LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held in the Village Hall on Thursday, 13 March 2008

Present: Mr R E J Cooper (Chairman), Mrs J Boxall, Mr K M Caird, Mr N P Jowett, Mrs A Martin-Jenkins, Dr A H J Tate and Mr P J Széll (Clerk).

Also present: Mr C Duncton and two members of the public.

14/08 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies for absence had been received from Mr G D J R Sharp and Dr P J H Wilding.

15/08 – CODE OF CONDUCT
The Chairman reminded members of their responsibilities under the Code of Conduct.

16/08 - MINUTES OF LAST MEETING
The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

17/08 – MATTERS ARISING
No matters were raised.

18/08 – OPEN FORUM
Mr Paul Read, a former Chairman of the Council, spoke of the recent request from the Midhurst/Petworth Police Neighbourhood Specialist Team (NST) to contribute regular articles about their activities to the *Parish Newsletter*. He already prepared for the *Newsletter* a Neighbourhood Watch section which covered similar matters. This being so, he had been invited by the Chairman to look through the NST's articles for a trial period to see what, if anything, could usefully be used in his Neighbourhood Watch section. He would be happy to do this. In thanking Mr Read, the Chairman noted that the small size of the *Newsletter* made it impossible to allocate space to outside bodies as requested by the NST.

19/08 – COUNCILLORS' REPORTS
Among the matters addressed by Mr Duncton in his report were (a) the availability of WSCC funding for Parish projects and the prospects of obtaining a contribution towards repair of the Village Hall roof from that source; (b) his continuing concern about the ever-increasing use of the county's rural lanes by HGV lorries and the need to continue to seek ways of restricting such access; and (c) WSCC's introduction of two-person teams to carry out "a wide range of small-scale street scene improvement works" (eg trimming vegetation and cleaning dirty road signs, but not pothole repairs). The teams would rotate among the County Local Committee areas and aim to visit each at 5-weekly intervals. Whilst welcoming the initiative, the Chairman observed that from the papers he had seen, the scheme seemed geared towards urban, more than rural, works.

20/08 – FINANCE
1. Current financial statement. The Clerk distributed and explained:
   (a) a statement of the position of the Council's bank accounts, incorporating details of cheques that needed to be issued and for which approval was sought; and
   (b) figures setting out the Council's income and expenditure against its 2007-08 budget.

The Council approved payment of all the cheques listed in the Annex, below.

2. Appeals for donations. Members decided to make the following donations, totalling £100:

- Chichester and District Citizens Advice Bureau - £20
- Surrey Air Ambulance Fund - £80

21/08 – PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS

(a) **Planning**

1. Applications. In Dr Wilding absence, the Clerk reported that eight planning applications had been notified to the Council since the last meeting, ie the applications concerning Signpost Cottage, The Forge, Pheasant Hill and 2 Blackdown Hill Cottages which are referred to in paragraph 2, below, and the four listed in this paragraph. The Planning Committee had no objections to, or major comments on, any of the eight proposals:

LG/07/05827/LBC: The Malt House, Village Green

Replace window to bedroom no. 5, remedial works in basement, alterations to kitchen, utility room, cloakroom, store, bedroom no. 1, bedroom no. 2, bedroom no. 3, bedroom no. 4, bathroom, loft stair and rooflight to stair no. 2

LG/08/00681/LBC: Boxalland Farm, Petworth Road

Addition of solar water heating collectors to provide a non-polluting sustainable energy source and associated screening

LG/08/00701/DOM: The Hole, Blind Lane

Erection of replacement garage building. Amendment to planning permission LG/06/02173/DOM

LG/08/00825/DOM: Pear Tree Cottage, Village Green

Single storey double garage

2. Decisions. Ten decisions had been received from Chichester DC since the last meeting:

LG/07/05553/DOM: Becketts Farm, Roundhurst Lane

2 storey extension, plus general re-furbishment of exterior of property PERMIT

LG/07/05852/FUL: Old Hearne Farm, Jays Lane

A mixed agricultural and equestrian development consisting of a stock building, 10 loose boxes, tractor barn, 2 storage barns and ancillary feed store, office and mess room PERMIT

