

LURGASHALL PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held in the Village Hall on Thursday, 11 November 2010

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 and Mr P J Széll (Clerk)

Also present: Mrs P Hardwick and 2 members of the public.

The Chairman declared the meeting open at 7.30 pm.

78/10 - APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence had been received from Dr P J H Wilding and Mrs R D Wood.

79/10 – CODE OF CONDUCT

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

80/10 – MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

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

81/10 - MATTERS ARISING

No matters were raised.

82/10 – OPEN FORUM

- One member of the public asked if the voting numbers under agenda item 74/10 in September could be publicised. The Clerk replied that, as reported, the Council's decision had been taken by consensus; hence there had been no ballot.

- The other member of the public, referring to a letter circulated by Mr Joe Harden, asked for clarification on the action being taken by the Council to sort out the parking problem at the eastern side of the Green and, in particular, if anything was being done to make Greene King face up to its responsibilities by converting land behind the pub into a parking area. In response, the Chairman summarised the main elements of the report he subsequently delivered under agenda item 90/10 and, amongst other points, noted that the Council did not have legal powers to force the brewery to create a parking area. (See further under agenda item 90/10).

83/10 – COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Among the matters addressed by Mrs Hardwick in her report were: (a) the District Council's budget reduction plans (planning for the heavy cuts required of CDC – 26% over 4 years – was at an advanced stage); (b) Annual Parishes Meeting (this year's meeting - 17 November – would focus on the financial implications of the current budget review); (c) fly tipping (CDC's enforcement team had successfully prosecuted two fly tippers, one for tipping on the Midhurst Road at Singleton and the other for dumping at a farm in Selsey); (d) housing development (HydeMartlet had recently secured planning permission for small housing developments at Bury and Hammer – both had similarities to the proposed Greengates development (see agenda item 87/10, para.1); and (e) planning enforcement (there had been a significant increase in the number of enforcement actions being taken by CDC in the past year).

84/10 – 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 up to date against its budget for the current financial year.

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

2. Electronic payment by Parish Councils. The Clerk informed members of the Government's announcement in October that sometime in 2011 Parish Councils will be authorised to use modern banking methods for making payments. Since 1894 even the smallest payments by Councils had needed the signature of two Council members but change became inevitable with the recent decision to abolish cheques by 2018. The delay in introducing the change was because of the need to set in place safeguards to ensure that all Council payments were legitimate and that there was no misuse of the system.

3. Village Hall Management Committee. Mrs Martin-Jenkins, in her capacity as Treasurer of the Management Committee, had written expressing the Committee's gratitude for the Council's grant of £1000 towards the hall's running costs.

85/10 – HIGHWAYS

1. Flooding. The sudden heavy rain earlier in the week had caused flooding on a number of the Parish's roads. Mr Sharp was particularly concerned about flooding on the Village Green which he argued was the consequence of the drains at the end of Northhurst Lane being blocked with silt and leaves and the Highways Department's failure to blow them through. Likewise, the flooding of the stretch of tarmac between the pub and the village pond was because the drain under the roadway was blocked. The Clerk was instructed to speak to the Highways Department.

2. Dislodged setts. Mr Sharp told the meeting that setts at the corner of the village green by the signpost had been flattened by heavy trucks going to and from the Greenfield Bungalow site. The Clerk was asked to investigate and, as necessary, speak to the Highways Department.

3. Bollards by Glebe Park. The wooden bollards by Glebe Park's entrance had been removed.

4. Broken branch on Jobson's Lane. The large branch that was in danger of falling onto the road near the Roundhurst turn had been removed shortly after being reported to the Highways Department.

5. Sightlines at A283 junction. Acting on a complaint by a parishioner, the Clerk had asked Mr Dunton to get the Highways Department and the farmer concerned to cut back the overgrown grass and hedges that were obstructing the sightlines of drivers, especially those in small cars, at the junction of Lane End with the A283. The grass had now been cut and the visibility of drivers to the south had improved, but the hedge had yet to be trimmed.

