

LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Thursday, 8 July 2010

Present: Mr R E J Cooper (Chairman), Mr J S Bonnett, Mrs A Martin-Jenkins, Mr G D J R Sharp, Dr A H J Tate, Dr P J H Wilding, Mrs R D Wood and Mr P J Széll (Clerk)

Also present: Mr C Duncton, Mr J Andrews and three residents.

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30 pm.

43/10 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr N P Jowett and Mrs P Hardwick.

44/10 – CODE OF CONDUCT

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

45/10 – MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

46/10 - MATTERS ARISING

Donations. A letter of thanks had been received from another organisation (the fourth) to which a donation was sent in March: Carers Support Services (Regis, Chichester and Rural).

47/10 – OPEN FORUM

No matters were raised.

48/10 – COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

- Among the points noted by Mr Duncton in his report were: (a) the appointment of a new WSCC Cabinet member for Highways; (b) the need for a new Head Teacher at Northchapel Primary School because the present Head was moving at Christmas to a post at Chidham; and (c) the forthcoming meetings about the future of the Grange Centre (Midhurst: 13 July) and WSCC's role in maintaining the rights of way in the new National Park (Washington: 21 July).

- Among the matters addressed by Mr Andrews in his comments based on Mrs Hardwick's written report were: (a) the likelihood of the District Council (CDC) putting its Local Development Framework on hold pending clarification about infrastructure support for future housing development and about the new government's plans for reforming the planning system; (b) the expected severe cutback in local government funding and the challenge this will pose for CDC; (c) the impact of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for Lurgashall; and (d) the availability of the joint WSCC/CDC Future Jobs Fund to help finance six-month work placements for up to 212 young persons in Sussex over the coming 9 months.

49/10 – FINANCE

1. Current financial statement. The Clerk distributed Annex A, below, ie:

- (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 budget for the current financial year.

The Council approved payment of the four cheques listed in that Annex as needing payment.

50/10 – HIGHWAYS

1. Blind Lane. The Chairman reported that the owners of The Chimes had spoken to him on a couple of occasions about the continuing use of Blind Lane by large vehicles entering and leaving

the village despite the 6'6" width restrictions marked at each end. The owners were understandably concerned about the risk of serious damage by such vehicles to their property and had written a number of times over the years to the Highways Department and Sussex Police requesting action. A vehicle had recently demolished one of the posts by the bridge adjacent to their house. The Chairman sympathised with the owners' predicament. The Parish Council itself had no power to stop vehicles using Blind Lane. He suggested, however, that WSCC's Highways Rangers might be instructed to keep signs such as the 6'6" width restriction signs foliage free at all times. Mr Duncton said he would look into the possibilities.

2. Greenfield Bungalow. The Chairman said that a number of residents had complained about the size of the trucks making deliveries and/or working at the Greenfield Bungalow site in recent weeks and the routes they had taken to get there. He had taken these concerns up with the builder who insisted that delivery vehicles had been instructed to avoid Blind Lane.

3. Bollards by Glebe Park. The Clerk reported that the Highways Department had written to him saying it had spoken to the owner of Glebe Park on 25 May and that she had agreed to remove the wooden bollards. Members noted, however, that the bollards were still in place.

51/10 – PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

1. Future care of Lurgashall's rights of way. As instructed by the May meeting, the Chairman had written to Mrs Deborah Urquhart, WSCC's Cabinet member responsible for the Environment and Economy, stating that, whether or not the County Council took back its statutory powers for public rights of way, the Parish Council would hope and expect that the public rights of way in its area would continue to receive the same excellent level of care, expertise and commitment as had been provided over many years by SDJC, assisted by its dedicated band of local volunteers. Mrs Urquhart had sent a non-committal reply on 1 June in which she said the County "will endeavour to sustain the standard and improve where [it] can". The Parish Council had been invited to be represented at a so-called "stakeholder engagement event" in Washington on the afternoon of 21 July at which the County's future role regarding its rights of way would be discussed with Parishes. The Chairman said that, time permitting, he would attend.

2. Footpath 2031. In May SDJC had inspected the boundary fence across footpath 2031 adjacent to the Greenfield Bungalow site and had subsequently spoken to Mike Oakland. It had apparently been agreed that Mr Oakland would speak to the land owner about moving the style back to its correct position.

3. Byway at the top of The Quell. Despite SDJC's written assurance on 7 May that, now there was some dry weather, the planned remedial work on the track's surface would start within a matter of days, the work had still not been done. Mr Bruce Middleton had apologised saying that SDJC's contractor had been ill. It was agreed that the Clerk should continue to press Mr Middleton on this matter which had implications for the safety of horse riders.