LG/07/05512/DOM: The Hole, Blind Lane

Modification to permitted part single and part two storey rear extension to extend first floor bedroom by 0.44m (amendment to planning permission LG/07/00579/DOM) PERMIT

LG/07/05513/LBC: The Hole, Blind Lane

Modification to permitted part single and part two storey rear extension (amendment to listed building consent LG/07/00578/LBC) GRANT

LG/07/05961/FUL: Lower Roundhurst Farm, Tennysons Lane

Alteration to grade II listed timber barn and development of adjacent redundant farm buildings to provide self contained bed and breakfast accommodation, with 7 double rooms, breakfast room, reception and service areas PERMIT

LG/07/05962/LBC: Lower Roundhurst Farm, Tennysons Lane

Alteration to grade II listed timber barn and development of adjacent redundant farm buildings to provide self contained bed and breakfast accommodation, with 7 double rooms, breakfast room, reception and service areas GRANT

LG/07/05907/LBC: Signpost Cottage, Village Green

Proposed extension and alterations GRANT

LG/07/06053/DOM: The Forge, Roundhurst Lane

Two storey extension to side PERMIT

LG/07/06026/DOM: 2 Blackdown Hill Cottages, Fernden Lane

Two storey rear extension and internal alterations PERMIT

LG/07/06089/DOM: Pheasant Hill, Hillgrove Lane

Two storey rear extension and alterations; loft conversion and 4 no. dormer windows to house. Demolition of outbuilding (garaging with room over). Replacement outbuilding with room over new position away from boundary, relocated vehicular access. Refurbishment of Bulrush Cottage including new fireplace/chimney, new window/door openings, cloakroom, external walls to be faced with featheredge boarding to match outbuilding, roof tiles to be replaced PERMIT

3. Other planning related matters. The Clerk informed Members about progress on the Kings Copse appeal to the Secretary of State. The appeal was being conducted on the basis of written representations. The Inspector had made a site visit on 4 March accompanied by the applicants' agents and a District Council Planning Official. At National Trust suggestion, he had also viewed the site from Blackdown. The Inspector's decision was expected within about three weeks.

(b) **Highways**

1. Speed checks. The Clerk and Mr Jowett informed the meeting of a recent communication from the Police Neighbourhood Specialist Team (NST) about the problem of speeding vehicles in rural areas and the scope for implementing Community Speed Watch Schemes using, eg, speeding detection equipment. The NST considered that Speed Indication Devices, two of which had recently been purchased by Sussex Police, could be a better option as their use was less confrontational. (SIDs are placed for short periods at the side of roads and can be programmed to display a variety of warning messages such as "Slow Down".) Members discussed the communication at some length, in the process recalling the Safe Lanes exercise conducted within the Parish in 2004. Whilst hesitant about the prospects of successfully employing SIDS, let alone speed detection devices, on Lurgashall's lanes, they instructed the Clerk to discuss with the NST whether and, if so, it how such equipment could benefit the Parish.

2. Jobson's Lane. Potholes remain a problem. The recent patching was already wearing away. Mr Duncton said he continued to press the Highways Department on this matter as well as about the constant stream of water trickling along the eastern side of the lane between Jobson's Cottage and Beard's Cottage which became a hazard whenever the temperature dropped to zero.

22/08 – RECREATION

Mr Caird reported on the Recreation Committee meeting held on 14 February and updated it as necessary. Members added various comments. The Council took note of the report as updated and endorsed a number of decisions arising from it, as indicated in the following summary:

(a) Footpaths and bridleways.

- *High Lane*. SDJC had said it would cost them £300 to produce and erect "No Motorised Vehicles" signs at either end of High Lane but they did not have the funds at present. Thanks to Mr Paul Read the job had been done for significantly less - £90. The Recreation Committee felt that such signs were needed to deter motor cyclists and had recommended that the Council reimburse Mr Read for his outlay. The Council agreed and thanked Mr Read for being so pro-active on this matter as well as Mr Michael Oakland who had erected the signs.
- *Bullocks Lane*. A SDJC contractor had done a lot of remedial work on the ditches along Bullocks Lane in early March. He did an excellent job and the bridleway was now much improved. There remained, however, much to be done before the entire track was up to standard. SDJC planned to carry out Phase 2 of the work in May.

(b) Village maintenance contract. The Recreation Committee's recommendation to approve Garden Escapes' quotation for maintaining the playground, allotments and pond throughout 2008 was endorsed. Garden Escapes had quoted £870, against which a sum of £1000 had been allowed for in the 2008-09 budget. In addition, Garden Escapes had been invited to quote for strimming those areas around the Green that are not mown by the Cricket Club, the Noah's Ark or homeowners. Hitherto this work had been done voluntarily by Mr Jim Court but, in fairness to him, the Parish Council considered he should no longer be burdened with the task. Garden Escapes had estimated that, to keep the areas concerned in good order, they would need to make six to eight visits in the year, for which they would charge £70 per visit. The Council considered this work to be important for the overall appearance of the village and that the price quoted was very reasonable. The item had not been allowed for in the 2008-09 budget but the Council agreed to meet the anticipated maximum cost of £560 from its reserves, including the £130 "left over" from the budgeted amount referred to above, ie an additional sum of up to £430.

(c) Playground. The Council expressed its thanks to Mrs Boxall for offering to repaint two pieces of equipment in the play area. It authorised the Clerk to spend up to £50 on buying "approved" paint from Avenue Coatings, which makes similar supplies to other councils and whose costs appeared reasonable.

(d) Allotments. Leconfield Estate had informed the Clerk that it would remind the tenants of the field south of the allotments of their duty to maintain the stretch of boundary hedge between that field and the football field. Also, it had agreed to check the condition of the posts along the west side of the path leading to the allotments.

(e) Village Green.

- *Ditches*. The ditches in front of the Malt House and alongside the Old Rectory had been cleared in accordance with the Council instructions in January. The water flow at both places had already improved. It was reported that the 3 inch pipe by the road in front of the Malt House was insufficient for its task and the Council agreed to its replacement by a 9 or 12 inch pipe.
- *Trees.* The replacement circular seat had now been installed by W L West & Son around the horse chestnut tree on the triangle. Members agreed that the plaques from the old seat should be reinstated. On 20 February, Leconfield had planted a wild service tree grown from a sucker on the Estate towards the south-west corner of the Green at a point agreed with the Chairman and Mr Caird. The diseased ash tree outside Hazards had been felled. (Under Open Forum (item 18/08, above) Mr Read had drawn attention to the fact that the other, smaller ash tree outside Hazards was likewise in poor condition and should probably be felled as well. The Chairman said that Leconfield Estate was aware of the matter and would no doubt act it due course.)
- *Pond.* The contractors had worked hard on tidying up the pond in January. Their painstaking work had received favourable comment from around the village.
- *Damage to telephone kiosk.* BT had replaced the broken kiosk door.
- *Parking on verges*. No progress had been made in recent weeks. Damage to the Green caused by careless parking continued to be a problem, though not to the same extent as in 2006-07.