86/10 – PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

1. Future care of rights of way. Mr Mike Oakland (SDJC's volunteer Rights of Way Ranger for the Parish) had informed Mrs Martin-Jenkins that the future role of SDJC's volunteers was still very much up in the air. Would they be working with and for WSCC or the new National Park Authority (NPA) and, in either case, what would the volunteers' functions be? Neither the County Council nor the NPA seemed in any hurry to settle the matter. A meeting promised by the NPA to discuss matters with the volunteers had yet to materialise.

2. Footpath 2031. Mr Oakland had also reported to Mrs Martin-Jenkins that he had spoken to Mr Bruce Middleton at SDJC about the apparent deviation from its official line of the footpath that runs adjacent to the Greenfield Bungalow site. Mr Middleton undertook to raise the matter at a meeting about footpath trouble spots that he was shortly due to have with WSCC's Footpaths Officer.

3. Byway off The Quell. Mr Oakland had met Mr Bonnett and the Clerk on site to identify precisely what needed to be done to make the track safe for horses and riders and to check for signs of use by 4WD vehicles. He undertook to speak to SDJC on both matters. Mrs Martin-Jenkins reported that, as a consequence of this, SDJC had agreed (a) to run a short length of pipe along a key stretch of ditch and cover it with hardcore to allow riders safe access to the lower side of the track, (b) to put some additional light covering on the higher, more boggy, side of the track to improve access for walkers and (c) to erect "No Motorised Vehicles" signs at SDJC expense at each end of the byway (to be made by the person who made the High Lane signs two or three years ago). The National Trust, on whose land the track runs, had agreed to SDJC's proposed action.

4. Footpath by The Chimes. The rotten wooden slats on the bridge on the footpath running from the churchyard towards The Chimes had been replaced shortly after being brought to SDJC's notice after the last Council meeting.

87/10 – PLANNING

1. Applications. In Dr Wilding's absence, the Clerk reported that five planning applications had been notified to the Council since its last meeting (see below). The three applications concerning Barfold Farm had yet to be considered by the Planning Committee. The Council had no comments on the Herne House proposal but it had serious reservations about the Greengates application which it set out in a letter to the District Council, dated 5 November 2010, copies of which were distributed to those present for information.

LG/10/04176/DOM: Herne House, Petworth Road

Erection of three dormers to front of main house, two dormers to rear of side wing and french doors and terrace to rear of main house. Remodelling of roof over stair to afford access to loft, and a new round window in either gable of main house

LG/10/04432/FUL: Garage compound at Greengates

Demolish existing garages and provide 1 no. three bedroom house and 2 no. two bedroom houses

LG/10/04499/FUL: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane

Two storey estate office barn to replace existing buildings and portacabins

LG/10/04507/FUL: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane

Single storey storage barn to replace existing buildings and container

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

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

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

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

LG/10/03561: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane

Erection of steel framed agricultural barn for the storage of equipment, hay and forestry products from the woodland PRIOR APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED

LG/10/03141/FUL: Barfold Farm, Tennyson's Lane

Repair of estate track and extension of existing estate track PERMIT

LG/10/03444/LBC: Southwater, Lickfold

Proposed demolitions and two storey extension, with a new entrance porch and chimney to garden room and internal alterations PERMIT

LG/10/03448/DOM: Southwater, Lickfold

Proposed demolitions and two storey extension, with a new entrance porch and chimney to garden room and internal alterations PERMIT

LG/10/03749/TPA: St Laurence's Church, Lurgashall

Remove 4 branches (to raise crown) away/off from roof of church on 1 no. Yew tree (T1) subject to LG/10/00004/TPO PERMIT

LG/10/04213/TCA: The Old School, Village Green

Notification of intention to fell 1 no. Conifer tree (marked on plan as X) WITHDRAWN

3. Other planning matters

- (a) Old Mill Farm. The Parish Council had been informed that the applicant in this case (application no. LG/10/00829/FUL) had appealed to the Secretary of State against the District Council's refusal and that the oral proceedings would commence on 23 November 2010.
- (b) High Hampstead Farm. The Parish Council had been notified on 17 September 2010 that an enforcement notice had been served on the owner of High Hampstead Farm alleging a breach of planning control because pasture lying to the west of the dwelling house had been converted into garden without planning permission.

88/10 - PLAYGROUND

Repairs. In line with one of RoSPA's recommendations, Garden Escapes had filled the gaps around the safety surfaces under the junior swings and the cradle swing with soil and grass seed.

