

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD  
IN THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup>, 2011

Present: Cllr. Mrs. G. D. Duckett (Chairman); Cllr. The Rev. J. R. Andrews;  
Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. C. D. Cherry; Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke; Cllr. A. J. Juxon;  
Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cllr. K. C. Taylor; and Cllr. S. K. Welch.

Also present were the Clerk and Cllr. N. J. Roberts, of Lichfield District Council.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. N. J. Bird; Cllr. M. J. Nash; and County Councillor F. W. Lewis, MBE

2. REVIEW OF CURRENT PRACTICES AGAINST RISK ASSESSMENT REGISTER

The current procedures and practices of the Council were reviewed, and, with the Council's risk assessment policy control actions applied, the risk levels as recorded in the Risk Assessment Register were unaltered. There were no new activities to be assessed.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of a meeting of the previous meeting held in the Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall, Buds Road, Cannock Wood, on Tuesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Welch and seconded by Cllr. Taylor, approved and signed.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Letter to Rodney Allatt

The Clerk reported that, to date, there had been no response from Mr. Allatt.

(ii) Fir Tree Cottage

The Clerk reported that, to date, there had been no response from Mrs. Hibbs.

(iii) Vacancy at St. James Church

Cllr. Cherry reported that the Parochial Church Council had been advised that the vacancy was not likely to be filled until January 2012.

(iv) Grange Hill

The Clerk reported that Cllr. Lewis had asked Richard Rayson to assess the situation regarding the wall at Grange Hill, where the continuing presence of the metal barriers was causing anxiety amongst local residents who thought that they were constituting a road-safety hazard, particularly to pedestrians using the lane.

Mr. Rayson had replied that he would be travelling to Stafford the next day (March 17<sup>th</sup>) and would inspect the wall on his way.

He had reminded Cllr. Lewis that the wall was placed on land outside the remit of his Department and had added that he considered that there was no immediate risk to pedestrians, as they could safely pass on the opposite side of Grange Hill without coming into contact with the obstructions.

(v) Community Paths Initiative Bid

The Chairman reported that she had submitted a bid for £1200. 00 towards the cost of the new footpath leaflets.

(vi) Verge between No. 12 Berkeley Way and Brook End Green

The Clerk reported that he had received from Mrs. Elizabeth Cauldwell, of 12 Berkeley Way, a letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> March 2011 calling on the Council to honour an undertaking made in a letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> January 2005 to maintain the verge between her property and the footpaths running alongside Brook End.

However, this undertaking had been made in the mistaken belief that the verge was public land since when the Community Highway Liaison Manager had produced documentary evidence showing that the land was, in fact, within the curtilage of Mrs. Cauldwell's property.

This being the case, the Parish Council could not use public money to maintain private property, though it had already agreed that, on this occasion, it would, in the interests of the Best Village Competition, arrange for the verge to be cleared of overgrown vegetation and had asked Mr. Alan Johnson to carry out this work, as he had done in the past.

However, Mr. Johnson had declined to do this work, and the Parish Council would need to look for someone else to carry it out.

It was agreed that, for the reason already stated, the Parish Council did not intend to accept any further responsibility for maintaining the verge.

(vii) Ditches in Stockings Lane

It was noted that work had begun on re-instating the ditches in Stockings Lane.

(viii) Deduction of Tax on Interest on Halifax Account

The Clerk reported that, in the absence of a reply to his letter, or the re-imburement of the deducted interest, he had called at the bank and had been promised that the matter would be given attention.

(ix) Donation to Longdon Brownies

The Clerk reported that the donation had been gratefully acknowledged by Mrs. Worth.

6. PLANNING

(i) Report of Planning Group

11/00230/FUL/COU: Longdon Hall School: Change of Use from Office (B1) to Educational (D1): Longdon Hall, Church Hill, Longdon Green

It was noted that the proposed change of use from office to educational meant that the premises would revert to an earlier use when they were previously occupied by a school and that no structural alterations were being proposed.

There were therefore no objections to this proposal.

11/00277/FUL: Mr. A. Moore: Erection of an Agricultural Livestock Building: Benbrook Farm, Stoneywell Lane, Longdon Green

The Council was concerned that the granting of permission to erect another agricultural livestock building on this site would be followed by an application for a permanent dwelling to replace the temporary accommodation already being occupied and urged the District Council to ensure that the present agricultural building was being fully used for the purpose for which it had been built before it considered this application.

It was thought that there was enough evidence to suggest that the applicant was also using these premises in pursuit of his other (non-agricultural) business; a small hillock of hard core had been built up which, in the opinion of the Council, far exceeded the purported purpose of providing the foundations of a building for which the applicant has yet to receive planning permission and was being brought to the site by large non-agricultural trucks which were causing extensive damage to the verges.

