

MINUTES 5 DECEMBER 2006

LOXWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

An ordinary meeting of Loxwood Parish Council was held at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 5 December 2006 in St John the Baptist Church Room, Loxwood.

Present: Parish Councillors John Andrews (Chairman), Priscilla Phillips (Vice-Chairman), Mary Ringrose, Alison Sanderson, Tim Spence, Charlie Whitmarsh, Peter Winney.

Also in attendance: Peter Evans (Parish Clerk), County Councillor Peter Moffatt, District Councillor Brian Hooton.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

179/06 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Parish Councillor David Townsend.

- QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No matters were raised, no member of the public being in attendance.

- COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Proceedings were adjourned for the County and District Councillors to address the meeting.

County Councillor Peter Moffatt spoke about local highways matters, including drainage in the Village, use of motorbikes, particularly off-road, and a probable lorry ban in Petworth. There would be job losses at the County Council as the fundamental service review proceeded, and a further reorganisation of local government might be in prospect. The latest NHS proposals would lead to significant changes in hospital services.

District Councillor Brian Hooton spoke about the proposed development of more than 300 houses at King Edward VII Hospital site, outside Midhurst: charges for waste collection from schools: the Local Government White Paper and the District Council's objections to a merger with the County Council: and the Wey & Arun Canal Trust's progress on the road crossing at the Onslow Arms.

The Chairman thanked both local Members for their reports and the meeting reconvened.

180/06 CO-OPTION OF NEW PARISH COUNCILLOR

Only one local resident had expressed any interest in standing for co-option. Despite the imminence of parish council elections, the Council was required by statute to try to fill the vacancy. The Clerk had put up new notices inviting volunteers to stand for co-option, and would put a note in the Parish magazine. All Members were encouraged to seek suitable candidates for co-option.

181/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL & AMENDMENTS TO REGISTER OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Peter Winney declared a prejudicial interest in **Agenda item 10 – Community Transport (minute 184/06)** as a volunteer driver for the Billingshurst Community Transport scheme.

Members were reminded that they should declare interests at any stage during the meeting if it became apparent that this might be required when a particular item or issue was due to be discussed.

182/06 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was proposed by Peter Winney, seconded by Tim Spence and agreed that the minutes were a correct record of the ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 7 November 2006. The Chairman signed the minutes.

183/06 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(a) Highways (minute 176/06(a)): the Chairman reported his contact with the County Council about drainage problems and potholes. At the Chairman's suggestion, it was agreed to invite the local Highways Inspector to visit the Parish to see for himself the extent of repairs necessary to local roads and to discuss traffic calming measures. In addition to those already reported, Charlie Whitmarsh said that there were potholes in Station Road, eastwards towards the Mucky Duck pub.

(b) Wey & Arun Canal Trust (minute 171/06): Members noted arrangements for an informal meeting with members of the Trust on 13 December. The Chairman and his wife would attend, as would Mary Ringrose and her husband, Priscilla Phillips, Tim Spence and Peter Winney.

(c) County Local Committee Street scene paper (minute 163/06): it was agreed to ask David Townsend to review the paper before the Parish Council considered its response at its January meeting.

(d) Flower shop, High Street (minute 169/06(b)): the Clerk reported that a certificate of lawful use was granted in January 2005 for continuation of use of the premises as a florist's shop. Mary Ringrose thought further investigation was necessary, in view of the work currently in progress to the premises. The Clerk would follow up.

(e) Parish newsletter (minute 168/06): the Clerk had written to the printers seeking assurances on the points raised at the last Parish Council meeting. Four nearby parish councils, who used the same printers to produce their newsletters, had experienced no real difficulties with the arrangements.

The Chairman suggested changing the order of business to consider Community Transport (Agenda item 10) before discussing the budget and precept for 2007/8 (Agenda item 6).

184/06 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Having declared a prejudicial interest, Peter Winney left the room during consideration of the item.

Members had received a note from Peter Winney prior to the meeting about the activities of Billingshurst Community Transport, which did not currently operate in Loxwood Parish. A voluntary transport scheme already operated in Loxwood, though some Members felt that it was not well publicised, that it was not open to all Parishioners and that there was a shortage of volunteer drivers. After discussion it was agreed to clarify the following matters with Billingshurst Community Transport:

- If extended to Loxwood, would the Billingshurst Community Transport Scheme require volunteer drivers from the Parish?
- Would the Parish Council be expected to make a grant to the Scheme and, if so, how much?
- Would the Scheme be open to all Loxwood Parishioners regardless of age, means, etc?
- What transport links would the Scheme provide, ie what routes would it cover?
- How would organisers ensure that there was liaison and co-ordination with the existing volunteer transport scheme in Loxwood?

