

# MINUTES 3 OCTOBER 2006

## LOXWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

An ordinary meeting of Loxwood Parish Council was held at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 3 October 2006 in St John the Baptist Church Room, Loxwood.

**Present:** John Andrews (Chairman), Priscilla Phillips (Vice-Chairman), Mary Ringrose, Alison Sanderson, Jez Mumford, David Townsend.

**Also in attendance:** Peter Evans (Parish Clerk), 3 members of the public.

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

### **149/06 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Parish Councillors Charlie Whitmarsh, Tim Spence.

County Councillor Peter Moffatt, District Councillors Brian Hooton and Paul Mackey.

### **150/06 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL**

Alison Sanderson declared an interest in LDF and planning matters as owner/occupier of land abutting the Hall House/Hurst Farm site

John Andrews declared an interest in LDF and planning matters as owner/occupier of property next door to the Hall House/Hurst Farm site, and as his wife is an active member of Wey and Arun Canal Trust.

### **151/06 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

It was proposed by the Mary Ringrose, seconded by David Townsend and agreed that the minutes were a correct record of the **ordinary Parish Council meeting held on 5 September 2006**. The Chairman signed the minutes.

### **152/06 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**(a) LDF (minute 138/06(a)):** David Townsend reported that the pre-examination meeting he had attended with the Chairman had been concerned with procedures to be followed at the public enquiry.

Priscilla Phillips reminded the meeting that the Council had resolved some time ago that Members attending meetings should provide written reports for other Members' information.

**(b) Traffic and road safety (minute 138/06(b)):** deferred to the November Parish Council meeting.

**(c) Rights of way (minute 138/06(b)):** Alison Sanderson had spoken to Brian Smith from County Highways about local residents' wishes, expressed in the Parish Action Plan, for footways into the Village from Alfold Bars and from Ifold. Brian would consider the matter but warned that a path from Alfold Bars would be low priority, and both projects would be costly. The Parish Council would need to express its support strongly to get something done. At Mary Ringrose's suggestion it was agreed to write to Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council to enlist their support for improving the footpath link between Ifold and Loxwood.

David Townsend had looked at the procedure for upgrading footpaths to bridleways. There were several possibilities and the Parish Council should first of all decide precisely what it hoped to achieve.

The County Council Access Ranger would begin his inspection of Parish rights of way on 16 October prior to organising maintenance work.

**(d) Parish newsletter (minute 98/06(b)):** it was agreed to ask a firm of printers in Steyning, who produced newsletters for several local councils, for details of their service.

**(e) Request for information (minute 141/06):** Mary Ringrose reported that David Gumbrell had agreed to provide information about the Village, requested by a hospital radio researcher.

### **153/06 PLANNING MATTERS**

Members reversed the order of consideration of the first two matters appearing under this agenda item.

**(a) Establishment of a Planning Committee:** Jez Mumford noted that the Council had only 4 new applications to consider at this meeting, including a listed building consent. He questioned the need to set up a planning committee, which would inevitably increase Members' workload. He also questioned the Parish Council's *locus* in planning matters, and said that the Council should keep out of individual applications. In response the Chairman pointed out that the Parish Council was a statutory consultee in planning matters.

Mary Ringrose also doubted the need for a separate planning committee: if need be, the Parish Council could call an extraordinary meeting to consider major planning applications, as it had done in the past.

After discussion it was agreed to defer further consideration.

**(b) Planning applications:** Members considered the **latest planning applications affecting the Parish** and made the following comments:

**LX/06/3834/DOM** – Brewhurst House, Brewhurst Lane – single storey rear extension

**Parish Council – no objection.**

**LX/06/3835/LBC** - Brewhurst House, Brewhurst Lane – single storey rear extension to an existing kitchen which is located in a 20<sup>th</sup> century extension to the grade 2 listed house, plus internal reordering of adjacent laundry/toilet. Metal chimney to be replaced in brick. Doorway to old house. New toilet window.

