LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT LURGASHALL VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 8TH MAY 2025 AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present: Mrs B Burkhart (also in attendance as District Councillor), Mrs J Landstrom, Mr A Loughan, Mr T Macaulay, Mrs A Martin-Jenkins (Chair), Mr N Jowett, Mr A Stainton, Dr A Tate and Mr P Wilding

In Attendance: Mr Adrian Moss – Leader of Chichester District Council
District Councillor Ellie Newbery
Mrs H E Cruikshank (Clerk)

There were eighty-four members of the public in attendance including the press.

The Chair declared the meeting open at 7.30pm and welcomed all to the meeting including District Councillor Brett Burkhart and Adrian Moss, leader of Chichester District Council (CDC). Mrs Martin-Jenkins stated due to the amount of people attending tonight, PQT would be extended to 45 minutes to give everyone the opportunity to talk and have their say.

Public Question time
(This item was brought forward due to the amount of public and press interest)

District Councillor Burkhart stated this is not an easy situation. Unauthorised works started on privately owned land in a field off Blind Lane late on Thursday 1 May. CDC sent planning enforcement officers out to assess the site and this led to a Temporary Stop Notice (TSN) being served on Friday 2 May. Worked stopped for a while but then carried on that afternoon and over the Bank Holiday week-end until 8pm on Monday 5 May. The original TSN was re-issued on Monday. At 8.45pm, caravans entered the site, so a second Temporary Stop Notice was issued relating to unauthorised vehicles and caravans on the site on Tuesday 6 May. The Police visited Friday, Saturday and Sunday but as it was a civil matter, they did not have the power to make arrests for planning infringements. Andrew Griffith, MP has also been helping and shares the outrage and concern of residents about this illegal breach of planning.

Adrian Moss, leader of CDC said that CDC is now taking further legal steps and has sought an injunction through the High Court in London. When this has been granted, it will be served to the relevant parties. This is a court order that prohibits any further unauthorised work or vehicles and caravans on the site. CDC has also issued a planning Enforcement Notice. This requires the relevant parties to return the land to agricultural land and to remove any unauthorised structures, items, caravans and vehicles, and to cease unauthorised use of the land. Chichester District Council are acting on behalf of the South Downs National Park Authority.

These matters are taken incredibly seriously. Some actions take longer than others and each have different penalties. CDC are taking all of the steps available to them to achieve the quickest and most effective resolution.

Members of the public asked a plethora of questions regarding the notices, legal implications and procedures and the environmental impact of the devastating works on the site itself. Many asked about prosecutions and the fact that more protection against unauthorised development is needed in the SDNP.

Adrian Moss assured the community that CDC are doing everything in their power to respond to this and a close eye is being kept on the situation. There is a legal process which must be followed.

Adrian Moss left the meeting at 8pm

District Councillor Burkhart said that off the back of this, there will be much better and quicker access to CDC Officers out of hours and a raft of new protocols will be put in place. She is pushing for this to continue indefinitely. CDC will fight this development and it is confident it will get the land reinstated. It will not be inhibited by budget.

Please be courteous what it put up on social media sites. Discrimination is not tolerated.

Mrs Martin-Jenkins thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. She said patience is required and the Parish Council will keep the community updated with news where practicable.

Eighty- three members of public left the meeting at 8.15pm

Chichester District Council has since produced a series of frequently asked questions and answers for local residents who want to find out more about the action that has been taken: www.chichester.gov.uk/latestnews

The stop notice and enforcement notice are displayed on the following public access link: www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-applications/enforcement-report-a-breach/planning-enforcement/planning-enforcement-register/partner-authority-notices/

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS AGENDA

1. TO ELECT A CHAIR

Nominations were invited for Chair for the ensuing year. Mrs A Martin-Jenkins was proposed and duly seconded and there being no other nominations it was **RESOLVED** that Mrs Martin-Jenkins be elected Chair of Lurgashall Parish Council and she took the chair.

2. TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIR

The Chair invited nominations for Vice Chair and Dr A Tate was proposed and duly seconded. There being no other nominations it was **RESOLVED** that Dr Tate be elected Vice Chair for the ensuing year.

