

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD IN THE W.
I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH, 2005

Present: Cllr. J. R. Andrews (Chairman); Cllr. N. J. Bird; Cllr. H. C. Bramley;
Cllr. B. J. Butler; Cllr. R. C. Hemmingsley; Cllr. A. J. Juxon;
Cllr. Mrs. H. A. Meere; Cllr. Mrs. M. G. Nichols; Cllr. M. A. W. Parsons;
and Cllr. S. K. Welch.

Also present was the Clerk.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. N. Stanfield; Cllr. N. J. Roberts, of Lichfield District Council;
and County Councillor F. W. Lewis.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Bramley and seconded by Cllr. Juxon, the minutes of the previous meeting, held in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, on Tuesday, January 11th, 2005, were approved and signed.

3. PARISHIONERS' COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

No parishioners were present.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Discharge of Sewage in Shaw Lane, Gentleshaw

Cllr. Hemmingsley reported that part of the problem was the automatic discharge of water by pump from the basement of Ivy Cottage when the cellar became flooded.

For that reason, he did not believe that the problem had yet been solved.

(ii) Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Beauty - Meeting of Parish Councils

The Clerk reported that he had discovered that it was, in fact, for the Annual General Meeting on March 15th that the W. I. Hall had already been booked when he had made an attempt to book the Hall. He had now confirmed the arrangement with Judith Moore, the Cannock Chase AONB Officer.

(iii) Renovation of Cast-iron Roadside Signs

The Clerk reported that he had sent details of location and distances to Ken Owen and Tracey Benger, both of the Developments Services Directorate of Staffordshire County Council, and was now waiting for their approval and permission to proceed.

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(iv) Footpath Leaflets

The Clerk reported that he had been in touch with Greg Slater, of The Benhill Press, Rugeley, and had asked him whether the firm could proceed with printing three of the four leaflets while an illustration for the Longdon Green leaflet was being sought.

Mr. Benger had explained that this would considerably increase the cost and had suggested that the Council should either attempt to retrieve the original art-work or use another illustration.

After it had been decided that the Council would pursue the second of these options, Cllr. Bramley reminded the meeting that he had a number of photographs taken of various views of Longdon Green, and it was agreed that one of these photographs should be chosen as a replacement.

(v) Junction of Borough Lane

Cllr. Mrs. Nichols said that, in the light of recent experience, she now accepted that the existing priority was the most appropriate for this junction.

(vi) Lane opposite Chorley Pumping Station

The Chairman reported that the road surface at this junction had been renewed.

(vii) Knotweed in Church Hollow

Cllr. Bramley said that he now realised that the flattened area to which he had referred at the last meeting was not the area in which the knotweed had been growing and that, while the plant was now dormant, it still needed uprooting before it re-established itself in the spring.

Cllr. Welch added that it was becoming increasingly widespread, and it took three years to eradicate.

(viii) Policy on Rented Accommodation

It was agreed that, as recommended by Cllr. Roberts, the Council should develop a policy on rented accommodation.

It was suggested that this could be a feature of the Parish Plan being proposed by Cllr. Hemmingsley.

(ix) Parish Plan

Cllr. Hemmingsley reported that he had received copies of four Parish Plans drawn up by other Parishes, including Abbots Bromley and Brewood, which he intended to study.

He pointed out the scope of such Plans, which covered issues such as housing, traffic and transport, and education.

The cost, the major part of which would be printing, could vary between £2000 and £5000, but funding should not be a problem; while grants were no longer available from The Countryside Agency, they could be obtained from district or borough council or from "Awards for All", although, in the latter case, a parish council could not make the application.

What was needed was a working group which would involve - but not be dominated by - the Parish Council.

It was agreed that the project could be launched at the next Annual Assembly, at which Andrew Halden or Emma Beaman, of the Community Council of Staffordshire, and Eric Roy, Clerk to Abbots Bromley Parish Council, or Cllr. Ian Pritchard, the Chairman of Kings Bromley Parish Council (another parish where a Parish Plan was being prepared) should be invited to make a joint presentation.

In the meantime, Cllr. Hemmingsley would prepare an article listing a series of bullet points for publication in the next issue of "Longdon Life".

5. PLANNING

(i) Report of Working Group

Cllr. Welch reported that, since the last meeting, the Working Group had considered the following planning applications:

04/01309/FUL: Roger Smith: First-floor extension to form bedroom with en-suite:
46 Upper Way, Upper Longdon

No reason had been seen to object to this application.

04/01373/FUL: Mr. & Mrs. B. Heath: Erection of detached double garage: The Cottage,
Windmill Bank, Gentleshaw

While there had been no objection in principle to this application, there were reservations as to

whether it would detract from the visual amenities of the area owing to its exposed aspect and close proximity to footpaths and bridle paths.

05/00017/FUL: Mr. R. Dhanoa: Proposed side extension (1.5 storey) to form swimming pool and entertainment area: Park House, Lower Way, Upper Longdon

There had been an objection to this application for the following reasons: the proposed development was inappropriate in a "forest-glade" setting and the size was excessive; the village site plan provided was out-of-date and did not show recently-built adjoining properties in the vicinity; and there were no plans showing the existing and proposed property footprints in relation to the curtilage.