89/10 - ALLOTMENTS

There was nothing to report.

90/10 - VILLAGE GREEN

1. Damage from parking.

(a) The Chairman reported that over the past two months progress on the village green repair project had been slow, but he was glad to be able to report that, thanks to the generous offer of a grant of up to £1,750 from the Village Fete Committee to match an equivalent contribution from the Parish Council and a donation of £500 from the tenants of the Noah's Ark, it was now possible to go ahead with Stage 2 of the project, that is to say with repairing the grass verge from the pond to the corner opposite Jubilee Cottage.

(b) He had a useful site meeting on 21 October with WSCC's Highways Department and their contractors at which the best way to do the repairs was discussed in detail. The contractors had told him they could start work on 22 November 2010. The work would entail re-enforcing and then re-instating the verge. Afterwards, the repaired strip, which would be about 2.5 metres in width, would need to be fenced off to allow new grass to establish itself in the spring.

(c) Because of the need to do the work out before winter, the Chairman had checked that each Council member was content to proceed with the works discussed and, subject to confirmation at the present meeting, that the Council should pay £1,750 towards the total cost of nearly £4,000.

(d) The Leconfield Estates had been informed and were happy for the work to be done. Disappointingly, Greene King had declined to make any contribution towards the cost of Stage 2 but he did not intend to let the matter rest there. WSCC, whilst being most helpful in advising what needed to be done and arranging for its contractors to do the work, was not in a position to help financially on this occasion.

(e) Unfortunately, not enough money was available to allow the Council to repair also the triangle at the eastern end of the Green this financial year (ie Stage 3 of the project), so it would have to revert to its original plan and aim to complete the three stages in 3 years instead of just 2.

- (e) Among points and decisions made in discussion of the Chairman's report were the following:
- (i) Dr Tate suggested there could be some merit in the suggestion in Mr Harden's letter of providing space to accommodate some cars of visitors to the pub by suitably reinforcing the grass verges in the vicinity of the pond;
- (ii) He also suggested that consideration be given to laying a roll of geotextile membrane between the hardcore and topsoil when repairing the grass verge. The Chairman said he would raise the possibility with the contractor;

- (iii) Mr Sharp proposed reinstating the ditch that used to run along the eastern side of the Green just beyond the boundary of the cricket field. This would have two benefits. It would allow water to drain from the cricket field more quickly and, secondly, discourage drivers from parking on, and driving over, the verge. The work would best be done by hand though a parishioner might offer the use of a small mechanical digger. Leconfield agreement would be required. Members agreed with Mr Sharp's proposal and decided to aim to get the work done in the spring when the days were longer and the ground harder;
- (iv) Mr Hayhurst expressed surprise that the Noah's Ark had been allowed to erect the low post and rope fence along the side of the area it used for its customers in summer. The Chairman said he understood the pub's tenants had obtained Lord Leconfield's permission;
- (v) The Chairman announced that the Village Green Committee would need to meet again after the Stage 2 works had been completed; and
- (vi) the Council confirmed the conclusion at (c) above to pay £1,750 from its reserves towards the £4,000 overall cost of the verge hardening works at the eastern side of the Green.

2. Litter bin. The Clerk reported that the new metal liner supplied by CDC for the bin at the top of the Green was not the correct size or shape. It was both narrower and taller, leaving room for rubbish to miss its target and fall down the sides. He had requested CDC to fit the correct liner. The official concerned agreed that the size and appearance of the liner were unsatisfactory but added that liners of the right size for Lurgashall's bin were no longer made. As a compromise he offered to take the existing bin away and replace it with a second-hand, covered bin of the type outside the Village shop for the cost that the Parish Council had agreed to pay for the new liner, ie £74.80 (+ VAT). Also, he could locate the new bin at a different place on the Green if the Council so wished. Members decided to accept this offer and to keep the bin at its present location. It instructed the Clerk to reply to CDC accordingly.