3. TO ELECT MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES

Planning Committee
Mr Jowett, Mrs Martin-Jenkins, Mr Stainton, Dr Tate and Mr Wilding

Finance & General Purposes Committee
Mrs Burkhart, Mr Jowett, Mrs Martin-Jenkins and Mr Wilding

Highways (including Winter Planning and Village Green) Committee
Mrs Martin-Jenkins, Mr Loughan, Mr Macaulay, Mr Stainton and Dr Tate

Special Responsibilities
Systems Audit – Dr Tate
Playground – Mr Loughan and Mr Macaulay
Allotment Manager – Mrs Landstrom
Lurgashall Link – Mrs Landstrom

Representatives

Village Hall Management Committee – Vacant
L.R.A – Dr Tate

4. TO AFFIRM DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS 2025/26
   Thursday 10th July 2025
   Thursday 11th September 2025
   Thursday 13th November 2025
   Thursday 8th January 2026
   Thursday 12th March 2026
   Thursday 14th May 2026 (Annual Meeting)

All meetings are to be held in Lurgashall Village Hall at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated. Planning meetings are to be held on the first Tuesday of every month at the Village Hall at 7.30pm if required. Contact the Clerk for confirmation of these.

PARISH COUNCIL BUSINESS

40/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies were received from County Councillor Janet Duncton.

41/25 CODE OF CONDUCT
The Chairman reminded members of their responsibilities under the Code of Conduct.

42/25 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
The minutes of the last Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 13th March 2025 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

43/25 MATTERS ARISING
There were no matters arising which were not on the agenda this evening.

44/25 COUNCILLORS REPORTS
District Councillor Ellie Newbery reported on the following:

- **Chichester District Council Grants Programme**
  The District Council was pleased to be able to increase the amount of funding available through the discretionary grants programme for this financial year and agreed three new funding priorities. A pot of £350,000 is available for this year. The first closing date for applications over £2,000 will be Friday 16 May (there will be three further rounds during the year). Applications must be from organisations delivering projects or services meeting one of the priorities. They are:

  Economy – contact David Hyland 01243 534864
  • To support projects that bring forward inward investment.
  • To support viable start-up and existing SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) to implement 'growth' projects

  Improving Places and Spaces
  • Improvements to publicly owned space or built assets that enhance the wellbeing of local residents, or publicly accessible spaces that improve the habitats of the district's wildlife.

  It was agreed to consider looking into getting funding for new posts around the Village Green or a new piece of equipment for the play area. Mr Loughan and Mr Macaulay to decide what is best required.

Stronger Communities

• Funding for voluntary and community services delivering projects supporting vulnerable people who have been most impacted by current social and economic pressures. There are quarterly opportunities to apply for more than £2,000 (up to a maximum £25,000). Applications for up to £2,000 can be submitted at any time, through a Fast Track process.

Information on the council's website has now been updated: Chichester District Council grant programme - Chichester District Council. The programme can't fund retrospectively, and applications must be from eligible organisations. Please signpost anyone interested in knowing more about the funding or in applying to the programme to speak with a Funding Adviser. The Adviser will talk them through eligibility, completing the form and likely timescales. There are several Advisers specialising in supporting different types of projects, and potential applicants can just get in touch via the 'Enquiry Form' on the website. The form asks them for an outline of their project, organisation and request – the appropriate Adviser will then respond to them.

- **Consultation on Rough Sleeping Strategy**

  The five-year Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out how the council will continue to work with partners to prevent people from becoming homeless; create and retain affordable housing for young people and families; address the housing needs of older people; and improve housing standards for all residents in the district. Supporting people facing homelessness and ensuring that residents of all ages have access to high quality, affordable homes is a top priority for our council. Our housing teams do a tremendous amount of work to support people across the district, and as a council we have a proactive approach to tackling the various issues in this important area. Our council has already agreed to set aside £1m to support the strategy's aims, and we are confident that the actions and projects that have been identified will make a huge difference to residents and their quality of life. You can find out more about this at: www.chichester.gov.uk/article/39766/New-housing strategy-for-Chichester-District-is-approved and the new Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030 www.chichester.gov.uk/housingstrategiesandstudies

- **Local News**

  An illegal traveller site has been established at Blind Lane, Lurgashall (what three words repayment.remarks.purses) which was discussed earlier.

