

ACTION AND PROJECT PROGRESS LIST

Full - Item 7

Blue - completed or moved on and will be deleted after next meeting of relevant committee. Green = update. Grey background = confidential items. Violet = long term action. Red - priority

COUNCIL / COMMITTEE	MINUTE REF	MEETING DATE	SUBJECT	ACTION AGREED	WHO	DATE DONE	NOTES
Full	129.1	16-May-24	Annual Report	It was AGREED to instruct the Clerk to write the Annual Report 2023/24.	Clerk	04-Jun-24	Published in July edition of Lindfield Life
Full	141.2	13-Jun-24	Toilets on the Common	It was AGREED to appoint Martin Thomas Associates Ltd.	Clerk		Communicated to architects

### RFO Summary

#### Income that was received in May 2024.

1. Barclays Business Current Account:  
£808.00 CTH Rent for May 2024.  
£232.57 CTH Service Charge for the period 26 Dec to 25 Mar 2024.  
£421.25 Allotment Rent.  
£100.00 Allotment Deposits.  
Plus, regular automatic transfer facility transactions from Barclay's Business Premium account.
2. Nationwide Building Society:  
£100.96 Nationwide Building Society Interest for May 2024.
3. Barclays Business Premium Account:  
Only regular automatic transfer facility transactions from Barclay's Current account.
4. Unity Trust Instant Savings Account:  
There were no transactions.

#### Non-Budgeted Expenditure April 2024

There were no transactions

#### Transfer of funds to Nationwide Building Society Savings Account May 2024

£10,000 transferred from the Barclays Business Premium account on 7 May 2024.

£30,000 transferred from the Barclays Business Premium account on 31 May 2024.

#### Earmarked Reserves Expenditure May 2024 (Net of VAT)

There were no transactions.

## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/05/2024

## Cost Centre Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>100 Finance &amp; General Purposes</u>							
1076 Precept	128,500	257,000	128,500			50.0%	
1090 Interest Received	182	1,500	1,318			12.2%	
1120 Clock Tower House Rental	1,616	9,696	8,080			16.7%	
1125 CTH Service Charge	(60)	1,400	1,460			(4.3%)	
1150 Telephone Refund	(360)	0	360			0.0%	
1210 Licence Fee	0	143	143			0.0%	
1230 Christmas Festival Night	0	800	800			0.0%	
Finance & General Purposes :- Income	<u>129,878</u>	<u>270,539</u>	<u>140,661</u>			<u>48.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
4000 Salary	7,083	90,000	82,917		82,917	7.9%	
4010 Tax & NI	559	6,800	6,241		6,241	8.2%	
4020 Pension	984	13,200	12,216		12,216	7.5%	
4110 Staff Expenses	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
4111 Payroll Administration	0	500	500		500	0.0%	
4120 Training	195	2,000	1,805		1,805	9.8%	
4130 Bank Charges	0	75	75		75	0.0%	
4140 Audit Fees	(1,755)	3,000	4,755		4,755	(58.5%)	
4160 Insurance	3,196	3,500	304		304	91.3%	
4170 Postage & Stationery	50	400	350		350	12.5%	
4175 Annual Memberships/Subscriptio	2,043	3,000	957		957	68.1%	
4180 Photocopying	206	2,300	2,094		2,094	9.0%	
4190 Telephone & Broadband	419	2,500	2,081		2,081	16.8%	
4200 IT & Website	828	5,000	4,172		4,172	16.6%	
4210 Office Equipment	136	1,000	864		864	13.6%	
4221 Lindfield Enterprise Park	657	700	44		44	93.8%	
4230 Grants Paid	500	2,500	2,000		2,000	20.0%	
4240 Room Hire	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4250 Cleaning/Catering	317	3,000	2,683		2,683	10.6%	
4260 Newsletter & Annual Report	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%	
4265 F&GP Professional Fees	(900)	5,000	5,900		5,900	(18.0%)	
4270 Chairs Allowance	0	250	250		250	0.0%	
4271 Members Allowances	0	6,450	6,450		6,450	0.0%	
4280 Councillor Expenses	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
4285 Toilets on Common Construction	350	0	(350)		(350)	0.0%	350
4292 Community Engagement	343	1,500	1,157		1,157	22.8%	
4295 Waste Collection	89	1,500	1,411		1,411	5.9%	
4310 PWLB Repayment	10,968	21,815	10,847		10,847	50.3%	
4320 Electricity Supply	480	4,000	3,520		3,520	12.0%	
4330 Water Supply	32	200	168		168	16.2%	
4340 Security Alarm System	0	500	500		500	0.0%	

## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/05/2024

## Cost Centre Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
4350 Fire Safety System	10	500	490		490	2.0%	
4360 Health & Safety	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
4370 Publications	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
4380 Data Protection	0	400	400		400	0.0%	
4385 Vehicle	478	4,000	3,522		3,522	12.0%	
4393 Maintenance/Improvements CTH	79	2,500	2,421		2,421	3.2%	
<b>Finance &amp; General Purposes :- Indirect Expenditure</b>	<b>27,346</b>	<b>192,390</b>	<b>165,044</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>165,044</b>	<b>14.2%</b>	<b>350</b>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>102,532</u>	<u>78,149</u>	<u>(24,383)</u>				
6000 plus Transfer from EMR	350						
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>102,882</u>						
<b>110 Environment &amp; Amenities</b>							
4450 Street Lighting Energy/Mainten	1,583	4,900	3,317		3,317	32.3%	
4460 Street Lighting Purchase	0	3,000	3,000		3,000	0.0%	
4465 Christmas Lights	4,710	18,000	13,290		13,290	26.2%	
4471 Maintenance/Gardening	183	2,000	1,817		1,817	9.1%	
4480 Christmas Festival Night & Com	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%	
4500 Digital Mapping	150	525	375		375	28.6%	
4510 Grass Cutting	0	2,200	2,200		2,200	0.0%	
4530 Village Orderly Equip/Expenses	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4560 Denmans Lane Toilets Repair	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%	
4561 Denmans Lane Toilets Utilities	668	14,000	13,332		13,332	4.8%	
4565 Toilets on Common Utilities	0	9,000	9,000		9,000	0.0%	
4650 Climate Change Projects	226	1,500	1,274		1,274	15.1%	
4750 Replacement Street Furniture	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%	
4800 Emergency Equipment	0	300	300		300	0.0%	
4825 Community Equipment	0	300	300		300	0.0%	
4900 Village Archives	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
<b>Environment &amp; Amenities :- Indirect Expenditure</b>	<b>7,520</b>	<b>64,425</b>	<b>56,905</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>56,905</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>0</b>
Net Expenditure	<u>(7,520)</u>	<u>(64,425)</u>	<u>(56,905)</u>				
<b>120 Allotments</b>							
1200 Allotment Income	1,110	1,243	133			89.3%	
Allotments :- Income	<u>1,110</u>	<u>1,243</u>	<u>133</u>			<u>89.3%</u>	<u>0</u>
4600 Allotment Expense	548	2,500	1,952		1,952	21.9%	
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>548</u>	<u>2,500</u>	<u>1,952</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,952</u>	<u>21.9%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>562</u>	<u>(1,257)</u>	<u>(1,819)</u>				

## Detailed Income &amp; Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/05/2024

## Cost Centre Report

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>130 Planning &amp; Traffic</u>							
4960 SID Maintenance	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%	
4973 RTP1	0	400	400		400	0.0%	
Planning & Traffic :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>2,900</u>	<u>2,900</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,900</u>	<u>0.0%</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>0</u>	<u>(2,900)</u>	<u>(2,900)</u>				
Grand Totals:- Income	130,988	271,782	140,794			48.2%	
Expenditure	35,414	262,215	226,801	0	226,801	13.5%	
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>95,574</u>	<u>9,567</u>	<u>(86,007)</u>				
plus Transfer from EMR	350						
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>95,924</u>						

