

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD  
IN THE W. I. HALL, FORD LANE, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY,  
SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup>, 2013

Present: Cllr. R. A. G. Clarke (Chairman); Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. C. D. Cherry;  
Cllr. A. J. Juxon; Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cll. K. R. Morgan;  
Cllr. M. J. Nash; Cllr. K. C. Taylor; Cllr. C. J. Webb; and Cllr. S. K. Welch.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. P. M. Couchman; 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, on Tuesday, August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Juxon and seconded by Cllr. Taylor, approved and signed.

3. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST

None was declared.

4. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATION

None was made.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

No member of the public was present.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Maureen Piper Memorial

Cllr. Juxon said that no decision had yet been taken as to the form the memorial would take, and it was agreed that the Council could only wait for further information.

(ii) Fly-tipping on Cannock Chase

The Clerk said that there had been no further information regarding the action taken by the District Council in this matter, and he would ask for a response.

## 7. PLANNING

### (i) Report of Planning Committee

It was reported that the District Council's planning website was currently inaccessible, so Councillors had been unable to consult it for details of current planning applications.

These were:

13/00853/FUL: Mrs. L. Giles: Installation of log-burning exterior flue to rear of the property: Forge Cottage, Broomy Field, Longdon Green (which a cursory study suggested would not be a problem).

13/00918/FUL: Mr. S. Isaac: Single-storey rear extension to form orangery and the installation of a new flat roof, solar panels and an increase in the height of the parapet wall: Longdon Green House, Longdon Green.

In the case of this application, it was thought that the District Council should be made aware that the old village pound stood within the curtilage of this property, to which the previous owner had allowed public access.

However, it was agreed that, to allow Councillors time to make a more careful study of these two applications, the Clerk should contact the District Council, asking for an extension to the consultation period.

### (ii) For Consideration

13/00833/COU: Longdon Hall School Ltd.: Conversion and re-building of former coach house into classrooms and other facilities for use in association with the existing school at Longdon Hall: Longdon Hall School, Church Hill, Longdon Green

It was noted that the Council had been given prior notice of this development by the Head Master, and the building concerned was derelict.

Councillors saw no reason to object to this application.

### (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:

13/00769/FUL: Mr. K. Healey: Erection of agricultural building to house livestock: Land at High Street, Longdon.

### (iv) Refused by Lichfield District Council

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

(v) Neighbourhood Planning Update

The Chairman presented a report on a meeting of the Working Group which had taken place on August 14<sup>th</sup>, for which he had already provided notes, distributed prior to the meeting (*Appendix A*).

He felt that, while the meeting had been well supported by those members of the Group not on the Council, its effectiveness had been limited by the absence of all three Councillors who were members of the Group who had, in turn, been the only ones present at the previous meeting!

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup>, when the main item on the agenda would be public meetings.

The second meeting with a village organisation would be on Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, when he would be meeting the Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Musical Society.

8. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

There were no other reports.

9. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

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

(i) “Shape, Share and Sample” – Eat Well Staffordshire Information and Consultation Event: Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013, at Wade Street Church, Lichfield, from 9. 00 a.m. till 12. 30 p.m., followed by The Eat Well Lunch.

(ii) “Do YOU keep your horse on or near Cannock Chase AONB?”- Free Event: Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013 at the Hay Rack Café, The Equestrian Centre, Rodbaston College, from 4. 00 p.m. till 7. 00 p.m.

Cllr. Welch explained that there was growing concern about overgrown fields and temporary fencing and buildings on the perimeter of the AONB, and the meeting was an attempt to establish a policy regarding the use of these fields.

(iii) Community Council of Staffordshire Annual General Meeting: Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2013, in The Oak Room, County Buildings, Martin Street, Stafford, commencing at 7. 00 p.m.

(iv) Staffordshire Playing Fields Association Annual General Meeting: Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> October 2013, at St. George’s Park Football Academy, Newborough Road, Burton-on-Trent, commencing at 2. 00 p.m.

The Chairman said that he would be attending this meeting.

