

MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD IN THE CANNOCK WOOD AND
GENTLESHAW VILLAGE HALL, BUDS ROAD, CANNOCK, ON TUESDAY,
MARCH 12TH, 2013

Present: Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke, Vice-Chairman (who, in the absence of the Chairman, took the chair); Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. C. D. Cherry; Cllr. P. M. Couchman; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cllr. K. R. Morgan; Cllr. K. C. Taylor; and Cllr. C. J. Webb.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. A. J. Juxon; Cllr. M. J. Nash; Cllr. S. K. Welch; and Cllr. N. J. Roberts, of Lichfield District Council.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the W. I. Hall, Ford Lane, Longdon, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Webb, approved and signed.

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No member of the public was present.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Planning Checklist

Cllr. Morgan reported that, following his meeting with Cllr. Roberts, he had drawn up two pages of bullet points, and it was agreed that the next step was for Cllr. Cherry to convene a meeting of the Planning Committee to study them.

(ii) HGVs in Bardy Lane

The Clerk reported that, on Monday, March 4th, a lorry from Luxembourg, whose driver spoke no English, became stuck at Red Hill, and that it had taken the attention of two police officers to extricate it.

This had been achieved by reversing the lorry all the way back to Borough Lane, during which it had caused damage to the highway verge.

The whole incident had lasted from 8. 30 a.m. till 1. 30 p.m., during which time the lane had been closed.

It was agreed that the Clerk should make the County Highways Department aware of this incident, which would underline the need for action to deter the use of this lane by HGVs.

(iii) Highways and Footpaths

The Clerk reported that he had received a phone call from Kevin Wawrynczyk, Community Infrastructure Liaison Manager, regarding a site meeting at which the several issues raised by the Parish Council could be considered.

Of the dates offered, it was agreed that the afternoon of April 8th, the late morning and afternoon of April 10th, all day April 11th and the morning of April 12th were all convenient, and it was agreed that the Clerk should now contact Cllr. Lewis and ask him to finalise the arrangements.

(iv) Community Paths Initiative Bid

The Clerk reported that he had written to Paul Rochford, Principal Footpaths Manager, Staffordshire County Council, informing him that the Parish Council would be putting in a bid for £500 towards the cost of two new footpath leaflets.

The Council had until the end of the month to submit details.

(v) Financial Matters

The Clerk reported that the cheque to the Beaudesert Sports Field and Recreation Ground Trust had been cleared but not yet acknowledged.

5. PLANNING

(i) Report of Planning Committee

13/00121/FUL: Mr. S. Oxby: First-floor extension and alterations to form bedroom with en suite: Benvenuto, Bardy Lane, Longdon

No reason had been seen to object to this proposal.

Mr. D. Harrison: Erection of five-bedroom dwelling with integral garage (extension of time for application 10/00423/FUL): Land adjacent to 23 Upper Way, Upper Longdon

The Council's objection to the original application had been on the grounds that the development was incongruous and out of keeping with its immediate surroundings, and it was agreed that the Council should maintain its position.

13/00182/FUL: Mr. & Mrs. Peter Howells: Erection of three two-bedroom detached bungalows with associated garages (extension of time for application 10/00154/FUL): 93 Upper Way, Upper Longdon

The Council's objection to the original application had been based on the over-development of the site and the inappropriateness of the design in relation to their setting, and it was agreed that the Council should maintain its position.

(ii) For Consideration

There had been no further plans for the Council to consider.

(iii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

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

12/01364/FUL: Mr. T. Hewitt: Conversion and extension of existing outbuilding to form covered access and bedroom: Watery Lane Farm, Watery Lane, Gentleshaw

(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 Approval relating to the Parish of Longdon.

(v) Other Planning Matters

(a) Non Material Amendment to Planning Permission 11/01021/FUL: Single-storey side extension to form kitchen: Heather Bank, Huntsmans Hill, Upper Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received a copy of a letter sent to Mr. David Yarnall by the Development Control Manager of Lichfield District Council, dated 12th February 2013, informing Mr. Yarnall that his application to amend the original planning permission by infilling the gap of the north elevation to form a straight wall was thereby approved.

6. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

(i) Governing Body, St. James C. E. (V. C.) School, Longdon

Cllr. Taylor reported that he had recently attended the Governors' meetings, two of a special nature, the third a meeting of the full Governing Body.

While he was unable to report on the business of these meetings, he could inform the Council that three new Governors had been appointed.

However, the Chairman would be resigning in July.

(ii) Management Committee, Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall

Cllr. Taylor reported that he had attended a meeting of the Management Committee of the Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall.

It had been decided that the village would not be entered in this year's Best Kept Village Competition.

