

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD  
IN THE W. I. HALL, FORD LANE, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2012

Present: Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. C. D. Cherry; Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke;  
Cllr. P. M. Couchman; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cllr. M. J. Nash;  
Cllr. K. C. Taylor; Cllr. C. J. Webb; and Cllr. S. K. Welch.

Also present was the Clerk.

Following the resignation of the Chairman, Cllr. Mrs. G. D. Duckett, the Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Cherry, took the chair.

The first item of the evening was the election of a Chairman, for which Cllr. Cherry relinquished the chair to Cllr. Welch, who invited nominations.

There being no nominations, it was proposed by Cllr. Nash, who was seconded by Cllr. Butler, that Cllr. Cherry should resume the chair for the remainder of the meeting, and this was unanimously agreed.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. A. J. Juxon; Cllr. N. J. Roberts; Lichfield District Council; and County Councillor F. W. Lewis, MBE.

Cllr. Cherry reminded his fellow Councillors that, out of respect to other Councillors, any Councillor unable to attend a meeting should communicate his or her apologies to the Clerk, either by phone or email, before the meeting, and not ask another Councillor to convey them at the actual meeting.

2. 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, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Nash and seconded by Cllr. Butler, approved and signed.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No member of the public was present.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Computer Course

Cllr. Clarke said that he had found a potential teacher, but, as yet, no venue.

“The Swan with Two Necks” was not at present available, and the School was available only in the evening, whereas those expressing a wish to take part wanted the course to be held in the morning.

It was suggested that “The Chetwynd Arms” might make a suitable venue, and Cllr. Clarke said that he would approach the licensee.

(ii) Formation of Residents’ Association in Longdon Green

Cllr. Webb reported that there was support for the proposal but added that, in view of some tension between certain neighbours which he had detected, he did not feel that this was the right time to launch it.

(iii) Closure of Dark Lane

The Clerk reported that there had been no progress so far, and he would ask Richard Rayson, the County Highways Community Highway Liaison Manager, if there were a timetable, when he met him later in the week.

(iv) Gentleshaw Green

Cllr. Welch reported that the hornbeams required to screen the rear wall had been ordered and would be planted in November.

Cllr. Clarke said that there had been no response for the Cannock Wood Flower Club; nonetheless, the School was ready to go ahead with the planting but needed direction.

It was suggested that he should ask for suggestions from the School and, if possible, bring them to the Council at its next meeting with a figure for the cost.

(v) “The Red Lion”

The Clerk reported that, to date, he had received no reply from Enterprise Inns and would follow up his enquiry.

Cllr. Webb said that there had been in-depth cleaning of the premises, the sign, he believed, that the company was preparing to put a licensee in place.

## 5. PLANNING

(i) Report of Planning Committee

12/00569/COU (Change of Use): Acme Tree Services: Change of Use of existing barn to commercial use comprising office, storage and maintenance of plant and associated machinery: Redhill Barn, Horsey Lane, Upper Longdon

There was some surprise that an application for change of use was necessary, given that the surgery appeared to be within the remit of forestry, anyway.

It was feared that, by opening up the site to wider commercial/industrial use, there was a danger that future activity at the site might be inappropriate for such a quiet rural location.

12//00572/FUL: Punch Taverns PLC: Single-storey extension to rear, creation of external terrace and entrance pergola, and various other internal and external refurbishment works: “The Swan with Two Necks”, 40 Brook End, Longdon

The Council welcomed this proposed development, to which it gave its full support.

12/00701/FUL: Mr. and Mrs. R. Totty: First-floor extension to form bedroom: Rock Cottage, Bardy Lane, Upper Longdon

No objection was raised to this application.

12/00860/FUL: Mr. T. Hawkins: First-floor extension over existing garage to form bedroom with en suite: 19 The Grange, Upper Longdon

Opinion was divided on this application.

One Councillor commented that the proposal did not radically alter the skyline, and it was difficult to see how it could have an adverse effect on the adjacent properties. He also pointed out that this was one of the larger plots in The Grange.

However, by far the majority view was that this would be over-development of the site, and reference was made to the District Council’s refusal of planning permission for a similar development at No. 12 Upper Way.

One Councillor living in the area also reported that he had received a number of complaints from local residents about the light now emanating from the newly-built conservatory.

Overall, the predominant view was that further development of this site would be detrimental to the surrounding area, which was within the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Beauty.

12/00926/FUL: Mr. P. Clee: Erection of greenhouse in rear garden: 78 Upper Way, Upper Longdon

The Council saw no reason to object to this proposed development, which was thought to be replacing an earlier greenhouse.

(ii) For Consideration

12/00880/FUL: Walton Homes Ltd.: Erection of a three-bedroom detached dwelling with detached double garage/log store and associated work: Lysways Farm Bungalow, Lysways Lane, Hanch

Cllr. Webb was asked to look at this application and give his opinion to the Clerk for forwarding to Lichfield District Council.

12/00924/FUL: Mr. N. Kitchen : Installation of new raised ground floor patio area with steps to lower garden:5, The Grange, Upper Longdon

12/00925/OUT: Mr. Nick Stanley: Erection of a dwelling house (Outline: layout and access): Roselyn, Lower Way, Upper Longdon

Councillors were urged to look at these applications on the District Council's website and pass their observations on to the Clerk.