**Parish Council – no objection.**

**LX/06/3920/DOM** – Elm View, Guildford Road – demolition and reconstruction of an extension

**Parish Council – no objection.**

**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.

**Parish Council – no objection.**

Members noted the latest **planning decisions:**

**LX/06/1899/DOM** - Bumble Cottage, Drungewick Lane - proposed two-storey extension - **APPLICATION WITHDRAWN**

**LX/06/2428/FUL** - Crabfields Farm, Drungewick Lane - erection of replacement outbuilding for equestrian use, storage and garaging in connection with the approved converted barn (under LX/04/4004/FUL) - **PERMITTED**

**LX/06/2559/DOM** – Spy Farm, Spy Lane – fitting of garage doors to existing carport - **PERMITTED**

**LX/06/3220/DOM** - Crabtree Cottage, Drungewick Lane - renewal of existing approval LX/01/1308/DOM for proposed single tennis court and fenced surround - **PERMITTED**

**LX/06/3276/DOM** - Downland House, Pigbush Lane - new garage - **PERMITTED**

**LX/06/3408/DOM** - The Gables, Pond Copse Lane - first floor extension- **PERMITTED**

Members noted an **appeal against refusal of planning permission**:

**LX/05/4668/FUL** – Church Cottage, Station Road – demolition of existing garage and erection of 1 no. detached dwelling with associated access, garage and parking, together with replacement garage and parking for Church Cottage.

**(c) Planning application LX/06/2719/FUL, Church Cottage, Station Road:** Members noted the Clerk’s response, on behalf of the Council, to comments appearing on the planning authority’s website about the Parish Council’s consideration of the most recent planning application for Church Cottage.

As a general point Priscilla Phillips expressed concern that domestic garages could be converted to provide living accommodation. She urged the Council to ask for conditions controlling such use. The Chairman pointed out that the Council had indeed asked for such a condition on an application considered at the September meeting.

## **154/06 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

**(a) Parish Council payments and finances:** Members noted the Parish Council’s payments and receipts in September 2006, and the current balances. It was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Jez Mumford and agreed to approve the list of payments totalling **£1,028.50**.

**(b) Budget and precept for 2007/8:** the Chairman’s suggestion, that creation of a working group to draft the budget be deferred until the November meeting, was agreed *nem con*.

**(c) Internal auditor’s report 2005/6:** this had been circulated with the Agenda. Members responded to the principal matters covered in the audit report:

- It was agreed to sign the Clerk’s contract of employment (*approved under minute 39/05*)

- Any shortcomings in preparation of the budget for 2005/6 had been rectified in the following year and should not recur

- The Council’s asset register took the form of a spreadsheet listing all assets owned by the Council outright or as custodian trustee, recording either insured values or nominal values. This had apparently been the basis of the figure shown on the Council’s audit return for some years.

The Clerk had advised the external auditors of the internal auditor’s concerns.

**(d) Request for subscription:** Members agreed not to pay the subscription of £35 requested by the Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group.

Following consideration of the item Jez Mumford left the meeting at 9.05 pm.

## 155/06 CORRESPONDENCE

(a) The Clerk drew attention to **guidance given by the Monitoring Officer about disclosure of interests**, arising from a Standards Board case concerning a former Member of the Parish Council. Copies of the guidance note had been circulated to all Members and the Monitoring Officer was prepared to attend a local training session on the subject if members wished.

(b) Mary Ringrose had received papers for the **AiRS AGM** on 12 October.

In response to other items of correspondence, Mary noted that local residents attended the **Citizen's Advice Bureau** in Cranleigh rather than the branch in Chichester. There was nothing in **Horsham District Council's draft development policy on transportation sites** to concern the Parish Council. The DeFRA publication detailing the plethora of **rural development agencies** was a case of "jobs for the boys".

(c) The Chairman had received a letter from a former Chairman of the Parish Council about **possible development at North Hall**. The Clerk would reply

## 156/06 NORTH HALL

(a) **Parish Council/North Hall Management Committee Meeting:** the Clerk circulated copies of a note of the recent meeting (*attached*) and the Chairman spoke about the main points discussed.

Mary Ringrose reported that the caravan club, frequent users of the North Hall grounds, had written to a former Parish Councillor expressing concern that development of the site would mean the loss of a popular and much-appreciated facility.

(b) **Report of the Parish Council's representative on the Management Committee:** Priscilla Phillips reported that the Management Committee would in future meet following the Parish Council meeting.

- Concern had been expressed about inadequate supervision of Youth Club sessions.