## Barclays Current Bank A/c

Payments made between 01/05/2024 and 31/05/2024

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Details</u>
01/05/2024	Barclays Business Premium A/c	Automatic	710.25			210		710.25	From 20623318
02/05/2024	Connected Kerb Limited	DEBIT CARD	11.35		1.89	4385	100	9.46	Vehicle Charge 2 May 2024
07/05/2024	Streetlights	ONLINE	737.92		122.99	4450	110	614.93	Maintenance Contract 24/25
07/05/2024	Blachere Illumination UK Ltd	ONLINE	5,652.00		942.00	4465	110	4,710.00	Product Hire - 35 Trees Year 3
08/05/2024	British Telecommunications Plc	DD	73.75		12.29	4190	100	61.46	Broadband Services Apr 2024
08/05/2024	Mid Sussex District Council	DEBIT CARD	35.00			4385	100	35.00	Off Street Parking Penalty MS
14/05/2024	Red Rose Paint Supplies Ltd	DEBIT CARD	42.99		7.17	4471	110	35.82	Sadolin Woodstain: Bus Stop
14/05/2024	Amazon EU S.à r.l., UK Branch	DEBIT CARD	17.85		2.98	4471	110	14.87	Bus Stop: Wood Treatment
15/05/2024	British Gas	DD	168.79		8.04	4320	100	160.75	Elec Supply 30Mar- 27Apr 2024
15/05/2024	INSPIRE TECH UK LTD	DEBIT CARD	5.74		0.96	4393	100	4.78	8wT5 300mm12" FluorescentTubes
15/05/2024	Amazon Services Europe S.a.r.L	DEBIT CARD	8.99		1.50	4170	100	7.49	8" Multipurpose Scissors 3Pack
16/05/2024	Castle Water Limited	DD	77.31			4561	110	77.31	Water Supply Apr 2024
17/05/2024	Castle Water Limited	DD	19.31			4330	100	19.31	Water Supply Apr 2024
17/05/2024	Npower Commercial Gas Ltd	DD	493.41		23.50	4450	110	469.91	Electricity Supply Apr 2024
17/05/2024	Mailchimp	DEBIT CARD	19.08			4200	100	19.08	Mailchimp ComEngagement May24
17/05/2024	Monitor Cleaning Services Ltd	ONLINE	519.52		86.59	4561	110	432.93	Daily Cleaning Apr 2024
17/05/2024	Zurich Town & Parish Insurer T	ONLINE	3,195.98			4160	100	3,195.98	Policy Renewal 28May24-27May25
20/05/2024	Mercedes-Benz Fin Services Ltd	DD	234.69		39.12	4385	100	195.57	Lease Instalment May 2024
20/05/2024	Tisburys Cleaning Services	ONLINE	227.50			4250	100	227.50	Office & CTH Cleaning Apr 2024
20/05/2024	West Sussex County Council	ONLINE	8,625.51			4000	100	7,082.65	Salaries Apr 2024
						4010	100	558.98	NICs Apr 2024
						4020	100	983.88	Pensions Apr 2024
23/05/2024	British Gas	DD	49.00		2.33	4561	110	46.67	Elec Supply 6Apr- 6May 2024
23/05/2024	Connected Kerb Limited	DEBIT CARD	15.50		2.59	4385	100	12.91	Vehicle Charge 23 May 2024
24/05/2024	Screwfix Direct Ltd	DEBIT CARD	163.48		27.25	4210	100	120.82	Numatic 620W Vacuum Cleaner
Subtotal Carried Forward:			21,104.92	0.00	1,281.20			19,808.31	

