

# MINUTES OF THE LURGASHALL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON THURSDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2018

**From the Parish Council:** Dr P Wilding (Chairman), Mr R Cooper, Mr J Harden, Mr S Hellett, Mrs A Martin-Jenkins, Mr N Jowett and Mr G Sharp

**Also present:** Six members of the Public

The Chairman of the Parish Council opened the meeting at 7.00pm and welcomed everyone to Lurgashall's Annual Parish Meeting 2018.

## APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr Jeremy Bonnett

Dr A Tate

DC Nick Thomas

CC Janet Duncton

## MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes from the last Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2017 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

## MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

## PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Parish Council met 6 times over the last year and Councillors attendance has generally been very good. The attendance of the County and District Councillors has also been very good and I am mindful of the demands on their time and I would like to thank them for their support to the Parish over the year.

### **Finance**

The Finance and General Purposes Committee met on 27<sup>th</sup> November to set the Budget for the coming year and after presenting their recommendations to the Full Council in January it was agreed that the Precept should be increased by £4000 taking it from £16,000 to £20,000, an increase of 25%. The increase in the precept, works out as 22p per Band D household per week. It was agreed that the increase was needed to enable the Parish Council to cover increasing demands on its funding such as maintaining the Green, the allotments, the signposts and providing a skip each year. In addition it was felt that provision should be made for possible funding assistance for the Village Shop and the continuing support for Northchapel Primary School.

### **Planning**

The Planning Committee has considered 38 applications this year which is a slight decrease on the 40 applications last year; there were 36 in the year before that. It made comments on 12 of them of which 3 were an objection. It is interesting that there have been no applications involving the construction of large houses this year, and any granted last year have not been implemented; this may reflect a decline in prices in the top end of the housing market.

### **Village Shop**

Last October, we heard that the Village Shop might close in March 2018. I arranged a public meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> October to brief the Village on the situation, and soon afterwards, a committee was formed to look into setting up a Community run shop. A survey was conducted to find out the views of the Parish. Discussions took place with the freeholders about arranging a new lease and with the Post Office to ensure that the Post Office was retained. The shop was given a clean and redecorated at the beginning of March and was open for business on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March. On 27<sup>th</sup> April, the Village Shop signed a contract with the Post Office and a lease of more than 3 years with the freeholders. This means that the loan of £5000 given by the Parish

Council to the Village Shop now becomes a grant. There is now a rota of volunteers in place to staff the shop.

I must say I think this project has been a great success and is a credit to the Village community. It has demonstrated what can be achieved when a community works together.

### **Village Green**

The amount of cars parking on the Green continues to be a problem, but the work done to strengthen the surface in the south east corner seems to be alleviating the parking pressure on other parts of the Green.

We have recently heard that news that Lurgashall will no longer have a cricket team, because they were no longer confident of being able to raise a team each week. However, the cricket pitch will be used by other clubs and will continue to be maintained by the cricket club.

The Parish Council removed a pile of earth on the south east corner of the Green last summer so that BT Open reach could install a Broadband Cabinet there. This work is now completed which has brought superfast broadband to Lurgashall Village and some neighbouring areas.

### **Allotments**

Last year, a lot of effort was put into tidying up the allotments: a large quantity of rubbish was disposed of and the unused allotments were levelled and weeds treated with weed killer. This has made the allotments easier to maintain but has only resulted in one more allotment being used this year. Currently 10 people are using 12 out of 23 plots. The hedges have been cut and the grass cut once this year.

### **Village Hall**

The Village Hall had a full programme of events this year: film nights, lunches, teas, music and talks. Planning permission for an extension to the hall has been given but is not being implemented because there are other demands on funding in the village. The Village Hall now has a projector and Wi-Fi connectivity to Broadband.

Dialogue with the Chichester Diocese about transferring the Village Hall freehold to a Village organisation has made significant progress this year. After discussions with the Diocese and the Charity Commission, the option which appears to satisfy the requirements of both organisations is for the Freehold to be transferred to an Ecclesiastical Charity; this could be achieved if the Parochial Church Council (PCC) were to form a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and the freehold was transferred to it. There are some details to be resolved and there will be legal costs.

### **Village Bus**

The Village continues to have a twice weekly bus service. MYBus operated by Midhurst Community Bus on Tuesdays and the Compass 96 Bus Service Fridays. Thanks to Joe for his work in getting the replacement service arranged on Tuesdays.