It was agreed that, in future, the Clerk should, on receiving planning applications, advise Councillors of each application number so that interested Councillor could consult them and pass the comments on to the Clerk for forwarding to Lichfield District Council.

(iii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

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

12/00569/COU: Acme Tree Services Ltd.: Change of use comprising office, storage and maintenance of plant and machinery and associated facilities: Redhill Barn, Horsey Lane, Upper Longdon

12/00633/FUL: Mr. and Mrs. R. Marson: Single-storey rear extension to form garden room: 22-24 Brook End, Longdon

12/00637/LBC: Mr. and Mrs R. Marson: Works to listed building to enable the erection of a single-storey rear extension to form garden room: 22-24 Brook End, Longdon

(iv) Refused by Lichfield District Council

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

12/00555/FUL: Mr. J. Anders: First-floor extension and alterations to form bathroom and study, 12 Upper Way, Upper Longdon

REASON(S) FOR REFUSAL

1. The proposed development, by reason of its design, size and massing, would result in an over-dominant form of development which would represent an unsympathetic addition to the existing dwelling and would be harmful to the character and appearance of the surrounding streetscene. Furthermore, it would fail to achieve a high quality of design, to the detriment of the character of the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

12/00701/FUL: Mr. and Mrs. R. Totty: First-floor extension to form bedroom: Rock Cottage, Brady Lane, Upper Longdon

REASON(S) FOR REFUSAL

1. The proposed development, by reason of its design, size and massing, would result in an over-dominant form of development which would be detrimental to the amenity of neighbouring residents and would detract from its openness and visual amenity.

(v) Other Planning Matters

(a) Certificate of Lawful Use or Development

Applicant: Mr. & Mrs. J. Ashby  
Site: Fern House, Brereton Hill Lane, Upper Longdon  
Development: Two-storey extension

“The proposed two-storey extension would fall within Schedule 2, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended) and therefore would be lawful”.

Signed B. Nahal, Authorised Officer, and dated 11th July 2012.

(b) Benbrook Farm, Stoneywell Lane

The Clerk reported that he had received from Claire Billings, Development Control Manager, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 2012, in which she had assured the Council that the wording of the agricultural occupancy condition was in accordance with Government guidance as set out in Circular 11/95 and, as such, was considered to be suitably robust.

If the Parish Council should suspect at any time that the occupancy was other than as approved, it should contact the District Council’s planning enforcement team, who would investigate any alleged breaches.

Referring to the Parish Council’s concerns about the amount of rubble being stored on the premises, Mrs. Billings had said that the applicant had advised that it was being stored on site for use in foundations and areas of hardstanding around the farm and was not, therefore, related to the most recent application for a dwelling and could not be controlled as part of any consent issued in that respect.

The planning enforcement team was aware of the situation and inspected the relevant paperwork relating to transfer and use of waste.

It was generally agreed that the Parish Council’s immediate concerns had been satisfactorily addressed, but the Council would continue to monitor the situation.

6. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

None was presented.

7. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

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

(i) “Youth Engagement: Re-engaging Young People in Education, Training and Employment”: Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2012, at the Strand Palace Hotel, London, from 9. 00 a.m. to 4. 30 p.m.

First place £325. 00, 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> place £285. 00

(ii) Lichfield District Parish Forum: Tuesday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, commencing at 7. 00 p.m.

(iii) Cannock Chase AONB Parish Councils' Meeting: Thursday, September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2012, at 7. 00 p.m. Venue to be announced.

Cllr. Welch said that he was unable to attend this meeting, but Cllr. Taylor offered to attend in his place.

(iv) Community Council of Staffordshire – Annual General Meeting: Monday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012, at Abbots Bromley Village Hall, Bagot Street, Abbots Bromley.

Light refreshments would be served from 7. 00 p.m., and the formal business would begin at 7. 30 p.m.

The Clerk said that he hoped to attend this meeting.

(v) Staffordshire Playingfields Association – Annual General Meeting: Wednesday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in the Evans Park Conference Room, Stafford Football Club, Riverway, Stafford, commencing at 2. 00 p.m.

Both Cllr. Clarke and the Clerk indicated their intention to attend.

## 8. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

### (i) Report of meeting of Highways and Open Spaces Committee

Councillor Welch presented a written report on a meeting of the Highways and Open Spaces Committee which had taken place in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012 (*Appendix A*).

#### (a) Footpath Leaflets

The Clerk reported that, in spite of several attempts, he had been unable to place an order for footpath leaflet holders with POS Acrylics, possibly because the quantity was too small to interest the company.

He had found a number of other companies supplying leaflet holders, but none supplied five-tier holders, and he would now be approaching organisations like the tourist information centres and the County Library Service to see if they could help.

Cllr. Clarke suggested buying three-tier A4 holders and inserting divisions and offered to make enquiries amongst his own contacts.

#### (b) Footpath No. 73

Basically, the solution proposed was the re-aligning of the bridleway along the perimeter of the field through which it now passed diagonally.

Cllr. Clarke said that part of the problem had been the failure of horse-riders to close the gate once they had passed through, and, as a consequence, the farmer had now locked the gate.

Cllr. Butler suggested that one solution could be the installation of a self-closing gate, but Cllr. Clarke said that the problem had been exacerbated by the removal of a hedge which had allowed dogs running loose with the horses to enter the field, and the farmer feared that they would start worrying livestock.

Any fencing separating the proposed new line of the bridleway from the field would therefore have to be dog-proof and consequently more expensive.

While a minimum grant of £5000 would be available from Paths for Communities, a further 25% would have to be contributed from private sources, so there would be the added need to find a sponsor.

Progress in having the footpath upgraded to the status of a bridleway was virtually static; the application was item no. 168 on the County Council's list, and only twelve applications were dealt with each year!

Unfortunately, the Home Office had ruled that the application submitted by Alan Rowe did not fulfil the five priorities needed to facilitate prompt action.

Cllr. Clarke also pointed out that the footpath at the point where it left Ford Lane was not part of the bridleway, and its use by horses was only the result of custom and practice.

It was agreed that the matter should be referred back to the Committee, who would then make its recommendations to the Council.

(c) Ford Lane

The Committee had also received from Mrs. Val Passey, of The Cottage, Ford Lane, a letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> August 2012, drawing the Council's attention to the weeds growing at the edges of Ford Lane which needed to be treated and asking whether the surface could be re-laid so that the broken areas where the weeds grew would be covered by tarmac, thus discouraging future growth .

The Clerk said that this would be one of the issues which he would raise with the Community Highway Liaison Manager when he met him later that week.

It was agreed that, in the meantime, the Clerk should invite Graham McCulloch to submit a quote for treating the weeds.

Mrs. Passey had also asked if the street nameplate missing from the junction of the lane with Brook End and Mill Way could be replaced; the Clerk was instructed to forward her request to Lichfield District Council's Operational Services.

(d) Tree Survey

Cllr. Taylor said that it had been incorrect to report that Cllr. Juxon was helping him in preparing the final draft of the survey, simply that he had shown an interest in some sections of the map.

Asked if he was using GPS, Cllr. Taylor said that he was using maps provided by Portia Howe, one of Lichfield District Council's Arboricultural Officers.

(e) Litter Bin at junction of Church Way and Berkeley Way

The Clerk reported that he had received from Mr. Alan Johnson, of No. 1 Berkeley Way, a letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> July 2012, complaining about the use of the litter bin attached to the lamp-post adjacent to their property for the disposal of dog waste, which, as a consequence, was making the bin malodorous and fly-ridden.

He had more recently received a telephone call from Ms. Barbara Etheridge, Mr. Johnson's partner, asking for the bin to be taken away.

The Clerk was instructed to forward this request to the District Council's Operational Services.

(ii) Village Flower Tubs

Cllr. Clarke asked whether the village flower tubs could, in future, be planted more in uniformity, adding that he was not advocating that every tub should be planted with identical plants, but that each might have the same dominant central plant, leaving whoever maintained the tub to plant the remainder according to taste.

The Clerk reminded the Council that each and every tub was planted and maintained by a parishioner and co-ordinating their contribution might prove difficult.

Cllr. Cherry added that the perfect opportunity to introduce conformity had been presented by the Diamond Jubilee, but that opportunity had now passed.

It was finally concluded that any kind of imposition might not be met favourably and agreed that the idea should not be pursued.

(iii) Rights of Way Team

The Clerk reported that he had received from Paul Rochfort, Principal Rights of Way Officer, Environment and Countryside, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> August 2012, informing the Council of changes to the Rights of Way Team following the departure of three members of staff.

Rights of way queries, such as damaged stiles, overgrown footpaths and poor signage could be reported to the general enquiry email: [rightsofway@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:rightsofway@staffordshire.gov.uk) They would then be investigated by the County Ranger Service.

All matters relating to enforcement, large maintenance works, public paths orders and other community improvement schemes would be dealt with by the following officers:

Dawn Plant, Rights of Way Maintenance and Enforcement Officer (North)

Tel. No.: 01785 277246. Email: [dawn.plant@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.plant@staffordshire.gov.uk).

Jackie Atkin, Rights of Way Maintenance and Enforcement Officer (South)

Tel. No.: 01785 277244. Email: [jacqueline.atkin@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:jacqueline.atkin@staffordshire.gov.uk).

Officers were also available to meet with parish, community and user groups and provide any help and assistance that might be required.

## 9. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

(i) Mowing Contract

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, he had received two reports from Graham McCulloch, the Council's mowing contractor, the first dated 27<sup>th</sup> July 2012, the second dated 27<sup>th</sup> August 2012, in both of which he had reported that, in spite of the recent heavy rain, both cuts had been completed satisfactorily.



(ii) Open Area in front of Longdon Hall

Cllr. Welch reported that this area had recently been cut, in line with the management plan agreed between the owners of the Hall and Lichfield District Council.

10. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

(i) Vacancy in the Office of Councillor for Longdon Ward

The Clerk said that he would be reporting the resignation of Cllr. Mrs. Duckett to the Electoral Officer of Lichfield District Council so that she begin the procedure for filling the vacancy without delay.

(ii) Neighbourhood Plan

The Clerk reminded Councillors that Neighbourhood Plans would feature in the business of the forthcoming District Parish Forum.

It was agreed that this should be included as an item on the agenda of the next meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

11. LAW AND ORDER

(i) Retirement of PC Andy Brown

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to PCSO Lisa Anderson, who had confirmed that PC Brown would be retiring on October 24<sup>th</sup>.

As yet, it had not been decided whether he would be replaced or whether his responsibilities should be shared by neighbouring Community Beat Officers.

In addition to Longdon, his beat covered Farewell and Chorley, Hamstall Ridware, Mavesyn Ridware and Colton.

It was agreed that Longdon should hold its own farewell reception and that Mrs. Brown should also be included in the invitation.

Final arrangements would be agreed at the Council's next meeting

12. PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Cllr. Couchman reported that the residents' complaints had received a swift response from the County Council's Transportation Unit and the matter had now been resolved.

The Unit would be monitoring the service, for which it was paying a substantial subsidy.

### 13. BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

#### (i) Announcement of Results

The Clerk reported that Longdon & Longdon Green had been placed second in the Large Village Section of the Lichfield/Cannock Chase District, while Upper Longdon had won the Small Village Section, though Kings Bromley, winners of the Large Village Section, had been awarded the trophy.

He had posted copies of the appropriate certificates on the parish notice-boards and written a letter of thanks to each of the volunteers.

Cllr. Cherry said that he would post the results on the parish website.

### 14. FINANCIAL MATTERS

#### (i) Accounts for Payment

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

*Instaprint, Rugeley	Printing 700 copies of "Longdon Life" and 600 copies of 2 inserts	£ 866. 50
*Hazel Crosbie	Delivering "Longdon Life"	£ 45. 00
*A. J. Juxon	Editor's Expenses	£ 15. 00
*G. C. McCulloch	Mowing – July 25th	£ 370. 00
*G. C. McCulloch	Mowing – August 22 <sup>nd</sup>	£ 370. 00
Longdon W.I.	Hire of Hall – September 4 <sup>th</sup> : £12. 00 Hire of Hall – September 11 <sup>th</sup> : £12.00	£ 24. 00
W. B. Sullivan	Clerk's Salary	£ 280. 00
HM Revenue & Customs	Employers Tax	£ 70. 00
W, B. Sullivan	Photocopying: £112. 48 Postage: £ 34. 04	£ 146. 52
Audit Commission	<u>Audit Fee 2011/12</u> Fee: £162. 00 VAT: £ 30. 00	£ 192. 00
Staffordshire Wildlife Trust	Membership Subscription	£ 39. 00

Staffordshire Playing Fields Association Annual Subscription £ 15. 00

(\* confirmation # payment made under Section 137

(ii) Payments Received

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

Longdon Post Office and Stores	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 7. 50
Bradley Lakes Turf 'n' Landscape	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 15. 00
N. J. Sutcliffe	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 7. 50

(iii) Current Balances

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

NatWest c/a:	£579. 86	The Halifax s/a: £5189.33
<u>less uncleared cheques</u>		
	1739: £370. 00	
	1720: £ 50. 86	
	1723: £ 209. 00	

(iv) Requests for Grant Aid

(a) Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall

The Clerk reported that he had received a request from the Treasurer of the Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee for a donation towards the cost of emergency repairs to the roof of the Hall.

It was agreed, however, that the Council could not consider making any donations that had not already been budgeted for.

(b) Open Spaces Society

The Clerk reported that he had received from Tim Crowther, Chairman of the Open Spaces Society, a letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012, asking the Council for a donation towards its Legal Fund.

However, the Council agreed that the appeal was too general to have a direct application to the parish of Longdon.

(v) Completion of Annual Audit

The Clerk reported that the External Auditor had now completed the annual audit.

He had made no comment, either critical or complimentary.

A copy of the completed Annual Return had been placed in the Parish Council file in Longdon Post Office, and a copy of the Notification of Completion of Audit posted on each of the parish notice-boards.

(vi) Appointment of External Auditor from 2012/13

The Clerk reported that he had received from Marcine Waterman, Director, Audit Policy and Regulation, Audit Commission, a letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012, informing the Council of the appointment of Grant Thornton UK LLP as external auditor to audit the annual return of Longdon Parish Council for five years from 2012/13.

The Commission will continue to monitor the performance of the firms providing limited assurance audit services to small bodies.

## 15. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Shelley Lloyd, Business Services Co-ordinator, Enterprise Inns PLC, Solihull, a letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> July 2012, acknowledging receipt of the Clerk's letter of 6<sup>th</sup> July 2012, adding that he had passed it to Simon Hughes, the Regional Manager responsible for "The Red Lion", for a reply.

So far, Mr. Hughes had not responded and the Clerk would send him a reminder.

(ii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Antony Lancaster, Planning Policy Manager, Cannock Chase Council, a letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> August 2012, inviting the Parish Council's comments on the District's Draft Local Plan (Part 1), which could be consulted by visiting [www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/planningpolicy), which set out proposed future planning policy for the District till 2028.

The consultation period began on August 6<sup>th</sup> and would run six weeks; responses should be submitted by 17<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

(iii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Daniel Flanagan, of Local Works, an email dated 14<sup>th</sup> August 2012, informing the Council of an opportunity for Town and Parish Councils to gain new powers and funding to help their communities.

The Clerk had forwarded this email to Councillors, since the consultation had ended before the September meeting.

(iv) The Clerk received from Mary Cooke, Play Development Manager, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012, asking whether there were any parks or play areas 'down in the dumps' in the parish that needed a little help, since, if so, there was an opportunity to feature in a TV show.

However, Longdon Parish had no parks or play areas whatsoever.

(v) The Clerk reported that he had received from Annette Johnson, Secretary, Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee, a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012, thanking the members of Longdon Parish Council for their donation of £500.00 towards the cost of installing suspended ceilings and new lighting and enclosing photographs showing part of the work.

(vi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Stephen Bradbury, Manager, Lighting and ITS Section, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> August 2012, enclosing a briefing note clarifying the details behind his Council's street lighting energy conservation initiative, copies of which he had distributed to Councillors with the agenda of the present meeting.

(vii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Austin Brady, Head of Conservation, The Woodland Trust, a letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> August 2012, offering the charity's guidance on how to protect important woodland habitats and on how planting new trees and woods could mitigate the impact of High Speed Rail 2 on local communities.

It was agreed that HSR2 was not expected to have an impact on Longdon.

(viii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Rachel Frondigoun, Housing Strategy Officer, Community, Housing and Health, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012, informing the Council that British Gas was offering free solid wall insulation to any household where the property was on the main gas network, heated by electricity or coal, or where someone living there was in receipt of a benefit.

This offer was available only until the end of September, and the Clerk said that he had posted notices of the offer on all the parish notice-boards.

(ix) The Clerk reported that he had received from Gareth Thomas, Geographic Information Manager, Lichfield District Council, two letters, the first dated 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012, advising that there was an issue with the Service that provided access to Localview and the second, dated the following day, advising that the problem had been resolved.

(x) The Clerk reported that he had received from Sue Venables, South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula Clinical Commissioning Group, an email dated 10<sup>th</sup> September 2012, informing the Council that, under the Government's Health and Social Care Act (2012), South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula Clinical Group would be taking over the responsibility for arranging health services to meet the needs of the local community

Involving patients and the public in decision-making was fundamental to the future success of the Group, which wanted to establish an active partnership and to establish new approaches to involvement and engagement.

To that end, patients and public were being invited to a Patient and Public Stakeholder event at Oak Farm Hotel, Watling Street, Hatherton, Cannock, on Wednesday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012, commencing with lunch at 12 noon and ending at approximately 4.00 p.m.

Cllr. Webb said that he would be attending that meeting and expected his wife, Dame Patricia Morgan-Webb to be appointed Vice-Chairman of the advisory panel which was being formed.

## 16. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 29<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 12<sup>th</sup> August 2012;  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 26<sup>th</sup> August 2012;  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 9<sup>th</sup> September 2012;  
Forward Plan – Version 1 – Issued 17. 08. 2012 – Effective for the Period  
01. 09. 2012 – 31. 2. 2012;  
Forward Plan – Version 2 – Issued 17. 08. 2012 – Effective for the Period  
01. 09. 2012 – 31. 02 2012

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

Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 6<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 13<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 20<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 27<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2012;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 10<sup>th</sup> August 2012;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 17<sup>th</sup> August 2012;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 24<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

- (iii) From Neil Cox, Planning Policy Manager, Lichfield District Council:

Lichfield District Plan – Representation Form and Statement of  
Representations.

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

S3SN - E Bulletin - Issue No. 24/12 - 12<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
S3SN - E Bulletin - Issue No. 25/12 – 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
S3SN - E Bulletin - Issue No. 27/12 – 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2012;  
S3SN - E Bulletin - Issue No. 28/12 - 9<sup>th</sup> August 2012;  
S3SN - E Bulletin - Issue No. 29/12 - 16<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

- (v) From Andy Goode, Environment Group Leader, Staffordshire County Council:

Heritage Update – 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012.

- (vi) From Sue Sheppard, Biodiversity Officer, Staffordshire County Council:

Managing Cannock Chase – update on progress and planned works  
on Cannock Chase Country Park covering from August 2012 to July 2013.

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

SPCA Update (20<sup>th</sup> July 2012);

Weekly Update (25<sup>th</sup> July 2012);  
Weekly Update (3<sup>rd</sup> August 2012);  
Council Training Financial Seminars;  
Weekly Update ( 9<sup>th</sup> August 2012);  
NALC Legal Briefings;  
Weekly Update ( 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2012);  
Queen's Award for Voluntary Services 2013;  
Highway Consultancy (Stephen Clarke CV);  
Weekly Update (4<sup>th</sup> September 2012).

(viii) From The National Association of Local Councils:

“LCR”: Summer 2012, Volume 65, No. 2.

(ix) From Sara Green, Community Development Officer, The Community Council of Staffordshire:

Community Bulk Oil Buying Scheme.

(x) From Staffordshire Police:

“Staffordshire's Getting Even Better”  
- An Office of National Statistics (ONS) report published 19<sup>th</sup> July 2012 shows Staffordshire people are getting even safer;  
Transition Update – August 2012.;

(xi) From The Secretary, Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee:

Minutes of extraordinary meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
Minutes of meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2012;  
Agenda for meeting to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

(xii) From The Rural Services Network, Tavistock, Devon:

Weekly Email News Digest –16<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
Weekly Email News Digest – 30<sup>th</sup> July 2012;  
Weekly Email News Digest – 20<sup>th</sup> August 2012;  
Weekly Email News Digest – 28<sup>th</sup> August 2012;  
Weekly Email News Digest – 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012;  
Rural Opportunities Bulletin – 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2012;  
Rural Opportunities Bulletin – 6<sup>th</sup> August 2012.

(xiii) From The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust:

“Staffordshire Wildlife”: Number 115, Summer 2012;  
What's On: September to December 2012;  
2 books of Annual Raffle tickets;  
Notice of 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual General Meeting.

(xiv) From David Potts, Project Leader, Two Saints Way:

Two Saints Way blog on signage.

(xv) From The Ordnance Survey:

PSMA member survey and Royal Mail royalty terms reminder.

(xvi) From The Historic Towns Forum:

August Newsletter;  
Events and Seminars.

(xvii) From HAGS, Sturminster Newton, Dorset:

Stock clearance offers.

(xviii) From Clare Cox, S. G. Baker Limited, Grantham, Lincs.:

“Are you currently looking to restock your sandbags due to the recent flooding reducing stocks?”

(xix) From The Institute of Groundsmanship:

IOG SALTEX 2012 – “the largest ever representation of commercial vehicles”.

(xx) From Stephanie Chambers, Safe & Sound Playgrounds, Westcott, Kent:

Designed Playgrounds from Safe & Sound.

(xxi) From Sutcliffe Play, Pontefract:

“Don’t miss out on our dish roundabout offer”.

(xxii) From The Midlands Air Ambulance Charity:

21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Summer Prize Draw (2 book)

## 17. DOCUMENTS

The following documents were available for Councillors to consult:

- (i) Payments by parish and community councils and charter trustees  
- A Consultation Paper
- (ii) Lichfield District Local Plan: “Our Strategy” – Proposed Submission, July 2012.
- (iii) “LCR”: Autumn 2012.



## 18. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Cllr. Clarke pointed out that “The Parish Council of Longdon” and “Longdon Parish Council” were being used interchangeably as the name of the Parish Council.

He thought that, if this practice continued, it might compromise the legality of some of the Council’s legal documents.

The Clerk said that he would seek the opinion of the Staffordshire Parish Councils’ Association.

(ii) Cllr. Taylor reported that he had been approached by a resident of Lower Way who was concerned that overgrown shrubs and trees on the piece of wasteland at the junction of Grange Hill and Lower Way were beginning to obscure the visibility of motorists emerging from Lower Way and was asking if they could be cut back.

Cllr. Welch reminded the meeting that, when a diseased tree needed removing, it had not been possible to establish the ownership of this piece of land, and the District Council had put a charge on the land in case the cost of removing the tree could be claimed in the future if the owner were ever identified.

A similar problem would exist in this case too, though he thought that the County Highways Department would carry out the work if the vegetation were to become a danger.

(iii) Having seen a small child fall into a large hole there, Cllr. Butler expressed his concern about the state of the car park at Longdon Village Hall and said, in his view, the car park should be closed to discourage parking by parents delivering their children to or collecting them from the school and thereby prevent further deterioration

Cllr. Cherry added that it was not possible for wheel-chairs to use this entrance, either.

It was recalled that “The Swan with Two Necks” had faced a similar problem with its car park and had asked the School whether it would consider contributing to the cost of maintaining the surface, but this suggestion had been rejected by the School.

Similarly a proposal to charge parents a small parking fee had also been resisted.

There was, however, concern that denying parents either of these parking spaces would create chaos on the streets around and beyond the School.

(iv) Cllr. Butler reported that a street light in Upper Way close to its junction with Startley Lane was being obscured by the branches of a tree.

The Clerk said that he would draw the attention of the Community Highway Liaison Manager to this problem when he met him later that week.

## 19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in the W. I. Hall, Ford Lane, Longdon, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.



MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE HIGHWAYS AND OPEN SPACES  
COMMITTEE OF LONGDON PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE W. I. HALL,  
FORD LANE, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>, 2012

Present: Cllr. Mrs. G. D. Duckett (Acting Chairman); Cllr. C. D. Cherry;  
Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke; Cllr. P. M. Couchman; Cllr. M. J. Nash;  
Cllr. K. C. Taylor; and Mr. Will Rose.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. A. J. Juxon; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; and Cllr. S. K. Welch.

*Prior to the opening of the meeting, Cllr. Cherry presented the Chairman with a gavel, crafted by Mr. Rose, explaining that it was intended as an expression of his appreciation of the Council's patience during the months of his illness. In accepting the gift, the Chairman said that the Council were only too pleased that Cllr. Cherry was now able to resume his duties as Councillor*

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 3<sup>RD</sup> JANUARY 2012

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Nash and seconded by Cllr. Clarke, the minutes of the meeting of the Highways and Open Spaces Committee held in the W. I. Hall, Ford Lane, Longdon, on Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, were approved and signed.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Clarke and seconded by Mr. Will Rose, the minutes of the meeting of the Highways and Open Spaces Committee held in the W. I. Hall, Ford Lane, Longdon, on Tuesday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, were approved and signed.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No members of the public were present.

5. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Nash, Cllr. Mrs. Duckett was unanimously elected permanent Chairman of the Committee.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Glebe Field

Mr. Rose confirmed that Kevin Healey had cut margins on either side of the footpath running across the field, but Footpath No. 37 running from Longdon Memorial Hall along the back of Church Way needed clearing.

Cllr. Mrs. Duckett added that she had spoken to Mr. Healey, who said that he was at the moment extremely busy but would cut the field as soon as he could find the time.

(ii) Footpath Leaflets

The Clerk reported that he had not been successful in placing an order for leaflet holders with POS Acrylics, of Milton Keynes, possibly because an order of only seven holders was too small, and his search on the internet for an alternative supplier had revealed that none stocked five-tier holders.

He would now approach the Staffordshire Library Service to see that if they could furnish him with the name of a supplier or, better still, provide the Council with holders.

(iii) Footpaths Report

Mr. Rose updated the meeting on action which had been taken on footpaths since the last meeting.

FP. 27 (Hill Top)

A kissing-gate had now been put in, but the finger-post had not been re-erected and was now missing.

He had requested a new post from the County Council.

FP. 48 (Red Hill – Borough Lane)

While the need to repair two stiles had been highlighted during the Jubilee Walk, the County Council had, in fact, repaired four.

FP. 52 (Lower Way – Upper Way)

He had inspected this footpath that very afternoon and could confirm that it was now clear.

FP. 53 (Lower Way – Stockings Lane)

Following a complaint that the stile was difficult to use, an extra footplate had been put in.

Both Mr. Rose and Cllr. Taylor spoke of their pleasure at seeing the new wildflower meadow in full flower.

It was suggested that the land-owner should be recommended for a countryside award.

FP. 72 (Brook End – Hood Lane)

Mr. Rose said that Paul Rochford, the Principal Rights of Way Officer, had acknowledged that the new fencing could be a problem, though it did allow through passage to walkers.

However, the path was now completely impassable because of stinging nettles, and he would report this to Mr. Rochford,

FP. 55 (Bradley Lakes – Armitage)

At the conclusion of Mr. Rose's report, Cllr. Couchman once more drew the Committee's attention to the poor state of this footpath, which, he reminded the meeting, was impassable because of nettles and rabbit-holes.

Moreover, spoil had been dumped by the gate and further down the path, and building materials were being stored alongside the hedge

Mr. Rose said that he would report this to Mr. Rochford.

7. FOOTPATHS REPORT

Mr. Rose then presented an up-to-date report on the state of the footpath network in the parish.

FP. 27 (Hill Top – Armitage)

He had walked this footpath on June 1<sup>st</sup> and subsequently reported that a stile needed repairing, but, in view of the fact that cattle had churned up the ground in the vicinity of the stile, the Ranger had thought it best to leave the repair till the ground was dry.

FP. 49 (Racing Stables, Stockings Lane – Borough Lane)

He had cleared a stile of brambles and had asked for a replacement for the missing finger-post.

FP. 69 (Borough Lane – Longdon Green)

A stile on this footpath was totally overgrown.

Two other problems were raised: flooding in Lysways Lane; and an overgrown hedgerow alongside the pavement to the rear of Swan Close.

Firstly, Cllr. Couchman reported that a tractor had fallen into the ditch along Lysways Lane which now needed clearing out.

Cllr. Clarke reminded the meeting this part of the lane was classified as a flood area, which made it even more imperative that the ditch be kept clear.

The Clerk said that he would draw the attention of Richard Rayson, the Community Highways Liaison Manager, to this problem when he met him the following week.

Cllr. Couchman then reported that the pavement from Hood Lane into Brook End was being obstructed by nettles and an overhanging hedge.

It was agreed that clearing them was the responsibility of Lichfield District Council, who owned the adjoining properties, and that the Clerk should write to the appropriate officer asking that action be taken to clear the pavement.

Two other matters were discussed: damage to the wall alongside the church car park caused by a fallen tree; and stones brought onto High Street by recent heavy rain.

Cllr. Cherry reported that a tree on the edge of the church car park had fallen three weeks previously, undermining the adjacent wall. Following a visit by the Archdeacon, an architect had been instructed to re-build the wall and at the same time put in a wheelchair ramp.

Cllr. Taylor reported that, following recent heavy rain, large stones had been washed onto High Street and asked whether a road sweeper could be requested to clear them.