  I am hoping to help organise a "jumble safari" in aid of Fernhurst Primary School on the weekend of 12/13 July. Households who would like to participate will be asked to pay £5 and then be included on a map of the village. Buyers can travel around the village to different stalls. We hope it will be a really fun event.

  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

In her absence, County Councillor Janet Duncton sent through the following notes:
For the last month or so Irish Travellers took over the Football field in Kirdford and then moved on to Ebernoe near the Cricket pitch. I need to say if this should happen in your parish, make sure you have funds to clean up after their departure. Everyone involved did what they could but they are aggressive and leave mounds of what can only be described as filth. Although this is more a problem for Chichester District Council than County although as you can imagine we all get dragged in to trying to get them moved. The costs are enormous and I well remember last year when they took up residence on Hampers Green in Petworth; it was not only picking up litter but all the play equipment had to be fumigated afterwards. This is not easy.

Having got rid of them at Ebernoe over the last Bank Holiday a different group of Travellers/Gypsies decided to completely destroy the landscape in a field they purchased about 2 years ago; a field on Blind Lane which is just off the A283 and runs to Lurgashall. Despite CDC issuing Stop Notices they have continued to work on the site and today and yesterday moved in their living accommodation. CDC have issued a second Stop notice but of course no notice is taken of either. The MP is working hard to see what can be done and about 9 of us are having Teams meetings for updates but I fear it will be a long job.

There is not much to update on Devolution until later this month. As far as I know discussions are still progressing over the size of the new Unitary Council. By next month we may all know how these discussions have panned out. It's not straightforward and the most recent things I've heard have been one Unitary for Sussex but I think one of the difficulties Brighton and Hove start disagreeing and as I see it the Government will have to step in and make some decisions on what they are seeking. I had to mention Devolution because some of you may know that I was not going to stand as a County Councillor on the 1st May elections. However, the decision was taken out of our hands by Government who cancelled the elections. Now at this moment I can't tell you if I am still your CC for one, two or 3 years. I will update as I know but I do want to assure you that whatever happens I will be working for you all as I have always done.
My other duties are carrying on as normal. Everything at the moment is working well and with applications for school admissions in September. 97% got their first school choice for Secondary and for Primary 91% got first choice. Of course, that still leaves 3% and 9% who didn't get their first or second choice in some cases so a lot of work has to be done to help get these pupils settled into Primary or Secondary Schools.

As ever my email is janet.duncton@westsussex.gov.uk and my mobile 07979152898.

District Councillor Ellie Newbery left the meeting at 8.30pm

45/25 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 1st May 2025 incorporating details of payments which needed to be made, and for which approval was sought.
b) Budget Monitoring sheet as at 1st May 2025

The Council's current financial position at £46,604, bank account and budget monitoring sheet were noted. The first instalment of the 2025/26 precept of £12,500 has been received plus £715 VAT refund and £450 in allotment rents.

The members duly approved the payments for Mrs H E Cruikshank (Clerk's March & April 2025 Salary & Expenses) @ £1,115 and Clear Councils (Annual Insurance Renewal 2025/26) @ £782, The Leconfield Estates (Allotment water charges) @ £24, WSALC Ltd (Annual Subs) @ £210 and Mr James Tree (Internal Audit 2024/25) @ £50. Members agreed to put £10,000 into an earmarked reserve for Legal and Planning Consultancy fees.

The Clerk had previously distributed Appendix 3c which included the end of year 2024/25 documents:

- Page 1: The Internal Audit report carried out by Mr James Tree on 2nd May. He agreed that all internal control objectives had been carried out during the year raising no concerns.
- Page 2: Section 1 Annual Governance Statement
- Page 3: Section 2 Accounting Statements 2024/25
- Page 4: Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2025
- Page 5: Income and Expenditure sheet

The Clerk will distribute the Explanation of Variance document once she has a working laptop.

The Parish Council's 2024/25 financial year started with an opening balance of £33,643. During the year, the Parish Council received an income of £25,922. This consisted of the precept at £25,000, allotment rents and bank interest. The Parish Council spent £24,198 during the last financial year. This consisted of costs to maintain the Village Green, the Allotments and the Play Area, Clerk's Salary, General Admin plus grants of £7,450 for the year.