(f) Football field. Mr Caird reported that since December 2007 the Fete Committee had made generous grants towards the costs of the field's 2008 rental, mowing and repairs to its hedges. In addition, there was the prospect of raising some income towards the upkeep of the field from hiring the pitch out from time to time to football teams from Northchapel and Haslemere. The SDJC had agreed to use the hedge on the western side of the field as a project for one of its hedge laying courses. The cost to the Football Club would be only £150 for the materials. The Chairman expressed the Council's gratitude to Mr Caird for all the work he had done in recent months, and indeed continued to do, with regard to the football field.
(g) Victorian postbox at Parkhurst. Mrs Martin-Jenkins informed the meeting about the fate of the old postbox. The wall in which it was located had been demolished in a car crash three months ago. The Post Office had clearly seen the accident as an opportunity to remove the box altogether – it was near an awkward bend in the road and parking to use it was not easy. On the other hand, the box had character, had been a feature of Jobson's Lane for well over a century and, three years ago, had had been the subject of an unsuccessful application to get it listed Grade II. Mrs Martin-Jenkins had attended a meeting with a representative of the Post Office and the owner of Parkhurst House to discuss the situation but had found the former very insistent that the Post Office was under no obligation to reinstate the old box. Members regretted the loss of the post box and the very negative attitude of the Post Office's representative as reported by Mrs Martin-Jenkins but accepted that, given the circumstance she described, there was no hope of having the box reinstated.

23/08 – NORTHCHAPEL PRIMARY SCHOOL
Mr Duncton and Mrs Martin-Jenkins briefly reviewed the WSCC's proposals for reorganising schools in the Rother Valley and, in particular, the plan to close Northchapel PS to children aged 8 and above. Mr Duncton said he was fighting hard within the County Council to have the school retained to cater for children from 4 to 11. Mrs Martin-Jenkins felt there were not only compelling reasons for saving the school as a full primary school but also reasonable prospects of succeeding. She urged the Parish Council to write to the County Council arguing strongly for the school to remain as an all-through primary school. During discussion, Members expressed their wholehearted support for retention of the school for children from 4 to 11 and agreed that a letter to this effect should be sent to the Cabinet Member for Education at County Hall.

24/08 – COOPTION OF NEW MEMBER
The Chairman informed the meeting that no election had been requested to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Mr Oakland and that, therefore, the Council was now required to coopt a new member. Notices had been placed on both Parish notice boards inviting expressions of interest in filling the post. There had been no replies. He had, therefore, sounded out Mr Jeremy Bonnett, who had put his name forward for cooption when last there were vacancies. Mr Bonnett had told him he was willing to be coopted. After a brief debate, Mr Caird proposed, and Mrs Boxall seconded, a motion that the Council coopt Mr Bonnett. The motion was agreed by consensus.

25/08 – CORRESPONDENCE
The following were among the communications recently received by the Council:
1. Textile recycling bank. As part of its Waste Minimisation Strategy, the District Council had asked the Parish to consider providing space for a textile recycling bank in addition to its existing bottle bank. Members felt that case for installing such a container in the village was not as strong as it had been for the bottle bank. Besides it would be hard to justify sacrificing yet more of the Village Hall's limited space for cars. The Clerk was asked to reply to Chichester accordingly.
2. Local Development Scheme. Last June, the District Council's Local Development Framework Core Strategy was found "unsound" by the Planning Inspector appointed to examine

it. The District Council had now produced a timetable for its new Core Strategy and associated document on Delivering Development Opportunities (renamed the Local Development Scheme).

3. St Richard's Hospital. Parish Councils had been notified that the Primary Care Trust will announce in the first week of May which of three models for the future of hospital care in West Sussex it had chosen and then, at the start of June, whether St Richard's or Worthing is to be the county's Major General Hospital.

4. Forthcoming meetings. The North Chichester County Local Committee would meet on 18 March 2008 at Lodsworth Village Hall from 2 to 6 pm. The next meeting of the North West Frontier Community Forum would be on 23 April 2008 (not 19 March as originally announced) at the Grange, Midhurst.

26/08 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No matters were raised.

27/08 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting, which will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, will take place on 8 May 2008. It will be preceded at 7.30 pm by the Annual Parish Meeting.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.35 pm.

PJS: 19/3/08