

LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held in the Village Hall on Thursday, 8 November 2007

Present: Mr R E J Cooper (Chairman), Mrs J Boxall, Mr K M Caird, Mrs A Martin-Jenkins, Mr G D J R Sharp, Dr A H J Tate, Dr P J H Wilding and Mr P J Széll (Clerk)

Also present: Mr C Duncton

87/07 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Jowett, Mr Oakland and Dr Mackey.

88/07 – CODE OF CONDUCT

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

89/07 - MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

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

90/07 – MATTERS ARISING

1. Waste skip. The skip hired for 29 September had been well used. The Council asked the Clerk to arrange another skip for late April/early May next year.
2. Strengthening communication with parishioners. A letter from the Chairman summarising the work of the Council and emphasising Councillors' readiness to hear parishioners' views and concerns and bring them before the Council, had been distributed to all households in the Parish along with the November issue of the *Parish Newsletter*.

91/07 – OPEN FORUM

PC Phil Hanlon of the recently established Neighbourhood Support Team outlined the new local policing arrangements for the Midhurst and Petworth areas and answered questions put to him by the meeting.

92/07 – COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Mr Duncton confirmed that he and Mr Steve Johnston (WSCC Highways Manager) would meet Mr Caird and the Chairman on 9 November on the Village Green to discuss the causes of, and possible remedies for, the problems of excessive surface water around the Green and damage by vehicles to the grass verges after wet weather. He also drew Members' attention to WSCC's recent proposals for reorganising schools in the Rother Valley, an exercise driven largely by falling school rolls in rural areas, and noted that the West Sussex NHS hospital review would shortly end with, hopefully, good news about the futures of all three hospitals concerned.

93/07 – 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 the budget for the current financial year.

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

2. Annual audit. The Clerk reported that Mazars, the external auditors, had given a clean bill of health to the Council's accounts for the year to 31 March 2007 and that, as required, the statutory notices regarding the audited accounts had been displayed on the village notice board.

3. Finance Committee. It was agreed that the Finance Committee would meet on Monday 26 November at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall to prepare a draft 2008-09 budget for consideration by the Council at its January meeting.

94/07 – PLANNING AND HIGHWAYS

(a) **Planning**

1. Applications. Dr Wilding reported that eight planning applications had been notified to the Council since its last meeting – the application concerning Lurgashall Village Green referred to in paragraph 2, below, and the seven listed in this paragraph. The application concerning Boxalland Cottage had not yet been considered by the Planning Committee. Of the remaining six applications, the Committee had major comments and concerns on just one, namely Leigh Barton. A copy of its letter to the District Council, dated 23 October 2007, setting out those comments and concerns was circulated to those present at the meeting:

LG/07/04832/DOM: Leigh Barton, Blind Lane

Proposed two storey side extension and internal alterations

LG/07/04695/DOM: Southwater, Lickfold

Installation of new gated entrance to replace existing timber posts and 5 bar gate

LG/07/04974/DOM: Owlswood, Tennysons Lane

Proposed single storey front extension and two storey side extension

LG/07/05060/DOM: New Cottage, Park Farm, Dial Green Lane

Proposed first floor extension and garden room

LG/07/04036/DOM: Garden Cottage, Quell Lane

Renewal of unimplemented permission LG/02/02819/DOM. Provide garden room and boot room on the ground floor. Dressing room off existing bedroom and extend existing bedroom 5 with adjoining bathroom on first floor

LG/07/05109/LBC: The Cottage, Windfallwood Common

Alteration to the existing internal timber frame wall to form an access between the two halves of the cottage at first floor level

LG/07/05087/FUL: Boxalland Cottage, Petworth Road, Haslemere

New drive to provide safer access to Boxalland Lane from Boxalland Cottage

2. Decisions. 3 decisions had been received from Chichester DC since the last meeting:

LG/07/02091/DOM: Parkhurst House, Jobson's Lane

Proposed alterations and improvements to existing garage to provide ancillary accommodation

PERMIT

LG/07/04077/TCA: Lurgashall Village Green

Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Ash tree

DECISION NOT TO PREPARE A TREE PRESERVATION ORDER

LG/07/00631/COU: Woodcraft Park Farm

3 no. fields to be used for camping for a maximum of 60 days per year with no more than 42 days being consecutive. Maximum number of people on site at any one time 100

PERMIT

3. Other planning related matters.

(a) The Chairman reported that he, Mrs Martin-Jenkins and a number of parishioners had attended the meeting on 17 October at which Development Committee (North) decided to permit the amended Woodcraft Park Farm application (LG/07/00631/COU). The permission (valid for three years) was subject to a number of conditions, the main ones being that the number of persons occupying the site at any one time was not to exceed 100 and that use of the site was to be limited to 60 days per calendar year, no more than 42 of them consecutive. In addition, Mrs Martin-Jenkins mentioned that the Exemption Certificate sought by the Woodcraft Folk under the Public Health Act 1936 had been agreed to by DEFRA shortly after the planning permission was granted. As the Woodcraft Park Farm site was subject to an Article 4 Direction, the planning permission, and not the Exemption Certificate, would apply to use of the site. On the other hand, not being site specific, the Certificate of Exemption (which was valid for two years) would allow the Woodcraft Folk to camp at other sites, with the landowner's permission, without the need for a site licence or planning permission. Members welcomed what they saw as a fair compromise outcome to an issue that had been a source of concern in the Parish for nearly 20 years. This said, it would be necessary to continue monitoring activity by the Woodcraft Folk within the Parish to ensure that the terms of the planning consent were properly observed.

(b) Members drew attention to a realignment of the footpath along the eastern boundary of Greenfields and asked the Clerk to inform the relevant WSCC department in case this infringed the law.

(b) **Highways**

1. Potholes. Despite representations to the WSCC Highways Department about the series of potholes in Jobson's Lane and the site inspection in September by Mr Dunton and Mr Steve Johnston, some of the potholes remained unrepaired. Three in particular remained a problem for cars.
2. Traffic in Jobson's Lane. The Clerk read out a recent letter to Mrs Gay Bradley from WSCC (Mr Steve Johnston) in which it was stated that (a) the existing lorry route signs on the roads leading into Petworth were being ignored, (b) WSCC was looking into significantly improving those signs, specifically aimed at non-essential HGV traffic and (c) it was working with the companies that supply mapping data for satellite navigation systems to help them improve their systems to deter drivers from rat running on inappropriate routes. The letter concluded with an assurance that Jobson's Lane will not be signed as a route for traffic directed around Petworth.
3. Use of Old Hill by large vehicles. Concern was expressed about the increasing use of Old Hill by large vehicles for reasons other than access. Road signs on the A 283 made it clear that such vehicles should use other roads so clearly drivers were ignoring the advice. Large vehicles seen ignoring those signs should be reported to the police.

95/07 – RECREATION

1. Recreation Committee report. Mr Caird reported on the Recreation Committee meeting held on 11 October. Members added various comments. The Council took note of the report as updated and endorsed a number of decisions arising from it, as follows:
 - (a) Footpaths and bridleways. Mr Oakland had said there little to report on this front. No scheduled repair work was outstanding.
 - (b) Playground. Mrs Boxall had reported that the playground was well mowed and well used throughout the summer months. The Council agreed that the 2008-09 budget should allocate an appropriate sum for repainting the junior swings and slide in suitably bright, modern colours so as to give a lift to the appearance of the playground.
 - (c) Allotments. Members agreed to a suggestion by Mr Sharp that he should weed kill two of the vacant plots at the eastern side of the allotments to make them ready for prospective plot holders but that, until they were needed, the other vacant plots (numbering 10 in all) should continue merely to be cropped.
 - (d) The Green. Members expressed their appreciation to Mr Jim Court who had whitewashed the inside of the bus shelter and repaired some of the broken tiles on its roof. See also agenda item 92/07, above.
 - (e) Risk assessment. Members considered and approved the conclusions of the Recreation Committee as set out in Annex B.
 - (f) Football field. Mr Caird had made contact with the Football Club's Treasurer and they had agreed to meet on 14 November to discuss the future of the football field lease.

(h) Replacement seat around new chestnut tree. W L West and Son had quoted for a replacement oak seat for the Green and this had been accepted by the donor. The new seat's design was similar to the former one but allowed for dismantling in case the tree had to be felled and the seat relocated. Mr Caird informed the Council that Wests could install the seat (including attaching the commemorative plaques from the original one) during November and proposed there should be an unveiling ceremony in early December. There were no objections.

96/07 – CORRESPONDENCE

The following were among the communications received since the last Council meeting:

1. Flooding survey. Chichester DC had again asked the Council to contribute to its annual winter flooding survey. Members were asked to inform the Clerk of flooding incidents observed anywhere within the Parish between November and March.
2. Bus service to village. WSCC had notified the Council of the revised timetable for the twice weekly No 68 bus service from Loxwood, via Lurgashall and Graffham, to Chichester and back (operated by AMK Minicoaches). The Chairman had posted the details in the bus shelter.
3. Rural Post Offices. The Council had been told that an announcement would be made by January on post office closures in rural Sussex. There will then be a 6 week consultation period.
4. North West Frontier Community Forum. The next meeting of the Forum would be on 23 January 2008 at the Grange, Midhurst. (Other 2008 meetings of the Forum had been provisionally set for 19 March, 16 July and 22 October (venues yet to be decided)). Members agreed that a short note should be placed in the *Parish Newsletter* reminding parishioners of the importance of supporting village shops and rural bus services. If not used, they would be lost.

97/07 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

1. Northchapel Primary School. Mrs Martin-Jenkins reported that she had been appointed a Governor of Northchapel PS for the coming three years. The Chairman expressed his and the meeting's congratulations.
2. Former Blackdown Mission. Dr Wilding noted that the increasingly derelict buildings at Shopp Hill had still not been removed by the National Trust (NT) no doubt because obtaining funds for the task was proving difficult. The Clerk was requested to ask the NT if a financial contribution towards the work by the Parish Council would help speed matters up. Its reaction should be reported to the Finance Committee.

98/07 - DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council would take place on 10 January 2008 at 7.30 pm.

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

PJS: 12/11/07