### **Winter Management**

We have had a mild wet winter followed by a short but severe cold spell which has meant that there was little demand for the salt or for a local contractor to clear of snow.

Lurgashall and Lodsworth Parish Council had jointly applied for a grant from the County Council under Operation Watershed to employ a specialist firm to look in to the flooding problems at Lickfold. The final report was presented at The Lodsworth Annual Parish Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May last year, and it concluded that clearing silt from the mill pond or removing debris from the river would not stop flooding; the only solution would be to re-design the bridge at Lickfold. I attended the Fernhurst Parish Council yesterday and, in principle, they are prepared to join us in applying for another round of Watershed funding to look at potential solutions to the Lickfold flooding. This would initially involve design study for alterations to the bridge or bridges.

## **Playground**

The Playground had its annual ROSPA inspection and they once again rated us as Medium Risk mainly because of the age of our perfectly good equipment, but commented that we had a well maintained Playground.

## **Looking ahead**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> September, a large cycling event, Velo South involving 15,000 cyclists, is taking place and will be passing through Lurgashall travelling down Jobsons Lane from Gospel Green to Lickfold, and then on to Fernhurst. There will be some inconvenience due to road closures but on the positive side all pot holes will be filled along the route.

The new data protection regulations come into force this month and the Parish will need to consider how to comply with them.

The Village Shop was planning a second stage of refurbishment; this is likely to be delayed until the freeholders refurbish the house, so it is unclear when this will occur. When it does occur there is likely to be a significant requirement for further funding.

The Clerk will present a Financial Report later. The forecast budget for the last year produced by the Finance Committee aided by the Clerk turned out to be very accurate.

I would like to thank all the members of the council for their contributions over the last year especially the Chairpersons of the various Committees Anthea (Finance) Peter (Planning) and Ray (Village Green, Highways and Winter Management). Thanks also to Gary for the work he has put in to the Allotments and the Village Green and, of course, Helen who keeps everything running smoothly.

Once again thank you all for your support during the year.

## **PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES**

The Parish Council's 2017/18 financial year started with an opening balance of £27,631. During the year, the Parish Council received an income of £24,693. This consisted of the precept at £16,000, allotment rents, VAT return and a £4,985 contribution from the Cricket Club for the Cricket Pavilion refurbishment.

The Parish Council has spent £31,219 during the past financial year. In addition to its normal costs of maintaining the Village Green, the Allotments and the Play Area, Clerk's Salary, General Admin, grants and donations of £3,735 for the year. Money was also spent on the Lickfold Bridge survey (Operation Watershed (£4,980), the Cricket Pavilion £9,885 (PC contributed £900) and it now has its own laptop plus an A3 printer for when SDNP eventually stop sending out paper plans. These three projects were all funded by grants and donations.

As you can see from the figures on the sheet, this leaves a closing balance as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 of £21,104.

This leaves the Parish Council accounts in a healthy but not excessive state at year end which should keep both the internal and external auditors happy. The internal audit has been carried out by Mr James Tree and he has agreed that all internal control objectives have been carried out throughout the year raising no concerns. The internal report along with the annual return for 2017/18 will hopefully be approved at the AGM which follows this meeting and then be returned to the external auditor Moore Stephens in June. 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. All documents which need to be published in line with the local government transparency code will also be available to view on the website and the noticeboard from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018.

## LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL 2017/18

<u>2016/17</u>	<u>INCOME &amp; EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2017/18</u>
£		£
<b>21,587</b>	<b>FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD</b>	<b>27,631</b>
<b>£</b>	<b>INCOME</b>	<b>£</b>
14,500	PRECEPT	16,000
7	BANK INTEREST	4
209	ALLOTMENTS	209
6,305	GRANTS	4,985
537	VAT RECOVERED	3,494
781	MISCELLANEOUS	0
<b>22,338</b>	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>24,693</b>
<b>43,925</b>		<b>52,324</b>
	<i>GRANTS RECEIVED 2016/17</i>	
	<i>New Homes Bonus £1,405</i>	
	<i>CDC Queen's 90th Birthday grant £250</i>	
	<i>Fete contribution to Cricket Pavilion £4,000</i>	
	<i>SSALC transparency fund grant £650</i>	
	<i>GRANTS RECEIVED 2017/18</i>	
	<i>Cricket Club donation towards Cricket Pavilion £4,985</i>	
<u>2016/17</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2017/18</u>
£		£
5,181	GENERAL ADMIN * (Note 2)	5,858
390	NEWSLETTER	400
300	CHAIRMANS ALLOWANCE	300
197	LITTER BIN EMPTYING	200
5,139	VILLAGE GREEN AND SURROUNDINGS * (Note 3)	11,420
680	ALLOTMENTS	450
682	PLAYGROUND	626
0	HIGHWAYS inc OPERATION WATERSHED	4,980
2,685	GRANTS AND DONATIONS * (Note 1)	3,735
791	VAT PAID	3,206
0	ELECTION COSTS	0
250	MISCELLANEOUS	45
<b>16,294</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>31,219</b>
<b>27,631</b>	<b>TOTAL FUNDS AT YEAR END</b>	<b>21,104</b>
Note 1:	<b>GRANTS AND DONATIONS</b>	<b>£</b>
	VILLAGE HALL	1000
	PCC	375
	CRICKET CLUB	560
	L.R.A	250
	NORTHCHAPEL PRIMARY SCHOOL	1000
	<i>£137</i>	
	CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU (WAVERLEY)	100
	HASLEMERE FIRST RESPONDERS	50
	KENT SURREY SUSSEX AIR AMBULANCE	100
	ROTHER VALLEY TOGETHER	50
	PETWORTH COTTAGE NURSING HOME	50
	CHICHESTER DISTRICT FOODBANK (PETWORTH)	100
	MIDHURST COMMUNITY BUS	100
	<b>TOTAL GRANTS AND DONATIONS</b>	<b>3,735</b>
Note 2:	<b>GENERAL ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>£</b>
	CLERKS SALARY	3,800
	WEST SUSSEX ALC LTD (ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION)	177
	INSURANCE	635
	AUDIT	150
	GENERAL EXPENSES	1,080
	TRAINING	16
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,858</b>
Note 3:	<b>VILLAGE GREEN AND SURROUNDS</b>	<b>£</b>
	GRASS CUTTING	1,011
	GRIT BIN SITE RENTAL	25
	GROUNDWORKS ON VILLAGE GREEN TO ENABLE BT BROADBAND BOX TO BE INSTALLED	500
	CRICKET PAVILION REFURBISHMENT	9,885
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,420</b>

## DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT

There was no District Councillor report. In Nick Thomas' absence, Peter Wilding reported that District news was all very Chichester centric with the Southern Gateway plans. He added that the Chichester Local Plan was behind its deadline although this does not cover Lurgashall as it is covered by the SDNP local plan which is due to be published in 2019.

## COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

There was no County Councillor report.

## PARISHIONERS FORUM

One Parishioner said that he felt it would be better if the Annual Parish Meeting embraced all Village Organisations rather than providing a Report of the Parish Council's activities over the year. It could, for example, include presentations on the vision for the Village shop or the Cricket Club or possibly have an external speaker.

Ray Cooper said that in the past, the Annual Parish Meeting did have the village organisations attending and reporting, but after a time, it was felt it had run its course and should not be repeated every year. However, it was probably time to review the format and consider re introducing it.

The Parishioner then mentioned Parish Council's letter to CDC planners regarding the proposed MUGA on the Jubilee Field. He said he thought the letter was divisive and disingenuous. He said the Parish Council should engage fully with the L.R.A. and the Village Shop.

Peter Wilding reminded him that the Parish Council letter concerning the MUGA application contained comments and no objection and there were 7 objections from residents.

Peter Wilding said he had taken a central role in organising and leading the first Village Shop meeting in October and setting up the Committee to take it forward. Anthea Martin-Jenkins said that when the Parish Council had been asked for money to help support the shop at its March meeting. It had granted an interest free loan until the lease and contract with the Post Office had been signed. The £5,000 loan became a grant on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

Peter Wilding said that he thought the Parishioner was taking a specific concern about the LRA Planning Application and was trying to infer that it applied to all aspects of the Parish Council's activities. He said that this was not fair or accurate.

Neil Jowett said the Parish Council always had very free discussions at its meetings and were fully supportive of the shop from the start. At the last PC meeting when financial support was requested, two representatives of the Village Shop were at the meeting. The Parish Council was engaged with every organisation in the Village and its members were serving on committees of probably every organisation.

Another Parishioner, who had been on the fete committee for 10 years, said he did not recognise these concerns and was very surprised to hear them.

Another Parishioner said he thought it very poor that neither the District nor County Councillor were in attendance and hadn't even sent in written reports.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45pm