LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Thursday, 10 March 2011

Present: Mr R E J Cooper (Chairman), Mr J S Bonnett, Mr G J Hayhurst, Mr N P Jowett, 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, Mrs P A Hardwick and one member of the public.

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30 pm.

19/11 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
None.

20/11 – CODE OF CONDUCT
The Chairman reminded members of their responsibilities under the Code of Conduct.

21/11 – MINUTES OF LAST MEETING
The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

22/11 - MATTERS ARISING
Further to the concern he had raised at the January meeting about the method of producing the Council's minutes (see item 3/11, second paragraph), Dr Tate proposed two changes to the Council's procedures as follows:

(a) Parish Council meeting minutes that are published *before* being accepted by the Council should be clearly identified as DRAFT minutes subject to approval at the next meeting via a watermark and header/footer on each page; and

(b) following the next meeting the by then accepted minutes of the Council, clearly showing any necessary corrections, should be published on the Parish website.

After a brief discussion, Mr Hayhurst seconded the proposal and it was adopted by consensus.

23/11 – OPEN FORUM
No points were raised.

24/11 – COUNCILLORS' REPORTS
- Mr Duncton raised three matters in his report: (a) the impact of the County's budget on, in particular, adult day care provision; (b) the winter management scheme (there had been teething problems, but parishes generally had appreciated the improvement on the previous winter; and on a point of detail, empty Hippo bags and surplus salt would not now be collected by WSCC - parishes should dispose of/store them as appropriate; and (c) the next County Local Committee meeting would be at Midhurst on 7 April 2011.
- The points highlighted by Mrs Hardwick in her report were: (a) CDC's budget and council tax (good financial management and efficiency savings had enabled CDC to reduce its budget for the coming two years significantly with consequential benefits for the level of council tax; (b) Housing Benefit (important changes in the scheme were about to come into effect); (c) HMRC were renting office space at East Pallant House in part to complement CDC's services to the public; and (d) Football in the Community (among this year's courses for 6 to 15 year olds would be one at Fernhurst on 14-15 April).

25/11 – FINANCE
1. Current financial statement. The Clerk distributed Annex A, below, ie:

DRAFT

(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 to date against its budget for the current financial year.

The Council approved payment of the six cheques listed in that Annex.

2. PAYE and National Insurance. The Clerk informed the meeting that HMRC had recently announced that, with effect from 6 April 2011, Parish Councils would no longer be able to pay their Clerks gross and leave it to them to settle their own income tax and national insurance contributions. Parish Clerks were office holders and as such were subject to PAYE. The Council would, therefore, shortly have to register as an employer, operate a payroll system, forward monthly or three monthly payments of tax and NIC to HMRC and submit an annual return to HMRC at the end of each payroll year.

3. Appeals for donations. Members decided to make the following donations:

- Arun and Chichester Citizens Advice Bureau - £50
- Waverley Citizens Advice Bureau - £50

26/11 – HIGHWAYS

1. Rumble strips. At the request of a member of the public, Mr Joe Harden, the Council considered the feasibility and usefulness of laying rumble strips across certain roads in the village with a view to deterring the growing number of speeding vehicles. The Village Fete Committee could, he understood, consider a request to part fund the cost of such a safety measure. Among the points made during a lengthy discussion of the proposal were:

- advice was that rumble strips should be sited at least 200 metres from the nearest property so as to stop noise and vibration of vehicles going over the strips affecting inhabitants; strips cannot be put on unrestricted roads (none of Lurgashall's have speed restrictions at present); structures to reduce vehicle speeds were "hugely expensive" and money was in short supply at present;
- an alternative would be to look again into introducing speed limits, especially as in 2010 WSCC had modified its policy to support the idea of 30 mph limits in villages and in 2011 was showing sympathy for 20 mph limits;
- in terms of speed, the village's most dangerous road was the wide and straight stretch of High Hampstead Lane leading into the village;
- vehicles frequently drove much too fast past the village shop. Many of the offenders were local; it would be wrong to conclude that outsiders were the main cause of speeding in the parish;
- when a detailed, parish-wide survey on speed limits had been conducted a few years ago, the outcome had been against introducing speed limits in Lurgashall partly because residents were opposed to the signs and repeater signs that automatically accompany such a step and partly because they did not believe the police and others would enforce the limits;
- those who drive at excessive speeds are deterred not by signs but by the fear of being caught;
- traffic regulation orders (to introduce speed limits) frequently took years to obtain.