(v) Neighbourhood Watch County Conference: Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2013, at Weston Road HQ, Stafford, from 9. 30 a.m. till 4. 00 p.m.

(vi) Cannock Chase AONB Parish Councils' Meeting: Monday, 25<sup>th</sup> November 2013, at Brereton and Ravenhill Parish Council, commencing at 7. 00 p.m.

Cllr. Welch said that he would be unable to attend this meeting owing to work commitments; Cllr. Taylor offered to go instead.

## 10. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

### (i) High Street/ Stockings Green

The Chairman reported that, while delivering Neighbourhood Plan leaflets to Hazel Crosbie for distribution, he had been engaged in conversation by another resident of Stockings Lane.

During this conversation, the resident had requested that a village sign be erected at the entrance to the community so that motorists would be aware that they were now entering Longdon and that a "30mph" sign be painted on the surface of the road to reinforce the roadside sign, which was partly obscured by the hedgerow.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Meere, it was agreed that these requests should be passed on to the Community Infrastructure Highways Manager, and that the Clerk should write to the parishioner informing him of the Council's action in response to his requests.

## 11. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

### (i) Mowing Contract

The Clerk reported that he had received from Graham McCulloch a report dated 17<sup>th</sup> August 2013 stating that the sixth cut of the season had been carried out the previous day and that there had been no problems.

The next cut would take place in mid September.

Cllr. Juxon then drew the attention of the Council to the condition of the church car park, where weeds were once more establishing themselves.

He feared that, if treatment were delayed until the Spring, they would have become so well-established as to be very difficult to eliminate, and he proposed that Graham McCulloch should be asked to treat the car park with weed-killer once again.

His motion being seconded by the Chairman, the Clerk was instructed to write to Mr. McCulloch asking him to carry out this work.

## 12. GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

### (i) Appointment of Clerk

The Chairman presented a written report on behalf of the Employment Committee, which had interviewed two applicants for the post of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and was recommending that Mrs. Claire Dillow be appointed as from Monday, 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

Mrs. Dillow was currently Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Wall Parish Council as well as providing maternity cover for two Parish Councils in Stoke-on-Trent, both of which finished in October.

Previously, she had for three years been Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer to Bilbrook Parish Council, a large parish council consisting of thirteen Councillors and with a precept of £55,000.

In addition, she was a member of The Society of Local Council Clerks and of The Association of Accounting Technicians.

The Committee was proposing to invite Mrs. Dillow to a second interview at which she would be offered a permanent contract based on a NALC format and salary scale subject to the successful conclusion of an initial three-month probation period.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Nash and seconded by Cllr. Welch, the Committee's recommendations were adopted, and the Chairman was asked to proceed with the appointment.

#### (ii) Electoral Review of Lichfield

The Clerk reported that he had received from Archie Gall, Director of Review, The Local Government Boundary Commission, a copy of a letter dated 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013, and written to the Chief Executive of Lichfield District Council, copies of which he had distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting.

In it, Mr. Gall was announcing the start of the electoral review of Lichfield District Council, the purpose of the review being to improve the levels of electoral representation in the district, which had become imbalanced since the last review.

The first stage of the review had started on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2013 and submissions from the fifty-six District Councillors should be made by 14<sup>th</sup> October 2013.

The Commission's conclusions would be publicised in November 2013 on the Commission's website [www.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.lgbce.org.uk), and a public consultation would run from 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013 until 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014.

Councillors took note of these arrangements, but were uncertain how the outcome of this review could impact on Longdon.

#### (iii) Electoral Registration

The Clerk reported that he had received from Barbara Anderson, Electoral Services Officer, Electoral Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> August 2013, informing the Council that this year's annual canvass to compile the new Register of Electors was due to take place later than normal, starting in mid October instead of late August, with the new register being published on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2014 rather than 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013.

This was due to the transition towards Individual Electoral Registration, currently scheduled to commence next summer.

#### (iv) Review of Polling Stations in Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Mark Hooper, Democratic and Legal Officer, Lichfield District Council, an email dated 30<sup>th</sup> August 2013, informing the Council that, following correspondence received from a resident, the District Council was currently reviewing its polling station arrangements in the village of Longdon and inviting the views of the Parish Council on possible alternative venues.

Having considered alternative venues, all of which appeared to have disadvantages, Councillors concluded that continuing to use St. James School did not present such a serious problem that it should not continue to be used.

(v) Review of Risk Assessment Register

Opening the discussion, the Chairman reminded Councillors that the Register had last been reviewed in 2012, and he argued that it was not therefore necessary to go through it line by line but to decide whether there had been any significant external changes or omissions which were likely to impact on it and whether any of its original provisions were now redundant.

He himself had identified the growing impact of computer technology as more and more business was being transacted on-line, and the loss of the Clerk's services, whether by holiday, illness, retirement or sudden death, the latter being an omission from the original Register which needed rectifying.

The Clerk also reminded Councillors that the Register had been drawn up in the first instance on the insistence of the Independent Internal Examiner, who had reminded the Council that it was a legal requirement, and that Mr. Toplis had subsequently endorsed it, stating that it provided him with a model which he could use in his seminars on the topic.

In the discussion which followed, opinion diverged on two issues, whether a full review was required and whether the Council needed such a detailed Register.

Responding to this last point, Cllr. Nash said that such a detailed identification of and provision against risks provided Councillors with a comprehensive defence against negligence.

It was finally agreed, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Mrs. Meere and seconded by Cllr. Butler that a sub-committee consisting of Cllr. Morgan, Cllr. Nash and Cllr. Webb should be set up to study the Register and present a report to the Finance and General Purposes Committee, who would in turn submit their final recommendations to the full Council.

### 13. LAW AND ORDER

(i) OWL Messaging

The Clerk reported that he had received a number of warnings of 'scams', including bogus internet business directories, unwanted DVDs, unsolicited offers of compensation for delayed flights and distraction thefts of debit cards.

Copies of these messages had been placed in the folders kept in Longdon Post Office and Longdon Village Hall.

Cllr. Cherry expressed his concern that these messages would not be reaching those people most at risk, that is, elderly people living on their own without access to online communications, and he suggested that these people might best be reached through Neighbourhood Watch.

It was agreed that the Clerk should contact Robb Nunn, the Watch Officer, and ask him to identify those parts of Longdon not covered by the scheme so that the Council could look for residents who might be willing to fill the gap.

#### 14. PUBLIC HEALTH

The Clerk reported that he had received two boxes containing copies of a consultation document published by the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust entitled “Maintaining high quality, safe services for the future” which set out draft recommendations on the future of services for local people using Stafford and Cannock Chase hospitals with a request that they be distributed as widely as possible in the parish.

The consultation had begun on Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> August 2013, and would finish on Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013.

He had already placed copies in Longdon Village Hall and the Longdon W. I. Hall and arranged for copies to be placed in the Longdon Memorial Hall.

It was agreed that Councillors should respond individually to this consultation, if they so wished.

#### 15. FINANCIAL MATTERS

##### (i) Accounts for Payment

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

*B. J. Butler	Timber, paint, plants (omitted from minutes of 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2013)	£ 29. 47
*Hazel Crosbie	Delivering Neighbourhood Plan Leaflets	£ 45. 00
Longdon W. I	Hire of Hall: Aug. 22 <sup>nd</sup> , Sept. 3 <sup>rd</sup> & Sept. 10 <sup>th</sup>	£ 36. 00
W. B. Sullivan	Clerk’s Salary	£280. 00
HMRC	Employers Tax (cheque made out to “The Post Office”)	£ 70. 00
W. B. Sullivan	<u>Clerk’s Expenses</u> Photocopying: £96. 73 Postage: £46. 35	£143. 08
G. C. McCulloch	Mowing – August 16 <sup>th</sup>	£370. 00
Alan Toplis Associates	Professional services rendered in connection with the Independent Internal Examination of the Annual Return for the fiscal year 2012/13 Total Net Amount: £88. 75 Total VAT Amount: £17. 75	£106. 50

Print&Digital	2 x A2 posters printed & laminated:	£20. 00	
	! x A2 laminated map:	£ 5. 00	
	VAT:	£ 5. 00	£ 30. 00
Print&Digital	100 A6 cards black only, double-sided on 300 gsm:	£20. 00	
	VAT:	£ 4. 00	£ 24. 00
R. A. G. Clarke	Input card boxes, photocopying Total Net Amount:	£17. 12	
	Total VAT Amount:	£ 3. 42	£ 20. 54
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 following payments had been received:

Bradley Lakes Turf and Landscapes	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 15. 00
Superior Plumbing and Heating	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 15. 00
A. I. D. Fuel Oils Ltd.	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 9. 00
Longdon Post Office and Stores	Advertisement "Longdon Life"	£ 7. 50
Margaret Russon	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 7. 50
Longdon Club and Institute	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 7. 50
Aqua Jet Services	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 5. 00
A. D. Bennett	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 5. 00
P. J. Adams	Advertisement: "Longdon Life"	£ 5. 00



(iii) Current Balance

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

NatWest c/a:                   £11626. 87

less uncleared cheques:

1809: £    36. 00

1813: £    31. 65

£11559. 22

(iv) Requests for Grant Aid

The Clerk reported that no requests for grant aid had been received since the last meeting.

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

The Clerk presented a written report on a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013 (*Appendix B*), at which the Independent Internal Examiner's concluding report for the financial year 2012/13 had been received.

Copies had now been distributed to Councillors who were not members of the Committee.

It was agreed that a proposal that the Council should form a Grievance Committee and set out a Disciplinary Procedure should be considered at the next meeting of the Council.

The Chairman also suggested that the Council needed a policy on how to respond to surveys, and it was agreed that, in future, a distinction should be made between those surveys that required a collective response and those to which Councillors could respond as individuals.

In the case of a collective response, a minimum of four responses would be necessary before it could be submitted.

On a motion proposed by the Chairman and seconded by Cllr. Juxon, it was agreed that the Council should purchase ten copies of "The Good Councillor's Guide" at £2. 50 each for distribution amongst those Councillors who wanted a hard copy.

(vi) Real Time Information

After the Clerk had described the difficulties which he and other Clerks had experienced in recording salary payments in Real Time Information, it was agreed, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Taylor and seconded by Cllr. Butler, that he could seek assistance from a qualified accountant experienced in tax returns.

16. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Ellen Froggatt, Office Manager, The Open Spaces Society, an email dated 16<sup>th</sup> August 2013 , inviting comments from the Council on the Society's draft strategic plan for 2013-2018, "Choosing Direction", a copy of which had been attached and which he had forwarded to Councillors.

17. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

Register of Electors – Notice of Alterations (September 2013).

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

Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 25<sup>th</sup> August 2013;  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 8<sup>th</sup> September 2013;  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2013;  
Revised Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2013.

- (iii) From Mark Hooper, Democratic and Legal Officer, Democratic, Development and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council:

Forward Plan – Version 1 – Issued 02. 09. 2013 – Effective for the Period 01. 10. 2013 – 31. 04. 2013.

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

Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 16<sup>th</sup> August 2013;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2013;  
Licensing Act Applications registered during w/e 30<sup>th</sup> August 2013.

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

S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 30/13 – 15<sup>th</sup> August 2013;  
S3SN – E Bulletin – Issue No. 31/13 – 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2013.

- (vi) From Anne Walker, Assistant AONB Officer, Cannock Chase AONB:

August Newsletter.

(vii) From The Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association:

Bulletin (16<sup>th</sup> August 2013);  
Bulletin (23<sup>rd</sup> August 2013);  
Bulletin (30<sup>th</sup> August 2013);  
Bulletin (5<sup>th</sup> September 2013);  
Healthwatch Staffordshire News Bulletin – 21<sup>st</sup> August 2013.