Peter Winney then rejoined the meeting.

185/06 BUDGET AND PRECEPT 2007/8

Members had before them the budget recommended by the Budget Working Group, circulated with the Council Agenda.

The Chairman noted that provision for Clerk's expenses - phone - should be increased to £150, and additional provision of £220 should be made under Clerk's expenses for ADSL facilities. Both items related to provision of services to the Parish Council's office at North Hall. Peter Winney pointed out that these were already included, under computer support and supplies. The latter provision was therefore reduced from £600 to £200.

It was also agreed to delete provision of £2,500 for a new bus shelter and to increase provision for hedging to £600 to include surgery to Parish Council trees. Priscilla Phillips said the Council owned over 20 trees in Pond Close, Nicholsfield and Badgers Way, and adjacent to the Chapel. Roy Setterfield had carried out some tree surgery in previous years. Alison Sanderson, as Parish Tree Warden, would try to identify all trees owned by the Parish Council.

These alterations had the effect of increasing budgeted payments on Members and Officers to £11,580: reducing budgeted payments on Open Spaces and Playground to £9,350: reducing budgeted payments on Administration to £7,365: and reducing total budgeted payments to £39,345. It was not suggested that the precept of £28,000 recommended by the Budget Working Group be amended.

Members then considered a letter from the Chairman of the North Hall Management Committee, circulated prior to the meeting, requesting the Council to provide for additional grant for repairs to the Hall in its 2007/8 budget.

As members of the North Hall Management Committee, Priscilla Phillips and Mary Ringrose both declared prejudicial interests in the matter and left the room during consideration of the item.

The Chairman expressed the view that it would be inappropriate at present to make any funding available for repairs to the Hall or to make additional provision in the Council's budget for 2007/8. Although Councillors were sympathetic to the Committee's request, they were mindful of uncertainty over the future of North Hall and the whole North Hall site while the Local Development Framework process continued.

It was further noted that the Council's reserves already included provision for a grant of £10,000 to the Committee for repairs, and for a loan repayment of £4,600, the latter being the likely first repayment of a loan which the Council might at some future time raise to pay for repairs to the Hall. The Council therefore decided not to make any provision in the 2007/8 budget for repairs to the Hall, but agreed that, if a dire emergency required repairs to be put in hand urgently, the Parish Council would treat sympathetically a request for assistance. The Council also encouraged the Management Committee to investigate other sources of funding. The Clerk would advise the Committee of the Council's response.

Priscilla Phillips and Mary Ringrose then rejoined the meeting.

Having made the above changes, it was proposed by Peter Winney, seconded by Tim Spence and resolved to adopt the budget as amended, with total budgeted payments of £39,345: and to issue a precept in the sum of £28,000 for the financial year 2007/8. Priscilla Phillips and Mary Ringrose abstained from voting and requested that the fact be minuted.

The budget as recommended and as adopted made no provision for the payment of parish basic allowance to Members after 31 March 2007. Consequent upon the adoption of the budget, it was therefore proposed by Tim Spence, seconded by Peter Winney and resolved to amend the Parish Council's scheme of Members' Allowances to reduce Members' basic allowance to nil with effect from 1 April 2007. Priscilla Phillips and Mary Ringrose abstained from voting and requested that the fact be minuted.

Following discussion of the item Charlie Whitmarsh left the meeting at 9.30 pm.

186/06 PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Members considered and commented on the following **new applications** affecting the Parish:

LX/06/04837/FUL - Unit 3, Loxwood Chase Stables, Guildford Road - erection of detached outbuilding to be used as stable/carport/oil store (following demolition of existing stable).

Parish Council - no objection

LX/06/05031/DOM - Bumble Farm, Drungewick Lane - two storey extension and new porch and new bay window to kitchen

Parish Council - no objection.

LX/06/05263/DOM - Oak Grove Cottage, Spy Lane - Change of use and alteration of existing loft space into fourth bedroom and en-suite bathroom with additional staircase

Parish Council - no objection.

Members noted the following **District Council decisions**:

LX/06/4300/DOM – Crabtree Cottage, Drungewick Lane – relocation of vehicular access to Drungewick Lane and formation of new driveway (existing access to be permanently stopped up). Relocation of outbuilding approved under LX/05/0066/DOM and LX/05/1477/DOM and relocation of existing single stable. Alterations to approved outbuilding in new location. Proposed attached log store.

