

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD  
IN THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, APRIL 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2012

Present: Cllr. Mrs. G. D. Duckett (Chairman); Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke;  
Cllr. P. M. Couchman; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cllr. M. J. Nash  
Cllr. K. C. Taylor; and Cllr. C. J. Webb.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. C. D. Cherry; Cllr. A. J. Juxon; Cllr. S. K. Welch;  
Cllr. N. J. Roberts, of Lichfield District Council;  
and Councillor F. W. Lewis, MBE.

2. REVIEW OF CURRENT PRACTICES AGAINST RISK ASSESSMENT  
REGISTER

Cllr. Clarke reported that the amendments which he had proposed and which the Council had adopted had now been recorded on the Parish Website.

It was agreed that, in future, current practices would be reviewed as a matter of procedure during the course of each meeting.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall, Buds Road, Cannock Wood, on Tuesday, March 13th, 2012, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Meere and seconded by Cllr. Taylor, approved and signed.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

Cllr. Couchman and Cllr. Taylor had been present since 7. 00 p.m., but no parishioner had appeared, and, consequently, it was agreed that the experiment of holding a half-hour 'surgery' immediately before each meeting should now be discontinued.

5. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Lighting in Stockings Lane and Giddywell Lane

It was agreed that Mr. Hook should now be asked what sort of financial contribution he would expect from the Parish Council towards the cost of improving the lighting in these streets.

(ii) Developments at “The Swan with Two Necks”

The Clerk reported that he had emailed Ben Rayner, the planning consultant working on the proposed developments at “The Swan with Two Necks”, suggesting that, since the next meeting would be on Easter Tuesday, he might instead like to give a short presentation at the Annual Assembly, but, to date, he had had no response.

(iii) Community Paths Initiative Bid

The Clerk reported that he and Cllr. Juxon had prepared and submitted a bid for £500 towards the cost of two additional footpath leaflets for walks in Upper Longdon and Gentleshaw.

(iv) Two Saints Way Pilgrimage

The Clerk reported that Will Rose had been unable to meet the leader, David Pott, during the course of the pilgrimage but had offered to way-mark its route through the parish.

## 6. PLANNING

(i) For Consideration

Mr. and Mrs. M. Hearne: Conversion and extension to existing dwelling to form two dwellings and creation of a new vehicular access: 77 Upper Way, Upper Longdon

While Councillors were in sympathy with the circumstances which had given rise to this application, they nonetheless had very real concerns about the consequences of granting permission and questioned whether, in planning terms, Mrs. Hearne’s disability was material, not least because, as the plan showed, it could, in fact, be met without recourse to dividing the existing dwelling into two.

Councillors felt that, in making a decision on this application, the District Council must decide whether, as a planning principle, it was acceptable, for whatever reason, to divide an existing dwelling into two semi-detached dwellings in independent ownership and thus generate additional capital for this or any other purpose.

Councillors were concerned that, once this principle had been conceded, it might, in creating a precedent, be difficult to refuse similar applications subsequently submitted.

It should perhaps be pointed out that, while the circumstances put forward to support the application were, in such cases, always temporary, the consequences of granting approval were permanent and irreversible.

(ii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

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

12/00020/FUL: R. Barton: Demolition of existing single-storey garage and utility and creation of a new single-storey extension forming family room, dining-room and kitchen: Southdown, Lower Way, Upper Longdon.

(iii) 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:

12/00032/FUL: Sabre Homes: Erection of a three-bedroom detached dwelling and creation of parking area for Bankside Cottage: Bankside Cottage, Lower Way, Upper Longdon

REASONS FOR REFUSAL

1. The proposed layout would appear cramped and would erode the spacious character of the area and, due to the height, massing and proximity of the new dwelling to the highway boundary, would create an overbearing impact on the streetscene....
2. The development, due to the size, design and siting of the proposed dwelling, would erode the amenity currently enjoyed by neighbouring residents and would not provide a satisfactory residential environment for residents of Bankside Cottage and future residents of the new dwelling....
3. The proposed access fails to demonstrate that adequate visibility could be provided for drivers emerging from the proposed access, resulting in a potential danger to users of the highway....

(iv) Other Planning Matters

(a) Withdrawal of Application

The Clerk reported that he had received notice that the following application had been withdrawn:

12/00098/FUL: Mr. D. Hodson Walker: Single- and two-storey extension to form laundry room, study, WC, kitchen, breakfast area and bedroom with en suite: 4, Brereton Hill Lane, Upper Longdon

This application had been withdrawn on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

## 7. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### (i) Police Surgery: March 17th

The Clerk reported that PC Andy Brown and PCSO Lisa Anderson had been present in the car park of Longdon Village Hall from 1. 30 p.m. and 2. 30 p.m on Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>.

He and Cllr. Clarke had also been present, but the only member of the public had been a young scooter-rider who had stopped to ask for directions to Lichfield.

Constable Brown had said that a major concern at present was the theft of metal farm gates, one of which had just been stolen from Longdon Old Hall.

The police regularly mounted roadside inspections, but it was difficult to establish whether any of the metal scrap being carried had been obtained by theft.

Cllr. Nash added that he too had lost a metal gate and would be replacing with a wooden one.

Cllr. Clarke said that some houses in Ford Lane had recently been protected by Smartwater.

## 8. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

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

(i) Lichfield District Parish Forum: Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, commencing at 7. 15 p.m.

Cllr. Nash said that he would be unable to attend, as he had a prior engagement.

The Chairman pointed out that it was also the evening of the Annual Assembly.

(ii) Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee: Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in the Village Hall, Buds Road, Cannock Wood, commencing at 8. 00 p.m.

Cllr. Taylor said that he expected to attend.

(iii) Localism and Neighbourhood Planning training/briefing session for Parish Councillors: Tuesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2012, in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, from 6. 00 p.m. to 8. 00 p.m.

The Chairman, Cllr. Clarke and Cllr. Webb all indicated a wish to attend.

## 9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

### (i) Footpath Leaflets

Cllr. Juxon distributed samples of the five footpath leaflets, which, Councillors agreed, were both attractive and informative.

It was also agreed that Longdon Post Office & Stores and the three local pubs should be offered a supply.

On a motion proposed by Cllr, Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Nash, it was agreed that the Clerk should obtain prices for tiered display units.

## 10. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

### (i) Registering Brook End Green

Cllr. Clarke reported that he had now received from Burchell Edwards, the estate agents, valuations for Brook End Green as both open space and potential building land (though the latter was purely a formality) and asked that the Council should now settle the firm's invoice for £50. 00, plus VAT.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Nash and seconded by Cllr. Webb, it was agreed that payment of the invoice should be made.

It was also agreed, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by the Chairman, that Cllr. Clarke should purchase a 1:1250 scale OS map of the site from Lichfield District Council at a cost of £25. 00.

## 11. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

### (i) Parish Website

Cllr. Clarke reported that he would be meeting Eric Roy the following Tuesday for a final production meeting.

He expected the updated website to be on line in time for the Annual Assembly.

Mr. Roy would be issuing a brief for the editor, Cllr. Cherry, and would also be holding a short training session towards the end of May, when Cllr. Clarke expected to sit in.

The Chairman asked Cllr. Clarke to ask Mr. Roy whether the revised Grant Application Form could be made interactive.

### (ii) Annual Assembly

The Clerk confirmed that the School Hall had been booked for the evening of May 24<sup>th</sup> and that Mrs. Diane Howells and another member of Longdon W. I. would be serving refreshments.

He had written to Michael Street, Chairman of The Friends of Beaudesert, inviting him to give a talk at the meeting, but had so far not received a reply.

It was suggested that, if Mr. Street were unable to speak, a representative from Smartwater might be asked to give a presentation.

It was agreed that, in addition to the Chairman's report, there should be reports from both Chairmen of the Council's Committees.

## 12. LAW AND ORDER

### (i) Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr. Taylor presented a report which he had received from Rob Nunn, Watch Liaison Officer, giving links to other schemes in the area.

These were Shenstone-Stonnall-Little Aston; Mease-Tame-Bourne; Lichfield; Burntwood; Alrewas-Fradley-Longdon-Kings Bromley.

### 13. BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

#### (i) Programme of Improvements

The Clerk reported that he had written to Alan Johnson, asking him to quote for a new notice-board and bench at the top of Grange Hill.

He had also be asked for two replacement flower tubs for Stockings Lane, in addition to the two needed for Beech Walk.

He estimated that each tub would cost in the region of £35. 00.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Nash, the Clerk was authorised to purchase these tubs.

It was also agreed that the two flower tubs standing on Longdon Green opposite “The Red Lion” should be moved to either side of the bus shelter at the side of the Green.

Cllr. Couchman said that the service road at Bradley Lakes had not been swept for at least twelve months. He suggested that Operational Services should be asked to sweep the road at some time during the day, when there were no parked cars to cause an obstruction.

Cllr. Webb said that the pavement surface at the entrance to the lane leading to Cherry Orchard Farm had been broken up by heavy farm vehicles and asked that the District Council be urged to repair it.

It was pointed out that, similarly, the small island at the junction of Lysways Lane and Hill Top had been badly eroded.

The Clerk was instructed to write to the appropriate authorities asking that repair work be carried out at both sites.

#### (ii) Distribution of Leaflets

The Clerk reminded Councillors that the Competition leaflets, usually distributed with “Longdon Life”, had been delivered too late to be enclosed and that a separate delivery would now be necessary.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Nash and seconded by the Chairman, it was agreed that Mrs. Helen Crosbie should be paid a further £45. 00 to deliver them.

### 14. FINANCIAL MATTERS

#### (i) Accounts for Payment

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

*Instaprint, Rugeley	700 magazines, 600 inserts	£665. 50
*Hazel Crosbie	Delivering “Longdon Life”	£ 45. 00
*A. J. Juxon	Editor’s Expenses	£ 15. 00

Longdon W. I.	Hire of Hall – March 15 <sup>th</sup> : £12. 00 Hire of Hall – April 10 <sup>th</sup> : £12. 00	£ 24. 00
Staffordshire Parish Councils’ Association	Annual Subscription	£ 384. 91
#Gina Duckett	Trophies, Craft Materials  (Jubilee Account)	£129. 61
Staffordshire County Council	Hire of School Hall for Annual Assembly	£ 30. 00
The National Association of Local Councils	Annual Subscription for “LCR”	£ 15. 50
Land Registry	Registration Fee	£ 40. 00
<i>(Payment would be made when the Council’s application was made, probably in early May)</i>		
Burchell Edwards	Valuation Fee	£ 60. 00
Lichfield District Council	Refuse Collection - Christ Church, Gentleshaw	£348. 90
Lichfield District Council	Refuse Collection - St. James Church, Longdon	£237. 48

(\*Confirmation #Payment made under Section 137)

(ii) Payments Received

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

Mrs. Rosemary Cliffe	Advertisement; “Longdon Life”	£ 15. 00
Homestead Senior Care	Distribution of leaflets in “Longdon Life”	£ 25. 00
Western Power Distribution	Wayleaves	£ 38. 94

(iii) Current Balances

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

NatWest c/a:	£1007. 83	The Halifax s/a:	£2239. 33
<u>less uncleared cheques</u>			
	1689: £ 70. 75		
	1690: £ 500. 00		
	1693: £ 45. 00		
	<u>1694: £ 15. 00</u>		
	£ 377. 08		

(iv) Request for Grant Aid(a) Longdon Village Hall Management Committee

The Clerk reported that he had received from Neil Vyse, Chairman of the Longdon Village Hall Management Committee, a completed Grant Application Form in support of his Committee's request for a grant of £1500 towards the cost of refurbishing the playground.

He had given the total cost of the project as £10,000. A grant of £6000 had been secured from the Big Lottery Fund, and £500 would be found from existing funds.

Since the success of the project was vital to the future of Longdon Pre-School, it was agreed, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Clarke, that the Council should make the requested grant of £1500.

(b) St. James Church, Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Rob Heywood, Treasurer of St. James Parochial Church Council, a completed Grant Application Form in support of his Council's request for a grant of £1000 towards the cost of maintaining the churchyard.

Mr. Heywood had pointed out that Longdon Churchyard required considerable maintenance, which was carried out in part by a group of volunteers, but still required the services of a contractor, at a cost of £2800.

An additional £200. 00 was required to cover the cost of fuel and equipment for the volunteers to use.

The Chairman pointed out that the Parish Council was already committed to contributing towards the cost of upgrading the surface of the church car park, and she doubted whether the Council could afford to support both.

