LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT LURGASHALL VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 13TH MARCH 2025 AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present: Mrs Jane Landstrom, Mrs Anthea Martin-Jenkins (Chairman), Mr Neil Jowett, Dr Andrew Tate and Mr Peter Wilding

In Attendance: County Councillor Janet Duncton
Mrs H E Cruikshank (Clerk)

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30pm and welcomed all to the meeting.

There was one member of the public in attendance.

UPDATE ON VILLAGE SHOP

Mr Jim Rice gave an update on the Lurgashall Village Shop (LVS) on behalf of the Board of Directors. There are two important General Meetings coming up on Wednesday 9th April and Thursday 15th May. Both meetings will be held in the Village Hall and will start at 7pm.

In order to safeguard the future of LVS, fundraising is needed to replace the grant funding obtained in 2018 at the inception of the Community shop. It is proposed that LVS converts to Community Benefit Society form and proceeds to issue community shares in a target amount of at least £150,000, thereby creating an investment fund that provides a source of interest revenue to support the costs of the shop. The meetings in April and May will explain and facilitate these changes.

PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS

21/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Parish Councillors Brett Burkhart, Andrew Loughan, Tony Macaulay and Adrian Stainton. Also, from District Councillor Ellie Newbery.

22/25 CODE OF CONDUCT

The Chairman reminded members of their responsibilities under the Code of Conduct.

23/25 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 9th January 2025 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

24/25 MATTERS ARISING

The mobile skip on 1st March was very popular yet again. Thanks were given to all those Councillors and parishioners who helped at the successful Community tidy up morning last weekend.

25/25 COUNCILLORS REPORTS

County Councillor Janet Duncton reported on the following:
Secondary School admissions This year we had 9,050 Secondary Education requests. Slightly down on last year. Every child has been offered a place and 7,882 have been offered their 1st choice. The rest were offered 2nd and 3rd choices.
No-Smoking Day is on the 12th March if anyone would like to take part.

Budget You will all know by now that the Budget meeting set the budget at 4.99% which again was 2.99% for Council and 2% specifically for adult Services.
Devolution A lot of time is being spent on the Devolution issue. I think I did give an explanation last month but just to be clear this is how I see it so far. There will be one Strategic authority for the whole of Sussex, East and West Sussex and including Brighton and Hove. Strategic authorities have to be at least 1.1/2 million residents and this option is about 1.7 million residents. The election for the Mayor and the authority will be in 2026 and it is likely that there will be two others elected from each of the 3 authorities making the Authority 7. I know that the Leader of County and the Leaders and Chief Executives are working to try and produce a make up for the Unitary Authorities. These have to be at least half a million residents and we could end up with 2 or 3 or even 4 which is unlikely but you never know for the whole of Sussex. This election will be in 2027. For the final year to 2028 the new authorities will shadow the County's and I guess the Districts and Boroughs and then those three will then disappear in May 2028. This is the story as we know it so far and as you are aware things do alter but I don't think they will alter much. To be clear. County did not cancel elections, that was the Governments decision and they had to do so because the period of Government consultation on this issue goes into the purdah time before the May election so it isn't appropriate to have elections. We don't as yet know if it's for one, two or 2.5 years so it's watch this space. I will let you know when we know.

In the meantime, I can assure you that I will carry on my work for the division as I always have and try to do my best for the parishes I represent and indeed the whole of West Sussex so of course still do pass on queries to me. I hope that makes things a little clearer and when I know what authorities will do, that's another item for clarity. Broadly the Mayor strategic authority will have money for the bigger projects like infrastructure and a lot of the things done by boroughs and District will move to the Unitaries. Nothing is clear yet with regards Planning etc. but I'm sure we will know more soon.

We do of course have a National Park over much of Hampshire, West and East Sussex. Their main statutory duty is Planning so hopefully that will stay with them. It will have to be sorted out because at the moment some of the authorities like Chichester have a Planning department which does some of the Planning for South Downs. Of course, it could all go back to South Downs and that would give them a problem because they don't have the accommodation or the Staff in house to take in all the roughly 4000 applications that come in during the year.

EXTRAS The West Sussex Library Service is 100 years old. A range of events and activities are planned for people to take part in and enjoy. The SDNP Trust has announced a Litter Picking Fund www.southdownstrust.org.uk

Please let me know if there are some issues you want me to investigate and as ever you can contact me via janet.duncton@westsussex.gov.uk or my mobile 07979152898.