## Barclays Current Bank A/c

Payments made between 01/05/2024 and 31/05/2024

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	Nominal Ledger Analysis		<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Details</u>
						<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>		
						4210	100	15.41	Numatic VacCleaner Filter Bags
28/05/2024	Lindfield Bonfire Society Ltd	ONLINE	500.00			4230	100	500.00	S145 Lindfield Bonfire Society
28/05/2024	LM Associates Ltd Client Acc 1	ONLINE	656.50			4221	100	556.50	Ann. Service Fee 2024/25
						4221	100	100.00	Sinking Fund Supplement 24/25
28/05/2024	Geosphere Limited	ONLINE	180.00		30.00	4500	110	150.00	Parish Online Mapping Software
28/05/2024	Impeckable	ONLINE	226.00			4650	110	226.00	Four Swift Apt. Nest Box White
28/05/2024	Ian Woodhams	ONLINE	22.00			4250	100	22.00	CTH Window Cleaning 16.5.24
30/05/2024	British Telecommunications Plc	DD	120.92		20.15	4190	100	100.77	Mobile Reg Charges May 2024
31/05/2024	SUEZ Recycling and Recovery	DD	106.92		17.82	4295	100	89.10	Waste Collection Apr 2024
Total Payments:			22,917.26	0.00	1,349.17			21,568.09	

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## Lindfield Parish Council Current Year

### Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 May 2024

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	<u>Account Description</u>	<u>Balance</u>
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>		
1	31/05/2024 Barclays Current Account	14,837.16
2	31/05/2024 Business Premium Account	103,053.68
3	31/05/2024 Nationwide Building Society	85,000.00
4	31/05/2024 Petty Cash	127.62
5	31/05/2024 Unity Trust Current Account	464.20
6	31/05/2024 Unity Trust Savings Account	58,199.56
		<b>261,682.22</b>
<u>Receipts not on Bank Statement</u>		
1	31/05/2024 NBS Int	100.96
		<b>100.96</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>		<b>261,783.18</b>
<u>All Cash &amp; Bank Accounts</u>		
1	Barclays Current Bank A/c	14,938.12
2	Barclays Business Premium A/c	103,053.68
3	Nationwide Building Society	85,000.00
4	Petty Cash	127.62
5	Unity Trust Current Account	464.20
6	Unity Trust Savings Account	58,199.56
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00
	<b>Total Cash &amp; Bank Balances</b>	<b>261,783.18</b>



**Lindfield Parish Council 2024-2025**

**Expenditure from Earmarked Reserves as at 31 May 2024**

Account	Opening Balance	Net Transfers	Closing Balance
320 EMR - Toilets on the Common	77,191.67	- 350.00	76,841.67
329 EMR - Wilderness Field S106 Maintenance	12,845.58		12,845.58
332 EMR - Council Elections	1,350.00		1,350.00
334 EMR - Plan 23-27	5,000.00		5,000.00
335 EMR - Planning Reserve	4,000.00		4,000.00
336 EMR - SID Replacement	2,000.00		2,000.00
	<u>102,387.25</u>	<u>- 350.00</u>	<u>102,037.25</u>

Committee Meeting:	Full Council
Item:	11.7
Report of:	Parish Clerk / RFO
Meeting Date:	18 July 2024
Subject:	Banking Mandate

**Purpose of Report:**

- Members are asked to ratify the bank mandates and consider one proposed change.

**Summary:**

- It is proposed that a) the existing bank mandate be approved for 2024/25 and b) the Clerk be authorised to have view-only online access to the council's Barclays current account.

**Recommendation(s):**

**Members are recommended to:**

- Confirm the bank mandate for 2024/25.
- Agree to the F&GP recommendation that the Clerk be authorised to have 'view only' access to the council's Barclays current accounts.

**Background:**

- The Council has the following bank arrangements:

Councillor/Officer	Barclays Bank Current Account & Business Premium Account	Nationwide Building Society	Unity Trust Bank Current Account
Clerk	Debit Card use only	n/a	n/a
Deputy Clerk	n/a	n/a	n/a
RFO	Administrator plus View & Set up of Payments	Administrator	Administrator plus View & Set up of Payments
<b>Authority to Transact Business</b>	Cheques: Any two of the Five registered members (Chair of Council, Vice-chair of Council; Chair of F&GP; Vice-Chair of F&GP & One Member of F&GP)  Online Access: See below	Not a chequebook account.  Online access is not available.  Any two of the Four Councillors to approve transactions by written request.	Cheques: Any two of the Four registered members (Chair of Council, Vice-chair of Council; Chair of F&GP; Vice-Chair of F&GP)  Online Access: See below
<b>Chair of Council</b>	Online Access: View & Authorise Payments	Yes	Online Access: View & Authorise Payments
<b>Vice-chair of Council</b>	Cheque signatory only; Approval to Pay Invoices	Yes	Online Access: View & Authorise Payments
<b>Chair of F&amp;GP</b>	Online Access: View & Authorise Payments	Yes	Online Access: View & Authorise Payments
<b>Vice-chair F&amp;GP</b>	Online Access approved & Authorisation to Pay invoices Online	Yes	Online Access: View & Authorise Payments
<b>F&amp;GP Member (Cllr Grace)</b>	Cheque signatory only; Approval to Pay Invoices	n/a	n/a

4. In addition to the above it has been recommended by F&GP<sup>(1)</sup> that the Clerk be allowed 'view only' online access to the Council's Barclays current accounts. Currently, the RFO is the only member of staff with online access to the Barclays Bank. The RFO position is part-time. When the RFO is off the office is unable to see whether any payments have been received and keep track of the bank balance. In addition, the Clerk is unable to see whether payments set up for approval have been made. During periods when multiple payments are received (Allotment tenancies, Village Festival Night stalls etc) the Clerks are reliant on asking the RFO to provide them with a copy of the bank statement. To make this process simple it is proposed that the Clerk has view-only access to the Council's current account.

#### **Risk Management**

5. The council maintains a Financial Management risk assessment. No items of concern have been raised with the existing bank mandate arrangements.
6. View-only access would not permit the Clerk to make payments so it will ensure a strong level of financial checks and balances remain. View-only access would enable issues to be identified quicker than present as the office is solely reliant on the RFO.

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<sup>1</sup> F&GP, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024, 158.1

Committee:	Full Council
Item	12
Report of:	Parish Clerk
Date:	18 July 2024
Subject:	Lindfield Pond – WSCC update re roadside white wooden posts and metal railings

**Purpose of Report:**

1. To consider the future of the WSSC roadside bollards adjacent to Lindfield Pond

**Summary:**

2. This report sets out the management/ownership of the barriers around the pond and WSCC’s recent decision not to maintain the outer or roadside barriers in the future. It outlines three options as to the potential way forward.

**Recommendation(s)**

**Members are recommended to:**

- a) Agree the Council’s position.
- b) Agree that the current situation be communicated to the public in the Council's next newsletter.

**Background:**

3. There are two sets of white wooden posts and railings on either side of the pavement as it passes by the pond. Historically, the outer or roadside set of posts has been the responsibility of WSCC, as the highway authority, and the inner or pondside set, the responsibility of MSDC, as managers of the pond. The position in respect of the latter set is however complicated by a debate over whether the pond brick wall is the responsibility of WSCC, as it holds the ‘highway’ (e.g. road and footpath) in place, or MSDC as it retains the pond. When the pond wall partially collapsed in 2021, WSCC reluctantly agreed to undertake the repairs to the collapsed portion and wooden posts within that section on a ‘without prejudice’ basis.
4. WSCC employed Landbuild to undertake the work which was, certainly visually, completed to a good standard. Subsequently, MSDC undertook repairs to other pondside posts although visually this was not undertaken to the same standard (e.g. rather than bricks being cut to fit around replacement posts, cement fillets were applied and these deteriorated over time). It is also understood that Landbuild replaced the posts in ‘sockets’ to aid future replacement as necessary, whilst MSDC’s contractors concreted the posts in place, such that future replacement was likely to be more onerous than the ‘socket’ method.
5. Around this time there were increasing comments from residents and councillors about the poor condition of the roadside bollards and Landbuild were asked to quote for replacement of the roadside bollards. In previous years, village clean-up days have included washing down the posts, but this was a hazardous activity at the roadside dodging buses and other traffic. There were some suggestions that the bollards could be repainted/filled by a volunteer group, but this was considered a potentially unsafe activity and relatively pointless, as many of the posts had rotted beyond repair. The quote from Landbuild to replace 41 posts, supply and weld 87 meters of steel railing, paint both, and arrange traffic management, was £30,936 excluding VAT. It was suggested that perhaps piecemeal replacement could be undertaken of the worst posts, but this would present challenges in terms of extracting individual posts and rails within each section and

may prove more expensive as multiple revisits and traffic management would be required as unreplaced posts continued to weather and fail. In the event, no action was taken.