Members concluded by consensus that it would not be feasible or useful to pursue Mr Harden's proposal further.

2. Flooding on Jobson's Lane. As instructed, the Clerk had requested the County Highways Department to rod through the culverts in the vicinity of (i) Jack Fisher's Brook and (ii) Great Brockhurst Farm. The request had been noted but it was not clear if it had yet been acted on.

3. Flooding by Boundary Cottage (formerly Greenfields). Mr Sharp drew attention to the increased amount of water that, after heavy rain, flowed across the end of Northhurst Lane now that landscaping at Boundary Cottage had been completed. The Chairman commented that this might be a problem to put to CDC's land drainage adviser rather then the County Highways Department. The Clerk was asked to pursue the matter in consultation with Mr Sharp.

4. Lower Roundhurst Farm. Mr Bonnett commented on the contractor's sign that appeared some weeks ago at the Jobson's Lane entrance to Lower Roundhurst Farm instructing construction traffic to approach the farm site via Tennyson's Lane. Whilst no such vehicles had yet been seen by him on Roundhurst or Tennyson's Lane, he was concerned that those roads were unsuitable for such traffic.

DRAFT

5. The Quell - broken sign. Dr Wilding pointed out that the road name sign at the junction of Jobson's Lane and The Quell had been broken for some time and suggested the County Highways Department be asked to repair it. The Clerk was instructed to take the matter forward.

27/11 –PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

1. Byway off The Quell. The Clerk had, as requested, drawn Mr Mike Oakland's attention to (a) the vandalised "No motorised vehicles" sign at the western end of the byway and (b) SDJC's continuing failure to repair a short stretch of the byway to make it safe for riders of horses. The broken sign was currently being repaired whilst SDJC had now greatly improved the track for riders by, as requested, running a short length of heavy duty pipe along a key stretch of ditch and covering it with hardcore. The Clerk had written to thank Mr Oakland.
2. Future care of public rights of way. The Clerk reported that Mr Oakland had made contact with Mr John Perks, WSCC's official responsible for public rights of way. Mr Perks had said a Volunteer Coordinator was about to be appointed to recruit and manage a number of Path Rangers, each responsible for a given area. How the Coordinator and his Rangers would operate was still being worked out, but Mr Perks was clear that WSCC would want local volunteers to work closely with them though not precisely as they had for SDJC. Little progress was likely before 1 April but Mr Oakland would continue to seek clarification.

28/11 – PLANNING

1. Applications. Dr Wilding's reported that nine planning applications had been notified to the Council since its last meeting, the eight applications below and the one concerning The Green listed in paragraph 2. The applications concerning Sarnsfield, Measowside (two) and The Lodge, Windfallwood Common had yet to be considered by the Planning Committee. Of the remaining five, the Planning Committee had objections to just one - Upper Blackdown House. A copy of its letter to CDC concerning this application was distributed to those present for information.

LG/10/05746/FUL: Upper Blackdown House
Demolition of existing dwelling with proposed replacement of dwelling

LG/11/00216/DOM: Valewood Grange, Fernden Lane
Oak framed traditional double garage and store (alternative to approved scheme 04/00172/DOM)

LG/11/00276/LBC: Southwater, Lickfold
Proposed demolitions and two storey extension, relocating the existing entrance porch and chimney to garden room and internal alterations

LG/00287/DOM: Herne House, Petworth Road
Erection of single storey garden room

LG/11/00378/DOM: Meadowside, Village Green
Addition of single storey timber and glass garden room.

LG/11/00641/DOM: Sarnsfield
Two storey extensions to the south and east, single storey extensions to the south and west following removal of previous extensions

LG/11/00379/LBC: Meadowside, Village Green
Addition of single storey timber and glass garden room

LG/11/00614/DOM: The Lodge ,Windfallwood Common
Alterations, single storey rear extension and rear dormer window

DRAFT

2. Decisions. Eleven decisions had been notified by CDC since the Council's last meeting:

LG/10/04499/FUL: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane
Two storey estate office barn to replace existing buildings and portacabins REFUSE

LG/10/04507/FUL: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane
Single storey storage barn to replace existing buildings and container PERMIT

LG/10/04508/FUL: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane
Single storey building containing 16 looseboxes and ancillary storage and mess room to replace existing loose boxes, field shelters and coralls REFUSE

LG/10/04849/COU: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane
Use of land for mixed use of agriculture, forestry and equestrian (polo) purposes PERMIT

LG/10/05095/COU: Woodcraft Park Farm
Three fields to be used for camping for a maximum of 60 days per year PERMIT

LG/10/05056/DOM: Cotchet Farm, Fernden Lane
Alterations and associated works to facilitate use of existing attached garage as enlarged kitchen and utility. Use of existing barn to provide ancillary accommodation REFUSE

LG/10/05057/LBC: Cotchet Farm, Fernden Lane
Alterations and associated works to facilitate use of existing attached garage as enlarged kitchen and utility room. Use of existing barn to provide ancillary accommodation REFUSE

LG/10/05213/FUL: Jays Farm, Jays Lane
Change of use and alterations of existing two storey barn and associated single storey building into residential unit with annexe. Replacement of existing dilapidated milking shed with 3 bay garage and storage above. New bat loft with storage at ground floor level. Covered way linking garage to main house PERMIT

LG/10/05377/DOM: Victory Cottage, Hillgrove
Proposed double garage and ancillary accommodation REFUSE

LG/11/00179/NMA: Southwater, Lickfold
Non material amendment to planning application LG/10/03448/DOM. Proposed demolitions and two storey extension, with a new entrance porch and chimney to garden room and internal alterations PERMIT

LG/10/05571/LBC: The Green, Lurgashall Green
Restoration of brick built inglenook fireplace to original format, including removal of current modern fireplace PERMIT

3. Other planning matters
(a) Old Mill Farm. The applicant's appeal to the Secretary of State against CDC's refusal to give retrospective planning permission for the Dutch barn conversion, car park and access track at Old Mill Farm had been turned down.
(b) Boundary Cottage (formerly Greenfields). The Parish Council had been notified by CDC on 9 March 2011 that enforcement action was being taken in respect of Boundary Cottage alleging a breach of condition 8 attached to planning permission no. LG/10/02131/FUL (unauthorised removal of hedging along part of the property's front boundary).
(c) Boxalland Farm Cottage. At the Council's request, CDC was investigating whether there had been an unauthorised encroachment onto agricultural land when the fencing around the curtilage of Boxalland Farm Cottage was recently renewed.

DRAFT

(d) Woodcraft Park Farm. The Council had written to CDC enquiring why condition 2 attached to the 2007 temporary permission (which imposed a user restriction on the site) had not been carried forward to the new permanent permission. A considered response was awaited.
(e) National Park Authority – planning seminar. Five members of the Council had attended this seminar in Chichester on 10 March. Summarising the meeting, the Chairman concluded that in practice not a lot was likely to change after 1 April; CDC's planning department would continue to process and decide over 95% of planning applications. Only major and/or controversial matters such as the development of the King Edward VII Hospital site were likely to be handled directly by the Authority. The new Authority was going to take over responsibility for the Local Development Framework from CDC. Mrs Martin-Jenkins added that she sensed CDC's planners were taking a tighter line on applications because of the need to apply National Park criteria.

29/11 - PLAYGROUND
No matters were raised.

30/11 - ALLOTMENTS
Plot fees for 2011. All plot holders, except one who had relinquished her allotment, had paid their fees for 2011; total - £240.

31/11 - VILLAGE GREEN
(a) Village Green Committee. The Committee's Chairman, Mr Hayhurst, reported that, as agreed by the Council in January, letters had been written to local landowners enquiring about the prospect of land being made available for the creation of a village car park. Responses had been received, ranging from the negative to the fairly promising. Negotiations were continuing. It was, he said, the considered opinion of the Committee's members that the disclosure of further details at this stage could be fatal to the ongoing discussions and, therefore, in the interests of the entire community, he preferred not to give more information for the time being.
(b) East side of Green – November's repairs. The appearance of the repairs carried out in November was criticised by Mrs Martin-Jenkins. Granite setts should have been used rather than unattractive, wide concrete strips. The Chairman replied that cost had been a factor and that once grass had grown most of the concrete would be covered. It was agreed, however, that the appearance of further edging materials for the Green would need to be carefully thought about.
(c) East side of Green – next steps. The Council's Chairman added that Mr Oakland had written in response to his call in January for constructive ideas for tackling the parking issue at the eastern side of the Green. Mr22 Oakland had suggested constructing a combination of a ditch and mound around the perimeter of the triangle. Such a barrier had, he said, been successfully employed at Tillington, though in that case the mound alone that was the deterrent. Dr Tate recalled that he had drawn attention to Tillington's approach in the past and was interested to see how successful the re-created ditch and mound along the eastern edge of the main Green would be. The risk, added the Chairman, was that a mound and ditch could push irresponsible parking further around the Green. The meeting agreed (i) that the proposal should be looked into further by the Village Green Committee at its next meeting and (ii) that, if need be, up to £200 could be spent from the Council's reserves to hire equipment and/or labour to re-create the old ditch and mound along the eastern edge of the main Green.

32/11 – LOCAL WINTER MANAGEMENT PLAN
- The Chairman of the Winter Management Committee, Mr Hayhurst, reported that in February the Committee had conducted a mid-winter review of the Parish's Winter Management Plan. It was, he said, satisfied that the locations identified for the next delivery of bags of salt, which could be seen on an interactive map on the Parish website, were appropriate ones.
- It was, however, clear that salt bins had a significant advantage over Hippo bags in that the County Highways Department undertook to fill bins with salt in October whereas, as the Committee now knew, the delivery of Hippo bags could be haphazard and might well not happen until after the first snowfall. The Committee had accordingly decided that the effectiveness of the Plan would be significantly improved by the purchase of some salt bins.

DRAFT

- It recommended that the Council should purchase two bins, one to be located in the village by the bus shelter and the other in Jobson's Lane by Southbridge Farm (Mr David Nixon having agreed to accommodate this one). The cost of each bin would be in the £150-£210 range (depending on size and appearance). It was felt that siting them at these two locations would be the most cost-effective solution within the constraints of the Council's budget.
- The Committee was also investigating the possibility of equipping a local farmer with a more effective snow-blade with a view to making the operation of the snow plough in future winters more effective and more responsive to local needs than had been the case this past winter. The cost was likely to be in the region of £1,000 but the Committee would investigate whether this might be shared with others.
- Further dialogue with the County Highways Department had disclosed some fairly surprising views about the division of liability between the County Council and Parishes for incidents arising out of Winter Management Plans. In consequence the Clerk had been in correspondence with the Parish Council's insurers with a view to ensuring that adequate cover was in place. The issue has not yet been finally resolved.
- It had been arranged that Mr Richard Speller (WSCC's Assistant Highways Manager) would meet of local Parish Council representatives to review the first year of operation of their Winter Management Plans. Provisionally the meeting would be on Wednesday, 16 May in Lurgashall.
- Conclusions reached during discussion of the Chairman's report were as follows:

(a) get a local farmer to move any partly filled Hippo bags of salt into summer storage;
(b) to be fully effective, snow plough clearance needs to be followed by salt treatment; and
(a) defer decision on purchasing salt bins and a snow-blade till after the WSCC review meeting with Parish Councils in May.

33/11 – BOTTLE BANK

The Clerk had written to CDC enquiring if the bottle bank (placed in the Village Hall car park in January 2007) was going to be taken away now that householders had been told they could put bottles and other glass into their maroon recycling bins. In reply, CDC had said the containers would be removed, hopefully by the end of April.

34/11 – PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The Chairman thanked Members for their loyal service to the Council as well as their help and support to him as Chairman over the past four years. Elections for the new Council would take place on 5 May, with the last day for lodging nomination being 4 April. The Clerk distributed nominations papers to those members present who indicated an intention to stand for re-election.

35/11 – CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence that needed to be drawn to the Council's notice.

36/11 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chairman said the Government's Localism Bill had been considered at a recent North West Frontier Forum meeting. The key point to emerge had been that, whilst there was still much uncertainly about the Bill's scope and likely impact, it was pretty clear that it would not place any new responsibilities on Parish Councils unless they expressly wanted to take them on.

37/11 - DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

The next meetings will be as follows:

- Annual Parish Meeting on 14 April 2011; and
- Annual Meeting of the Parish Council on 12 May 2011.

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

PJS: 12/3/11

DRAFT