However, it was thought that some of them might be too large for a sweeper to remove and that, anyway, removing them should be the responsibility of the farmer who had laid them at the entrance to his field in the first place.

Mr. Rose suggested that Cllr. Taylor should advise the resident who had complained to him about the stones to contact CLARENCE, the County Highways Emergency Service.

## 8. FOOTPATH NO. 73

Mr. Rose reported that he had arranged a site meeting with Brian Smith, Access and Bridleway Officer for Staffordshire, British Horse Society, together with Cllr. Mrs. Duckett, at which it had been suggested that a bridleway could be laid out around two sides of the field accessed from the ford, separated from the field by a simple post-and-wire fence and even replacing part of Bridleway 25 currently cutting diagonally across the field.

He pointed out that Parish Councils had the power to designate a footpath or bridleway without seeking the consent of the County Council, who would, nonetheless, have to be informed as matter of a courtesy. However, this could not be done without the consent of the land-owner, neither would it become a legal right of way.

While the owner would give up a small area of land - the bridleway would have to be at least three metres wide - , he could be compensated under the Paths for Communities scheme, which offered grants of a minimum of £5000 provided twenty-five per cent of the funding came from other non-public sources.

Keith Healey had given a verbal quote of £700. 00, plus VAT, to provide and erect the fencing, approximately two hundred yards in length, and to re-locate the field gate and kissing-gate, though this had been an extempore quote and might be higher if he were asked to provide a detailed written quote.

Cllr. Mrs. Duckett assured Cllr. Clarke that there was no legal obstacle to accessing the bridleway from Ford Lane on horseback, though the route is currently designated as a footpath.

Cllr. Mrs. Duckett then said that she had rung the land-owner, Mr. Paul Boston, in order to discuss the proposal with him and had left a message on his answer-phone asking him to contact her; the Clerk asked whether this had not been premature on her part, since the Parish Council was still in ignorance of the proposal.

Cllr. Mrs. Duckett argued that she was merely seeking information about the viability of the scheme, since a refusal on the part of Mr. Boston would mean that it could not proceed.

However, the Clerk suggested that, in fact, by approaching Mr. Boston, she had taken the first step in implementing the project, and he asked whether it would have been more appropriate at that point, once the details of the project had been established at the site meeting, to discuss the project with the Council before approaching Mr. Boston.

After a further exchange of views, Cllr. Mrs. Duckett abruptly left the meeting, which was then chaired by Cllr. Cherry.

## 9. TREE SURVEY

Cllr. Taylor reported that he and Cllr. Juxon were currently preparing an updated version, which he hoped to make available to Councillors shortly.

## 10. FUTURE PROJECTS

Cllr. Clarke reminded the meeting of his proposal that floral gateways be laid out at the entrances to the village.

He was warned that money would not be available during the current financial year, but advised that the project could be included in next year's budget.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN)

### (i) Condition of Ford Lane

Mr. Rose read out an email from Mrs. Val Passey, dated 24<sup>th</sup> August 2012, in which she asked for the maintenance of Ford Lane to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council, particularly the area outside the W. I. Hall, where weeds had gradually broken down the edges of the road.

It was time, she felt, that a contractor was employed to make good the edges of the lane so that weeds would no longer grow through and asked whether this could be considered in any planning of road improvements during the coming year.

Mrs. Passey also asked if the street nameplate, missing for a number of years, could be replaced at the far end of Ford Lane at its junction with Mill Way.

It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Richard Rayson, the Community Highways Liaison Manager, drawing his attention to this request and at the same time establishing with him that Ford Lane was indeed an adopted road and therefore the responsibility of the County Council.

(ii) Flower Tubs

Cllr. Clarke asked whether next year the village flower tubs could be planted so as to display a common theme chosen by the Parish Council.

It was agreed that, while the suggestion had its appeal, it might be difficult to implement it, since the tubs were maintained by individual parishioners, and the only likelihood of introducing it would be if the Council were to take over the responsibility of planting all of the tubs.

(iii) Litter Bin in Berkeley Way

The Clerk reported that he had received from Alan Johnson, of 1 Berkeley Way, Longdon, a letter dated 29<sup>th</sup> July 2012, complaining that the litter-bin attached to a lamp-post outside his property was being used to deposit dog waste and that the smell emanating from the bin had now become offensive and asking whether the bin could be re-sited on a post on the edge of the Green opposite or simply be removed altogether.

The Clerk added that this complaint followed an altercation between Mr. Johnson and a dog walker whom he had asked to refrain from using the bin for that purpose.

The Clerk said that he had attached a notice to the lamp-post above the bin asking dog walkers to use the dog waste bin at the top of the footpath between Nos. 31 and 33 Church Way and had subsequently received two emails from the husband of the dog walker, the first asking if the notice was official and the second complaining that his wife had been deeply upset by the aggressive approach of the house-holder, an allegation strenuously denied.

It was agreed that this matter should be raised at the next Council meeting, when it could be decided whether to re-locate or remove the bin and whether to provide a dog waste bin on the Green, as had been suggested.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, in the W. I. Hall, Ford Lane, Longdon, commencing at 7. 00 p.m.