

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD
IN THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 2006

Present: Cllr. R. C. Hemmingsley (Vice-Chairman, who, in the absence of the Chairman, chaired the meeting); Cllr. N. J. Bird; Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. A. J. Juxon; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cllr. Mrs. M. G. Nichols; Cllr. H. M. P. Reynolds; and Cllr. N. Stanfield.

Also present were the Clerk and County Councillor F. W. Lewis.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. The Rev. J. R. Andrews; Cllr. M. A. W. Parsons; Cllr. S. K. Welch (Chairman); and Cllr. N. J. Roberts, of Lichfield District Council.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the Meeting Room, Christ Church, Gentleshaw, on Tuesday, July 11th, 2006, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Stanfield 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) Replacement of Stiles with Kissing-Gates

The Clerk reported that he had invited Alan Johnson, of Aqua Jet Services, to carry out this work, but understood that the kissing-gates had not yet been collected from Tithe Barn Farm.

He would contact Mr. Johnson to see when he would be carrying out the work.

(ii) Caravan in Field next to Commonsides, Gentleshaw

It was noted that the caravan had still not been removed, and the Clerk was instructed to contact Beth Harries, the District Council's Solicitor, to see why no progress had been made in putting an end to this planning infringement.

(iii) Tithe Barn, Tithe Barn Lane, Gentleshaw

The Clerk was instructed to contact Christine Hibbs, Principal Planning Officer responsible for enforcement, to ask for a progress report.

It was observed that it appeared that the rear garden of the property had been extended into the field beyond.

(iv) Gentleshaw County Primary School

The Clerk reported that he had, as instructed, written to the Head Teacher, offering her and her staff the Council's congratulations on an excellent OFSTED report.

(v) Highway Verges

Cllr. Mrs. Nichols reported that, in re-surfacing Smithy Lane, the contractors had failed to fill in potholes beforehand and had covered an inspection cover with tarmac

(vi) Longdon Village Hall

The Clerk reported that he had, as yet, received no response to his request for a meeting with members of the Village Hall Management Committee and would contact the Chairman once more.

(vii) Notice-boards

The Clerk reported that he had not yet received a reply to his letter to the Divisional Highway Manager regarding ownership of the strip of land in front of "Crown Bank".

(viii) Footpath across Glebe Field

The Clerk reported that he had written to Barry Toothill, Secretary of the Diocesan Glebe Committee, asking for a reply to his letter of January 4th, 2006, regarding the upgrading and lighting of the above footpath.

He had received an assurance from the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association that the Council could fund such a project, but had been advised that this should be through a donation to St. James Church through Section 137, once the work was completed.

He had also been advised that a grant might be obtainable towards the cost of lighting the footpath.

(ix) Damaged Street Nameplate

The Clerk reported that he had written to John Roobottom, of the District Council's Operational Services, asking him to replace the damaged nameplate at the junction of High Street and the A51.

(x) Decking at "The Chetwynd Arms"

The Clerk reported that he had been advised that planning permission had not been required for the decking erected at the front of "The Chetwynd Arms".

Councillors were in agreement that fears that properties opposite could now be overlooked were greatly exaggerated.

5. DECLARATIONS OF COUNCILLORS' PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL AND FINANCIAL INTERESTS

None was declared.

It was agreed that, in future, such declarations should be made at an appropriate time in the course of the meeting.

6. PLANNING

(i) Report of Working Group

Cllr. Hemmingsley reported that, since the last meeting, the Working Group had dealt with the following planning applications:

05/00712/FUL: Mr. N. Sweeney: Alterations to existing roof and formation of new front entrance: Tara House, School Lane, Gentleshaw.

It was agreed that an objection should be made to this application for the following reasons:

1. Although the details stated that the volume of the proposed alteration would reduce the overall volume of the property, it appeared from the calculations and the drawings that the upper balcony and front porch might not have been included. If included, the proposed extension would be increased by some 39m³.

2. In view of the extensions that had already taken place, the proposal would be contrary to Lichfield District Council's policy for dwellings within the Green Belt.

3. While the proposed extension might be regarded as a design improvement, this did not constitute "very special circumstances" to override the Green Belt policy.

4. The proposed extension, sited within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, would make the property marginally more dominant, particularly when viewed from the public footpath at the junction of School Lane and Windmill Bank (This point had been supported by a photograph taken by Cllr. Stanfield from the footpath).

A photograph of the small cottage known as "In-the-Fields" which had been replaced by the mansion-sized Tara House had been enclosed with this submission, together with a copy of the conclusions of a planning inspector called upon to adjudicate in the case of an appeal relating to a property in Windmill Bank in 1989 in which he had cited the building of Tara House as supporting the introduction a planning policy restricting the size of future developments in a rural environment.

06/00797/FUL: Mrs. Janet Tompkins: Extension to existing stables: Forge Cottage, Broomy Fields, Hay Lane, Longdon Green.

No objection was made to this application, since planning permission had already been given for two stables.

However, it was believed that incremental development must be carefully monitored to prevent over-development and/or commercialisation.

(Cllr. Hemmingsley reminded the meeting that, while Policy PPG2 of the Lichfield District Local Plan stated that small stables were not an inappropriate development within the Green Belt, unfortunately no definition of what a small stable was had been appended).

Cllr. Hemmingsley confirmed that Cllr. Mrs. Nichols, as a neighbour of the applicant, had acknowledged a prejudicial interest and had not been consulted.

06/00814/FUL: Mr. G. Witherington: Proposed Garden Building: Ivyhurst, Lower Way, Upper Longdon

No objection was made to this application, since the site was within the built-up area of the village and the development would not have a detrimental impact on the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or on the Green Belt.

(ii) For Consideration

Councillors then considered the following planning applications:

06/00754/FUL: Longdon Stud Ltd.: Erection of studman's dwelling: Longdon Stud, Bardy Lane, Upper Longdon

06/00755/FUL: Longdon Stud Ltd.: Replacement purpose-built stable block: Longdon Stud, Bardy Lane, Upper Longdon

It was agreed that no observations should be submitted on these applications, which had only just been received, until the Working Group had had time to give full consideration to them.

06/00850/ABN: Mr. Kevin Healey: Agricultural Determination – Agricultural machinery and produce store: Land at High Street, Longdon

It was agreed that Lichfield District Council must be satisfied that the agricultural activity carried out *on the associated land* made this a reasonable requirement.

(iii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, Lichfield District Council had issued Notices of Planning Approval:

06/00410: Mr. R. Dhanoa: Single-storey side extension to form swimming pool: Park House, Lower Way, Upper Longdon.

06/00474/LBC: Mrs. J. Pybus: Replacement of front entrance door: Hill Top Cottage, Hill Top, Longdon Green.

06/00505/FUL: Mr. & Mrs. J. Heaton: Erection of wooden 3-box stable block: Red Hill Cottage, Red Hill, Upper Longdon.

06/00547/FUL: Mr. S. Lindley: Two-storey side extension to form lounge and bedroom with en suite: 5 Stockings Lane, Longdon.

06/00565/FUL: Lichfield Cathedral School: Erection of temporary Accommodation: St. John's Preparatory School, Longdon Hall, Longdon.

06/00612/FUL: Lichfield Cathedral School: New timber doors and canopy, new path and timber fence to match existing: St. John's Preparatory School, Longdon Hall, Longdon.

(iv) Refused by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that Lichfield District Council had refused a Certificate of Lawful Usefulness or Development for the use for storage and office purposes of Red Hill Barn, Red Hill, Bardy Lane, Upper Longdon, giving as the reason the failure of the applicant to submit sufficient evidence to demonstrate that, on the balance of probabilities, the above specified use had operated continuously for a period of ten years or more.

(v) Other Planning Matters

(a) Notice of Planning Appeals

(i) Appeal by Mr. and Mrs. R. Bate against the refusal by Lichfield District Council of planning permission for a proposed residential dwelling (outline) on land adjacent to "Pine Ridge", Brereton Hill Lane, Upper Longdon

Cllr. Stanfield reported that he had studied the appeal papers and concluded that Lichfield District Council had covered all the points made by the Parish Council.

Consequently, he had concluded that there was no reason why the Parish Council should be represented at the hearing.

(ii) Appeal by Mrs. L. M. Mullan against the refusal by Lichfield District Council of planning permission for the change of use of agricultural land to the grazing of horses and the erection of a stable block on land east of Olde Croft, Borough Lane, Longdon

It was agreed that the Council had already made its objections clear in its original submission.

(b) Proposed Implement Store at Badger Brook Farm, Giddywell Lane, Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Jeff Upton, Development Control Manager, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a copy of a letter dated 11th July 2006 which he had sent to the applicant informing him that his application for Prior Approval had been refused.

(c) Alleged Business Use of Residential Dwelling in Upper Way, Upper Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Christine Hibbs, Principal Planning Officer, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 11th August 2006, in which she had explained that, while a business operating from a residential property might require planning permission where there was a material change to the residential character of the house, she could take no action in this particular case without some evidence that the use was causing some detriment to the amenity of nearby residents.

7. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

(i) Joint SPCA/SLCC Meeting: July 18th

The Clerk reported that he had attended a joint meeting of the Staffordshire Branch of the Society of Local Council Clerks and the Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association which had taken place at Stone Station Community Centre, Stone, on Tuesday, July 18th, 2006.

In the morning there had been a presentation by Lynda Wilcox, NALC West Midlands Regional Development Officer, on the Quality Parish Scheme, and in the afternoon he had attended a SLCC Branch Meeting, when there had been a presentation on bullying in the work place.

Neither topic had seemed of particular relevance.

(ii) Meeting of Parish Clerks with Beth Harries: August 24th

The Clerk reported that he had been present at a meeting of parish clerks with Beth Harries, Lichfield District Council's Solicitor, which had taken place in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, on the morning of Thursday, August 24th, 2006.

Mrs. Harries had focussed on the Code of Conduct, which she felt was still imperfectly understood.

Because she was going on to another meeting, the Clerk had been unable to speak to her about specific Longdon issues, but he thought it possible that she would attend a meeting of the Parish Council if invited.

(iii) Open Meeting for Cannock Wood Residents: September 12th

Cllr. Hemmingsley reported that a meeting was taking place that evening at Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall at which local residents of all ages were being invited to give their appraisal of the organised social life of the community.

Unfortunately, because of the clash over dates, no representative of the Parish Council had been free to attend, but his wife, Mrs. Maureen Hemmingsley, would be present and would be able to inform him of what had been proposed and agreed.

8. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

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

(i) Lichfield District Parish Forum: Wednesday, September 13th, 2006, in The Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, commencing at 7.15 p.m.

The theme of the meeting would be planning, and an invitation had been extended to all Parish Clerks.

The Clerk and Cllr. Stanfield both intended to be present.

(ii) St. Giles Hospice Service of Thanksgiving: Sunday, September 17th, 2006, in Lichfield Cathedral, commencing at 3. 30 p.m.

The Clerk thought that he might be able to attend.

(iii) Community Council of Staffordshire Annual General Meeting: Wednesday, September 20th, 2006, in Weston Methodist Church Hall, London Road, Weston, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.

Cllr. Mrs. Nichols regretted that she would be on holiday and therefore unable to attend.

(iv) SPCA Training Day – “Training in Chairmanship Skills”: Thursday, September 28th, 2006, in The Mountbatten Suite, Gatehouse Theatre, Eastgate Street, Stafford, from 7. 00 p.m. to 9. 15 p.m.

Fee: £20. 00 for SPCA members (including programme papers and tea and coffee).

(v) Staffordshire Playing Fields Association Annual General Meeting: Wednesday, October 18th, 2006, at the Staffordshire Football Association Headquarters, Dyson Court, Beaconside, Stafford, commencing at 2. 00 p.m.

The Clerk hoped to be able to attend.

(vi) SPCA Lichfield Area Committee Open Evening: Wednesday, November 1st, 2006, in The Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, commencing at 7. 00 p.m.

Speaker: Ruth Plant, Corporate Director – Operational Services, Lichfield District Council.

(vii) SPCA Annual General Meeting and Conference: Saturday, November 4th, 2006, in The Council Chamber, County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford, commencing at 10. 30 a.m.

The Council did not wish to nominate a candidate for election to the Executive Committee, nor propose a resolution for debate.

9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

(i) Speed Management – Upper Way, Upper Longdon

Cllr. Butler reported that speeding through Upper Longdon was becoming a serious problem.

For example, the previous Wednesday evening, twenty-six vehicles had been recorded at speeds of between 42mph and 62 mph. and, that very evening, he had noted three heavy lorries driving along Upper Way, two of them loaded with logs.

PC Brown had been asked to set up a speed check, but had said that he was unable to find the necessary support owing to a shortage in human resources.

He was therefore advocating the introduction of a traffic-calming scheme involving the laying-down of road humps similar to those found in Great Haywood, which were 2¼ ins. high and reduced the speed of passing traffic to between 25 mph and 30 mph.

Cllr. Lewis offered to give his support to such a proposal and asked the Parish Council to address its request to him directly.

(ii) Speed Management – A51

The Clerk reported that he had received from Charles Brown, of Upper Way, Upper Longdon, a copy of a letter dated “Early September” which he had sent to both Cllr. Roberts and Cllr. Lewis in which he had recounted meeting a young mother attempting to cross the A51 opposite High Street while pushing a pram.

When he had remonstrated with her, she had explained that she had been unable to use the kissing-gate because of the pram, and, in his letter, he had asked whether something could be done to allow access through the gate for mothers pushing prams.

Mr. Brown had also expressed the view that the speed limit should have been reduced to 30 mph.

Both Cllr. Roberts and Cllr. Lewis had sent the Clerk a copy of his reply, and the Clerk himself had responded by informing Mr. Brown that the Parish Council had already considered the matter and had concluded that the kissing-gate should remain in the interests of road safety.

(iii) Obstructed Footpaths

(a) Footpath No. 2 (Gentleshaw)

The Clerk informed the Council that, following a report that the stile which gave access to this footpath from Briertey Hill Lane was being obstructed by an overgrown hedge, he had written to Mr. and Mrs. Cluer, of "Laurel Cottage", the owners of the hedge, asking them to arrange for it to be cut back.

If they failed to comply with this request within a reasonable period of time, he would refer the problem to the Principal Rights of Way Assistant of Staffordshire County Council.

(b) Footpath No. 46 (Longdon)

The Clerk reported that he had received a complaint from a parishioner that her use of the above footpath, which ran from Giddywell Lane to the A51, had been impeded by a group of horses that had 'crowded' her and her companion as they had attempted to pass through the field in which the horses had been grazing.

The Clerk had spoken to Glyn Chapman, Rights of Way Assistant, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire Council, who had advised him that no action could be taken unless the animals showed themselves to be dangerous by threatening to kick or bite.

So-called 'crowding', though some might find it intimidating, might simply be the result of curiosity or the expectation of food.

(c) Footpath/Bridleway No. 15 (Farewell and Chorley)

The Clerk informed the Council that, following a report that the above bridleway had been blocked by an electronically-controlled gate which was kept locked overnight, he had spoken once again to Mr. Chapman, who had advised him that, provided that the smaller gate erected at the side was five feet in width, thus allowing unrestricted passage by pedestrian and horse-rider at all times, no offence was being committed by the landowner.

The Clerk reminded the Council that, while it had been a legitimate concern on the part of Longdon Parish Council that a bridleway which could be accessed from Commonsides, in Gentleshaw, was not obstructed, the gateway itself and the grassed triangle (now newly turfed) at the junction of the lane and the bridleway both lay inside Chorley, and it was therefore not Longdon Parish Council's responsibility to establish the legality of the work which had been carried out there.

10. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

(i) Longdon Green

The Clerk reported that he had received a phone call from an official of South Staffordshire Water PLC advising him that work would shortly begin on reconstructing the pressure-reducing valve chamber on Longdon Green outside "The Meads".

There would be some disturbance of the surface, but the ground would be fully re-instated.

(ii) Gentleshaw Common

The Clerk reported that he had received notice of an event to be held on Gentleshaw Common on Sunday, September 24th, entitled "Heather Harvest Festival".

It would take place opposite the car park of "The Old Windmill Inn" between 10.00 a.m and 4.00 p.m.

(iii) Site of Biological Importance, Longdon Hall

The Clerk reported that he had been advised by Cllr. Lewis that the County Council Cabinet was being recommended to declare certain areas of land still in the County Council's ownership surplus to requirement.

These included a section of the above S. B. I., and the County Council was already in negotiation with Ocean View Properties with a view to selling the site to the company.

The Council agreed that, since the management plan drawn up between Ocean View Properties and Lichfield District Council would not be affected, there would be no point in the Parish Council's seeking to intervene, especially since the sale would simply create a situation which the Council, like many others, already believed existed.

11. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

(i) Changes in Bus Service No. 823

The Clerk reported that, from Monday, September 4th, 2006, this bus service had been taken over by The Green Bus Service, of Landywood, and re-numbered as No. 14.

There had been some agreed variations in its route, and the bus would no longer call at High Street.

There was also some concern among the residents of Bradley Lakes that they would not be receiving the same personal service which they had enjoyed when A2B Taxibus served the route.

It was agreed, however, that time should be allowed for the new service to become established before attempting to assess the level of customer-satisfaction.

(ii) Horsefair Practice Group

The Clerk reported that he had received from Ms. Patsi Hemmingsley, Business Partner, The Horsefair Practice, Rugeley, a letter dated 6th September 2006, informing the Council about a local transport service which The Horsefair Practice Group, in conjunction with its Patient Participation Groups, was trying to set up.

In addition to a large practice in Rugeley town centre (which, from January 2007, would be located in new purpose-built accommodation in Sandy Lane), the Group had branch surgeries in Armitage and at Hillsprings, also in Rugeley. Consequently, the practice now covered an extensive area, and the feasibility of providing a transport service for registered patients which would cover all three sites was being explored.

Ms. Hemmingsley invited the Council to comment on this proposition, adding that any comments would be used to profile the Group's plans, which were still at an early stage.

It was agreed that the Council should give its support to this proposal, though it recognised the possibility that, at a later stage, the Council might, as a consequence, be asked for its financial support.

(Cllr. Hemmingsley declared a prejudicial interest, being the father of the correspondent, and took no part in the discussion)

12. LAW AND ORDER

(i) Reported Use of Cleat Hill Layby for Anti-Social Behaviour

Cllr. Butler reported that Cleat Hill layby was being regularly used for homosexual activity which had become so blatant that it was now a source of increasing embarrassment to members of his Model Flying Club, some of whom were young children.

He suggested that one solution would be to cut down all the shrubs and bushes which provided cover for these activities, leaving only the trees.

Since the layby was in the ownership and was therefore the responsibility of the County Highways Department, the Clerk was instructed to write to the Divisional Highway Manager, alerting him to the problem.

13. BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION 2006

The Clerk reported that the results of this year's Competition were as follows:

Lichfield/CannockChase District

Large Village

1st Kings Bromley (trophy winner)
2nd Longdon/ Longdon Green
3rd Alrewas

Small Village

1st Harlaston
2nd Haunton
3rd Elford

There was surprise that Upper Longdon had received no recognition from the judges; the Council would have to await the judges' comments before evaluating the villages' entries.

14. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(i) Accounts for payment

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

* Salute Ltd.	Independent Internal Auditor's Fee	£ 70. 00
* G. C. McCulloch	Mowing – July 19 th	£205. 00
*≠Insta Print, Rugeley	Printing 660 copies of "Longdon Life"	£331. 97
*≠Hazel Crosbie	Delivering "Longdon Life" and inserts	£ 35. 00
*≠A. J. Juxon	Editor's Expenses	£ 15. 00
* G. C. McCulloch	Mowing – August 16 th	£205. 00
W. B. Sullivan	Salary: £300. 00 Photocopying: £ 77. 26 Postage: £ 22. 87	£400. 13
Longdon W. I.	Hire of Hall	£ 12. 00

(*confirmation; ≠ expenditure incurred under Section 137 of the Local Government Act of 1972)

(ii) Payments Received

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, the following payments had been received:

HM Revenue and Customs	VAT Refund	£1096. 71
HM Revenue and Customs	Income Tax Refund	£ 22. 32
Aqua Jet Services	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 6. 50
Paul Adams	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 8. 00

(iii) Current Balances (as at 29th August 2006)

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

NatWest c/a: £1161. 25	The Halifax d/a: £15062. 52
(less uncleared cheques for £410. 00)	

(iv) Appeals for Grant Aid

None had been received.

(v) Report of Independent Internal Auditor

The Clerk reported that he had received from John Blount, Independent Internal Auditor, a letter dated 10th July 2006, enclosing his report on the Parish Council's Accounts for the financial year ended 31st March 2006.

Copies had been distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting, and the comments of the Auditor were noted.

The Clerk informed the Council that the completed Annual Return had been sent to the District Auditor on September 10th.

(vi) Funding Opportunities(a) Central Networks

The Clerk reported that he had received from Jason Guest, Safer Environment Fund Administrator, Central Networks, Tipton, West Midlands, a letter dated 18th July 2006, informing the Council that funding up to a maximum of £2500. 00 was available to community groups for projects which would have a lasting and positive effect on the environment and its surroundings.

The Clerk would display copies of the poster which accompanied Mr. Guest's letter on the Parish Council's notice-boards.

15. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Emma Beaman, Community Development Officer, Community Council of Staffordshire, a letter dated 6th July 2006, informing the Council that the Community Council were just commencing a new project looking at communities' access to services and were looking for parishes that would like support access funding for projects which would address the needs and aspirations of their community.

The Clerk was instructed to send Ms. Beaman details of the proposed provision of transport for patients of the Horsefair Practice Group.

(ii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Keith Cackett, Corporate Director (Children and Lifelong Learning), Children and Lifelong Learning Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 12th July 2006, advising the Council that the second report on the Lichfield District Review of School Places had been approved and would be formally released on Friday, 14th July 2006, when it would be published on the Staffordshire Web.

(iii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Justine Lloyd, Biodiversity Officer, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 17th July 2006, in which she had thanked him for sending her a copy of a photograph of Gentleshaw Common, which, she said, would be useful when working with local schools. She asked to be contacted again if further information became available.

(iv) The Clerk reported that he had received from Dan Roberts, Conservation and Urban Design, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 17th July 2006, in which he informed the Council that, after due deliberation, the District Council had concluded that it could not support the designation of a conservation area for Brook End, principally because some of the 'group value' afforded by the buildings and spaces in the village had been affected by the loss or alteration of original buildings and the intrusion or dilution caused by new structures.

Nevertheless, it had been agreed that the village did retain an ambience and an attractive quality of environment, and he felt that the Council should consider producing a village design statement which would allow the assets of the village to be highlighted.

(v) The Clerk reported that he had received from Mrs. Lyn Hamnant, Parks Administration Officer, Leisure and Culture, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 18th July 2006 offering the Council the opportunity of saving money on its annual play equipment inspection by combining with the District Council's.

However, since the Parish Council had no play equipment, it could not take advantage of this offer.

(vi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Olwen Dutton, Corporate Director (Resources), Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 24th July 2006, notifying the Council that an Order would be made by Staffordshire County Council on 24th August 2006, prohibiting any vehicles from proceeding in those roads in South Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Lichfield and Stafford Borough that would comprise part of the route of the Tour of Britain Cycle Race.

The Order would come into force on 1st September 2006 and would remain in force until the Tour of Britain Cycle Race had passed through the County.

Roads in the District of Cannock Chase would be Wolseley Bridges A51; Bower Lane, Rugeley; Etchinghill; Brindley Heath; Hazelslade; Upper Longdon; Longdon, A51; and the District Boundary.

(vii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Mrs. S. Mannion, Assistant Passenger Transport Officer, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 27th July 2006, informing the Council that a review of the local bus services in the Cannock and Lichfield/Rugeley areas had recently taken place and that, as a consequence, there would, from September 3rd, 2006, be minor route and timetable changes to Service 823, which would be re-numbered as Service 14 and operated by The Green Bus Service.

(viii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Charles Soutar, Head of Transport and Planning Policy, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire a letter dated September 2006, enclosing a dozen copies of the Executive Summary booklet of Staffordshire's second Local Transport Plan, which he had distributed to Councillors.

(ix) The Clerk reported that he had received from Graham McCulloch, the Council's mowing contractor, a report and invoice dated 1st August 2006, in which he informed the Council that he had carried out a little of the verge repair work, but found the ground too hard to get anywhere. He had also assured the Council that the long grass at Longdon Green would be cut as soon as possible.

(x) The Clerk reported that he had received from Sarah Pearce, Licensing and Electoral Services Manager, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, an undated letter, advising the Council that the Draft Policy Statement had been prepared in accordance with guidance issued by the Gambling Commission and would be adopted by the Council only after consideration of the responses from this consultation.

The policy could be reviewed and downloaded from the Council's website www.lichfield.gov.uk/gamblingact2005, and the deadline for responses was Friday, 27th October 2006.

(xi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Emma Beaman, Community Development Officer, Community Council of Staffordshire, a letter dated 8th August 2006, informing the Council that a small pot of funding was now available from DEFRA for all parishes in Staffordshire who had not yet completed a parish plan.

(xii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Linda Renshaw, Principal Development Plans Officer, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 8th August 2006, informing the Council that the District Council was giving notification of the withdrawal in the light of the Inspector's Reports of its three Development Plans and that a revised Local Development Scheme would be published later in the year.

(xiii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Graham McCulloch, the Council's mowing contractor, an invoice and report dated 18th August 2006 in which he informed the Council that the stone collecting from the A51 verge was complete, but to level the worst areas the ground needed to be more workable.

(xiv) The Clerk reported that he had received from Stephen Bradbury, Lighting and ITS Manager, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 21st August 2006, re-iterating the requirements for the installation of seasonal attachments onto street lighting equipment.

(xv) The Clerk reported that he had received from Stuart Harrison, Lichfield District Council's Webmaster, a letter dated 22nd August 2006, asking for information regarding allotments in the parish.

He had contacted Mrs. Ann Oliver, Secretary of the Longdon Allotments Association, who would provide Mr. Harrison with some information, but it had been agreed that the Clerk's telephone number, not Mrs. Oliver's, should appear as the number to contact.

(xvi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Gareth Hare, Arboricultural Officer, Community, Housing and Health, Lichfield District Council, an email dated 25th August 2006, in which he had advised the Council that he had, at Mrs. Elizabeth Cauldwell's request, inspected the robinia growing at the side of her bungalow in Berkeley Way and had concluded that the portion of the crown overhanging the bungalow might need to be raised slightly.

He had left a completed Tree Preservation Order Consent Form for the Clerk to collect from the District Council offices, which, with the consent of the Council, Cllr. Hemmingsley and the Clerk signed.

It was agreed that Acme Tree Services, who had earlier carried out remedial work on the tree, should once again be invited to carry out the latest work once the formality of obtaining consent had been completed.

(xvii) The Clerk reported that he had received from David La Trobe, Honorary Secretary of Longdon Cricket Club, a letter dated 5th September 2006, enclosing a photograph of the net frame under which was the concrete strip that the Parish Council had helped finance and re-iterating the Club's thanks.

The Club's next need would be to replace the gang mowers, the existing set having gone almost beyond repair.

It was suggested that Mr. La Trobe might be sent one of the Council's new Grant Application Forms shortly before the Council was due to consider its budget for 2007/08.

(xviii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Christopher J. Spruce, Bursar of Lichfield Cathedral School, a letter dated 11th September 2006, inviting the Council to visit the School one evening and asking to be given a couple of dates and best starting time for such a visit.

Councillors selected Monday, October 2nd, Tuesday, October 3rd and Wednesday, October 4th as possible dates, an appropriate time to be agreed with Mr. Spruce.

16. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

Executive Arrangements – Forward Plan 2006/2007 – August – Version 1
(to take effect from 1st September 2006).

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

Register of Electors 2006 – Monthly Applications for 1st August 2006;
Register of Electors 2006 – Monthly Applications for 1st September 2006.

- (iii) From The Strategic Director for Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council (by email):

Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 6th August 2006;
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 3rd September 2006;
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 17th September 2006.

- (iv) From The Licensing Officer, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council (by email):

Licensing Applications registered during week ending 21st July 2006;
Licensing Applications registered during week ending 25th August 2006;
Licensing Applications registered during week ending 1st September 2006;
Licensing Applications registered during week ending 8th September 2006.

- (v) From The Leader of the Council and The Chief Executive, Staffordshire County Council:

“Changing Lives: Independence, Inclusion and Well-Being” – A New Vision for Social Care and Health in Staffordshire.

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

Chief Executive's Circular 31;
Form for Nomination of Candidate for Election to Executive Committee;
Form for Resolutions for Debate.

- (vii) From The National Association of Local Councils:

“Local Council Review”: Volume 58, No. 3 – September 2006;
Direct Information Service – invitation to subscribe to NALC's unique new bulletin;

“Rural Services Review – Reviewing Standards 2006;
Notice of SLCC Annual General Meeting on Saturday, October 12th, 2006,
In The Mariner Suite, The Holiday Inn, Armada Way, Plymouth, at 2. 15 pm.

(viii) From The Community Council of Staffordshire:

“Rural News and Views”: Summer 2006;
“West Midlands Rural Community”: May 2006

(ix) From Cannock Chase AONB Unit:

Minutes of Parish Councils’ Meeting of 15th March 2006;
Report: Local Economy Research;
“The Lapwing” (Newsletter of North Mercia FWAG): February 2006.

(x) From The Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council:

Cannock Chase AONB Annual Review 2005-6.

(xi) From The Sustainable Staffordshire Forum:

“Sustainable Staffordshire”: Issue 18, Summer 2006.

(xii) From The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust:

“Staffordshire Wildlife”: No. 97, August 2006;
“Natural World”: Summer 2006;
Report and Financial Statement for year ended 31st December 2005;
“Nature Products”: Ernest Charles catalogue;
Heather Hike: Sunday, 10th September 2006 – Registration and Sponsorship Form;
Tickets for Autumn Raffle;
Wildlife What’s On: September to December 2006;
Nature Reserve Volunteer Workparties: September to December 2006;
Cannock Group News;
“This card could help change the world...’Stop Climate Chaos’ ”;
Advertising material – The Hanley Economic Building Society, Paycare.

(xiii) From Staffordshire Police:

“saferstaffs”: Summer 2006.

(xiv) From Wicksteed, Kettering, Northants.:

“Playground Inspirations”.

(xv) From Earth Anchors Ltd., Croydon, Surrey:

The New Cigarette Bin.

17. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Cllr. Bird presented a copy of a letter written to Cllr. Neil Roberts by David Drury, of The Farm House, Lysways Lane, Longdon Green, and dated 13th July 2006, in which Mr. Drury had pointed to the danger of damage to his property from several trees standing on common land at the side of his property and offering to purchase the land on which they stood and accept responsibility for their maintenance.

However, Councillors thought that ownership of the land might still be vested in the County Council following the re-alignment of the A51 or even that it still formed part of the Green.

It was agreed that further action would depend on Cllr. Roberts' reply.

(ii) Cllr. Reynolds reported that he had been asked if the Council had any objection to the planting of a shrub on land in High Street in front of Nos. 70-76, where once a "No Ball Games" notice stood.

It was agreed that, while the Council had no objection, it was not owner of the land and therefore could not specifically give permission.

(iii) Cllr. Butler reported that a parishioner had complained to him that he had been approached aggressively by three lurcher-type dogs while taking his own dog for a walk down Catmeadow Lane.

The Clerk said that he would pursue the matter.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, October 10th, 2006, in The W. I. Hall, Longdon, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.