Cllr. Clarke reminded the Council that the car park was still technically County Council property, though it had been made clear when permission was given to lay out the car park that the County Council would not spend any of its money on its maintenance.

On the other hand, every resident in the parish of Longdon had a right to burial in the churchyard, regardless of their faith or non-faith, and it did figure prominently in the BKV judges' comments the previous year.

The Chairman said that, before any decision was made, she would contact Judy Grew, one of the churchwardens, and ask her to which project the PCC would give priority.

(c) Longdon Women's Institute

Councillors then considered the request for a contribution of £250. 00 towards the cost of refurbishing the toilets in the W. I. Hall.

Cllr. Clarke pointed out the entire interior of the Memorial Hall had been decorated by volunteers at a cost of just £30. 00 for materials, but, in response, it was also pointed out that the refurbishment of the toilets had gone far beyond decoration and had included damp-proofing.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Webb, it was agreed that a grant of £200. 00 should be made towards the cost.

(d) Longdon Produce and Flower Show Committee

It was agreed that, in the absence of a completed Grant Application Form, a decision on this application should be deferred, particularly as the Show would not be taking place until September.

(v) Confirmation of Alan Toplis Associates as Independent Internal Auditor

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Couchman, it was agreed that Alan Toplis Associates should continue as the Council's Independent Internal Auditor.

(vi) External Audit

The Clerk reported that he had received from the Audit Commission notice of the dates for the External Audit.

These were:

*Date of Announcement:* 10<sup>th</sup> April 2012;

*Dates when accounts should be available for public inspection:*

24<sup>th</sup> April 2012 – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2012;

*Date for submission of Annual Return to Auditor:* 24<sup>th</sup> May 2012;

*Date for local electors and their representatives to contact Auditor:*

24<sup>th</sup> May 2012.

The Clerk added that he had received an email from Alan Toplis advising him to adhere to the dates set by the Audit Commission, though they were early, since the Audit Commission was anxious to wind up its affair before the external audit was opened up to private firms.

He had therefore posted notices of the Audit on the Parish Council's notice-boards and completed a financial statement for the financial year just ended, copies of which he distributed to Councillors for their scrutiny prior to adopting it at the next meeting.

15. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Steve Shaw, National Co-ordinator of Local Works, an email dated 20<sup>th</sup> March 2012, to which he had appended a message from Cllr. Ron Bailey, of Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Council, regarding news of the success of the proposals to empower Town and Parish Councils regarding dealing with major planning applications.

He had forwarded this email to Councillors for their information.

(ii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Blanka Stead, Wendy House Project Co-ordinator, Animal Health, Petroleum, Safety of Sports Grounds, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012, informing the Council of a project that was intended to deliver advice and guidance to local keepers of animals and all those interested in keeping poultry, sheep or pigs in their back yard or residential area.

Attached was a poster advertising a seminar for keepers and local communities of Lichfield and East Staffordshire Parish Councils and in Tamworth Borough to be held on Thursday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, at the Royal British Legion Club, Alrewas, which he had copied and posted on the parish notice-boards.

(iii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Sue Winson, Head Teacher of Gentleshaw Primary School, a letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012, thanking the Parish Council for the donation of £500 towards the cost of the traversing wall.

(iv) The Clerk reported that he had received from David Ramsbotham, an email dated 25<sup>th</sup> March 2012, enclosing a petition against the number of wind turbines in Staffordshire for which planning applications had been received.

He had forwarded the email to Councillors.

(v) The Clerk reported that he had received from R. E. Bray, Secretary/Co-ordinator, Staffordshire Branch, The Campaign to Protect Rural England, a letter dated 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012, acknowledging receipt of the Parish Council's cheque for £20. 00 and expressing the Branch's appreciation of the Council's continued support.

(vi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Clare Eggington, Principal Development Plans Officer, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> March 2012, inviting members of the Parish Council to the training/briefing session on Localism and the implications for Parish and Town Councils referred to in 8 (iii) above, which he had copied to all Councillors.

## 16. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 25<sup>th</sup> March 2012;  
Revised Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 25<sup>th</sup> March 2012;  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 8<sup>th</sup> April 2012;  
Revised Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 8<sup>th</sup> April 2012;  
Forward Plan – Version 1 – Issued 16. 03. 2012 – Effective for the Period 31. 07. 2012.