Janet Duncton left the meeting at 7.55pm

In her absence, District Councillor Brett Burkhart had sent through the following report:

English Devolution White Paper
The Government's recent English Devolution White Paper published in December 2024 includes plans for the creation of new Combined Mayoral Authorities, as well as Local Government reorganisation, in all areas that currently have a structure of County and District Councils. These two-tier structures will cease to exist over the next 3 years with all areas moving to single-tier Unitary councils.
Following applications from the upper tier authorities in January, East and West Sussex and Brighton have been confirmed within the Devolution Priority Programme meaning there will be Mayoral Elections in May 2026, and that elections for the new Unitary Authorities will take place in May 2027. There will then be a shadow

year for the new unitary councils before taking full effect from April 2028 at which point the County and District Councils in those areas will be dissolved.
Achieving such a major reorganisation within the timescales set by government will be challenging and will require the reallocation of existing resources to focus on the work required during the transition period. In the short term there is an expectation that the relevant authorities will work together to develop and agree evidence-based proposals to shape the geographies of the new unitary councils that will achieve what is best for the local areas. This will be followed by working with other West Sussex authorities to get all of the requisite elements in place to ensure that the Shadow Authority is ready to come into effect.
Once we enter the shadow year the existing District and County Councils will be limited in their ability to take new strategic or major decisions and will be expected to deliver their services on a business-as-usual basis.
Surprisingly, given the detail with which this is now being implemented, the Government has launched a devolution consultation on creating a new Strategic Combined Authority and a mayor for the wider region of West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton. This consultation runs for eight weeks, until 11:59pm on 13 April 2025 and can be found here: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/sussex-and-brighton-devolution.

Recycling changes for businesses
The government's 'Simpler Recycling' legislation comes into force on 31 March 2025 and requires businesses with 10 or more full time employees to have separate collections for recycling and food waste. CDC's Business Waste and Recycling team are on hand to help ensure it is easy to become compliant, as well as quick and cost-effective. Email today or call 01243 534617.

Council Tax Rise
The decision was made at Chichester District Council's Full Council meeting on 25 February 2025, where the 2.99% rise was agreed for 2025 to 2026. This means that the average Band D council taxpayer will pay £192.06 a year for the council's 80 plus services. This amounts to around 52 pence a day.

Chichester District Council collects all the council tax, but only keeps around an 8% share of this. The other 92% is then distributed to West Sussex County Council (77%); The Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner (11%); and parish councils (4%). Each of these public service providers make decisions about its council tax increases independently.

Petworth Pump Track
CDC has released £70,000 for a pump track in Petworth. A pump track is a purpose-built circuit track for cycling, featuring banked turns and features. This means riders can 'pump' or generate their own momentum through up and down movements, instead of pedals. These tracks also cater for a wide variety of rider ability. The project will be led by Petworth Town Council, in partnership with local landowners, subject to all of the relevant planning permissions being in place. Over the last 10 years both the district and town council have been working to find a suitable site for a skate park, but unfortunately an appropriate location has never been identified. Last year, we asked Petworth Town Council to come up with alternative ways to use the money that we had set aside, and they put forward the idea for a pump track instead and asked us to re-allocate the funds to this project. The district council's ward member for Petworth, Harsha Desai, has also worked with the town council and other local landowners to help find a suitable site. As a result, an area of under-used farmland has been identified, and a planning application will be submitted shortly.

Contacting your District Councillors
Brett can be contacted on email bburkhart@chichester.gov.uk or telephone 07876594168
Ellie can be contacted on email enewbery@chichester.gov.uk or telephone 01428 656 941

26/25 FINANCE
The Clerk had previously distributed Appendix 3a and b which included:

a) A statement of the position of the Council's bank accounts as at 6th March 2025 incorporating details of payments which needed to be made, and for which approval was sought.
b) Budget Monitoring sheet as at 6th March 2025

Two payments were approved: Mrs Helen Cruikshank (Clerk's January and February Salary plus expenses) @ £1,031and The Leconfield Estates (Allotment Water) @ £12. Awaiting the Goss Skips invoice.

The Council's current financial position at £37,507, bank account and budget monitoring sheet were noted.

The members discussed the question of donations (Appendix 3c). It was agreed that the following donations be made and payments for these were approved;

Kent Surrey Sussex Air Ambulance £250
Chichester (Petworth) Food Bank £250
West Sussex Mind £200
The Sylvia Beaufoy Centre £150
Rother Valley Together £150
Tylers Trust £100

The Clerk had previously distributed Appendix 3d, the Newsletter year-end accounts and update from the editor, Liz Stedall. Members agreed to continue its financial support @ £500 for 2025/26. Thanks were given to Liz for all her hard work and commitment.

The Parish Council agreed the updated costs for the village grass cutting for 2025 by Garden Escapes.

