held 9 July 2020 to confirm their recommendations. It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 9 July 2020 be received and their recommendations confirmed.
- iii) Statements of Account / Budget Progress and Bank Reconciliation for the period upto 31 August 2020: (if available) and the quarterly Receipts and Payments Summary (if available).

The figures for June were not yet available. The expenditure on 31 August 2020 was as follows:

Committee or reserve	Current expenditure/budget available (£)
Finance & General Purposes	56,064 / 161,500
Environment and Amenities	5,220 / 50,200
Allotments	388 / 2,500
Planning & Traffic	0 / 4,500
Ear marked reserves	4.75 / 116,335.18

- v) List of cheques & debit card payments for approval.
The list of cheques drawn since the Council meeting held on 16 July 2020 meeting was tabled. **NOTED:** that the expenditure during this period under the powers granted by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 was £150 and that the Petty Cash balance as at 10.09.20 was £167.98.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the list of payments, totalling £20,343.28 with VAT of £940.12.

- vi) Toilets on the Common – Update
The Clerk advised that Cllr Jonathan Ash-Edwards has stated that the report, seeking owners and managers consent to install the toilets on Common, is still on track to be considered at a trustee's meeting on 30 September 2020.

201. CODE OF CONDUCT

201.1 Members re-approved the code of conduct for the period 2020/21.

202. CLOCK TOWER HOUSE

202.1 Members were provided with a report on the options for reopening the office. The Deputy Clerk had undertaken a thorough risk assessment in line with the latest government guidance. The report recommended that the Council:

1. Critically review the Risk Assessment and agree which of options 1, 2 or 3 should be followed. Option 2 is recommended.
2. Authorise the Parish Clerk to revert to all office-based staff working from home if Mid Sussex rises into the top half of infection rates, further reviewing whether it is appropriate for the Village Orderly to continue working/alter activities accordingly.
3. The Parish Clerk to sign off when all Risk Assessment actions have been completed before any re-opening.

The Chairman supported the proposal of the report (option 2). All members were asked for their comments. Debate followed that included but was not limited to; the number of Covid-19 cases in the local area, duties that staff can only undertake whilst at the office, whether manning the office would set a good example to the community.

Cllr Hersey objected to the proposal and believed that staff had continued to work extremely well from home. She queried whether the staff needed to return to the office. She believed that staff should only attend the office for a specific reason.

The Clerk was asked to confirm what services to the public could not be undertaken by home working. The Clerk advised that only service that physically required meeting a member of the public was to verify their identity for third party forms.

It was by majority **AGREED** that the office would re-open with reduced staff. Members of the public and Council would only be allowed to visit the office by appointment. The Parish Clerk has authority to revert to all office-based staff working from home if Mid Sussex rises into the top half of infection rates, further reviewing whether it is appropriate for the Village Orderly to continue working/alter activities accordingly. The reopening of the office will only take place once all action points on the risk assessment had been addressed. This would then enable the risk assessment to be signed by the Clerk and Chairman. Furthermore, no member of staff would be forced to return to office working if they did not feel it was safe to do so.

Cllr Hersey asked that her vote against the proposal be minuted.

203. MATTERS ARISING

- 203.1 The Chairman **NOTED** that correspondence had been received from Mid Sussex District Council regarding traders operating on Lindfield Common. The Parish Council Office had suggested that MSDC consider implementing a policy for licencing traders on the Common. MSDC advised that they do not believe there is sufficient demand to implement a policy. MSDC will therefore look at each request individually with consideration to local feeling, which is where the Parish Council can offer their opinion.

The meeting finished at 20:10.