### Current Position

6. Recognising ongoing comments from residents, councillors (and taxi drivers) about the state of the roadside posts, in May 2024 the Parish Office contacted WSCC to seek their proposals to renew the posts. It is understood that LPC has in the past contributed towards such replacement works. WSCC Highways responded that they could not currently support any replacement programme, recognising budget constraints and priority being given to formal safety-related schemes. WSCC advised that they would be happy to licence LPC to undertake works on the posts but that the correct traffic management (footway closure and traffic lights) would be required. Shortly after this response, two metal railings fell out and one post collapsed. Accordingly, WSCC were reapproached to at least undertake the necessary repairs, they have now responded with:

*"I have revisited the council's position regarding the future maintenance and repair of the wooden post and metal rail fence in the grass verge between the footway and carriageway and discussed the situation with colleagues. I'm afraid that our position remains the same as set out in my previous email, in that maintenance and repair of the fence is not something the County Council is able to undertake at the current time. We will of course ensure that the site remains in a safe condition, **and this will involve removing any damaged sections that might pose a risk to members of the public.** (LPC bold annotation)*

*The fencing budget available this financial year is limited and hence officers must target it at the areas of most need, with the priority given to those sites demonstrating highway safety implications. The wooden post and rail fence in this location would not be regarded as safety fencing, and we are unclear on what highway purpose the existing fencing serves, other than contributing to the street scene. Whilst I note your reference to the fence providing a physical barrier to prevent children from walking into the road, there are no highway requirements in these circumstances to provide a physical barrier, and the fence only extends the width of the pond.*

*We appreciate this response is disappointing, but hope you understand the rationale provided."*

7. Based on this response, WSCC approach is to allow the posts to rot away with no replacement. Landbuild have been asked by the Parish Office to provide updated quotations on undertaking replacement works. As mentioned by WSCC above, the current post and rail fence contributes positively to the street scene and is located within the Conservation Area, MSDC will be approached for their views on WSCC's decision.

8. The Planning, Traffic & Transport Committee were asked to consider the issues at a recent meeting:

*Committee noted the report previously circulated outlining WSCC's decision not to maintain the outer or roadside white posts and metal rails in the future. It was agreed that this issue should be discussed at Full Council to consider next steps.<sup>(1)</sup>*

### Budget

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<sup>1</sup> PT&T, 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024, 222.1

9. There is no current budget at LPC to undertake such roadside post-replacement works, should indeed the council wish to do so. If it were to be decided to undertake the works, consideration will need to be given to (a) funding the replacement works and (b) putting in place a 'sinking fund' to build up reserves for future replacement in, say, 12-15 years' time. In respect of (a) options might include 'managing' the project and seeking contributions from the District and County Councils, as well as local organisations such as the Lindfield Society and potentially public contributions (as MSDC undertook for the Duck House).
10. Members should also be mindful of the wider context. LPC needs to have sufficient funds to maintain and run its assets/services. Given our modest income and reserves, we are not in a position to routinely take on additional unplanned and unbudgeted expenditures.

#### **Risk Assessment**

11. No formal risk assessment has been undertaken at this point.

#### **Sustainability**

12. The existing wooden posts are painted white, with the steel rails painted black, the types of paint and their environmental impact vs longevity have not been reviewed. There has been some suggestion of replacing the posts with plastic but to date, white items of a similar design have not been identified. Recycled plastic might be preferable to newly manufactured plastic but the resistance to fading compared with the current wooden items is not known. It also needs to be remembered that with grass around the posts, strimming inevitably wears post material away and in the case of a plastic post would lead to microplastics being generated and probably ending up in the pond or drainage systems. If the council did choose to progress replacement, the environmental implications would need to be more fully considered.