27/25 PLANNING
The Clerk had previously distributed Appendix 4. Mrs Martin-Jenkins reported on the following:

PLANNING APPLICATIONS DISCUSSED SINCE THE LAST PC MEETING

There have been no planning applications discussed since the last meeting and there are none outstanding.

DECISIONS RECEIVED FROM CDC/SDNPA SINCE THE LAST PC MEETING

SDNP/24/04829/TCA
Walnut Tree Cottage High Hamstead Lane Lurgashall West Sussex GU28 9ET
Notification of intention reduce height by up to 6m on 1 no. Walnut tree (quoted as 2). Crown reduce by up to 1m on 1 no. Magnolia tree
Decision: Raise no objection

SDNP/24/04628/HOUS
Hazards High Hamstead Lane Lurgashall West Sussex GU28 9ET
Replacement of windows in residential annex
Decision: Approved

SDNP/24/04976/HOUS and SDNP/24/04977/LIS
Wheelwrights, Hillgrove Lane, Lurgashall GU28 9EW
Single storey rear extension to replace existing conservatory
Case withdrawn

SDNP/24/05070/LIS

Aldworth Lodge, Tennysons Lane, Lurgashall GU27 3BJ
Repairs and replacement of ground floor flooring
Decision: Approved

SDNP/24/05139/DCOND
Wheelwrights House Hillgrove Lane Lurgashall West Sussex GU28 9EW
Discharge of condition 3 from planning permission SDNP/24/03808/LIS
Decision: Approved

28/25 HIGHWAYS INCLUDING WINTER MANAGEMENT
Leconfield Estates has kindly offered to improve the rutted layby on Blind Lane at its cost to make it useable for cars and vans. Dr Tate is to be the liaison and help organise volunteers for traffic management to save time and staff costs.

The Clerk to report a highway issue on Surrey Road before Dial Green where the road is falling away at the side. There is an Oak tree dropping large branches on Hillgrove Lane which a neighbouring resident will photograph and send to the Clerk to report. Fencing has been erected around Goffs Copse where Ash Dieback trees have been removed. The pothole by Leigh Barton has been repaired.

29/25 VILLAGE GREEN
The Village Green has been cut. The parking issue at the bottom of the Green had been resolved.

30/25 PLAYGROUND
Mr Loughan has purchased the parts required for the playground repairs so he will be carrying out the works shortly. Mr Macaulay has kindly offered to help.

31/25 ALLOTMENTS
Mrs Landstrom reported that the new season's invoices with the increased rents will be going out at the beginning of April. The allotments are full in 2025 with a waiting list. The Parish Council will be taking over the water bill from The Leconfield Estates so Business Stream will invoice directly.

32/25 RIGHTS OF WAYS
Mrs Martin-Jenkins said that trees had been taken down and the footpaths are being cleared at Wateredge Copse. The Clerk continues to put pressure on WSCC to get the landowner to reinstate the footpaths to a safe state at Coochway Ground. There is an issue with motorised vehicles using the lane between Windfallwood Common and Northurst Lane. Mrs Martin Jenkins to speak with Andy Kinnear about getting one end blocked to prevent this.

33/25 L.R.A
Dr Tate reported that the hedge laying has been done by SDNP and it looks great. The fundraising Quiz is on Thursday 20th March and the AGM will follow in April.

34/25 SOUTH DOWNS LOCAL PLAN REVIEW
The Local Plan Review decides how and where development takes place in the National Park, as well as addressing important issues such as nature recovery, climate change, affordable housing and helping local communities thrive. Lurgashall has no land allocations proposed for development/housing. The deadline for responses is midnight on Monday 17 March. The web hub for the Local Plan Review can be accessed here: www.southdowns.gov.uk/local-plan-review

35/25 VE/VJ80 COMMEMORATION

The Village Hall is organising a tea party on Wednesday 7th May to commemorate VE/VJ80. As CDC declined the grant application for funding the music at the event, the Parish Council agreed to pay for this.

36/25 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING 2025

The APM is on Thursday 3rd April at 7.30pm at the Village Hall. Everyone is welcome. Andrew Griffiths, MP will be in speaking and answering questions. The Clerk to ask Mrs Burkhart whether she could organise fliers advertising the event through the Conservatives which could then be distributed with the Parish Newsletter. Mr Jowett and Dr Tate to organise some food on the night and the Clerk to ask the Village Hall to run the bar.

37/25 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk said there was one meeting for Councillors coming up: SDNP Parishes online meeting on Wednesday 19th March at 6.30pm.

38/25 TO CONSIDER URGENT MATTERS AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

There were no urgent matters.

39/25 ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AGENDA

Please let the Clerk know of any additional items by Thursday 1st May

40/25 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Thursday 8th May 2025 at 7.30pm

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm