

DRAFT

LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Village Hall
on Thursday 10 January 2013**

Present Mr R E J Cooper (Chairman), Mr J S Bonnett, Mr G J Hayhurst, Mr J W Harden, Mrs A Martin-Jenkins, Dr P J H Wilding, Mrs R D Wood, and Mr M H Oakland (Clerk).

Also present Mr C P Duncton, Mr N Thomas and five members of the public.

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.35pm.

1/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies had been received from Mr N P Jowett

2/13 CODE OF CONDUCT

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

3/13 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

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

4/13 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5/13 OPEN FORUM

A member of the public expressed great concern in respect of the work which had been carried out on the pond overflow ditch. He said that as a result of the increase in height of the retaining wall, the water level had risen to a point where it was seeping through the boundary wall of "The Old Rectory". He added that no consultation had been entered into with him prior to the work being carried out and that there would be a serious long-term effect on the condition of the wall. He wanted to know what action the Parish Council would take to improve the situation. This matter was discussed later in the meeting under section 11/13 Village Green.

Another member of the public questioned whether there would be a repeat of last years "Pop Concert", held on or near the School House Farm property in Ebernoe parish, and which generated some complaints from Lurgashall parishioners about the noise level. The Chairman said he would speak to the relative licensing authority to ask that if a similar event was to be sanctioned for 2013 then the Parish Council be advised of the details, including names/contact numbers for people to phone in case of complaints.

6/13 COUNCILLORS REPORTS

Mr Duncton mentioned the “Meals on Wheels” service operated by the WRVS from the Herbert Shiner school, Petworth and suggested that it be advertised locally. Clerk to obtain details and arrange for note to be inserted in Newsletter.

He said that a new “black bin” waste disposal facility had been opened in Warnham and that it was expected to make substantial cost savings by avoiding land-fill charges. He also mentioned the grant of £10K made recently to the L.R.A.

In early 2012 a grant of £750 was received by the Council from WSCC. This was to support refurbishment work on the village Green phone-box, but in the event was not required. The Parish Council still holds the funds and Mr Duncton enquired as to whether a fresh supporting application might be submitted whereby the monies could be used, or whether they would be returned to the WSCC. He needed a firm decision before 31 March. Mr Hayhurst said that the Council may well be able to submit a suitable grant application within that time-scale, this in respect of work to be carried out on the eastern end of the Green. Mr Duncton said that for this type of work the South Downs National Park Authority may accept an approach for funds. Clerk to make enquiries.

Mr Thomas said that good progress was being made on the new Midhurst Community Centre. It was hoped to complete construction work in November 2013 with an opening in Spring of 2014.

He mentioned that the next meeting of the Community Forum was on 14 March, and added that it may be possible to obtain small grants for local projects from the Forum.

7/13 FINANCE

The Clerk distributed annex “A” which included;

- a) a statement of the position of the Council’s bank accounts, incorporating details of cheques which needed to be issued, and for which approval was sought.
- b) figures setting out the Council’s income and expenditure to date against the current budget.

The members duly approved the payment of all cheques listed.

An additional invoice was presented for consideration. This was £40 from Hancock & Eggett (payable to R Hancock) in respect of repair work to an allotment gate. Members approved this payment.

“Garden Escapes” annual contract. Members considered the quotation from Garden Escapes (annex “B”) for work to be carried out in 2013. The Clerk was authorised to accept this with the addition of a total of £130 for other work in respect of the hedge adjacent to the pond.

Insurance. The Clerk had obtained a quotation from the Council’s insurers, Aon, to cover the Village Green phone-box in the sum of £3K. This was £19.58 and members authorised the Clerk to accept this.

Budget for the year 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014

As chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, Mrs Martin-Jenkins presented the draft budget for the coming year. She proposed that this be accepted as presented and this was approved unanimously. A copy of the budget, dated 29 November 2012, is attached as annex "C"

Precept for 2013 – 14

As part of her budget presentation, Mrs Martin-jenkins said that the budget committee, being particularly mindful of the current economic conditions, recommended that the Precept be held at the same level as for the last two years, £13K. She proposed that the Council accept this figure. Mr Hayhurst seconded this and it was approved unanimously. Clerk to inform CDC.

Risk Assessment

Mrs Martin-Jenkins presented the report of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, dated 29 November 2012 and attached as annex "D", highlighting section "D" (Financial). Members approved the conclusions reached in the report.

8/13 PLANNING

Dr Wilding reported on the following planning applications,

APPLICATIONS CONSIDERED SINCE THE LAST MEETING

SDNP/12/02750/HOUS

Wheelwrights House, Hillgrove

Continued use of outbuilding and barn for residential purposes ancillary to house.

SDNP/12/02751/LIS

Wheelwrights House, Hillgrove

Continued use of out building and barn for residential purposes ancillary to house.

SDNP/12/03070/HOUS

School House, High Hampstead Lane.

Installation of a single dormer window to bedroom 1.

DECISIONS RECEIVED

SDNP/12/01056/FUL

Park Farm, Dial Green Lane.

New toilet block in upper field.

APPROVED

SDNP/12/01524/FUL

Owlswood, Blackdown

Workshop for woodland and field management of applicants land. APPROVED

SDNP/12/01861/LIS

Southwater, Lickfold

Minor internal alterations, including moving kitchen, removal of internal stud walls and addition of new stud wall. APPROVED

SDNP/12/00825/FUL

Silver Birches, Jays Lane

Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a new dwelling and change of use of existing garage to ancillary granny annexe. APPROVED

SDNP/12/01570/HOUS

Greenland Farm, Jobsons Lane

Construction of a new swimming pool, greenhouse and garden wall following the demolition/removal of existing swimming pool and garden wall. APPROVED

SDNP/12/01072/HOUS & SDNP/12/01073/LIS

Barfold Farm, Tennysons Lane

Single-storey extension, new entrance door and internal alterations. APPROVED

SDNP/12/01517/FUL

Millicent, Hillgrove Lane

Erection of a tennis court to include installation of a 2.8m high chain link fence within the grounds of the property. APPROVED

9/13 HIGHWAYS

Artificial “gates” on High Hampstead Lane. WSCC require an Agreement to be completed by the Parish Council before approval will be given for the erection of the gates. Members approved completion of the document attached as annex “E”. Clerk to action.

The Clerk said that obtaining approval from WSCC for this project was proving to be slow work. Mr Duncton said he would see if this could be expedited.

Finger-post adjacent to “Sods”. Mr Hayhurst had kindly taken away the severely damaged finger-post, repaired and re-erected it. The members expressed appreciation for his work.

Flooding. The Clerk said that Highways had cleared the flooding points in Jobsons lane, namely adjacent to the “Brockhurst” properties, Beards Cottage and Jack Fishers Brook. A cutting had also been made on the corner near Parkhurst to alleviate the heavy flooding. These all seemed to have alleviated the flooding problem.

Referring to the recent heavy flooding outside numbers 1 – 6 Greengates (Mill Lane), the Clerk said that partial clearance had alleviated the problem but Highways planned to use a camera to establish the cause of the remaining blockage. Clerk to follow.

Drain outside “Boundary Cottage”

It appears that this is blocked. Clerk to report.

Pot-hole survey

Members were provided with a schedule of pot-holes on parish roads, compiled within three days prior to the meeting. They were asked to consider the list and inform the Clerk within 48 hours of any additions they wished to make to the list. Clerk then to send to Highways.

Speeding. Mr Harden raised the issue of a speed restriction through the village. The Chairman suggested that members wait to see if the installation of the artificial gates on High Hampstead Lane have a suitably calming effect on drivers before considering any further measures. Members agreed.

10/13 COMMUNITY FLOOD PREVENTION

On 11 December members had been provided with a copy of a letter received from WSCC Highways referring to a “Community Flood Prevention Fund”. Mr Bonnett said that this had been covered when he and Mrs Martin-Jenkins attended the Meeting of Parishes on 26 November. The core of the proposal was that parishes should identify their problem flooding points and draw up a list of works which needed to be carried out. The drawback was that this would be on a “matched-funding” basis, possibly entailing a large financial commitment on the part of the parish.

Members then discussed the major problem of flooding at Lickfold. It was agreed that it would be helpful to motorists if some form of depth-gauge could be installed in order that they be warned not to attempt to drive through the water if it had reached a certain depth. Clerk to contact Highways to seek their views.

11/13 VILLAGE GREEN

Scheme to protect eastern end of Green (Common land). Mr Hayhurst said that he was in course of obtaining quotations from contractors for the laying of a plastic membrane to give protection to this surface. He was trying to ensure that this method would in fact give real protection and hoped to be able to report further on this at the March meeting. He added that he may then also be able to recommend that the Council seek approval for an associated grant from WSCC which would provide a use for the grant monies referred to under 6/13.

Green Committee. On Mr Hayhurst’s proposal, members agreed that Mr Matthew Boxall be co-opted on to the Green Committee.

Water damage to wall of “The Old Rectory”

Members considered further the matter raised by the member of the public under 5/13. They were sympathetic to the concerns raised and considered how these might be allayed. It was agreed that the height of the retaining wall be reduced by approximately four inches and to monitor the effect this then has on the level of the spill-way.

12/13 PLAYGROUND

Mrs Wood reported no problems with the Playground, but that Mr Hancock had found it impossible to repair the broken spring on the gate. A suggestion was made that perhaps a lighter (wooden?) gate be installed which would require a less powerful spring mechanism to keep it closed.

13/13 ALLOTMENTS

The stand-pipe in the centre of the allotments leaks and requires a professional repair. The Clerk will see that this is done in time for the 2013 season.

The Council approved an increase in the rental charges for 2013 from £15 to £20 for a large plot and from £7.50 to £10 for a small plot.

14/13 RIGHTS OF WAY

The Clerk reported;

a)The owner of Old Hearne Farmhouse (Jays Lane) had reported badly deteriorated surface on the Bridleway alongside the property. Owner put into direct contact with WSCC to look at the problem

b)Broken stile adjacent to Boundary Cottage (The Green) had been reported to WSCC

c)WSCC had reported upon the work carried out following the recent parish-wide survey and Clerk detailed.

Mrs Martin-Jenkins said that a broken Waymarker had not been replaced. Clerk to identify with her and report to WSCC.

15/13 VACANCY FOR PARISH COUNCILLOR

Following the publicising of the vacancy caused by Mr Sharp’s resignation, the Chairman said that the only person to have applied to fill the position was Mr Andrew Tate and he (the Chairman) proposed that Mr Tate be co-opted to the Council.

Mrs Martin-Jenkins said that she appreciated Mr Tate’s proven qualities, but felt that insufficient consideration had been given to looking wider afield, particularly with a view to encouraging younger parishioners to take on the role. She felt that a more pro-active approach should be adopted, rather than waiting for people to come forward. Mr Bonnett supported this view and suggested that the Council develop a strategy to actively encourage people to stand as Councillors.

16/13 CORRESPONDENCE

A letter dated 20 December had been received from the Lurgashall Recreation Association applying for a grant of £5000 from the Parish Council in respect of the purchase of the land known as the “Football field”.

Mr Hayhurst and Mr Bonnett both declared a prejudicial interest in the matter and withdrew from the Council. The remaining members agreed that this request should be placed on the agenda for the Council meeting to be held on 14 March 2013 and no further discussion ensued. At this point Messrs Hayhurst and Bonnett returned to the Council.

17/13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 18 April 2013. The Clerk reported that acceptances to speak at this meeting had been received from representatives of the following organisations;

Horticultural Club, L.R.A., Book Club, Luncheon Club, Village Hall, Church, and the Cricket Club. A reply was still awaited from the Fete Committee.

Members agreed that a bar should be available, and the Clerk is to see that a suitable note is placed in both the March and April Newsletters.

18/13 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting is 14 March 2013.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.43 pm.

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