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

Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 16<sup>th</sup> March 2012;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2012;

- (iii) From Karen Travers, Admin. Officer – Electoral Services, Lichfield District Council:

Register of Electors – Notice of Alterations (April 2012).

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

S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 9/12 – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2012;  
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No.10/12 – 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012;  
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No.11/12 – 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2012.

- (v) From Sarah Mellor, Operations Manager, East Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Service:

ECVS Criminal Records Bureau Service.

“East Staffordshire Community and Voluntary Service is an Umbrella Registered Body with the Criminal Records Bureau, and we can offer the service across the Midlands and across sectors....”

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

Newsletter – 2012;  
Notice of reduction of fees by Audit Commission;  
“Managing Environmental Change at the Rural Urban Fringe”  
- video by the Birmingham School of the Built Environment,  
Birmingham University.  
SPCA Update (21<sup>st</sup> March 2012);

SPCA Update (27<sup>th</sup> March 2012);  
SPCA Update (4<sup>th</sup> April 2012).

(vii) From The National Association of Local Councils:

NALC Mailbox (30<sup>th</sup> March 2012)

(viii) From The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust:

“Staffordshire Wildlife”: Number 114, Spring, 2012;  
What’s On: May to August 2012;  
Lottery New Players Form.

(ix) From The National Journal of Local Planning, Manningtree, Essex:

“What can the Localism Act do for us?” A practical guide for town  
and parish councils.

(x) From Ordnance Survey:

PSMA Newsletter – March 2012.

(xi) From The Rural Services Network, Tavistock

Weekly Email News Digest – 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012;  
Weekly Email News Digest – 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012;  
Rural Opportunities Bulletin.

(xii) From Insignia Ltd., Wallington, Surrey:

“Closure date for orders for commemorative Diamond Jubilee items  
is fast approaching”.

(xiii) From imember Media Group, Salford:

Cloud Computing & Virtualization Conference 2012 - The Britannia  
Hotel, 15<sup>th</sup> May 2012 (last remaining 85 places).

(xiv) From Stephanie Chambers, S & S Playground Equipment Ltd., Aylesbury,  
Bucks.:

Excellent Value Play Equipment from Safe & Sound.

(xv) From HAGS, Sturminster Newton, Dorset:

“Fantastic bargains to be had!”.

(xvi) From Nottssport, Lutterworth, Leics.:

“Time’s running out. Get your sport or project up and running”;

Brochure: Synthetic Surfaces/Childs Play;  
Brochure: Synthetic Surfaces.

(xvii) From Sutcliffe Play, Pontefract:

“Give your playground a new lease of life”.

(xviii) From Tower Mint Ltd., London SE5:

Diamond Jubilee Commemorative Medal for School and Councils.

(xix) From Sustainable Options, Leeds:

Fences that last for ever.

(xx) From Proludic Sports Ltd., West Bridgford, Nottingham:

“Join Olympian Steve Brackley and Experience the First Sports Legacy Zone”.

(xxi) From Brian Johnson & Co., Insurance Brokers, Reigate, Surrey:

Eclipse Insurance for Parish and Community Councils.

## 17. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Cllr. Taylor expressed concern at work being carried out at the side and rear of No. 2, The Grange, and asked whether it was in conformity with the planning permission granted for the development.

The Clerk said that he would make enquiries.

(ii) Cllr. Clarke asked whether adequate provision existed at the W. I. Hall for disabled access, bearing in mind that Cllr. Cherry was still confined to a wheel-chair.

The Clerk said that he would see whether a ramp was available.

(iii) Cllr. Clarke said that he had found a new source of funding for his computer courses following the withdrawal of financial support by AGEUK.

However, he would need to find a suitable venue, the facilities at St. James School being available only for very short periods.

The Council welcomed Cllr. Clarke’s willingness to continue the courses, which he hoped to begin in October or November.

(iv) Cllr. Nash said that he thought that the information given out by Lichfield District Council could give the misleading impression that Longdon Parish Council had raised the precept for the forthcoming financial year, whereas it would remain the same as the previous year.

The Chairman commented that a study of the figures would reveal, however, that the increase was due to a rise in the cost of services provided by the District and County Councils.

#### 18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in the W. I. Hall, Ford Lane, Longdon, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.

This meeting would also be the Annual Meeting of the Council.

