

MINUTES OF MEETING OF PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD IN THE
W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, APRIL 4TH, 2006

Present: Cllr. S. K. Welch (Chairman); Cllr. the Rev. J. R. Andrews; Cllr. N. J. Bird;
Cllr. R. C. Hemmingsley; Cllr. A. J. Juxon; Cllr. Mrs. M. G. Nichols;
Cllr. M. A. W. Parsons; Cllr. H. M. P. Reynolds; and Cllr. N. Stanfield.

Also present was the Clerk.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. B. J. Bird; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cllr. N. J. Roberts, of Lichfield District Council;
and County Councillor F. W. Lewis, M. B. E.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the Meeting Room, Christ Church,
Gentleshaw, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Hemmingsley and seconded
by Cllr. Mrs. Nichols, approved and signed.

3. PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

No parishioner was present.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Car Park off Hayfield Hill

The Clerk reported that he had written to the Head of Operational Services of Lichfield
District Council, asking whether a large receptacle could be provided at the above car park to
reduce the amount of litter left there.

(ii) House Agent's Advertisement Boards in Upper Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Christine Hibbs, Principal Planning Officer,
Development Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 31st March 2006, in which
she had addressed a number of enforcement issues.

In it, she reported that the site which had been the subject of the above complaint had been
visited on March 1st.

The complaint would be followed up, but, as there had been a heavy appeal workload in
recent weeks, it would not be seen as a high priority.

(iii) Tara House, School Lane, Gentleshaw

In the same letter, she had reported that the above site had twice been visited, but access
had not been gained. However, a site meeting had now been arranged.

(iv) Malodorous Surface Water in Smithy Lane

The Clerk reported that he had once again spoken to Christine Prosser-Davies regarding
the presence of foul-smelling surface water in Smithy Lane, and she had undertaken to pursue
the matter with the County Highways Department.

However, the Clerk was instructed to write to the Divisional Highway Manager to ask
for a site meeting at which this and other problems relating to this lane – pot holes and
compacted gravel impeding the road surface - could be discussed.

(v) Development at “Southdown”, Lower Way, Upper Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had, as instructed, written to Jeff Upton, Development Control Manager, of the Development Control Directorate of Lichfield District Council, asking for an interpretation of his Council’s duty, in granting planning consent for a development in Upper Longdon, to ensure that it preserved or enhanced the character of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

In reply, he had received a letter from Rosamund Robb, Principal Planning Officer, dated 30th March 2006, in which she confirmed that current national planning policy required that the landscape quality of an AONB and its setting be conserved and enhanced and that the natural beauty of AONBs be given greater weight in planning decisions.

Concluding, Mrs. Robb had stated that she was satisfied that these requirements had been met in relation to the planning application relating to “Southdown”.

(vi) ‘Three Longdons’ Walk – Replacement of Stiles with Kissing Gates

The Clerk confirmed that, following a meeting of the Highways and Footpaths Working Group, at which a choice of kissing gate had been made, he had, in line with the Council’s instructions, placed an order for 3 Oxford Kissing Gates (Pedestrian Access Only) with Centrewire, of Wymondham, Norfolk, at a listed price of £116. 00 each, excluding VAT and including a delivery charge of £75. 00.

(vii) Grange Hill, Upper Longdon

The Clerk reported that, in his letter to the Divisional Highway Manager to which he had previously referred, he had also asked for a site meeting at Grange Hill at which the stability of the two embankments could be viewed.

(viii) Standing Orders

It was confirmed that adoption of the Standing Orders presented by Cllr. Hemmingsley at the last meeting had been confirmed.

A copy was then given to each Councillor, who formally acknowledged acceptance by signing a Confirmation of Receipt prepared by Cllr. Hemmingsley.

(ix) Speedwatch

The Clerk reported that he had, as instructed, written to Simon Edwards, the Project Manager in charge of the speed management scheme for Upper Way, asking for it to be reviewed in the light of the continuing problem of speeding vehicles.

5. DECLARATION OF COUNCILLORS’ PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL AND FINANCIAL INTERESTS

None was declared.

6. PLANNING(i) Report of Working Group

06/00183/COU: Mrs. L. M. Mullan: Change of use of agricultural land to grazing of horses and erection of stable block: Land east of Olde Croft, Borough Lane, Longdon.

The following objections had been raised to this application:

1. The site was within the Green Belt, where development was not normally allowed unless it was essential to agriculture or was intended for a use appropriate to the Green Belt.

The erection of stables did not satisfy these categories and was therefore contrary to Policy E4 of the Lichfield District Local Plan.

2. The stable block would be visible from the public footpath which crossed the field, despite screening proposals by the applicant, which would themselves affect the openness of the Green Belt.

3. By reason of the proposed position of the stables and the access, it was probable that a driveway would be required, which would detract from the openness of the Green Belt.

4. The proposed stables were not closely related to existing farm buildings or other groups of buildings and would therefore be contrary to Policy DC10 of the Lichfield District Council Local Plan.

06/00203/FUL: Simon Allan-Smith: Formation of an all-weather exercise area for horse-training (40m. x 20m.): Land north of "Tree Tops", Horsey Lane, Upper Longdon

The following objections had been raised to this application:

1. The site was within the Green Belt, where development was not normally allowed unless it was essential to agriculture or was intended for a use appropriate to the Green Belt.

2. The site bordered the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

3. Although not specifically detailed in the application, flood-lighting, frequently erected at such exercise areas, would have a detrimental effect of the Green Belt.

06/00213/COU: Ian M. Heelas: Conversion of existing barn to form four-bedroom dwelling: Redhill Barn, Bardy Lane, Upper Longdon

The following objections had been raised to this application:

1. This was not a typical Staffordshire barn constructed of brick and tile, but a modern steel-framed building infilled with blockwork and timber cladding, the form, bulk and general design of which was totally out of character with the neighbouring cottages.

The proposed alterations would not significantly improve this situation.

2. It was clear from paragraph 4. 13. 2. of the applicant's supporting statement that this was not a conversion but the construction of a new building inside the existing structure (To quote, "The new structure will stand independently of the existing Redhill Barn and will sit on its own foundations").

Furthermore, it was noted that the only external element that was to remain of the existing structure was the timber cladding. The structural report appeared therefore to be irrelevant.

3. To permit this development would therefore be contrary to the advice contained in Paragraphs 3. 8 (c) and (d) of PPG2 and Policy DC4 of the Local Plan.

(ii) For Consideration

The following applications were then considered:

06/00215/ABN: Mr. A. Cluer: Building for fodder and agricultural store: Laurel Cottage, Briertey Hill Lane, Gentleshaw

It was noted that the land edged in blue on the application plan was not, and had not been, used for agricultural purposes for many years. The only use had been the keeping of horses, evidence of this being the stables that had been erected and the outdoor floodlit equine exercise area.

The Parish Council was therefore of the opinion that, as it was a precedent condition that a building was "reasonably necessary" for the purpose of agriculture within the unit, this development could not be permitted under Part 6 of the General Development Order 1995, and it would be necessary for a full planning application to be submitted.

06/00242/FUL: Mr. and Mrs. R. Allen: Conservatory to rear: 3 Rookery Cottages,
Longdon Green

The Council concluded that, while there had already been a substantial increase in the size of these premises as a result of earlier development, there remained ample space within the curtilage to accommodate this extension and therefore saw no reason to object to the application.

(iii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, Lichfield District Council had issued the following Notices of Approval of Planning Permission relating to Longdon:

04/00460/FUL: Mr. R. W. Barton: Demolition of existing building and erection of two detached dwellings and replacement vehicular access: Southdown, Lower Way, Upper Longdon

05/01256/FUL: Messrs. R, & J. Cope: Conversion of existing milking sheds into 2 no. dwellings: Horsey Lane Farm, Horsey Lane, Upper Longdon

(iv) Refused by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, Lichfield District Council had issued the following Notice of Refusal of Planning Permission relating to Longdon:

06/00076/FUL: Mr. A. Smith: Agricultural building for the housing of water buffalo: Land adjacent Malthouse Road, Gentleshaw

(v) Other Planning Matters

(a) Caravan in field at side of Commonside, Gentleshaw

In her letter of 31st March 2006 concerning a number of enforcement issues to which her attention had been drawn, referred to earlier in the meeting, Mrs. Hibbs had reported that an enforcement notice had been issued by Lichfield District Council to the owner of the above caravan on 19th December 2005, which had taken effect on 30th January 2006.

This had given the owner one month to remove the caravan, and, as no appeal had been received against the notice and the caravan had not been removed, further action would be pursued for non-compliance.

It was agreed that Mrs. Hibbs' response should be considered at greater length at the next meeting of the Council.

Mrs. Hibbs had also been asked to investigate the possible non-agricultural use of a barn situated in a field at the side of Giddywell Lane and had asked for directions.

7. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

(i) Governors' Meeting, Gentleshaw County Primary School: March 16th

Both Cllr. Andrews and Cllr. Hemmingsley had attended this meeting.

It had been established that the school would not be affected by the Staffordshire Plan for Schools, which, elsewhere, proposed amalgamation or closure as an answer to falling rolls.

Gentleshaw now had 141 pupils and was still popular with parents, one of whom had applied to register a child only six months old!

All major building work had been completed, and the Governors would now be spending £50,000 on a new cloakroom area and library.

The staff were presently awaiting a long-overdue OFSTED inspection.

(ii) Longdon Cotton Almshouses Trust: March 22nd

Cllr. Andrews, who had also attended this meeting, reported that all void properties had now been filled.

Modernisation of the interiors was progressing.

8. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

The Clerk reported that he had received notice of the following meetings:

- (i) Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands: Draft Phase 1 Revision – The Black Country: Monday, 3rd April 2006, at The Copthorne Hotel Merry Hill, Dudley, from 2. 00 pm to 4. 00 pm.
- (ii) SPCA Area Committee Annual General Meeting: Thursday, 6th April 2006, in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, commencing at 7. 00 pm.
Cllr. Andrews and the Clerk would be attending.
- (iii) Cannock Chase Local Development Framework Core Strategy – Issues and Options Development Plan Document: Monday, 10th April 2006, at the Civic Centre, Beecroft Road, Cannock, commencing at 7. 00 pm.
- (iv) Lichfield District Parish Forum: Wednesday, 12th April 2006, in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, commencing at 7. 15 pm.
- (v) Wicksteed Exhibition: Tuesday, 25th April 2006, at the City of Manchester Stadium, and Thursday, 27th April 2006, at Lumley Castle, Chester-le-Street.
- (vi) Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership Annual Conference: Friday, 12th May 2006, at the Beau Desert Golf Club from 9. 30 a.m to 3. 30 p.m.
The Chairman would be present as a facilitator.

9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

(i) Speedwatch

The Clerk reported a request from Cllr. Butler for a dictaphone to assist the Speedwatch team in recording the registration number of faster-moving vehicles.

Cllr. Juxon said that he was prepared to lend Cllr. Butler a dictaphone for a trial period.

(ii) Street Nameplates – Swan Close

The Clerk reported that he had received from John Roobottom, Technical Assistant, Operational Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 27th March 2006, informing him that replacements for the faded nameplates at the entrance to Swan Close were on order and would be replaced within the next six weeks.

10. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

It was agreed that the photocall and reception on March 29th had been very successful: the event had received considerable publicity through the good offices of English Heritage, and had given the Council the opportunity to show its gratitude to individuals for the support which they had give to the project.

These had included Cllr. Frank Lewis; Cllr. Neil Roberts; Ken Owen, Divisional Highway Manager; and Alison Richards, Implementation Projects Co-ordinator of Lichfield District Council.

11. BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

(i) Repair of Notice Boards

The Clerk reported that he had received from Alan Johnson, of Aqua Jet Services, a letter dated 20th March 2006 in which he had quoted £400. 00 for replacing the notice boards at High Street, Brook End and Longdon Green.

Unfortunately, this would involve reducing the space available for displaying notices when, in the Clerk's view, what was needed was more space, not less.

It was agreed that it should be left to the Chairman to look at the options.

12. ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

It was confirmed that this would take place in the School Hall at St. James School, Longdon, on Tuesday, April 25th, commencing at 8. 00 p.m.

The usual programme would be followed: the Chairman's Report, followed by the presentation of a financial statement covering income and expenditure for the financial year and the formal acceptance of reports from local organisations.

Refreshments would be served by ladies of the Longdon Women's Institute following an open session when parishioners would have the opportunity of making their concerns known and proposing resolutions.

The Chairman confirmed that Ruth Hÿtch, of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, would be attending to give a presentation.

13. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(i) Accounts for Payment

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Stanfield and seconded by Cllr. Hemmingsley, payment of the following accounts was approved:

*Centrewire	3 Kissing Gates	£494. 80
*The Red Lion on the Green	Reception	£220. 00
≠*Insta Print, Rugeley	Printing 660 copies of "Longdon Life"	£156 26
≠*Hazel Crosbie	Delivering "Longdon Life"	£ 35. 00
≠*A. J. Juxon	Editor's Expenses	£ 15. 00
Longdon W. I.	Hire of Hall: £12. 00 ≠ Repair of notice board: £8. 00	£ 20. 00
≠ Campaign to Protect Rural England	Donation	£ 20. 00
Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association	Annual Subscription	£358. 00

(* Confirmation of payment made ≠Payment made under Section 137)

(ii) Payments Received

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, he had received the following payment:

C. T. Marshall	Advertisements: "Longdon Life"	£ 10. 00
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(iii) Current Balances

The Clerk reported that, currently, the Council's balances stood as follows:

NatWest c/a: £1086. 28; The Halifax s/a: £9257. 91
(less £714. 80 in uncleared cheques)

(iv) Appeals for Grant Aid

(a) St. James Church, Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from the Rev. Michael Jefferson, Priest-in-Charge of St. James the Great, Longdon, a letter dated 24th March 2006, applying for the Council's annual contribution of £500. 00 towards the cost of maintaining Longdon Churchyard.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Juxon and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Nichols, this contribution was approved.

(b) Longdon Cricket Club

The Clerk reported that he received from David La Trobe, Honorary Secretary of Longdon Cricket Club, an undated letter asking if the Council would assist in meeting the cost of a concrete base and matting for a practice area, which would likely to be in excess of £500. 00.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Nichols and seconded by Cllr. Stanfield, a donation of £500. 00 was agreed, payable under Section 137 of the Local Government Act of 1972.

(c) Longdon Women's Institute

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Stanfield and seconded by Cllr. Hemmingsley, it was agreed to meet the request of the President of Longdon W. I. and pay the cost of the materials used in the repair of the notice board outside the W. I. Hall, which had amounted to £8. 00.

This payment would also be made under Section 137 of the Local Government Act of 1972.

14. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Tim Johnston, Regional Director for the West Midlands, English Heritage, a letter dated 14th March 2006, apologising for his inability to attend the photocall on Longdon Green on March 29th because a previous commitment, but confirming that his colleague, Alan Taylor, would be present.

(ii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Ben Bradshaw, MP, Minister for the Environment, DEFRA, a letter dated 27th March 2006, reminding the Council that, from 6th April 2006, the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act of 2005 would enable parish councils to issue fixed penalty notices for littering, graffiti and fly-posting offences, and offering copies of a parish council guide to environmental enforcement.

The Clerk was instructed to apply for three copies of this guide.

(iii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Mrs. Maureen Piper, of Brook End House, Longdon, an undated letter enclosing a cutting from "The Times" on the subject of light pollution caused by security lighting, of which she thought there were examples in Longdon.

It was agreed that this might be a topic for an article in the next issue of "Longdon Life".

15. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk reported that, in addition to the above, he had received the following communications:

- (i) From Beth Harries, Solicitor, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council:

Executive Arrangements – Forward Plan 2005/2006 – March – Version 1 (to take effect from 1st April 2006);
Executive Arrangements – Forward Plan 2005/ 2006 – March – Version 2 (to take effect from 1st April 2006).

- (ii) From The Electoral Registration Officer, Lichfield District Council:

Register of Electors 2006 – Monthly Applications for 3rd April 2006.

- (iii) From The Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association:

Chief Executive's Circular 29;
Legal Briefing L02-06 (Councils' payment of SLCC fees for Clerks);
Leaflet about the SPCA's services for 2005/2006;
Publication Order Forms (2 copies);
Names, addresses and parishes of representatives on SPCA Executive Committee for Lichfield District;
Report of NALC Chief Executive;
"Working Together": Staffordshire Highways Remodelled;
Appeal by Vitalise (formerly The Winged Fellowship).

- (iv) From J. R. Morgan, Principal Planning Officer – Development Plans and Policy, Cannock Chase Council:

Cannock Chase Local Development Framework – Core Strategy
Issues and Options Development Plan Document.

- (v) From Wicksteed Leisure Limited, Kettering:

Leaflet: Playground Equipment.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Cllr. Hemmingsley asked when the double yellow lines and zig-zag lines outside Gentleshaw School promised by PC Brown would be laid down.

The Clerk was instructed to find out when this work would be done.

(ii) Cllr. Reynolds reported that an estimate of £942. 00 had been obtained by the Management Committee for the sound limitation device which the licensing authorities required to be installed in Longdon Village Hall.

However, it was agreed that there was a need for more technical detail and an assurance that it would be officially approved.

(iii) It was confirmed that the corners in Giddywell Lane had been re-instated following the recent road works in Borough Lane.

(iv) It was agreed that meetings of the Council in Gentleshaw should continue to take place in the Meeting Room at Christ Church, Gentleshaw, subject to the consent of the Vicar.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, May 9th, 2006, in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.