An advertisement in "The Farmers Weekly" of 25<sup>th</sup> March 2011 placed by the applicant for C. A. L. L., a Nationwide Hire Company which supplied agricultural equipment and operators into the Civil Engineering environment, for tractor drivers who could work on their own initiative throughout the UK gave the premises as the address to which applications should be sent and, in the view of the Council, provided further evidence that the premises were not being used exclusively for agricultural activity.

The Parish Council was therefore strongly opposed to the granting of planning permission for this development.

(ii) For Consideration

There were no further applications for the Council to consider.

(iii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, Lichfield District Council had issued no Notices of Approval of Planning Permission relating to the Parish of Longdon.

(iv) Refused by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, Lichfield District Council had issued no Notices of Refusal of Planning Permission relating to the Parish of Longdon.

(v) Notice of Appeal

The Clerk reported that he had received from Claire Billings, Development Control Manager, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011, in which she had notified the Council of an appeal by Mr. Andrew Moore against the refusal by Lichfield District Council to grant planning permission for the siting of a temporary (three years) mobile home for an agricultural worker on land at Benbrook Farm, Stoneywell Lane, Longdon Green.

If the Parish Council wished to modify or withdraw its earlier comments or make additional observations or request a copy of the appeal decision letter, it should write to the Planning Inspectorate at Temple Quay, Bristol, within six weeks of the appeal starting date (10<sup>th</sup> March 2011).

It was decided that the Parish Council need make no further comment.

## 7. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

(i) Beau Desert Sports Field and Recreation Ground Trust

The Clerk presented a written report on a meeting on a meeting of the Beau Desert Sports Field and Recreation Ground Trust which had taken place at The Park Gate Inn, Park Gate Road, Cannock Wood, on Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011 (*Appendix A*).

(ii) Lichfield District Parish Forum

The Clerk presented a written report on a meeting of the Lichfield District Parish Forum which had taken place in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, on Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2011 (*Appendix B*).

The issue of identity badges had been raised, and Steve McQuade, the District Council's Policy and Performance Manager, had said that he would make enquiries regarding the possibility of these badges being provided by the District Council, either at no cost to parish councils or at their expense, though this was likely to be modest.

It was agreed that the provision of identification badges would best be done through official bodies such as Lichfield District Council, rather than being ad hoc creations by individual Clerks or Councils.

The question of providing Councillors with identity badges would be re-visited after the forthcoming elections.

## 8. NOTICE OF MEETINGS AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, he had received notice of the following meetings and forthcoming events:

(i) Participatory Budgeting Event: Monday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in St. Luke's Church, Great Colmore Street, Lee Bank, Birmingham, from 10. 00 a.m. to 12. 45 p.m.

(ii) Big Green Fair: Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011, at Whittington Village Hall, Langton Crescent, Whittington, from 10. 00 a.m. to 4. 00 p.m. Admission was free

(iii) Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee Annual General Meeting: Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in the Village Hall, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.

(iv) Cannock Chase AONB Parish Councils' Meeting: Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Cllr. Welch said that he would be unable to attend this meeting and asked anyone interested in attending to contact him.

## 9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

### (i) Public Sector Mapping Agreement

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Welch and seconded by Cllr. Butler, it was agreed that the Council should sign up to this Agreement.

### (ii) Highways and Footpaths Committee

Members of the Council's Highways and Footpaths Committee were reminded that the next meeting of the Committee would take place in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday. April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011, commencing at 7. 00 p.m.

## 10. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

### (i) Gentleshaw Green

Cllr. Welch reported that Living Landscapes had completed work on Gentleshaw Green and that appreciative comments had already been made by local residents and passers-by.

Cllr. Taylor asked whether the breeze block wall at the back of the Green could be screened, and it was agreed that some appropriate planting should be considered.

(ii) Meeting of Greens and Open Spaces Committee

Cllr. Welch presented a written report on a meeting of the Greens and Open Spaces Committee which had taken place in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 (*Appendix C*).

(iii) Arrangements for visit to Beaudesert Park

The Clerk reported that he had met Bob Marsh, the Chief Executive of The Beaudesert Trust, who had proposed a number of dates for a visit to Beaudesert Park by members of the Parish Council.

Of those offered, Councillors chose Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, the visit to start some time after 5.00 p.m.

(iv) Healthy Walks across Gentleshaw Common

Cllr. Cherry drew the attention of the meeting to three “Healthy Heathland” walks being developed on Gentleshaw Common by Lichfield District Council’s Countryside Team.

Each walk would be marked by coloured arrows – yellow, green and red – and would take half an hour, an hour and one and a half hours respectively, based on the average walking speed of a reasonably fit, able-bodied person.

Boards would also describe the wildlife that visitors should look out for.

Some surprise was expressed that the Parish Council had not been notified about this development, and the Chairman said that she would be contacting Justine Lloyd, the District Council’s Countryside Officer, for an explanation.