4. Bullock Lane – Japanese knotweed. The Clerk had spoken to SDJC about the large amount of Japanese knotweed growing at the eastern end of Bullock Lane. Mr Middleton had replied that the Joint Committee was aware of the problem; it had been cutting back the growth for a number of years, had sprayed the area with pesticide last autumn and would continue to spray annually in the hope of getting on top of the problem.

52/10 – PLANNING

1. Applications. Dr Wilding reported that eight planning applications had been notified to the Council since the last meeting (the three listed in this paragraph and the applications concerning The Noah's Ark Inn, Crossways (two), Sods Cottage and Greenfield Bungalow referred to in paragraph 2, below). The applications concerning Blackdown House and Moses Farm House had yet to be considered by the Planning Committee. The Council did not object to any of the other six applications, though it had registered concerns about certain of the materials it was proposed to use on the exterior of Greenfield Bungalow.

LG/10/02425/FUL: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane

Re-surfacing and reduction in size of existing polo pony exercise track

LG/10/02891/DOM: Blackdown House, Fernden Lane

Application for the retention of dressed stone retaining wall and coping stone, with associated stone steps to south of Blackdown Park; stone retaining wall and stone steps, swimming pool and paved surround and rill, water cascades and associated hornbeam hedge to north of Blackdown Park

LG/10/02849/DOM: Moses Farm House, Hillgrove Lane

Single storey and first storey rear extension

2. Decisions. Ten decisions had been received from CDC since the Council's last meeting:

LG/10/00977/LBC: High Hampstead Farm, High Hampstead Lane

Attached traditional garden room orangery, single storey GRANT

LG/10/00975/DOM: High Hampstead Farm, High Hampstead Lane

Attached traditional garden room orangery, single storey PERMIT

LG/10/01037/DOM: Springfield, Hillgrove Lane

Loft conversion. Replace conservatory. Change flat roof for pitched roof on garage PERMIT

LG/10/00829/FUL: Old Mill Farm, Mill Lane

Retention of existing track to allow articulated vehicles access to the farm. Retrospective change of use of farm buildings to timber storage and joinery workshop REFUSE

LG/10/02088/TCA: Noah's Ark Inn

Notification of intention to fell no. 1 oak tree (T1)
NOT TO PREPARE A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER

LG/10/01241/PNO: Rear of Oak Tree House, Park Farm

Proposed new building, a flat roof shelter open at one end
PLANNING PERMISSION REQUIRED

LG/10/01416/DOM: Crossways, Hillgrove Lane

Single storey extension to provide a sunroom PERMIT

LG/10/01496/LBC: Crossways, Hillgrove Lane

Single storey extension to provide a sunroom GRANT

LG/10/01702/LBC: Sods Cottage, High Hampstead Lane

Installation of 3 no. conservation style roof windows to rear and side elevations GRANT

LG/10/02131/FUL: Greenfield Bungalow

Revisions to materials and fenestration of replacement dwelling (amendments to LG/08/01282/FUL) PERMIT

3. Other planning matters.

Tanfield Copse. Dr Wilding added that, after notifying Chichester in May of a possible planning breach at Tanfield Copse at Northchapel, CDC's Planning Enforcement team had written to him that there was indeed a breach (extension of a track without agricultural justification) and that the person concerned had been advised to submit an application or remove the extension.

53/10 - PLAYGROUND

No major points were reported. The very dry weather meant that the grass needed to be cut less often. RoSPA's annual report was awaited.

54/10 - ALLOTMENTS

Mr Sharp commented that the gatepost at the entrance to the allotments was in need of repair. It was agreed that the Clerk should assess the extent of the problem and report back. The Chairman said he had received a complaint about a dog running loose and fouling the allotments. The dog owner had been spoken to but the meeting agreed that, if further such incidents came to light, the Clerk might need to send a note to all plot holders. In mid-June, the unworked parts of the allotments had received the first of this summer's two cuts with an all-terrain cutter.

55/10 - VILLAGE GREEN

1. Damage from parking. The Chairman reported that, by way of follow up to the Council's conclusions at its May meeting and the concerns voiced by a number of residents, he had made various enquiries and had held a number of informal meetings during the past eight weeks. The following had been among the steps taken:

- (a) He had met John Clark, Geoff Hayhurst, Joe Harden, and Henry Coghlan informally. Mr Clark and Mr Hayhurst had accepted invitations to become members of the Council's Village Green Committee but Mr Harden and Mr Coghlan said that, whilst they would be happy to contribute to the work of the new Committee, they but not wish to be members of it.
- (b) He had spoken to Stuart Anslow-Wilson about using the land north of the churchyard for parking and to Luigi Andreozzi about access to that land and to the pub's rear garden from the track to his farm. Nothing was settled but he felt the door to these approaches was still ajar.
- (c) Use of the football field for parking was looking less likely owing to complications with the lease but the option was not entirely dead and would be investigated further.
- (d) He had not yet discussed with Leconfield the possibility of using part of the field behind the shop for parking as he and others to whom he had spoken felt it was too far from the pub and church to be a practical solution.
- (e) The Clerk had written to Leconfield in the hope of clarifying the position as to the ownership and legal status of various grass strips surrounding the Village Green. Predictably perhaps, the Estate's reply on 27 May was short on "chapter and verse". It merely asserted that its "understanding has always been that the Estate is the sole owner of the whole Green [that is to say] not only the Village Green proper, but also all the common land that surrounds it, on the western, northern, eastern and southern sides."
- (f) Mr Hayhurst had looked into the dos and don'ts for common land. It appeared that one cannot alter the surface of common land without first obtaining consent from the Secretary of State. Whilst this would preclude laying material such as grasscrete along the Green's verges, it would not appear to prevent the use of hardcore on the damaged areas provided the top surface was grassed over.
- (g) Mr Andrews had requested CDC's Solicitors Office to advise on what would be entailed in introducing parking restrictions around the Green and the District Solicitor had forwarded some written guidance on this to the Clerk on 30 June. The majority of residents to whom the Chairman had spoken were not keen on the idea of parking restrictions and, in any event, such controls would take about two years to introduce.
- (h) The Chairman had made contact with Greene King's Regional Manager who had asked him to forward a list of issues he would like to discuss face to face with the brewery's Estates Manager. The list had been e-mailed to Greene King and, all being well, the meeting would take place by the end of July.
- (i) Jeremy Bonnett and the Chairman had met Jonathan Ullmer of the County Council's Highways Department on 5 July to discuss Phase 2 of the projected repair work to the verges along the eastern end of the Green and to get his advice on how best to proceed. Mr Ullmer indicated that the Highways Department was in principle ready to hire a contractor to carry out work (a) to the verge from the pond to Jubilee Cottage and (b) to the northern tip of the triangle and the two sides adjacent to it. As in the case of Phase 1 last autumn, the Highways Department would consider making a contribution towards the overall cost of Phase 2 but it would be up the Parish Council to find the rest from other sources. The prospect of receiving such a contribution was, Mr Ullmer cautioned, greater in the current financial year than it

would be in 2011-12. Mr Ullmer was currently obtaining estimates for Phase 2 and would present the best to the Parish Council for its consideration.

The meeting welcomed the Chairman's extensive report and agreed to his proposal to call a meeting of the Village Green Committee once the Highways Department's estimate was to hand for the purpose of deciding how to proceed.

2. Litter bin. CDC's waste collection unit had pointed out that the metal liner in the waste bin near the old chestnut tree on the Green was in bad condition and needed to be replaced. The Clerk confirmed this assessment. CDC could provide a replacement liner for £74.80p (+VAT) – the lowest price available to CDC. The Council felt that this figure was on the high side but decided nevertheless to take up the offer given how difficult and time-consuming it might be to source a good galvanized alternative of the right size and quality.

56/10 – CO-OPTION OF NEW MEMBER

The Chairman informed the meeting that no election had been requested to fill the vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr Malcolm Caird and so the Council was now expected to proceed to co-opt a replacement. Already three parishioners had indicated a provisional interest in being considered for co-option. Members agreed (a) that notices should be placed on both Parish notice boards as well as in the August *Parish Newsletter* inviting formal expressions of interest in filling the post, (b) that candidates should be invited to submit a written statement indicating their willingness to stand and giving information as to their background, experience and why they wish to join the Council, and (c) that the Council would consider all the applications and decide who to co-opt at its September meeting.

57/10 – CORRESPONDENCE

Among the correspondence received during the past two months were the following:

1. an invitation to the Chairman to support the Trustees' proposals for the future of the Grange Centre in Midhurst and to attend a meeting on the matter on 13 July 2010 from 10 am till noon;
2. notification that CDC's Local Development Framework had been put on hold (see item 48/10, above); and
3. a note from the owner of The School House explaining that he had sought Leconfield Estates' agreement to him siting a skip on the village green in front of his house for about 48 hours whilst works were being carried out. Leconfield had agreed, subject to the Parish Council having no objection. The Council considered the matter briefly. It saw no problem provided the skip remained on the green for no more than about 48 hours.

58/10 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs Martin-Jenkins read a letter she had received from a member of the public describing how he had been injured by a cricket ball during the Lurgashall Six-a-Side event on 4 July. The Council was sorry to learn of the injury and agreed the Chairman should discuss the matter with the Cricket Club's Chairman.

59/10 - DATES OF NEXT MEETING

The Council's next meeting would be held on Thursday, 9 September 2010 starting at 7.30 pm.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40 pm.