91/10 – LOCAL WINTER MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Mr Hayhurst introduced the draft Local Winter Management Plan (LWMP) that he, Dr Tate and the Chairman had drawn upon the basis of various models and advice provided by WSCC. It was, he said, clear from the County's Highways Department's communications that, if faced with severe winter weather again this winter, rural parishes like Lurgashall were going to be largely on their own. The most to hope for from WSCC was the delivery of bags of salt to pre-determined locations and authority to engage approved contractors at WSCC expense to clear snow from key parish roads.

- Parish involvement would be of two types: (i) requesting bulk "hippo" bags of salt, identifying locations within the parish to site them and finding volunteers to sprinkle the salt in an appropriate manner on roads and footpaths when the temperature justified it and (ii) engaging WSCC approved contractors to clear snow from pre-determined roads at WSCC expense, monitoring the contractors' performance and verifying their claims prior to payment by WSCC.

- Under the LWMP, the Parish Council would inform WSCC of its point of contact and its requirements for salt and for road clearance. It would be important to contact WSCC soon on these matters to underline to Chichester that Lurgashall wanted to participate in the scheme, limited though it was. On the detail of the LWMP, members made the following decisions:

- (i) Dr Tate would be the Parish Council's principal point of contact for the LWMP. He would receive information from WSCC and disseminate it via telephone/SMS and a dedicated group e-mail address: winter@lurgashall.org;
- (ii) WSCC's telephone contact point within the Parish for matters arising from the LWMP would be the Chairman;
- (iii) the following roads to be kept clear of snow at WSCC expense with a view to assisting as many parishioners as possible to maintain contact with the adjacent national road network - the three roads around the village green; those from the green to the Village Hall; Northhurst Lane; Jobson's Lane from Lickfold Bridge to Gospel Green; and Petworth Road from the B2131 to

Gospel Green. (It was assumed that Lodsworth Parish Council would ensure that the continuation of Jobson's Lane southwards, from Lickfold Bridge to the A272, was kept clear of snow. Petworth Road was a Priority 3 road so WSCC should keep it clear in any event);

(iv) Dr Tate, Mr Hayhurst and the Chairman were invited to decide how many bags of salt should be requested and to identify where they should be located. It was recognised that WSCC's supplies were limited and that the Parish Council's would received sufficient only the worst stretches of road. At a minimum, salt bags should be located on Blind Lane (by The Chimes); Gospel Green; Jobson's Lane (by Southbridge Farm); Crossways; White's Green; and the Village Hall; and

(v) Dr Tate, Mr Hayhurst and the Chairman were also invited to find appropriate ways to identify suitable volunteers both to accommodate the salt bags and to spread the salt. To this end they should consider including a note in the December *Parish Newsletter* explaining the LWMP and emphasising that its effectiveness would depend on there being a sufficient number of volunteers willing and able to spread the salt when ice and snow threatened.

92/10 – CORRESPONDENCE

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

North West Community Forum. The next CDC North West Forum meeting would be at the Grange, Midhurst, on Wednesday, 2 March 2011. (The Chairman had offered Lurgashall Village Hall as the venue for the following meeting, provisionally set for Wednesday, 15 June 2011.)

93/10 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) Remit of the Village Green Committee. Mr Hayhurst asked whether the remit of the Green Committee should be expanded to include the parking problem in Greengates. As he saw it, the core issue at each location was the lack of suitable parking spaces; resolving the problem at one was likely to have consequences for the other. Whilst noting Mr Hayhurst's comments, other Members were not persuaded of the need to alter the Committee's remit.

(b) Large scale maps. Dr Tate said that access to copies of large scale maps was becoming increasingly important for the Council (eg for planning and winter maintenance plan purposes). A company called Getmapping had made an attractive offer to parish councils, offering them access to OS maps and aerial photography of their area, which he felt the Council should take up. It would cost Lurgashall only £10 pa, plus a one-off £20 signing-up fee. Given that it had recently cost him £8 to obtain a single map and details from the Land Registry, this was very good value. After a short discussion, Members agreed to Dr Tate's suggestion and that he should be the lead councillor on this matter.

(c) Waste skip. A skip, plus qualified supervisor, had been hired for Saturday, 7 May 2011, once again from 10am till noon at the Village Hall car park.

94/10 - DATES OF NEXT MEETING

The Council's next meeting would be held on Thursday, 13 January 2011 starting at 7.30 pm.

There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.00 pm.

PJS: 16/11/10