#### **Way Forward**

13. The following options appear to be available to LPC: -

1. To do nothing and accept that the roadside or outside bollards and rails will fail and be removed, leading to a small grass verge remaining. Whilst double yellow lines are in place, some vehicles will likely stop or park on the verge and, with no bollards to block them, there is also the possibility of vehicles driving up over the verge when larger vehicles are travelling in the opposite direction.
2. To try and 'fight' WSCC's decision. It might be that MSDC can provide some support in the context of the conservation area, but this is as yet untested, and WSCC might choose to stick to their budget argument regardless.
3. To seek to undertake the replacement project, either wholly funding it or seeking contributions from district, county and local bodies alongside. This potentially comes with the danger that MSDC in the future take a similar approach to WSCC with the inner or pondside posts; perhaps relying on LPC to address and/or arguing that other ponds exist with no protective fencing.

Should members choose options 2 and or 3 it would seem appropriate that a working group be created and tasked with carrying out the necessary research and or lobbying.

Committee Meeting:	Full Council
Item:	13
Report of:	Parish Clerk
Meeting Date:	18 July 2024
Subject:	Tree Wardens & Tree Plan

**Purpose of Report:**

1. To consider whether further action is undertaken concerning tree wardens and a tree plan.

**Summary:**

2. The Council has sought to recruit a tree warden without success. It has been suggested by members that the role should be expanded from that of previously providing comments on tree applications to PT&T. A West Sussex County Council Tree Officer has suggested before seeking to recruit a volunteer tree warden(s) the Council should consider creating a tree plan. Members are therefore asked to consider what action if any to take next.

**Recommendation(s)**

**Members are recommended to:**

- a) **Confirm whether they wish to pursue this matter further. If members are inclined to do so then we will need a member(s) to agree to undertake research on a proposed tree plan and provide a report to the office that can be included on a future meeting agenda.**

**Background:**

3. Until September 2020 the Council benefitted from the services of a volunteer tree warden, who would provide their views on tree applications being considered by LPC. Following their decision to retire from the role, adverts were placed on the Council's noticeboard and in Lindfield Life seeking a replacement. Whilst a few responses were received, further discussion did not result in any of them pursuing the matter. It would ideally suit someone who has an interest in trees, was prepared to undertake some training (this has previously been available from the District Council and potentially outside bodies) and has the time to review the tree planning applications for PT&T meetings. They would not necessarily need to attend the committee meeting but to provide their comments via email or similar, in advance of the meeting. The Council previously advertised the voluntary role, to look at tree planning applications, and there was very little interest in the post.
4. The matter was considered at PT&T.<sup>(1)</sup> Members noted the report (see Appendix 1). Discussion took place on the role of the previous tree wardens. It was proposed that a future voluntary role could be expanded to look at which trees in the village could be protected further. It was agreed that research be undertaken on whether other parish/town councils have voluntary tree wardens and what their role involves.
5. During subsequent discussion/research on the matter, it was suggested by a WSCC Officer that the creation of a tree plan to outline the Council's approach and aspirations would be an appropriate precursor to any volunteer role description and advertising a role. This was put to PT&T members and given the potential overlap with the Environment & Amenities Committee, it was suggested that the matter go to Full Council for consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> PT&T 12 March 2024

### **Considerations**

6. The approach recommended by WSCC would seem to have merit. The following points would need to be addressed:
- What would be the purpose of having a tree plan?
  - What would the plan seek to achieve?
  - Would the plan require any additional resources (for example a volunteer)?
  - Avoid duplicating work already undertaken by other local authorities. For example, MSDC maintains records of trees with TPOs and tree planning applications.