## 11. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

(i) Elderly Parishioners’ Support Group

Cllr. Clarke reported that he had booked places for a party of between six and eight parishioners at Lichfield Library at the end of June, and he was waiting to see what sort of response resulted from his article in “Longdon Life”.

What was being offered was a standard IT course which taught a range of skills beyond what he thought would be needed, but the Library also offered a free ‘buddy’ course of three one-hour sessions.

He would also be meeting with a representative from Age UK, who offered a tailor-made on-site courses and would supply the equipment.

Cllr. Juxon suggested that an approach might be made to Ray Hemmingsley, former Chairman of the Council, who was now a tutor at the University Campus at Lichfield.

## 12. UPDATING THE PARISH WEBSITE

Cllr. Clarke reported that, following their meeting with Eric Roy, he and Cllr. Cherry had met to formulate an approach and establish the content of the updated website.

When this had been completed, the next stage would be to send the specifications to the web designer and await his tender.

He then outlined the proposed contents of the web site, which would include a welcome page; a contents list; a history of Longdon Parish; information on services, schools, churches, halls, organisations and clubs and businesses; a guestbook (with a limited life for entries); details of the Parish Council, including photographs, officers, dates of meetings, and documents; the two latest issues of "Longdon Life"; a diary of forthcoming events and news of recent matters of interest; press cuttings (with a life of three months); and useful links.

Various related matters were discussed, including the need for disclaimers, the importance of observing copyright laws and the possibility of including ten-second videos.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Cllr. Clarke and Cllr. Cherry were warmly thanked for their work in preparing the draft of a new Parish Website.

## 13. LAW AND ORDER

### (i) Joint Operations Group

The Clerk reported that he had received from Bob Haynes, Community Safety Officer, Lichfield District Council, the main points of a meeting of the Joint Operations Group held on Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

No items related specifically to the Parish of Longdon.

### (ii) Mobile Meeting Point

Cllr. Clarke reported that PC Andy Brown and PCSO Lisa Anderson would be at a Mobile Meeting Point outside Longdon Village Hall on Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, from 9. 15 a.m. to 10. 15 a.m. and were inviting residents to come and have a chat and find out what work the police were doing in their area.

## 14. BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

### (i) Progress Report

The Clerk reported that he had written to all last year's volunteers asking them to undertake the tasks they carried out in 2010.

He had received a quote from Alan Johnson, of Aqua Jet Services of £422. 00 to carry out the re-furbishment of selected items of street furniture. but had received no reply from Magpie, of Abbots Bromley.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Welch, it was agreed that Mr. Johnson should be asked to carry out this work.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Juxon and seconded by Cllr. Butler, it was agreed that the Clerk should ask Graham McCulloch to quote for spraying the church car park with weed-killer and that the Clerk should be authorised to accept his quote provided that it did not exceed £150. 00.

(ii) Complementary Children's Poster Competition

The Clerk reported that the Community Council of Staffordshire was holding two complementary children's competitions in association with the Best Kept Village Competition.

The first was Children's Poster Competition, in which, as in previous years, there would be two categories, one for children aged between five and seven, the other for children between eight and eleven.

In addition, there would this year be an additional competition for young people between eleven and sixteen based on the theme of "In Remembrance", in which entrants would be asked to answer a series of simple questions about war memorials and remembrance and to submit an entry which could take the form of a poem, essay, drawing, painting or any other appropriate medium, based on the theme of remembrance.

It was agreed that, in the absence of a secondary school in the parish, it would be difficult to promote this competition, which, since the letter was addressed to Chairmen of Governors and Heads and Chairs of School Councils, might already have been advertised through other channels.

The Clerk reported that, to date, he had received no posters from either St. James School or Longdon Pre-School, without which the villages' entries would be severely handicapped.

## 15. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(i) Accounts for Payment

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Welch and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Meere, payment of the following accounts was agreed:

*Staffordshire C. C.	Community Speedwatch Equipment	£ 801. 00
	(payment made under s274a of the 1980 Highways Act)	
*Instaprint, Rugeley	700 copies of "Longdon Life" and inserts	£ 412. 50
*Hazel Crosbie	Delivering "Longdon Life"	£ 45. 00
*A. J. Juxon	Editor's Expenses	£ 15. 00
Longdon W. I.	Hire of Hall – April 5 <sup>th</sup> : £12. 00	
	Hire of Hall – April 12 <sup>th</sup> : £12. 00	
		£ 24. 00

Staffordshire C. C.	Hire of School Hall for Annual Assembly	£ 30. 00
Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association	Annual Subscription	£ 383. 00
#Community Council of Staffordshire	Membership Renewal	£ 22. 00
Staffordshire C. C.	Contribution towards cost of road works	£1000. 00
Living Landscapes	Work at Gentleshaw	£2768. 00

(\*for confirmation #payment made under s137 of the 1972 Local Government Act)

(ii) Payments Received

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

e-on Central Networks	Wayleave	£ 36. 27
A. I. D. Fuel Oils Ltd.	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 9. 00

(iii) Requests for Grant Aid

(a) Longdon Branch, Royal British Legion

The Clerk reported that the Council had received from Mrs. Audrey Penlington, Local Poppy Appeal Organiser, Longdon Branch, Royal British Legion, an invitation from the to purchase a wreath of poppies for a representative to place at the base of the War Memorial in St. James Church on Remembrance Sunday.