- The Management Committee had been given a grant from the proceeds of the Churches' Village Fête, which would be used to buy new tables and chairs.

- Following an e-mail from the Secretary of the Management Committee, the Council discussed the question of storing Youth Club equipment at the North Hall. Although the Parish Council was instrumental in setting up the Youth Club some 2 or 3 years ago, and had strongly supported the Club since its inception, the Parish Council was not in any way responsible for the management of the Club. That was the responsibility of the Club's managing Committee and its officers. The Club was the user of the Hall, not the Parish Council: the equipment belonged to the Club, not to the Parish Council. Members therefore asked that the North Hall Management Committee take up any questions about storage of the Club's equipment with the Club's managing Committee.

- Should the Club wish to apply to the Council for financial assistance, the Council would consider any request sympathetically: but the Council could not assume functions and responsibilities which were properly those of the Youth Club Committee. Members instructed the Clerk to write to the Chairman of the Management Committee accordingly.

(c) **Parish Council office at North Hall:** after a discussion of telephone and storage facilities it was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by David Townsend and agreed to hire the room at North Hall on the basis of a rolling annual agreement, renewable on 1 November each year, terminable by either side on giving 90 days notice, such termination to take effect on 31 October in any year (ie notice to be given no later than 1 August): the Parish Council to pay the Management Committee a rent of £400 a quarter for the room, as proposed in the North Hall Secretary's e-mailed letter of 26 June 2006.

It was further proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Alison Sanderson and agreed to order a telephone and internet connection for the office at a cost not to exceed £250.

Both Priscilla Phillips and Mary Ringrose declared interests as members of the North Hall Management Committee and took no part in the discussion and votes on the item.

Following consideration of the item Priscilla Phillips left the meeting at 9.25 pm.

### **157/06 YOUTH CLUB**

Following a question about the need to appoint a Parish Council representative to the Youth Club Committee, it was agreed to defer consideration of the matter.

The Chairman reported that the County Local Committee had funds of £20,000 available for local initiatives. It was agreed that the Chairman would contact the County Council's youth adviser with a view to arranging a meeting with the Youth Club Committee.

### **158/06 RECREATION GROUNDS, HEDGES, TREES, OPEN SPACES**

**(a) Smallpeice Oak:** it was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mary Ringrose and agreed to accept a quotation of £365 from David Leng (Crown Tree Care) for surgery to the tree.

**(b) Children' Playground at North Hall:** the Clerk had spoken to the District Council's playgrounds advisers and had arranged a meeting with a contractor (Playsafe) to discuss maintenance needs and costs and safety surfacing.

**(c) Other matters:** Alison Sanderson had looked at the trees at North Hall after it had been suggested that preservation orders be requested to protect them. Questions of ownership and responsibility had yet to be determined.

Following consideration of the item Alison Sanderson left the meeting at 9.35 pm.

### **159/06 COUNCILLORS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS AND SEMINARS**

**(a) Attendance at meetings:** Mary Ringrose had attended meetings of (i) the North East Parishes Forum, at which there had been presentations on affordable housing and emergency planning; and (ii) the Petworth sub-district of the Sussex Association. A day's training course for parish councillors would be held following next May's elections. There were concerns about the use of motorcycles on footpaths.

The Chairman warned that the CLC meeting planned for 29 November might be rescheduled.

**(b) Members' and Officers' training requirements:** members were again encouraged to attend the next SALC course at Midhurst on 3-5 November. Only one member of the Council had so far signed up.

The Clerk would attend the SALC Clerks' Training day at the end of November.

### **160/06 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION**

**(a) Casual Vacancy:** Members noted the procedure for filling the casual vacancy resulting from Chris Kershaw's resignation. If no election were demanded by 10 local electors, the Council would fill the vacancy by co-option. The Clerk would place advertisements on the notice boards and it was hoped to co-opt a new a new member at the November meeting.

**161/06 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

No further matters were raised.

**162/06 DATES OF FUTURE PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Members noted the proposed dates of forthcoming ordinary meetings of the Parish Council - 7 November 2006, 5 December, 9 January 2007, 6 February, 27 February (brought forward as Chairman not available on 6 March), 3 April, 8 May (Annual Parish Council Meeting).

There being no further business the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 9.51 pm.

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

(Signed)

Chairman