(viii) From The Staffordshire Playing Fields Association:

Agenda for 2013 Annual General Meeting;  
Minutes of 2012 Annual General Meeting;  
Annual Report and Accounts 2012/2013.

(ix) From The Community Council of Staffordshire:

Notice of Annual General Meeting on Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> October 2013;  
Agenda for Annual General Meeting;  
Minutes of 2012 Annual General Meeting;  
Notes on Nomination to the Board;  
Nomination for Election Form 2013;  
Voting Slip/Form of Proxy;  
Attendance Slip;  
Annual Report 2012-2013.

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

Weekly Email News Digest – 19<sup>th</sup> August 2013;  
Weekly Email News Digest – 27<sup>th</sup> August 2013;  
Weekly Email News Digest – 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2013;  
Rural Opportunities Bulletin – August 2013;  
Rural Vulnerability Service – Transport (August 2013);  
Rural Vulnerability Service – Broadband (August 2013);  
Petition: “Rural Fair Share”;  
Evidence about your Neighbourhood Plan;  
Spotlight on Young People.

(xi) From VAST:

Voluntary and Community News for Staffordshire (8<sup>th</sup> August 2013);  
Voluntary and Community News for Staffordshire (15<sup>th</sup> August 2013);  
Voluntary and Community News for Staffordshire (22<sup>nd</sup> August 2013);  
Voluntary and Community News for Staffordshire (29<sup>th</sup> August 2013);  
Voluntary and Community News for Staffordshire (5<sup>th</sup> September 2013).

(xii) From Ordnance Survey:

PSMA Licensing Update;  
PSMA Newsletter (August 2013);  
Improvements to our colour raster products.

(xiii) From The Open Spaces Society:

“Choosing Direction” - Draft Strategic Pla.

(xiv) From Sutcliffe Play Ltd., Upton Pontefract:

Playback, Issue 3.

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

August Newsletter.

(xvi) From Komplan Playgrounds Ltd., Milton Keynes:

Komplan Playgrounds invites you to Playfair 2013 (IOG SALTEX).

(xvii) From Nick Guyton, Norfolk China Ltd., Horsford, Norfolk:

Commemorative Mugs celebrating the birth of HRH Prince George.

(xviii) From Proludic, West Bridgford, Nottingham:

Newsletter.

(xix) From TDP, Wirksworth, Derbyshire:

Parish Council Recycled Seat.

(xx) From Wayne Ormrod, Go Shelters Ltd., Southport:

Parish Bus Shelters.

(xxi) From Steelway Fencesecure Ltd., Wolverhampton:

Providing sports and play solutions in towns and villages for 85 years.

(xxii) From Queensbury Shelters , Farlington, Portsmouth:

Queensbury Shelters – Your one-stop bus stop shop.

## 18. DOCUMENTS

The following document was available for Councillors to consult:

(i) Cannock Chase AONB electronic Newsletter – August 2013.

19. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Cllr. Morgan reported that mobile reception at the centre of the village was poor, and he was concerned that public buildings such as the Village Hall might not have a public telephone in case of an emergency.

Cllr. Nash added that digital radios also faded in the village.

It was agreed that both these issues should be discussed at the next meeting.

(ii) Cllr. Taylor reported that the parishioner who had been agitating to have the roadside shrubs at the entrance to Lower Way at its junction with Grange Hill cut back was continuing to complain that action had still not been taken and was threatening to write to the constituency MP.

The Clerk said that he would once again communicate her concern to the Community Infrastructure Liaison Manage.

(iii) Cllr. Taylor reported that the Head Teacher of St. James School, Michelle Slymn, was being seconded for two terms to two schools in Walsall, and that Simon Robson, of Western Springs Primary School, Rugeley, had been appointed to fill the vacancy during her absence.

(iv) It was suggested that, in the absence of a reliable bus service, the Parish Council might consider setting up a register of voluntary car drivers.

It was agreed that this suggestion should be discussed at the next meeting.

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013, in the W. I. Hall, Ford Lane, Longdon, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.