Prices ranged between £9. 00 (7" diameter) to £50. 00 (18" diameter).

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Cherry, it was agreed that a Type F wreath 17" in diameter costing £19. 00 should be purchased.

(b) St. James Church, Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Mrs. Val Shand, Secretary of the Parochial Church Council, The Parish Church of St. James the Great, Longdon, a completed Grant Application Form in support of a grant towards the cost of maintaining the churchyard.

While it was agreed that the Church served the community and should be supported, there was concern that the sum requested, £2800. 00, amounted 22% of the Annual Precept, and it was decided to defer until the next meeting a decision on the level of support the Council was able to give so that Cllr. Juxon and Cllr. Cherry could consult with the PCC.

(c) Longdon Village Hall Street Party

The Clerk reported that he had received from Cllr. Clarke a completed Grant Application Form, signed on behalf of Neil Vyse, Chairman of the Street Party, in support of a request for a pledge of up to £100. 00 towards the cost of organising the party, which would be taking place on the day of the Royal Wedding, April 29<sup>th</sup>, in the car park of Longdon Village Hall between 3. 00 p.m. and 6. 00 p.m.

Cllr. Clarke explained that what was being requested was a guarantee of up to £100. 00 (the amount already donated by St. James PCC) to meet any shortfall in the funding of the event.

It was agreed that, while in principle, the Parish Council was prepared to meet this request, a decision on the amount of the grant would be deferred until the next meeting, when the exact amount needed would be known.

(iv) Current Balances

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

NatWest c/a:	£1960. 86	The Halifax s/a:	£4682. 70
less uncleared cheques:			
	1598: £ 24. 00		
	1604: £ 16. 00		
	1609: £ 45. 00		
	1610: £ 15. 00		
	<u>£1860. 00</u>		

(v) Adoption of Financial Statement for the Financial Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011

It was agreed that there was insufficient time to consider the Financial Statement in detail, and its adoption was deferred until the next meeting.

16. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Hugh Reynolds, Secretary of the Longdon Village Hall Management Committee, a letter dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 2011, thanking the Parish Council for the grant of £1000. 00 towards the cost of the security fencing erected to protect the Village Hall, which, he had added, had made a big difference in the amount and timing of when the work could be done.

He apologised for the delay in writing, which had been caused by the Committee not having a meeting over Christmas and the New Year and then him himself being away.

(ii) The Clerk reported that he had from Emma Jane Beaman, AONB Assistant, Cannock Chase AONB, an email dated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011, informing the Council that a few places were still available for willow weaving at Shugborough on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

(iii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Bob Haynes, Community Safety Officer, Lichfield District Council, an email dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2011, informing the Council that Connexions Lichfield would be moving on March 29<sup>th</sup> to Minster Hall Youth Centre, Dam Street, Lichfield, where it would be offering careers information, advice and guidance.

A service would also be offered at Burntwood Library, and personal advisers would continue to be in schools offering careers advice.

(iv) The Clerk reported that he had received from Annette Johnson, Secretary of the Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee, a letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> March 2011, asking for the name and address of the person who would be representing the Parish Council on the Management Committee.

He had advised her that the Parish Council would be nominating its representative at its Annual Meeting in May.

(v) The Clerk reported that he had received from Emma Jane Beaman, AONB Assistant, Cannock Chase AONB, an email dated 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, listing a number of Awareness Days taking place between May and September and also advertising the sale of purple AONB sweat shirts in various sizes.

(vi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Michele McDonald, Web and Information Development Officer, SCIO Intelligence Unit, East Staffordshire CVS, an email dated 5<sup>th</sup> April 2011, inviting subscriptions to her organisation's bi-monthly e-bulletin, designed to keep its subscribers abreast of design, IT training and data services.

However, this invitation was directed at organisations within East Staffordshire.

(vii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Alison Wynne, Acting Director of Commissioning and Strategy, South Staffordshire Primary Care Trust, an email dated 7<sup>th</sup> April 2011, announcing the outcome of the engagement process on the future of mental health day centres.

All the responses had been collated and integrated could be viewed into an evaluation report which could be viewed on the PCT website.