This leaves a closing balance as at 31st March 2025 of £35,367. This is a higher than normal at year end but we have playground repairs to pay and a new laptop to purchase. The Parish Council accounts are healthy and hopefully with an explanation the external auditors will be happy. The notice of the period for the exercise of public rights and all other legal information will be displayed on the notice board and website from Tuesday 3rd June until Monday 14th July.

Members considered the Accounts for 2024/25, the AGAR 2024/25 including section 1: The Annual Governance Statement questions and section 2: The Accounting Statement figures.

45/25 sub item 1 Section 1: The Annual Governance Statements were duly proposed, seconded and approved, then signed by the Chair.

45/25 sub item 2 Section 2: The Annual Figures were duly proposed, seconded and approved, then signed by the Chair.

46/25 PLANNING
The Clerk had previously distributed Appendix 4.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS DISCUSSED SINCE THE LAST PC MEETING

SDNP/25/0066/HOUS
Deerfell, Fernden Lane, Lurgashall GU27 3BU
New lean-to extension

SDNP/25/01140/HOUS
Sods Farm, High Hamstead Lane, Lurgashall GU28 9EX
Provision of new access point to provide off-road parking

DECISIONS RECEIVED FROM CDC/SDNPA SINCE THE LAST PC MEETING

SDNP/25/00620/DCOND and SDNP/25/00621/DCOND
Green Cottage, High Hamstead Lane, Lurgashall GU28 9ET
Discharge of conditions 3 (Door detail), 4 (Rainwater Goods), 6 (Rooflight) and 9 (Main roof repair) from planning permission SDNP/24/02812/HOUS and SDNP/24/02813/LIS)
Decision: Approved

SDNP/25/00846/DCOND and SDNP/25/00847/DCOND
Green Cottage, High Hamstead Lane, Lurgashall GU28 9ET
Discharge of condition 8 (façade) from planning permission SDNP/24/02812/HOUS and SDNP/24/02813/LIS
Decision: Approved

Mrs Burkhart has written to Shona Archer at CDC Enforcement asking for an update on the mobile home in a field off Jobsons Lane.

The Clerk to compose a list of how to report issues which will be posted on the noticeboard, Lurgashall Link FB page and included in the newsletter. Mrs Martin-Jenkins asked that the names of Councillors be reinstated into the newsletter too. The Clerk to action.

47/25 HIGHWAYS INCLUDING WINTER MANAGEMENT

Mrs Martin-Jenkins said sadly there already was a lot of litter everywhere in spite of the village tidy up only a couple of months ago. Another date will be agreed in due course for October.

Thanks were given to Mrs Burkhart, Mr Macaulay and Dr Tate for volunteering to help with the traffic management whilst The Leconfield Estates installed a permanent new layby on Blind Lane.

The Clerk to order a replacement grit bin by Sods Farm over the Summer.

48/25 VILLAGE GREEN

The number of vehicles parking at the bottom of the Green has reduced.

49/25 PLAYGROUND

Mr Loughan said the playground refurbishment and repairs were nearly there and would be in place before the annual inspection takes place in June.

50/25 ALLOTMENTS

Mrs Landstrom reported the allotments are still full and there had been a weekend tidy up session. There has been a problem with rats however all plastic has now been removed from plots to prevent further issues. The allotment rules have been updated accordingly.

51/25 RIGHTS OF WAYS

Mrs Landstrom mentioned a broken stile on FP 2029 (subsequently reported to WSCC). New fingerposts have been erected around the parish.

52/25 ANNUAL INSPECTIONS

Mrs Martin-Jenkins suggested Councillors walk around the village together to inspect its various assets. It was agreed to meet at the Village Shop at 7pm before the next meeting to look at the allotments and the playground as a start.

53/24 CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

54/25 TO CONSIDER URGENT MATTERS AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

Dr Tate said the L.R.A AGM had been held last night and all went smoothly. Finances are good and the mole problem in the Jubilee field had been sorted. The L.R.A Quiz had raised £1,000.

55/25 ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AGENDA

Please let the Clerk know of any additional items by Thursday 3rd July 2025

56/25 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is on Thursday 10th July 2025 at 7.30pm

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm