

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD  
IN THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, JUNE 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2010

Present: Cllr. A. J. Juxon (Vice-Chairman, who chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chairman owing to ill-health); Cllr. The Rev. J. R. Andrews; Cllr. C. D. Cherry; Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cllr. M. J. Nash; and Cllr. K. C. Taylor.

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

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. N. J. Bird; Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. G. D. Duckett; Cllr. S. K. Welch; and Cllr. N. J. Roberts, of Lichfield District Council.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Cherry and seconded by Cllr. Taylor, approved and signed.

3. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING

The minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council, held in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010, immediately prior to the monthly meeting, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Cherry and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Meere, approved and signed.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Planting of Bluebell Bulbs in Bank at Side of Shropshire Brook

The Clerk reported that these bulbs had been planted by Cllr. Clarke, Cllr. Welch and himself, the Brownies being engaged that evening in badge work.

(ii) Ditches in Stockings Lane

The Clerk reported that a site visit had taken place within the last fortnight between the Community Highway Liaison Manager and one of his staff but he did not know the outcome.

Cllr. Lewis reported that he had received an email from Wayne Mortiboys, Group Manager, Community Highway Liaison (South), advising him that no action was planned because of the failure to secure funding from the land-owner concerned.

Other information provided by Mr. Mortiboys in his email was that the pot-holes in Borough Lane would be filled within the next two weeks.

However, he had no knowledge concerning the provision of a barrier outside 71 Upper Way, Upper Longdon.

Regarding the latter, Cllr. Taylor expressed concern that Richard Rayson, the Community Highway Liaison Manager, had given permission only for the erection of posts, since he believed that these could be damaged or removed, and he re-iterated his view that the verge should be raised as an effective means of discouraging parking, but the Clerk pointed out that his initial request to Mr. Rayson had been supported by an illustration of the post-and-rail barrier proposed by the Parish Council.

However, Mr. Rayson was at present on leave, so there would be no immediate response to the Council's request that the work be carried out by his Department.

(iii) Refurbishment of Bridge over Shropshire Brook

The Clerk reported that the Chairman had spoken to Kevin Healey, the contractor commissioned to carry out this work, and had established with him that the existing handrails should be re-furbished, not replaced.

## 6. PLANNING

The following applications had been considered by the Planning Group prior to the meeting:

(i) Report of Planning Group

10/00266/FUL: Mr. Mark Lewis: Proposed boundary retaining wall fronting Grange Hill: 2, The Grange, Upper Longdon

There was no objection to this application provide that no more shrubbery was removed from the bank than was absolutely necessary.

10/00537/FUL: Mrs. Teresa Talbot: Conservatory to rear: 50 Upper Way, Upper Longdon

There was no objection to this application.

10/00647/FUL: Mr. Robert Moore: Increase in ridge height to create new first-floor comprising of 3 bedrooms and 2 en suites: 27 Upper Way, Upper Longdon.

A decision on this application was deferred until the return of Cllr. Welch from holiday.

10/00623/FUL: Mr. Andrew Moore: Siting of temporary (three year) mobile home for agricultural worker (Revised application following refusal of application 09/00105/FUL in March 2009): Benbrook Farm, Hay Lane, Longdon Green

In the view of the Council, there was no significant difference between this and previous applications which would this time justify approval.

(ii) For Consideration

The following applications were then considered:

10/00660/FUL: Mr. Barry Overton: Two-storey extension to form kitchen and bedroom: Longdon Post Office and Store, 11 Brook End, Longdon

The Council had no objection to this development.

10/00665/FUL: Mr. Keith Ashby: Excavation of ground at front of property to allow a builder's skip: Villiers, Lower Way, Upper Longdon

The Council had no objection to this application provided the land was made good once the skip had been removed.

(iii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

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

10/00154/FUL: Mr. & Mrs. Peter Howells: Erection of 3 two-bedroom detached bungalows with associated garages: 93 Upper Way, Upper Longdon

10/00240/FUL: Mr. & Mrs. B. Matthews: Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a three-bedroom detached dwelling and garage with associated works: Pear Tree Cottage, Briertey Hill Lane, Gentleshaw

10/00319/FUL: Trustees of Longdon Club & Institute: Creation of community bowling green: Land at rear of Club & Institute, 6 Brook End, 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:

10/00398/FUL: Lichfield Cathedral School: Variation of Condition 1 of Application No. 08/00835/FUL relating to removal of building: Lichfield Cathedral School, Church Hill, Longdon Green

In a letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> May 2010, Claire Billings, Development Control Manager, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, had explained that this application had been refused because it had been considered that the applicants had had sufficient time to overcome their accommodation problems, given that they had already had two previous consents for a temporary period, which had been four years, especially as the proposal constituted inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

## 7. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

There were no reports of meetings, Cllr. Cherry having been obliged to send his apologies for the Annual General Meeting of the Longdon Village Hall Management Committee, held the previous day.

## 8. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

The Clerk reported that he had received no new notices of forthcoming meetings.

## 9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

### (i) Report of meeting of Highways and Footpaths Committee

The Clerk presented a written report on a meeting of the Highways and Footpaths Committee which had taken place in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010 (*Appendix A*).

On the subject of footpath leaflets, Cllr. Cherry said that one of the proposed new Walks crossed no fewer than fifteen stiles, many difficult of access for older ramblers and dog-walkers, and recommended more thorough research; he also thought that more signage would be needed.

Cllr. Clarke pointed out that the Parish Council would be publishing new sets of leaflets which would modify existing routes and draw attention to more interesting features, not merely re-writing the old ones.

Cllr. Mrs. Meere said that Mrs. Juxon would be providing photographs.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Cherry and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Meere, the purchase of the way-marking discs from Brisco Signs and Graphics was confirmed.

However, the Chairman had discovered, since receiving a quotation of 49p from the same firm for the coloured inserts for these discs, that another firm could produce them at a lower price and would not, for the time being, be proceeding with the second part of this order.

She had also been meeting Kevin Healey, who was at present completing work on erecting a security fence at Longdon Village Hall, and would be asking him for a quote for replacing the fence at the top of Church Hollow and providing hard core for the car park and the pathway through Church Hollow.

(ii) Footpath Survey

The Clerk reported that he had received the following reports from Dominic Willmore, Rights of Way Assistant, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council:

(a) Public Footpaths 44, 68, 69 and 71

The Enforcement Officer, Richard Collins, would be contacting the land-owner with regards to the issues raised (Letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> April 2010)

(b) Footpaths/Bridleways (12) Armitage with Handsacre)

On inspection of the path furniture by the County Ranger on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2010, no problem was encountered (Letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 2010)

(c) Footpaths/Bridleways (30) Longdon

The County Ranger had inspected the route and the issues on the path had now been referred to the Enforcement Officer (Letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> May 2010)

(d) Footpath 32

The County Works Unit had replaced three stiles and done some clearance work. They had also turned the finger-post to the correct direction. The cropping issue was still ongoing, and the Enforcement Officer would be doing a site inspection (Letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010).

(iii) Village Lengthsman Agreement

The Clerk reported that he had received from Richard Rayson, Community Highway Liaison Officer, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010, informing the Council that the expected value of the Village Lengthsman Agreement this year was £1409. 00.

However, he stressed that, in order to satisfy him that public money was properly expended and to facilitate an auditable approach generally to the administration of the Lengthsman's work, it was important that record sheets were included with the Council's invoices detailing the work undertaken and the hours deployed, and signed by both the Lengthsman and a designated member of the Parish Council.

The Clerk reminded the Council that last year's allocation had not been spent in full, and it was agreed that the Highways and Footpaths Committee should this year draw up a programme of work to be carried out by the Village Lengthsman.

Cllr. Lewis said that the Council should notify him of any work which it would like carried out but which was beyond the competence of the Village Lengthsman.

## 10. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

### (i) Mowing Contract

The Clerk reported that Graham McCulloch had completed the second cut of the season on May 12<sup>th</sup> and had found no problems.

Mr. McCulloch had enclosed a photocopy of his new liability insurance with his latest invoice.

### (ii) Highway Grass Cutting Agreement

The Clerk reported that he had received from Richard Rayson, Community Highway Liaison Officer, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010, informing the Council that the expected value of the above agreement for 2010 was £707.15 and imposing the same conditions for payment as those in the Lengthsman Agreement.

The Clerk added that he would ask Mr. McCulloch to estimate and record the hours spent on cutting the highway verges, as distinct from the two greens, which probably occupied the majority of his time in Longdon.

### (iii) Closure of Amenity Site at Burntwood

The Clerk reported that, as a cost-cutting measure, Staffordshire County Council would be closing down the amenity site at Burntwood on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2010.

He reminded the Council that the last time closure of this site had been proposed the Parish Council had written to the County Council warning them of the potential which this would create for an increase in fly-tipping, the cost of clearing which would fall on the District Councils.

Cllr. Lewis said that, as the consequence of representations by himself and two of his colleagues, the decision was being looked at again, and he advised the Council to make its concerns known to the Cabinet Leader, Robert Marshall, before that meeting took place on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

He did point out, however, that when opening hours were reduced at Burntwood, there had been no increase in the incidents of fly-tipping.

### (iv) Tables on Longdon Green

The Clerk reported that the licensee had placed two tables on Longdon Green and had subsequently failed to remove them despite being asked to do so by both the Chairman and the Clerk.

He pointed out that such an action was contrary to the byelaws and the continued presence of the tables would impede the mowing contractor and encourage the spread of litter.

He recalled that, during the term of office of his predecessor, a previous licensee of "The Red Lion" had put tables on the Green and resisted attempts from the Council to have them removed, the consequence of his stubbornness being that the Council had secured a court injunction against him, and he had had to pay the Council's legal costs.

He was instructed to write to Mr. Pearson reminding him of the prohibition imposed by the byelaws and urging him to remove the tables without further delay.

## 11. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

### (i) Risk Management Policy

Cllr. Clarke presented a draft Risk Management Register listing identifiable risks under the separate areas of the Parish Council's activities (Planning, Greens and Open Spaces, Highways and Footpaths and Finance), the level of risk, steps to be taken to minimise or eliminate risk and the frequency of review.

His next step would be to agree with the Chairman of each of the Committees both risk level and control action.

He asked Councillors to take time to study his proposals and to make any comments they wished to make to him as soon as possible so that he could finalise the register and present it to the Council for approval and adoption.

Cllr. Clarke added that the hard work was in the preparing of the register rather than in implementing the policy; concurring, Cllr. Nash offered to assist Cllr. Clarke in the task, an offer which Cllr. Clarke gratefully accepted.

The Chairman thanked Cllr. Clarke for his hard work in preparing the draft.

## 12. LAW AND ORDER

### (i) Joint Operations Group

The Clerk reported that he had received from Bob Haynes, Community Safety Officer, Lichfield District Council, an email listing the main points of a meeting of the Joint Operations Group which had taken place on Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

### (ii) Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr. Taylor presented an update from Rob Nunn, Watch Liaison Officer, Neighbourhood Watch, dated 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

There had been no reported criminal activity in Longdon during April, but the report warned of a number of scams, including spoof emails purporting to be from Amazon, the online retailer, claiming to be a confirmation of an order for high value items such as televisions and asking the recipient to open an accompanying zip file, which was, in fact, a malware which would compromise the user's PC.

The report also warned of a considerable number of thefts of metal items and of an increase in burglaries of homes.

It re-iterated an earlier warning against ever giving out pin numbers under any circumstances, even in response to a call purporting to come from the owner's bank.

### (iii) Visit of Mobile Meeting Point

Cllr. Clarke reported that there would be a police gazebo in the car park of Longdon Village Hall on Saturday, June 12<sup>th</sup>.

The gazebo would be there from 2. 00 p.m. to 3. 00 p.m.

### 13. BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

#### (i) Children's Posters

The Clerk reported that the Chairman had selected the best three entries amongst the seventeen submitted by the pupils of St. James School, but he could not confirm who the prize-winners were.

It was agreed that, in view of the poor support given by the School this year, no donation should be made to the School Library.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Cherry and seconded by Cllr. Taylor, it was agreed that a donation of £50. 00 should be made to Longdon Pre-School for their support in providing posters from their pupils.

#### (ii) Progress Report

The Clerk reported that the seat in High Street had been repaired and re-furbished.

Cllr. Clarke reported concern over the neglected state of a front garden in Brook End, where the premises was unoccupied and for sale.

He would endeavour to discover the present address of the owner, to whom the Clerk, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Juxon and seconded by Cllr. Taylor, was instructed to write when the address was known.

### 14. FINANCIAL MATTERS

#### (i) Accounts for Payment

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

*G. C. McCulloch	Ground Maintenance of Parish Sites – May 12 <sup>th</sup>	£ 350. 00
*AON Ltd.	Insurance Premium	£ 760. 53
Longdon W. I.	Hire of Hall - May 25 <sup>th</sup> : £12. 00; Hire of Hall - June 1 <sup>st</sup> : £12. 00; Hire of Hall - June 8 <sup>th</sup> : £12. 00	£ 36. 00
W. B. Sullivan	Clerk's Salary: £350. 00; Photocopying: £188. 90; Postage: £ 30. 28; #WH Smith tokens: £ 22. 00	£591. 18

(\* confirmation      #payment made under section 137)



(ii) Correction to Minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Cherry and seconded by Cllr. Taylor, the following correction to the minutes of 13<sup>th</sup> April 2010 was made:

Community Council of Staffordshire	Membership Renewal	£ 22. 00
CPRE (Staffordshire Branch)	Annual Subscription	£ 20. 00

(iii) Payments Received

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

N. J. Sutcliffe	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 8. 00
A. W. Johnson	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 6. 50
Paul Adams	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 5. 00

(iv) Current Balances

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

NatWest c/a:	£1724. 57	The Halifax s/a: £18666. 21
(less uncleared cheques)		
	1546: £ 350. 00	
	<u>1547: £ 760. 53</u>	
	£ 614. 04	

(v) Appeals for Grant Aid(a) Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Country Fayre

The Clerk reported that he had received from Richard Poynton, Treasurer of the Organising Committee, a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 2010 in which he asked whether the Parish Council would once again make a donation towards the cost of organising the above event.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Nash and seconded by Cllr. Clarke, it was agreed that the Council should make a donation of £100. 00

(vi) Report of Meeting of Finance and General Purposes Committee

The Clerk presented a written report on a meeting of the Finance and General Purpose Committee which had taken place on May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010 (*Appendix B*).

Cllr. Juxon, a member of the Committee, said that the Committee had agreed that £7000 should be held in reserve towards the cost of a play area, though he emphasised that there was a need to document the action being taken to pursue this project.

The Clerk reported that, in the course of implementing the Council's instructions to close the Halifax Savings Account and to invest £7000 in an Guaranteed Investment Bond offered by the Co-operative Bank, he had discovered that an investment of £25,000 would be paid interest at the rate of 0.34% per month and 0.78% over twelve months.

It was agreed that action to close this account should be suspended while a more lucrative investment was being sought.

(vii) Insurance – Fidelity Guarantee

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Cherry, it was agreed that the Council's Fidelity Guarantee should be increased from £10,000 to £20,000, and the Clerk was instructed to make the necessary arrangements with AON Ltd

(viii) Report of Independent Internal Auditor

The Clerk reported that he had not yet received the Independent Internal Auditor's Final Report.

(ix) External Audit

The Clerk reported that he had sent the completed Annual Return to the External Auditor on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

The period allowed for the public inspection of the Council's Accounts had now lapsed.

## 15. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Rob Heywood, Treasurer, St. James Church, Longdon, a letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> May 2010, asking him to pass on to the Parish Council the thanks and appreciation of the Parochial Church Council for its contribution towards the upkeep of the churchyard.

## 16. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

(i) From Dawn Everitt, Democratic, Development and Legal Services,  
Lichfield District Council:

Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 6<sup>th</sup> June 2010;  
Forward Plan - Version 1 – Issued 17<sup>th</sup> May 2010 – Effective for Period  
01. 06. 2010 to 30. 09. 2010.

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

Register of Electors 2010 – Monthly Applications for 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010.

- (iii) From Sally Duckett, Licensing Officer, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council:

Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 14<sup>th</sup> May 2010;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 21<sup>st</sup> May 2010.

- (iv) From Bob Haynes, Community Safety Officer, Lichfield District Council:

“*Cityspeak*” (the newsletter for Lichfield businesses): May 2010.

- (v) From Jan Wright, Administration Assistant, Lichfield & District Community Support Sector:

S3SN - E Bulletin - Issue 16/10 - 6<sup>th</sup> May 2010;  
S3SN - E Bulletin - Issue 17/10 - 13<sup>th</sup> May 2010;  
S3SN - E Bulletin - Issue 18/10 - 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

- (vi) From Julia Harris, Development Officer, Lichfield & District Community Support Officer:

Opportunities for Voluntary and Community Groups in Lichfield and the Surrounding Areas (06. 05. 2010);  
Opportunities for Voluntary and Community Groups in Lichfield and the Surrounding Areas (14. 05. 2010);  
Opportunities for Voluntary and Community Groups in Lichfield and the Surrounding Areas (29. 05 2010);

- (vii) From Christopher Kirkland, Staffordshire Co-ordinator for the 2020 Games:

Community Games Toolkit.

- (viii) From The Staffordshire Parish Councils’ Association:

Local Food Support Package for Village Shops;  
Weekly Update (26<sup>th</sup> May 2010);  
Training Courses 2010/2011;  
LINK Staffordshire Bulletin: Volume 1, Issue 3 - May 2020;  
Notice of LINK Annual General Meeting.

- (ix) From The National Association of Parish Councils:

NALC Events Bulletin (14<sup>th</sup> May 2010);  
Policy & Parliamentary Briefing P01-10: The Coalition Programme for Government;  
NALC Events Bulletin (28<sup>th</sup> May 2010).

- (x) From Peter Caine, VAST (Voluntary Action Stoke-on-Trent):

Voluntary & Community News - May 2010 - Week 1;  
Voluntary & Community News - May 2010 - Week 2;

Voluntary & Community News - May 2010 - Week 3.

(xi) From Julie Tibbits, Web Portal Implementation Manager, SCIO:

SCIO Venues Directory Launch

“SCIO – the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Consortium of Infrastructure Organisations – is a membership of 11 local infrastructure organisations (LIOs) that have come together to deliver the Government’s ChangeUp agenda....” Its website is [www.communitiestogether.org.uk](http://www.communitiestogether.org.uk).

(xii) From The Open Spaces Society:

“Open Space”: Summer 2010 – Volume 29, No. 8;  
Annual report and Accounts 2009;  
Notice of Annual General Meeting.

(xiii) From Record SS Ltd., Selby, North Yorkshire:

Promotional Leaflet: Landscape-led Natural Play.

(xiv) From Husson International, Bourne End, Bucks.:

Spring Deals (Table Tennis, Meeting Point, Bins).

(xv) From imi (Independent Memorial Inspections):

Memorial Stability Inspections.

**16. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

(i) Concern was expressed over the display of two signs advertising carp and coarse fishing at Chorley Springs, off Tithe Barn Lane.

It was feared that the establishing of such an enterprise would generate increased traffic flow along already heavily-used rural lanes.

The Clerk was instructed to establish whether planning consent was needed for this commercial business.

(ii) Cllr. Taylor reported that he had now received photocopies of the details of all Tree Preservation Orders relating to the parish, which he would collate and make available for inspection by interested parties.

(iii) The Chairman reported that, prior to the commencement of the meeting, a letter had been handed to the Clerk by a concerned parishioner who had noticed that new drainage pipes were being laid on land between Longdon and Handsacre.

When he had spoken to the land-owner about the work being carried out, the land-owner had replied that he was selling the land and had had two offers on condition that he provided electricity and water supplies.

When asked to whom he would be selling the land, the land-owner had replied that he might be selling it to travelling people!

While the parishioner recognised that this reply might be intended as a joke at his expense, he was nonetheless concerned that, if it *was* meant seriously, it might do great harm to the countryside between Longdon and Handsacre.

Councillors were inclined to believe that the remark was indeed meant as a joke, but agreed that the situation should be monitored.

In the meantime, Cllr. Juxon would seek an opportunity to have a word with the land-owner, whom he knew.

#### 17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2010, at Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall  
Buds Road, Cannock Wood, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS  
COMMITTEE OF LONGDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE W. I. HALL,  
LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, MAY 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2010

Present: Cllr. Mrs. G. D. Duckett (Chairman); Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. C. D. Cherry;  
Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke; and Mr. Will Rose.

Also present was the Clerk.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. N. J. Bird; and Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Thursday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Clarke and seconded by Mr. Rose, approved and signed after the following omissions were added:

1. Mr. Rose had asked that an article on dog-fouling be included in the next issue of "Longdon Life".
2. Mr. Rose had expressed concern over the visual impact made by wheelie bins parked at the front of the properties in Brook End and the potential effect on BKV judges. It had been pointed out that, in some cases, this might be because the householder might be elderly and/or of limited mobility.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Footpath No. 73

The Clerk reported that, in the absence of a response from the Director of Law and Governance of Staffordshire County Council, he had, as instructed, written to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

(ii) Ditches in Stockings Lane

It was agreed that sufficient time had elapsed for this work to be carried out, even when current problems over pot-holes were taken into account, and the Clerk was instructed to write to the Highways Department, urging action.

(iii) Meeting with County Access Officer

Mr. Rose reported that his meeting with County Access Officer had been postponed and was being re-scheduled.

5. PROVISION OF DISABILITY-FRIENDLY ACCESS TO FOOTPATH ACROSS GLEBE FIELD

Mr. Rose said that, as a temporary measure, he would remove the gate from its hinges, thus converting it into a chicane.

He would write to Paul Rochford to ask whether he could arrange for proper wheelchair access to be provided.

It was thought that the width of the gateway at the entrance to the churchyard was of sufficient width, but this would be checked.

6. FOOTPATH AND BRIDGE AT FORD

It was agreed that a thin layer of smaller stones needed to be laid on top of the newly-surfaced footpath, where the edging boards were prominent.

The Chairman reported that she had received a quotation from Kevin Healey of £400. 00 for concreting the side of the bridge and for £480. 00 for replacing the wooden rails and making the bridge child-proof by fitting a barrier at a height of 350mm.

However, it was thought that the existing railings needed re-furbishing rather than replacing, and Cllr. Mrs. Duckett said that she would seek a revised quote from Mr. Healey.

The Clerk reported that he had now received the bluebell bulbs which the Council had ordered; the Chairman suggested that the pupils of St. James School or the Brownies might be invited to carry out the planting.

7. NOTICE-BOARD OUTSIDE NO. 71 UPPER WAY

The Clerk reported that he had written to Richard Rayson, the Community Highway Liaison Officer at the Lichfield Highway Depot, asking for his permission for the Parish Council to erect a barrier along the verge outside No. 71 and was awaiting a reply.

The Chairman suggested that an acceptable alternative might be reflector posts.

The Clerk added that the oak surface was very difficult to penetrate, and he suggested that a layer of composite might be pasted over it

Cllr. Butler suggested that deal would make an acceptable alternative.

It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain a large-scale map of Cannock Chase AONB for this notice-board and that space should be left to one side of the map for notices relating to the Chase.

It was unanimously agreed that the notice-board should remain in its present position.

## 8. FOOTPATH SURVEY

Mr. Rose gave the meeting an update on work carried out on local footpaths following the submission of reports to the County Council.

The principal problem being encountered was the failure of some farmers to re-instate footpaths once the fields which they crossed had been ploughed and planted. Once a field had been ploughed and planted, a footpath a metre wide should be re-established using a roller or harrow.

The presence of an electric fence across one footpath had been investigated by the County Ranger, who had reported that, since it was not switched on, it was not causing a problem, but nonetheless it was felt that the very presence of an electric fence offered a deterrent to walkers by implying that they should not go there.

Some good work had been done by the County team, notably along the footpaths at the side of “The Swan with Two Neck” and at the rear of Longdon Hall.

Asked about the presence of mud on footpaths, particularly at stiles, Paul Rochfort, the County Council’s Principal Rights of Way Officer, had replied that it must be seen as part of normal agricultural operations.

The Chairman showed members of the Committee samples of inscribed footpath waymarkers sent to her by Brissco Signs & Graphics of Bristol.

Each sign could be overlaid with a direction arrow, each with a different colour for each path.

The signs could be numbered to match the number appearing on the corresponding footpath leaflet and could carry a distinctive logo, such as the Staffordshire Knot.

It was agreed that the Chairman should now request a quote for these waymarkers in multiple of 100s.

## 9. FOOTPATH LEAFLETS

It was agreed that a special meeting should be convened on June 1<sup>st</sup> to discuss the design and format for these leaflets.

## 10. MANAGEMENT OF CHURCH HOLLOW

Cllr. Cherry reported that the ramps across the path had been re-built by local skate-boarders and were causing an obstruction to pedestrians.

It was agreed that the future management of this pathway should be discussed at the meeting on June 1<sup>st</sup>.



## 11. ROLLING PROGRAMME – FUTURE PROJECTS

### (i) Flower Beds at Entrances to Villages

The Committee then discussed Cllr. Clarke's proposal that flower beds be laid out at the upper and lower entrances to the village at Brook End, in the verge outside "Kosikot" and in the verge on the same side as "The Swan with Two Necks" being considered prime locations.

A third location might be on the verge just before the bend at Brereton Hill lane, Upper Longdon.

There was some discussion over the choice of planting, heathers emerging as a preferred choice, since they would be colourful and low-maintenance. They could also be interplanted with roses and spring bulbs.

Mr. Rose agreed to draw a sketch showing a possible planting scheme after consulting Cllr. Welch.

## 12. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

### (i) Dog Fouling

Mr. Rose reported that dog-fouling was becoming a problem, particularly along the pathway at the side of the A51 from Brook End to the Church and along the footpath through the Glebe Field.

It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain more discs warning dog-owners of the consequences of allowing their animals to foul pavements and footpaths.

Mr. Rose added that he would like to see the warnings stencilled in yellow on the pavements in Brook End renewed.

The Clerk said that he would ask the District Council's Operational Services Department, who were contracted to empty the village's dog waste bins, if they could be disinfected.

## 13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

The Committee would meet in the Church Car Park at 7.00 p.m. and then, after examining the state of the path, proceed to the W. I. Hall for the remainder of the meeting.

## Appendix B

### REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD IN THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, MAY 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2010

Present: Cllr. G. D. Duckett (Chairman); Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke; and Cllr. A. J. Juxon.

Also present was the Clerk.

#### 1. APOLOGIES

None had been received prior to the meeting.

#### 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2010, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Clarke and seconded by Cllr. Juxon, approved and signed.

#### 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

All matters were dealt with in the main agenda.

#### 4. LIKELY CAPITAL EXPENDITURE DURING THE CURRENT FINANCIAL YEAR

Likely projects identified as requiring funding during the forthcoming financial year were the protection and maintenance of the verge outside No. 71 Upper Way, the laying down of flower-beds at the entrances to Brook End and at the top of Grange Hill, Upper Longdon, the printing of footpath leaflets and the purchase of waymarkers.

It was thought that the cost of regenerating and maintaining Gentleshaw Green was likely to exceed the £3000. 00 already allocated.

However, the Parish Council was unlikely to be asked to provide any funding for the projected community bowling green the near future.

It was agreed that the Council should set up a contingency fund of £7000. 00 in case the opportunity should arise to acquire and develop a site for a play area.

#### 5. REVIEW OF INSURANCE POLICY

The following changes to the current policy were agreed: the Fidelity Guarantee should be raised from £10,000 to £20,000; the value of the notice-boards should be increased by the value of the new notice-board in Upper Way; and the value of the six dog-waste bins should be reduced from £2400 to £1400, their current market value.

The Clerk would contact the insurance company to make these adjustments.

6. CONFIRMATION OF CLOSURE OF HALIFAX SAVINGS ACCOUNT AND RE-INVESTMENT OF FUNDS

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Clarke and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Duckett, closure of the Halifax Savings Account was confirmed and the Clerk was authorised to obtain details of the fixed-period bonds offered to Parish Council by the Co-operative Bank.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

Cllr. Clarke said that he would be ready to present a full draft of a formalised schedule to the Council at its next meeting.

8. FINAL REPORT OF INDEPENDENT INTERNAL AUDITOR

The Clerk reported that the Independent Internal Auditor had carried out a second and final audit of the Council's accounts for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010 on May 17th, and, while he had not yet submitted his written report, had indicated that he would be raising three points: the acceptance of apologies; the accumulation of uncommitted reserves, and the formal procedures which should be followed when budgeting for the Annual Precept.

9. CLERK'S SALARY

The Committee agreed that the increase in the Clerk's salary approved by the Council should date from the beginning of the current financial year.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Display of notices on parish notice-boards

Cllr. Clarke said that he had had considerable difficulty in finding space to display a short progress report on the bowling green project on any of the parish notice-boards, and asked whether there was a protocol governing the removal of multiple notices displayed by individual organisations.

The Chairman said that there was a policy to remove notices as soon as they were out-of-date or if they were of a commercial nature.

On the other hand, she felt that it would be quite in order to pin a new notice over an existing notice giving information which remained relevant in the long term provided it was for a short period.

The Clerk agreed that a policy was needed to limit the time a notice could be displayed, not least because, over time, notices lost their initial impact and also became weather-worn and unattractive in appearance.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To be arranged.