Decision - PERMITTED

LX/06/04301/DOM & /04302/LBC - The Gatehouse, Plaistow Road - Erection of single storey rear hardwood conservatory.

Decision - PERMITTED

LX/06/04395/FUL - Holmbushes, Roundstreet Common - Construction of a 20x40m riding arena comprising of a network land drains, a stone base, silica sand and equestrian rubber surface, surrounded by a post and rail fence with a five bar gate.

Decision - PERMITTED

LX/06/04573/DOM - River View, High Street - Erection of new garage demolition of existing garage.

Decision - PERMITTED

LX/06/04962/CMA - Loxwood Water Treatment Works, Brewhurst Lane - Development refurbishment of existing waste water treatment works and extension onto adjacent arable field. Construction of Motor Control Kiosk housing electrical equipment. New biological filter. Extension of on site access road to give access to extended works. Site fencing.

NO OBJECTION by the District Council. The County Council, as waste authority, will determine this application

(b) **LX/06/4962/CMA - Loxwood wastewater treatment works:** it was agreed to ask County Councillor Peter Moffatt to support the Parish Council's request for conditions to be attached to any grant of permission for this application. The Clerk would forward a copy of the Parish Council's comments.

187/06 MEETINGS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

(a) **Duration of Parish Council meetings:** after discussion of Alison Sanderson's note, circulated with the Agenda, it was proposed by Priscilla Phillips, seconded by Tim Spence and agreed that the Chairman and Clerk should include on future agendas indicative timings for consideration of items, with the aim of limiting meetings to 2 hours duration (that is, to conclude consideration of business at Parish Council meetings by 9.30 pm).

Following consideration of the item Mary Ringrose left the meeting at 10.00 pm and Alison Sanderson left at 10.01 pm.

(b) Annual Parish Meeting 2007: Members noted that parish elections would be held on 3 May 2007, with nominations closing at noon on 4 April. They agreed with the Chairman's proposal to bring forward the Annual Parish Meeting to Wednesday 21 March, and to invite guest speakers to encourage local residents to stand for election and to speak about the Local Government White Paper.

Following consideration of the item Priscilla Phillips left the meeting at 10.03 pm. The meeting remained quorate with the Chairman, Tim Spence and Peter Winney still in attendance.

188/06 LOXWOOD VILLAGE WEBSITE

Members noted the matters raised by Priscilla Phillips on accessibility, site contents and the Village calendar, which had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting. It was agreed that the Clerk would reply to Priscilla.

It was also agreed to ask the County and District Councils to include in their parish council web pages a link to the Parish Council's pages on the Loxwood Village website: and to discuss with the Loxwood Webmaster direct posting of Parish Council papers on the Village website. The Clerk would contact the officials responsible.

189/06 OTHER FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Accounts and payments: the Clerk reported the Parish Council's payments in November 2006, and the current balances, details of which had been circulated at the start of the meeting. It was proposed by Tim Spence, seconded by Peter Winney and agreed to approve the list of payments totalling £1,892.87.

(b) Application for financial assistance: it was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Tim Spence and resolved to defer until the January meeting of the Parish Council consideration of a request from the West Sussex Rural Mobile Youth Trust for financial assistance

190/06 CORRESPONDENCE

Alfold & Loxwood Magazine had written to thank the Council for its grant of £275.

Members noted receipt of a letter from Impetus Consulting about "free consultancy and facilitation for a green makeover".

191/06 NORTH HALL

No report was received, the Parish Council's representative on the Management Committee having left the meeting at 10.03 pm.

192/06 RECREATION GROUNDS, HEDGES, TREES, OPEN SPACES

(a) Mobile skatepark: the District Council was considering purchasing a mobile skatepark for hire by parish councils. It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Tim Spence and resolved to defer consideration of the items.

(b) Other matters: Peter Winney had listed several sites in the Village where trees or hedges overgrowing the pavement required pedestrians to walk in the road. It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Tim Spence and resolved that the Clerk write to owners/occupiers asking that the offending vegetation be cut back, with copies to the Highway Authority.

193/06 COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS AND SEMINARS

It was agreed to defer consideration of the item.

194/06 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION

No matters were raised.

195/06 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

No matters were raised.

196/06 DATES OF FUTURE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Members noted the dates of ordinary meetings of the Parish Council - 9 January 2007, 6 February, 27 February, 3 April, 8 May (Annual Parish Council Meeting).

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 10.20 pm.

Approved at a meeting of the Parish Council held on (date)

(Signed)

Chairman