### **Options**

7. There would appear to be two different options available
- 1) Agree that this item is not pursued any further.
  - 2) Members who wish to see a voluntary tree warden position are asked first to consider the creation of a tree plan. This will require members to research what the proposed tree plan would cover and hope to achieve. Members would then need to provide a report to the office. This can then be added to the agenda of the most appropriate committee.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1      Report for PT&T Committee (12 March 2024)



Lindfield Parish Council

Committee	PTTC
Date	12/3/24
Item	8, 9, 10, & 11

Report:	<b>10. Trees – Policy and Volunteer Warden</b>
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**Summary**

Following recent discussions at PTTC this report considers whether it might be appropriate to advertise again for a volunteer tree warden, and to update the current Tree policy.

**Background**

Until September 2020 the council benefitted from the services of a volunteer tree warden, who would provide their views on tree applications being considered by LPC. Following their decision to retire from the role, adverts were placed on the council's noticeboard and in Lindfield Life seeking a replacement. Whilst a few responses were received, further discussion did not result in any of them pursuing the matter. It would ideally suit someone who has an interest in trees, was prepared to undertake some training (this has previously been available from the District Council and potentially outside bodies) and has the time to review the tree planning applications for PTTC meetings. They would not necessarily need to attend the committee meeting but to provide their comments via email or similar, in advance of the meeting.

It is probably worth highlighting the limitations in available responses to planning applications relating to trees, as recently circulated to PPTC Members:

- Trees in a Conservation Area (TCA) – there is no legal requirement for the Planning Authority to consult on these notifications, however, MSDC choose to do so. Residents choosing to do works on trees in the Conservation Area are required to notify the Planning Authority and allow the requisite period (six weeks) before undertaking any work. MSDC would normally issue a 'no objection' response unless they considered the tree worthy of having a Tree Preservation Order applied (i.e. it must meet the criteria detailed on MSDC's website).
- For trees with a TPO, the normal expectation would be for an arboricultural (or similar) report however, the Tree Officer will take a pragmatic view – if the tree is clearly diseased or fallen, they would be unlikely to insist on one.

Accordingly, whilst LPC might prefer to see an arboricultural report, for TCAs this is not legally required. Equally, whilst replacement trees would obviously be preferred by LPC this is also not a legal requirement. There is no reason responses should not request a replacement tree but in usual circumstances, it will ultimately be down to the applicant.

**Current Position**

Some members of PTTC have asked whether a new recruitment exercise for tree wardens is appropriate and suggested that in addition to the advertising approaches mentioned above, organisations such as Action in Rural Sussex and MSVA may be able to assist in recruiting such volunteers. Notwithstanding any additional insight that such a person might be able to provide to councillors, the position in respect of considering tree applications detailed above would remain.

**Tree Policy**

In January 2023, PTTC adopted a tree policy, and this is shown at Appendix One. Recent discussions have suggested that this be reviewed, and suggested amendments have been added (in red text at Appendix One). Feedback will be sought from MSDC's Tree Officer to ensure that the wording accurately reflects the position.

Committee	PTTC
Date	12/3/24
Item	8, 9, 10, & 11

**Budget**

None sought.

**Risk Assessment**

Undertaken if candidates were identified, recognising the volunteer role description.

**Sustainability**

No further action recommended.

**Way Forward**

Accordingly, the following options have been considered:-

1. Whether or not to advertise for a new tree warden(s)
2. Updating the current tree policy, as shown in Appendix One

**Recommended Action**

The recruitment of a new volunteer tree warden should provide an additional view on any tree related planning application. However, as detailed above, the options available to the Local Planning Authority in respect of application for Trees in a Conservation Area are limited to whether to apply a Tree Preservation Order or not to object to the works. For a Tree Preservation Order application, the requirement for an arboricultural report in most circumstances is potentially likely to provide more information from a qualified party, than many volunteers would be able to offer. Against this background, it would not appear that the recruitment of a volunteer tree warden would materially impact upon information available to decide upon responses to either Trees in a Conservation Area or Tree Preservation Orders. It is not therefore proposed that a new recruitment exercise should be undertaken.

It is recommended that the Tree Policy be updated as proposed in Appendix One, subject also to clarification with MSDC's Tree Officer.

**David Parsons**  
**Deputy Parish Clerk**

8<sup>th</sup> March 2023