Bookings for March were high, and the licensee of The Park Gate Inn had accepted the Committee's invitation to run a bar.

Hire charges had been reviewed, and it had been agreed to charge a rate of £90 a day for a five-day week on condition that the organisation did its own cleaning.

The Committee were considering joining the bulk oil-buying scheme; however, the boiler needed replacing urgently, and the Committee were looking into the cost of changing to gas. It had been suggested that Comic Relief might be approached for a grant; Cllr. Webb suggested that the Committee might also seek funding from the Green Deal, delivered through local authorities, while Cllr. Clarke pointed to the cost-saving advantages of installing a heat pump; he conceded that these were expensive to install, but the Green Deal could apply.

Proposed fund-raising events included a car boot sale, a sale of farmers' produce, and film shows, for which a licence would be needed.

Cllr. Taylor said that the meeting had been well attended and well conducted.

7. NOTICE OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

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

(i) Free Introduction to Neighbourhood Planning: Tuesday, March 18th, 2013, at the Mitchell Arts Centre, Broad Street, Hanley, from 9. 00 a.m. till 12 noon.

Cllr. Clarke had been informed of this meeting, but had concluded that the process in Longdon had gone beyond the early stages and was, in any case, being well supported by Clare Eggington and Patrick Jervis, the two officer assigned by Lichfield District Council to work with parish councils who were drawing up Neighbourhood Plans.

(ii) "Welfare Reform 2013 - Creating a Welfare State System fit for the Twenty-First Century": Wednesday, March 20th, 2013, at a venue in Central London from 9. 00 a.m. till 4. 30 p.m..

(iii) St. Giles Hospice – A Service of Thanksgiving for 30 Years of Care 1983-2013: Sunday, April 28th, 2013 at Lichfield Cathedral at 3, 00 p.m., as part of Cathedral Evensong.

Cllr. Clarke suggested that Cllr. Juxon be asked to attend to represent the Parish Council, since the Council supported the Hospice.

8. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

(i) Potholes

Cllr. Mrs. Meere drew the attention of the Council to a series of three potholes between Ivy House Farm and Laurel Farm, in Gentleshaw, which, she feared, would, if left unattended, meet and make the road impassable.

The road surface at the bottom of School Lane, close to The Cottage, was also breaking up.

The Clerk was instructed to make these problems known to the County Highways Department.

It was also suggested that the dedicated number for reporting potholes to the Highways Department could be displayed on the parish notice-boards.

(ii) Complaint of Dog Fouling and Damage to Verge by Horses in Giddywell Lane

The Clerk reported that a resident had complained to him about the problems being caused by dog owners allowing their dogs to foul the verges in Giddywell Lane and the damage being done by the hooves of horses being ridden over these verges.

It was agreed that a notice should be put in the next issue of "Longdon Life" drawing attention to the problems being caused by these actions.

The whereabouts of dog waste bins could be listed, and residents asked whether there were locations where more bins could be provided.

(iii) Street Cleansing

The Clerk reported that a street cleansing vehicle had been seen operating in the parish on March 4th.

(iv) Parking in Layby on A51

The Clerk reported that he had, as instructed, written to Armitage Shanks, but to date had received no reply.

Cllr. Taylor's offer to follow up the letter with a visit the factory was accepted.

9. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

(i) Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr. Clarke gave Councillors an update on the progress which had so far been made in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Lichfield District Council would be publishing a notice of intent on March 26th, which, in addition to appearing in "Longdon Life" with an introductory note, would appear on the Parish Website and be posted on local lampposts.

At the same time, introductory notes accompanied by a covering letter would be issued through the local schools and public houses.

After Easter, those members of the Working who did not receive Patrick Jervis's briefing at the earlier meeting would be meeting Clare Eggington and Patrick Jervis.

The consultation process would end on May 15th, and, on May 23rd, the Working Group would meet to decide whether there was sufficient interest to proceed.

The final stage of this part of the process would be a meeting of the full District Council at which it would have to be approved.

An initial grant of £5000 would be available, and the cost of the referendum would be met by the District Council.

The Working Group would have to decide how best to contact all interested parties in the area in order to collect their views and the evidence of sustainability and viability, and then public meetings, one in Longdon and one in Gentleshaw, would be called to start everything off.

In the meantime, Lichfield District Council was working on the Local Plan and would be ready to submit it for final examination very shortly.

(ii) Dispensations

Councillors had each been sent for study a copy of a sample application form for dispensation when issues touching on their individual interests were raised at meetings.

However, while the Council was willing to comply with any legal requirement, it was felt that some clarification was needed, particularly as to the nature of a non-closable interest, and discussion was postponed to allow the Clerk to seek clarification from the District Council's Monitoring Officer.

(iii) Arrangements for Annual Assembly

The Clerk reported that he had, as instructed, written to Matthew Storey, headmaster of Longdon Hall School, asking whether this year's Annual Assembly could be held at the school, but had not yet received a reply.

He would email all Councillors as soon as he received Mr. Storey's reply.

(iv) Community Learning – "1st Steps Computing"

Cllr. Clarke reported that this was a course being run by Stafford College and was intended for people of working age.

A similar course could be run for people of retirement age in Longdon, the cost of which - £200 - would be met out of the Staffordshire Wellbeing Fund, and he was now waiting to see if the College could run it.

(v) Appointment of School Governor

The Clerk reported he had received from Wendy Maddox, Administration Officer, Governor Services, a letter dated 1st March 2013, informing the Council that Mrs. Ann Oliver's term of office as Governor of St. James School would end on 31st October, 2013, and inviting the Parish Council to submit a nomination to be considered for appointment.

At the same time, she had reminded the Council that the person currently in post might wish to be re-appointed for a further term.

The Clerk was instructed to contact Mrs. Oliver to establish whether this was so.

10. LAW AND ORDER

(i) Police Surgery

Cllr. Clarke reported that PC Alison Lewis and PCSO Lisa Anderson had attended this surgery, held on Saturday, March 9th between 1. 00 p.m. and 2. 00 p.m.

While there had been no enquiries from members of the public, PC Lewis and PCSO Anderson had joined the children's party which was still taking place inside the Hall and mixed with the children.

The need for greater publicity for these surgeries was apparent, and it was agreed that, in future, more prominent notices should be posted on the parish notice-boards, as well as an insert provided for inclusion in "Longdon Life".

PC Lewis had also asked for the dates of local events such as school fetes and the Produce and Flower Show, at which they might have a presence.

The next surgery would be taking place on Saturday, May 11th.

(ii) Report from Neighbourhood Watch

Cllr. Taylor reported that two sheds at adjacent addresses in Upper Way had been burgled the previous night and a bicycle, chainsaw and other tools had been stolen.

Intruders had also entered the tack room of a local stables, but nothing had been taken.

Asked how this information was being disseminated to local residents, Cllr. Taylor said that, while he received the information, he did not distribute it, this being the function of Neighbourhood Watch cells.

It was agreed that some method of making residents aware of these incidents should be found, perhaps by setting up more cells, and the Parish Council should become pro-active in promoting information received from OWL, or "Online Watch Link", an online messaging service currently operating in Hertfordshire, Staffordshire, Gwent and Carmarthenshire, to which anyone could sign up.

The Clerk said that he posted notices of 'scams' he received from Staffordshire Trading Standards on the parish notice-boards and also placed them in a file in the information rack in the foyer in Longdon Village Hall, to which he could add reports from OWL.

11. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(i) Accounts for Payment

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

| | | |
|----------------------|---|----------|
| Longdon W. I. | Hire of Hall: February 21 st | £ 12. 00 |
| W. B. Sullivan | Clerk's Salary | £280. 00 |
| HM Revenue & Customs | Employers Tax | £ 70. 00 |

(This payment is made through The Post Office)

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------|
| W. B. Sullivan | <u>Clerk's Expenses</u> Photocopying: £77. 99 Postage: £31. 64 | £109. 63 |
| Community Council of Staffordshire | <u>Best Kept Village Competition</u> Entry Fees: £30. 00 Publicity: £40. 30 | £ 70. 30 |

| | | |
|-------------|---|----------|
| A. J. Juxon | Ticket to District Council Chairman's Dinner Dance | £ 38. 00 |
| | <i>(Chairman's Allowance)</i> | |

(ii) Payments Received

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

| | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|----------|
| A. I. D. Fuel Oils Ltd. | Advertisement: "Longdon Life" | £ 9. 00 |
| "The Chetwynd Arm" | Advertisement: "Longdon Life" | £ 15. 00 |

(iii) Current Balance

The Clerk reported that the Council's balance stood as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| NatWest c/a: | £3322. 73 |
| less uncleared cheque | |
| 1763: £ | <u>24. 00</u> |
| | £3298. 73 |

(iv) Requests for Grant Aid

The Clerk reported that he received from Ray Beecher, Vice Chair, South Staffordshire Cruse Bereavement Care, a letter dated January 2013, in which he expressed the hope that the Council would feel able to make a donation to his organisation.

On a motion proposed by Cllr, Mrs. Meere and seconded by Cllr. Couchman, it was agreed to make a donation of £50. 00.

12. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Kate Ashbrook, General Secretary, The Open Spaces Society, an email dated 22nd February 2013, reminding the Council that it was not too late to nominate a project for her organisation's 2013 Open Spaces Award.