## 17. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 27<sup>th</sup> March 2011;  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 4<sup>th</sup> April 2011;  
Forward Plan – Version 1 – Issued 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011 – Effective for the Period 01. 04. 2011 – 31. 07. 2011.

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

Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 11th March 2011;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 18<sup>th</sup> March 2011;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 25<sup>th</sup> March 2011;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

- (iii) From Barbara Anderson, Administrative Officer, Electoral Services, Lichfield District Council:

Referendum Poster.

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

Register of Electors 2011 – Monthly Applications for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011.

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

S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 9/11 – 10<sup>th</sup> March 2011;  
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 10/11 – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011;  
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 11/11 – 24<sup>th</sup> March 2011;  
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 12/11 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011.

- (vi) From Julia Harris, Development Officer, Lichfield and District Voluntary Support Sector:

Opportunities for Voluntary and Community Groups in Lichfield and the Surrounding Areas (11. 03. 2011);  
Opportunities for Voluntary and Community Groups in Lichfield and the Surrounding Areas (18. 03. 2011);  
Opportunities for Voluntary and Community Groups in Lichfield and the Surrounding Areas (25. 03. 2011);  
Opportunities for Voluntary and Community Groups in Lichfield and the Surrounding Areas (01. 04. 2011).

- (vii) From The East Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Sector Intelligence Unit:

E Bulletin – 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2011.

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

Weekly Update (16<sup>th</sup> March 2011);  
Weekly Update (23<sup>rd</sup> March 2011);  
Weekly Update (30<sup>th</sup> March 2011);  
Event Flyer;  
Promoting Whittington Community Stop HS2;  
Weekly Update (6<sup>th</sup> April 2011).

(ix) From The National Association of Local Councils:

“LCR”: Spring 2011, Volume 63, No. 4;  
“Communities in Action” – Conference and Exhibition  
- Bristol June 15<sup>th</sup>, Sheffield July 19<sup>th</sup>, London September 22<sup>nd</sup>;  
Weekly Update (11<sup>th</sup> March 2011).

(x) From The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust:

“Staffordshire Wildlife”: Spring 2011, Number 111;  
What’s On: May to August 2011;  
Lottery – “You could win £75 a week!”

(xi) From Pete Caine, VAST (Voluntary Action Stoke-on-Trent):

Voluntary and Community News: March 2011, Week 2;  
Voluntary and Community News: March 2011, Week 3;  
Voluntary and Community News: March 2011, Week 4.

(xii) From sustainable.gov.uk:

Newsletter – March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011;  
Public Service Efficiency Update – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2011.

(xiii) From The Department of Transport, London SW1:

High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain’s Future – Consultation;  
High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain’s Future – Consultation Summary;  
High Speed Rail: Investing in Britain’s Future – CD.

(xiv) From Navigus Planning, Manningtree, Essex:

“Journal of Local Planning” – “Budget 2011 introduces significant  
changes to planning”;

(xv) From Generic-Chasewater:

“Chasewater Bugle”: Issue One, March 2011.

(xvi) From The Open Spaces Society:

“Open Space”: Spring 2011, Volume 29, No. 16.

(xvii) From The Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall Management  
Committee:

Minutes of meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

(xviii) From St. Giles Hospice, Whittington:

St. Giles News: Spring 2011.

(xix) From Russell Play:

Sustainable Designs for Play.

(xx) From Proludic, West Bridgford, Nottingham:

Proludic News.

(xxi) From Blachere Illuminations UK:

March Madness: Buy One Get One Free on Refurbished LED Motifs.

#### 18. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Cllr. Juxon reported that his new neighbours had complained to him about the bright flood lighting at Lichfield Cathedral School.

The Clerk was instructed to write to the School asking if they could be dimmed.

(ii) Cllr. Mrs. Meere reported that there were still several pot holes around Gentleshaw, including Chorley Road, Tithe Barn Lane and Stockings Lane.

It was pointed out that the Highways Department was currently at work filling in potholes in the parish, and it was suggested that the Clerk should ask the Community Highway Liaison Manager when he expected the programme to be finished.

(iii) Cllr. Mrs. Meere pointed out that there was no street lighting at the junction of High Street and the A51 and at the junction of Borough Lane and the A51.

The Clerk was instructed to make enquiries as to whether any plans existed to light these junctions.

(iv) The Chairman asked that the Council's appreciation of the contribution of Cllr. Andrews and Cllr. Bird to the work of the Council during their terms of office be formally recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Councillors fully concurred with her request.

#### 19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, immediately following the Annual Meeting, which will commence at 7. 30 p.m.



