LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting

Held in the Village Hall on

Thursday 17 May 2012

PRESENT

From the Parish Council Mr R E J Cooper (Chairman), Mr J S Bonnett, Mr J W Harden, Mr G J Hayhurst, Mr N P Jowett, Mrs A Martin-Jenkins, Mr G D R J Sharp, Dr P J H Wilding, Mrs R D Wood, and Mr M H Oakland (Clerk).

Also present Mr N Thomas and five members of the public.

The Chairman of the Parish Council opened the meeting at 7.30 pm and welcomed everyone.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies for absence had been received from Mr C P Duncton and Mrs P A Hardwick.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING
The Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting, held on 14 April 2011, were approved and signed by the Chairman of the meeting as a true record.

MATTERS ARISING
There were no matters arising.

PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
This time last year we were about to have an election for the Parish Council. This election brought about one change on the council,with Joe Harden replacing Andy Tate. I welcomed Joe to the Council, but at the same time I had to express my regret at losing such a hard-working and committed Councillor as Andy.

The Council met six times in the last year and Councillor's attendance was 81%. This is a little down on last year .The attendance of County and District Councillors was a very commendable 92%, the highest for many years.

The Planning Committee considered forty-one applications in the last year, which was 17% up on the previous year and the most since 2007. The property with the highest number of applications was Barfold Farm in Tennysons Lane, with eight in our parish and some over the border in Waverley .In addition to the matters within our own parish, we wrote to the District Council in support of Northchapel Parish Council expressing our

concerns over two developments which were situated between Northchapel and Hillgrove.

The number of Allotment plots taken up last year was 17 out of the total 25, the same as in 2010, although we have had one extra plot taken for the 2012 season. The Council decided that there should not be an increase in the fees for the plots for 2012, in order to encourage their take-up and in recognition of the difficult financial times facing many parishioners.

The playground got a "medium-risk" report from ROSPA, the same as the previous year. But, since the report £1600 has been spent on improvements and repairs. These include a new seat for the toddler's swing, safety work on the adventure trail, matting under the swings and some repainting.

Needless to say, the parking problems associated with the Village Green have not gone away, and a meeting between the Parish Council, the tenants of the Noahs Ark, the brewery (Greene King) and the Leconfield Estate as owners of the Green, has not brought a solution as near as I had hoped. We will continue to try and get a solution which is acceptable to all. In the meantime work has been carried out to prevent parking on the triangle. This has met with a mixed response from parishioners, ranging from "very good" to "absolutely awful". The current month of rain has not helped the look of the work, but if the final result is not acceptable then it is easily reversable.

A Rights of Way survey was completed in the Parish by the WSCC, as the body now responsible. During this survey a number of jobs were identified and they have now been carried out very satisfactorily.

We have had our usual two visits from the skip, and each time it has gone away almost full. It is already booked for a Saturday in September of this year and we plan to continue with this well-used facility.

During the year the Council has been exploring the possibility of buying the Telephone Box at the side of the Village Green from BT for £1, and Geoff Hayhurst has looked at various uses that other Parishes have made of such boxes. If we go ahead with the purchase then the favoured use seems to be to house a defibrillator. But the cost involved in the renovation of the box would be substantial and is yet to be considered by members of the Council.

The Council purchased two salt bins ready for last winter and this seemed to work very well, as the bad weather of the previous two winters stayed away. Should we encounter seriously bad weather in the future, extra salt will be delivered in Hippo bags, as before, around the parish. We thank Chris Duncton for his help in getting our potholes filled, despite the lack of funds. Flooding, especially in Jobsons Lane and at Lickfold, has been a problem once again in very wet weather. But there is no easy fix except to encourage all land-owners to keep their ditches clear.

County Council cut-backs have meant reductions in our Bus Services and Library visits, but we do still have both, if only just. On the plus side, from the County Council we are now having a weekly visit from the travelling Youth Bus in an attempt to provide for the needs of the young people of the parish.

In August our clerk Patrick Szell resigned after six years and we were lucky to have Mike Oakland offer to come back for a second time. I would like to take this opportunity to say how lucky I have been during my time as Chairman to have had two such excellent clerks. I thank them both for looking after me and the Parish so well.

Our finances at the end of the year (31 March) show we have £9584 in the bank compared to £6812 last year. However, we have allowed for £1925 to be spent on renovations to the Pond in the coming Autumn, towards which we have already received a grant of £750 from the County Council.

Finally, I would like to say a few more "thank-yous". To the three Committee chairmen who do such sterling work with Finance, Planning, and Village Green, to Gary Sharp for all the unseen repair jobs that mysteriously get done, and last but not least all my fellow Councillors for their hard work and support over the last 12 months.

PARISH COUNCIL'S FINANCES

A summary of the Parish Council's income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2012 had been distributed to all Council members, and copies were provided for those members of the public present. The Clerk gave an explanation for the items contained in the summary. The financial year had opened with the funds held totalling £6812. During the year the Council received income of £14686 (of which £13000 came from the Precept) and it had spent a total of £11914, leaving a closing balance of £9584.

PARISHIONER'S QUESTIONS

Whilst not a question, one member of the public said that he particularly wished to thank Mr Gary Sharp for all his work carried out on behalf of the Parish throughout the year, this being greatly appreciated.

Another parishioner suggested that consideration be given to widening the format of the Annual Parish Meeting, so that it could include not just the Parish Council but perhaps other village organisations. The Chairman responded by saying that this was something that he had recently given thought to, and this would certainly be looked at for next year. One suggestion was that the profile of the Parish Meeting could be raised by holding it on a different night from the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.

Mr. Paul Read thanked the Parish Council for all the hard work carried out on behalf of parishioners throughout the past year.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 7.46 pm.

Signed……

Chairman of the Annual Parish Meeting

Date……