She also urged the Council to press any member of the House of Lords whom it knew to oppose Clause 14 of the Growth and Structure Bill, which restricted the right to register land as a town or village green, and Clause 22, which restricted the right to register land as a town or village green.

(ii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Gavin Webb, of The People's Power, an email dated 27th February 2013, informing the Council of a community scheme designed to help people save on their home energy bills.

(iii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Richard Inman, of richard.inman@spars.gov.uk, an email dated 27th February 2013, asking for input from the Council to research being carried out for Defra to identify interesting example of alternative service delivery in rural areas.

(iv) The Clerk reported that he had received from Chris Welch, Chief Executive, The Community Council of Staffordshire, a letter dated 26th February 2013, informing the Council of a new recycling project which the Community Council was keen to promote and enclosing a leaflet which explained the scheme and outlined how it worked.

The Clerk pointed out that this was the same scheme to which he had drawn the Council's attention at the previous meeting and which the Council had rejected on the grounds that it might adversely affect the work of local charities.

(v) The Clerk reported that he had received from Harry Brunt, Chairman of The Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association, an email dated 4th March 2013, introducing the Association's new Chief Executive Officer, Andrew McRae.

(vi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Cllr. Mike Maryon, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 8th March 2013, informing the Council that the County Council had launched a new roadworks web tool that would make information on current and planned roadworks free and accessible to everyone.

This information could be accessed through the County Council's own website www.staffordshire.gov.uk/roadworks or the national site www.roadworks.org.

13. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

Register of Electors 2012-2013.

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

Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 10th March 2013;

Forward Plan – Version 2 – Issued 15. 02. 2013 – Effective for the Period 01. 03. 2013 – 30. 06. 2013;

Forward Plan – Version 3 – Issued 21. 03. 2013 – Effective for the Period 03. 2013 – 0. 06. 2013;

Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 24th March 2013.

- (iii) From Michaela Plant, Licensing Assistant, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council:

Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 15th February 2013;
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 21st February 2012;
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 28th February 2013;
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 7th March 2013.

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

S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 6/13 – 14th February 2013;
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 7/13 – 21st February 2013;
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 8/13 – 28th February 2013;
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 9/13 – 7th February 2013.

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

Weekly Update (15th February 2013);
Weekly Update (27th February 2013);
Watchdog Alerts;
HSR2 Phase II: SPCA Policy.

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

“Putting Communities First – Connecting Power to Local People”:
London, June 6th; Sheffield, July 11th; Bristol, September 19th.

- (vii) From The Rural Services Network, Tavistock, Devon:

MPs demand fairer funding for rural councils;
Weekly Email News Digest – 18th February 2013;
Rural campaign starts to bear fruit;
Weekly Email News Digest – 25th February 2013;
Weekly Email News Digest – 4th March 2013;
Rural Opportunities Bulletin – March 2013.

- (viii) From The Cannock Chase AONB Unit:

Annual Review 2011-12.

- (ix) From Action for Market Towns:

Secure millions for your town project;
Town Funder Event – Birmingham, 5th March;
Town Team Initiative Event – Andover, 16th April;
Enterprising Towns Event – Thirsk, 25th April;
Does YOUR town deserve a Towns Alive National Award?

(x) From The Ordnance Survey:

Introduction to PAF Public Sector licence to PSMA members.

(xi) From Getmapping, Hartley Wintney, Hants.:

Newsletter – February edition (not available to non-members).

(xii) From Brian Johnson Insurance, Redhill, Surrey:

Help your Parish Council save money.

(xiii) From Inclusive Play Ltd., Edinburgh:

Inclusive Play Fast Track Service.

(xiv) From Ann Edwards, ROSPA:

Reduced rates for annual play area inspection;
Annual Parish Brochure.

(xv) From Whitehill Direct Ltd., Chorley, Lancs.:

Outdoor Seating.

(xvi) From HAGS SMP, Egham, Surrey:

The new essential range from SMP.

(xvii) From Sutcliffe Play, Upton, Pontefract:

Take a look at our new website.

(xviii) From Proludic, West Bridgford, Nottingham:

Newsletter and Special Offers.

(xix) From Sustainable Options, Leeds:

New Product – Ecoborder.

(xx) From Lamps & Tubes Illumination Ltd., Chesham, Bucks.:

Bunting and Flags for this summer's events.

14. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Cllr. Clarke asked whether the Council should send its good wishes to the newly-opened “The Swan with Two Neck”.

It was agreed that the Clerk should write on behalf of the Council wishing Mrs. McMeechan and her staff success.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, April 9th, 2013, in the W. I. Hall, Ford Lane, Longdon, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.