REPORT ON MEETING OF THE BEAUDESERT SPORTS FIELD AND  
RECREATION GROUND TRUST HELD IN THE PARK GATE INN,  
PARK GATE ROAD, CANNOCK WOOD, ON MONDAY, MARCH 28<sup>TH</sup>, 2011

Present: Cllr. Pat Ansell (Chairman); Sue Holliday (Secretary); John Tonks (Treasurer); Avril Green (Fund-raiser); Gwyn Samuel (representing Cannock Wood Cricket Club); and Bryan Sullivan (representing Longdon Parish Council)

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in The Park Gate Inn on Monday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011, were approved.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Maintenance of Field

PA reported that a quote from Fountains, the Cannock Chase District Council's new contractors, for cutting the playing field had been accepted. Fountains had previously known as "Connaught", but had ended its contract with the District Council for carrying out maintenance work on the Council's housing property.

JT added that mowing the field would be organised around cricket fixtures.

GS reported that Cannock and Rugeley Cricket Club had asked to share Cannock Wood Cricket Club's facilities. There had been no objection from the Management Committee of Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall, who would receive £18. 00 for the use of the Hall during each fixture, while CWCC would receive £12. 00.

CRCC would also help to maintain the pavilion, including repairing the doors, and would provide metal shutters, and Cannock Wood Football Club had also been asked to help with the maintenance and would be providing internal doors.

CWCC hoped in future to be able to make a full contribution to the maintenance of the field .

Some doubt existed as to whether the Club needed to provide its own third party liability insurance or whether the Trust's own insurance also covered users. GS said that he would ask other users what insurance they had taken out.

JT stressed that, in fixing its charges, the Trustees' prime purpose was to cover costs, not to make a profit.

(ii) Fund-raising for Child's Swing

JT had collected a number of catalogues, but more research was needed.

He estimated the cost of purchasing and installing the swing as being in the region of £5000. 00.

An application for a grant from Cannock Wood Parish Council was being held in abeyance until after the election in May.

AG said that every other funder required details of the Trust's bank account. JT said that he had decided against moving the Trust's account to the Santander branch at Swan Corner because of its perceived inactivity, which, he feared, might lead to the early closure of the branch and the need to transfer the account elsewhere.

BS said that nearly all the funding about which he received information seemed directed to specific groups such as disadvantaged youth or the disabled.

### 3. FINANCIAL REPORT

A Statement of Accounts from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2011 shown that income of £3112. 79 and expenditure of £1505. 57.

Income from the Caravan Club amounted to £684. 00, while a donation from Cannock Wood Parish Council had contributed an additional £500. 00. Cannock Wood Football Club had contributed £160. 00.

The major item of expenditure at £914. 68 had been on insurance while grass-cutting had cost £481. 75

JT said that one payment remained outstanding – business rates of £113. 99.

### 4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) JT reported that dog mess was a serious problem, both on the field and in the village at large, which he thought would adversely affect the Village's showing in the Best Kept Village Competition..

It was agreed that the Village Correspondent should be asked to use his column in "The Lichfield Mercury" to appeal for greater responsibility from dog owners.

(ii) PH reported that she had received a letter from Annette Johnson, the Secretary of the Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee, asking who the Trust's representative on the Committee was.

PA said that she already represented the District Council on the Committee and was not sure whether she could represent both.

It was agreed that the Management Committee should in turn be asked to send a representative to the meetings of the Trust.

(iii) PA drew the meeting's attention to the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge, which was offering protection to playing fields.

It was thought that this offered no advantage to the Trust, as the field was already protected by the terms of the Deed of Trust.

However, it was agreed that the paperwork should be studied by PA, AG and JT, who would report their conclusions at the next meeting.

(iv) AG recommended that the Trust insert a dissolution clause into the present deeds, since it would, she believed, facilitate her quest for funding if the funders which she approached could be re-assured that, in the event of the dissolution of the Trust, the moneys would be used for objectives of the charity..

On a motion proposed by AG and seconded by PA, it was agreed that such a clause should be inserted.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place at The Park Gate Inn, Park Gate Road, Cannock Wood, on Tuesday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011, commencing at 8. 00 p.m.

REPORT ON A MEETING OF THE LICHFIELD DISTRICT PARISH FORUM  
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL HOUSE,  
FROG LANE, LICHFIELD, ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 6<sup>TH</sup>, 2011

Geographic Information System

Gareth Thomas, Corporate GIS Manager of Lichfield District Council, gave a presentation on the benefits to parish councils from access to local data on the internet.

*(The Geographic Information Service is “a system that captures, stores, analyses, manages and presents data with reference to geographic location. In simple terms, it is the merging of cartography, statistical analysis and database technology. GIS may be used in archaeology, geography, cartology, remote sensing, land surveying, public utility management, precision agriculture, photogrammetry, urban planning, emergency management, landscape architecture, navigation, aerial video and localised search engines...In a general sense, the term describes any information system that integrates, stores, edits and analyses, shares and displays geographic information for informing decision making....”)*

This was a new Government initiative which gave access to mapping and data and also allowed data to be presented in an attractive form. It was a means of bringing together various pieces of Council information into one source; it would paint a picture of the local area.

Through [www.localview.lichfield.gov.uk](http://www.localview.lichfield.gov.uk), users could access a vast array of public sector information held on Lichfield District Council's GIS system. Data available included parish boundaries, addresses, bin routes, crime data, education, roads (adopted and unadopted), and planning.

A new public access website allowed emails to be registered and received.

Sarah Hall, Local Land & Property Gazetteer Custodian, GIS Management Team, then talked about street naming and numbering, which was the responsibility of Lichfield District Council, shared with parish councils.

This had now become part of the GIS since the Government had decided that it wanted a single national address database as an aid to the police and emergency services.

Problems were encountered when house names were changed without notification and properties were divided into multiple dwellings, and the help of parish councils was needed in notifying the District Council of any such changes.

Update on Parking Enforcement Arrangements: Presentation by Ruth Plant, Director,  
Operational Services, Lichfield District Council

The current arrangements had been in place for the last two years and were launched in partnership with Staffordshire County Council, who have a statutory role to enforce non-parking on double yellow lines. In turn, the County Council had decided to ask District Councils to carry out enforcement on street offences, but were underwriting any deficits on the service.

Enforcement in Lichfield was carried out by a private-sector company, who operate throughout the District and whose patrols cover on-street parking and car parks.

In the first year, over seven thousands penalty notices had been issued, two thirds in car parks, but in the second year this number had fallen to 6600, which indicated a change of attitude in the public. Incidents of abuse had fallen, and motorists were no longer willing to leave their cars all day in a parking bay where parking was restricted to half an hour in the belief that they would only receive a parking ticket about once a fortnight.

A lot of penalty notices were appealed and about a quarter of these were cancelled; sometimes this was because, in car parks, ticket machines were faulty, tickets had been blown into the car on exit or valid permits had been forgotten, while street signs or lines might be shown to be incorrect.

If an appeal was lost and the motorist still refused to pay the fine, the matter could be referred to an independent traffic tribunal and ultimately to the magistrates' court.

Traffic wardens worked to a policy document which applied throughout the County and included such guide-lines as length of observation periods and extenuating circumstances.

Every sign was backed by a Traffic Order, some of which were quite old and no longer appropriate but could only be changed by another Traffic Order. Public consultation was necessary, and the process could take up to twelve months. In addition, Lichfield District Council had resources which would allow for only four such charges each year.

The District Council would always respond to complaints about parking black spots by sending out an Enforcement Officer, but experience had shown that the problem would immediately disappear when he or she arrived, only to return as soon as he or she had gone!

Asked about the proliferation of "Think Bike" signs, Mrs. Plant said that these were put up by the Road Safety Partnership, and she wasn't sure of the criteria in choosing sites.

### Shared Learning

A Councillor complained about lack of public consultation on the part of developers proposing to erect wind turbines, though a representative from Hammerwich spoke highly of the lengths to which Severn Trent had gone to consult local opinion in his parish.

### Any Other Business

Representatives were handed copies of a document entitled "Role of Parish Councils in Emergency Planning".

### Dates of Future Meeting

Thursday, September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011; Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012; Wednesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

Any Other Business

## *Appendix C*

### REPORT ON MEETING OF THE GREENS AND OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE OF LONGDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, APRIL 5<sup>TH</sup>, 2011

Present: Cllr. S. K. Welch (Chairman); Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke;  
Cllr. Mrs. G. D. Duckett; Cllr. M. J. Nash; and Cllr. K. C. Taylor.

Also present was the Clerk and Ms. Portia Howe, Arboricultural Officer,  
Lichfield District Council.

#### 1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. C. D. Cherry; and Cllr. A, J. Juxon

#### 2. REVIEW OF PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES AGAINST RISK ASSESSMENT POLICY

The current procedures and practices of the Committee were reviewed and found  
to be consistent with the Council's risk assessment policies.

There were no new activities to be assessed.

#### 3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Clarke and seconded by Cllr. Nash, the minutes  
of the previous meeting, held in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>,  
2011, were approved and signed.

#### 4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

#### 5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

##### (i) Shropshire Brook

The Clerk reported that he had received a phone call from a member of the  
County Council's Highways Department, who had informed him that the culvert was  
inspected regularly and that no concern had been expressed about the state of the  
brickwork when it was last inspected.

However, in view of the Parish Council's report, a further inspection would be  
carried out.

It was agreed that this item should remain on the agenda for the next meeting.

Cllr. Welch reported that the bluebells planted by the ford last year were about  
to come into flower.

## 6. GENTLESHAW GREEN

Cllr. Welch reported that the work had now been completed.

There had been some amendment to the original plan: tannilised sleepers had been replaced by oak sleepers, and the idea of laying sleepers on either side of the beech whips had been abandoned, since it had been felt that this would have created a more artificial effect and would also have impeded mowing. Bigger whips had been planted in compensation.

Similarly, the benches were of oak. Asked why benches had been chosen instead of seats, Cllr. Welch said that children often used the backs of the seats to sit on while resting their feet on the seats themselves, thus putting a strain on the backs.

Adrian Bevan, principal of Living Landscapes, was intending to donate plants to Gentleshaw Schools for the pupils to plant in the triangles of soil at the corners.

It was proposed that there would be a photoshoot when this work had been carried out.

Cllr. Welch concluded by saying that Justine Lloyd, the District Council's Countryside Officer, was pleased that locally-occurring materials had been used and had felt that the softer edging was most effective.

Cllr. Mrs. Duckett reported that a parishioner had described it as "a fantastic job".

## 7. QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION WITH PORTIA HOWE

Cllr. Welch welcomed Ms Howe to the meeting and invited her to address the Committee.

Ms. Howe began by describing her role as one of Lichfield District Council's two Arboricultural or Tree Officers. She and her colleague, Gareth Hare, worked within the District Council's Planning Department, and one of their tasks was to look at trees that might be involved in planning decisions. They did not, however, deal with trees on land owned by the District Council – this was the responsibility of Kevin Yates, the Parks Manager -, nor did they deal with trees on highway land.

Tree Preservation Orders were first introduced in the 1940s, and Arboriculture did not emerge as a discipline until the 1960s

Since most trees covered by Tree Preservation Orders stood in people's gardens, she and Gareth were the officers closest in relationship with the public.

Anyone could ask for a TPO to be placed on a tree, regardless of ownership, provided that the tree was visible to the public, in good condition and markedly better than the average tree.

A land-owner could apply for consent to prune or remove a protected tree, and one of the strongest reasons was that the tree was preventing development from going ahead, though that in itself might not be strong enough.

If a land-owner wanted to cut down a number of trees, he would need a tree-felling licence from The Forestry Commission

With regards to a tree standing close to a dwelling, there are now BS standards that set distances, and modern engineering solutions now allowed houses to be built close to existing trees.

Asked whether home-owners were free to plant what and where they wanted within their own curtilage, Ms. Howe said that, provided that no covenant existed, this was so, but there was a preference for planting native trees in rural area, whereas more colourful exotic trees were acceptable in an urban setting.

Asked what was the importance of a Conservation Area regarding the preservation of trees, she pointed out that this was a planning designation to do with built form, particularly the historic pattern of buildings, though part of the visual attractiveness of settlements was the contribution made by its trees. However, it was not primarily concerned with woodland or wildlife conservation.

The management of rural hedges not forming part of a domestic curtilage was governed by Hedgerow Regulations, and farmers wishing to remove a hedgerow needed to serve notice. Governing factors would be its wildlife value and its historic value, but the regulations were very strict, and she conceded that it was very hard to keep a hedgerow.

Asked how the age of a hedge could be assessed, Ms. Howe said that the recommended way was to count the number of woody species within a central section. As a general rule, if the hedge was comprised of hawthorn, then it probably dated from the Enclosure Acts; if there were more species, then it probably pre-dated the Enclosure Acts. Its age could also be judged by how thick it was and how much growth it had.

The 1885 OS Maps show where hedges already existed at that time.

High hedges such as monster leylandii or lawson cypress came under the Anti-Social Behaviour Act. However, when approaching the Council, a complainant would have to show that every reasonable effort had been made at conciliation, and, even then, he or she would incur a charge of £425. 00, since the provision of such a service was optional.

The offending hedge must be evergreen, and this included ivy, though Ms. Howe pointed out that it had a value for wildlife. However, it has been reported that, because of the warmer weather of recent seasons, its growth rate had increased by thirty per cent and the added weight would place an extra strain on weaker branches, as well as competing more vigorously with the leaves for light the higher it grew.

Asked whether a land owner could apply for a TPO, Ms. Howe said that the first question asked would be: "Is the tree under threat?", which was not likely if the owner was seeking to protect it.

Ms. Howe concluded the discussion by providing information about organised woodland activities such as The Ancient Tree Hunt and also distributed leaflets about funding opportunities.

Cllr. Welch thanked her for stimulating a very informative and productive discussion which had given the Committee a great deal to think about.

## 9. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) The Clerk reported that, in spite of a request from Longdon Parish Council, the provision of identification badges had not appeared on the agenda of the District parish Forum taking place the next evening, but he had been told that he could raise the subject under "Any Other Business".

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, June 28<sup>th</sup>, 2011, in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, commencing at 7. 00 p.m.