(ii) For Consideration

The following plan was then considered by the Council:

05/00090/FUL: Mrs. E. Parry: Retention of boundary wall and gates: The Ridgeway, High Street, Longdon

It was noted that this was a retrospective planning application, the wall and gates having been in place for the past three or four months.

The Council believed that the pillar and gates were too high and out of keeping with the area and should be removed or at least reduced in height.

It was also noted that the curtilage of the property had been extended by the assimilation of an agricultural track into the front garden, and the Clerk was instructed to ask whether this had been done with planning consent.

(iii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, he had received no Notices of Approval of Planning Permission from Lichfield District Council.

(iv) Refused by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that, since the last meeting, he had received no Notices of Refusal of Planning Permission from Lichfield District Council.

(v) Other Planning Matters

(a) Erection of windmill at Lot 2, Stockings Lane, Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Christine Hibbs, Senior Planning Officer, of the Development Services Department of Lichfield District Council, a letter in the name of Stephen Hill, Development Control Manager, and dated 21st January 2005, in which she gave it as her informal opinion that the above development was now lawful, having existed for in excess of four years.

She pointed out that enforcement was a discretionary activity, and it did not always follow that enforcement action was warranted, even where planning permission was refused.

However, she went on to advise that enforcement procedures had recently been reviewed and additional resources allocated to the function, measures which she anticipated would provide an improved level of service.

Finally, she had pointed out that, as the development did not have the benefit of planning permission, even though it might be immune from enforcement action, the onus was on the owner to submit an application for a Certificate of Lawful Existing Development to confirm its lawful status, the absence of such confirmation having the potential to become an issue if the owner wished to sell the land in the future.

Copies of this letter had been distributed to Councillors prior to the meeting.

There was general dissatisfaction with this response; Councillors found it difficult to envisage circumstances when enforcement was *not* warranted when planning permission had been refused and the refusal ignored.

Cllr. Hemmingsley urged the Council to pursue its request for access to the barrister's opinion on which the Planning Department had based its decision not to act in the case of the unapproved

development at Bradley Lakes, citing the Freedom of Information Act as giving authority to the Council to insist on its disclosure.

It was agreed that the Clerk should be instructed to ask for access to all the documents relating to this case, since it had set such an influential precedent.

It was also agreed that the Council should seek to have enforcement included on the agenda of a meeting of either the Lichfield District Parish Forum or the Lichfield Area Committee.

6. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

(i) Lichfield District Parish Forum: January 19th

The Clerk reported that he had now received the minutes of this meeting, which no one from the Council had been able to attend.

A copy of these minutes had been sent to every Councillor prior to the present meeting.

(ii) Cannock Chase AONB Advisory Partnership: January 26th

Cllr. Welch gave a report on a meeting of the Cannock Chase AONB Advisory Partnership which had taken place at the John O'Leary Centre, Marquis Drive, Brindley Heath, on Wednesday, January 26th, 2005.

The principal item of business had been the budget for the next financial year; the agenda for the next meeting, to be held on February 22nd, would include Village Plans and the Crime-Stoppers Initiative.

The boundaries of the AONB were being reviewed, and some glaring omissions had already been noted, the exclusion of Hednesford Hills being the most outstanding..

Any proposed amendments had to be made by 1st April.

(iii) Longdon Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr. Bird gave a short report on a recent meeting of the Longdon Village Hall Management Committee, which he had attended.

The Committee had a current balance of £2000, but, from that, an outstanding payment of £600 still owed to the builder remained to be settled.

A working party was being recruited for a Saturday in April for which a skip would be needed; a proposal to provide a small green in the middle of the car park had been shelved.

7. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

Notice was given of the following meetings:

(i) Lichfield Area Committee, Staffordshire Parish Councils' Committee: Thursday, February 10th, 2005, in the Council Chamber, District Council House, Frog Lane, Lichfield, commencing at 7. 00 p.m.

The main items on the agenda would be "Closer Ties with the Parish Forum - Working Together" and "Licensing Laws and their effect on Parish Halls".

The Chairman and the Clerk expected to attend.

(ii) The Friends of Gentleshaw Common: Saturday, February 26th, 2005, in the Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall, commencing at 7. 30 p.m.

8. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

(i) Road Safety - A51

(a) Report on the Inquest into the Death of the late Roger Pickerin

The Clerk gave a report on the inquest into the death of the late Roger Pickerin, the motor-cyclist who had been killed in an accident on the A51 in June 2004 while travelling in the direction of Lichfield.

The accident had occurred immediately after he had successfully and safely overtaken a vehicle-drawn caravan, when he had suddenly lost control of his machine and fallen from it into the path of an oncoming car approaching from the direction of Lichfield.

Several contributory factors were identified, but none established as the major contributor: the motor-cyclist was found to be almost twice over the legal limit and was thought to have been suffering from fatigue, having attended a family gathering the night before, retiring late and rising early; the motor-cycle was found to have several defects (both tyres were under-inflated and the tread on the front tyre was below the legal limit, the clutch was faulty, and the pinch-bolts on the handlebars were loose, which would have caused them to drop if sufficient downward pressure were to be applied).

In addition, the motor-cyclist lacked recent experience and was unfamiliar with the machine, having only just bought it as a restoration job and having been warned that it was not roadworthy (The machine did not have an MOT certificate and the rider was not insured).

After a recent heavy shower of rain, the surface of the road was still wet, which had would have led to the white lines becoming slippery and especially hazardous to a motor-cycle, particularly if its tyres lacked tread and were under-inflated (The overtaking manoeuvre had taken place over the hatching which delineated the refuge for vehicles wishing to turn left into Brook End).

All the witnesses - including a motorist waiting to exit Borough Lane - were agreed that speed was not a factor; all agreed that none of the vehicles was travelling at an excessive speed, the general estimate being fifty miles an hour or less.

The coroner finally recorded a verdict of accidental death, the cause of death being given as A1 multiple injuries.

The Clerk added that, in conversation with the police officers - PC Kelsall, of the Collision Investigation Unit, and PC Mitchell, of the Chasetown LPU - at the end of the inquest, he had asked whether there were any implications for the traffic safety scheme being prepared for this stretch of the A51, bearing in mind the recent extension of the white lines at the end of the dual carriageway.

Their reply had been that white lines existed for the benefit of more than one group of road-users and that, by removing one hazard, it might even be found that another had been created - for example, the obligatory signs which accompanied a central reservation might, in some circumstances, be found to present a visual obstruction for other vehicles.

The Clerk ended his report by saying that he had found that attending the inquest had been a valuable learning experience and that he had been particularly impressed by the thoroughness with which PC Kelsall had prepared his report.

(b) Arrangements for meeting with David Grain

The Clerk confirmed that this meeting would take place in the W. I. Hall on Thursday, March 3rd, at 7. 30 p.m.

(c) Request for representation from L. A. S. T. at meetings

The Chairman reported that he and the Clerk had received a letter, signed jointly by Cllr. Bird, Cllr. Butler and Cllr. Parsons, asking the Council to consider admitting two members of L. A. S. T., the road safety action group, to future meetings at which road safety measures were being discussed, and he invited Cllr. Parsons to explain their reasons for making this request.

Cllr. Parsons said that he believed that members of this group could make a valuable contribution to such discussions, adding that he and his co-signatories were concerned that there was a growing belief amongst some parishioners that they were being kept at arm's length by the Council while these discussions were taking place.

This concern was shared by Cllr. Bramley, who felt that the Council's response, however justified constitutionally, had alienated a section of the parish, the strength of whose concerns they felt the Council had not fully recognised.

The Clerk suggested that this situation had not been helped by an accusation in L. A. S. T.'s most recent Newsletter that the Parish Council had been remiss in not keeping up a dialogue with the highway engineers while they were engaged in preparing the scheme, though Councillors themselves had felt that the time had come to allow the engineers to get on with their job of preparing a

scheme without any further lobbying.

In the ensuing debate, it was suggested that the time for discussion had now passed and that the views of local residents had been well documented in the forty or more letters sent to the County Highways Department and to Councillor Lewis.

The Chairman explained the difficulties of co-opting: members of the public could not, for legal reasons, be co-opted onto the Parish Council, even for a limited period and for a specific purpose. However, a member of the public could be co-opted onto one of the Council's working groups, an option which the Council could consider for the future.

In any case, any parishioner could attend a meeting of the Parish Council and make his or her views known to the Council during the period of public participation which preceded every Parish Council meeting.

Attention then turned to L. A. S. T., and it emerged that little or nothing was known about it: it did not appear to have a constitution or to have officers with whom the Council could deal; its newsletters were unsigned. It was not known how often it met (Cllr. Butler claimed to have been excluded from its meetings) or how many members it had.

Cllr. Juxon questioned whether the Council could invite just two parishioners; he argued that the Council would be morally, if not legally, obliged to follow an all-or-none policy. He reminded Councillors of the continuing efforts of the Council over past years to obtain improvements to the local road system when, unlike the present situation, little or no support was forthcoming from the parish, citing as one of the Council's successes the re-alignment of the carriageway at the top of Brereton Hill.

Cllr. Mrs. Nichols suggested that the opening of the next meeting of the Parish Council, which was scheduled to take place at Gentleshaw on March 8th, should be postponed until 8.00 p.m. and that a public meeting should take place at 7.00 p.m. (ending at 7.50 p.m.) at which the Council could give a report on the meeting with David Grain the previous week.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Welch and seconded by Cllr. Butler, this arrangement was agreed, the Clerk offering to prepare a written summary of the engineers' proposals for distribution at the beginning of the meeting.

(ii) Traffic Calming in Upper Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to Simon Edwards, Project Manager, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, who was now prepared to meet Councillors on site to discuss proposals for improving road safety in Upper Longdon.

It was agreed that he should be asked to meet Councillors at Upper Longdon on the morning of Thursday, February 17th, the exact time to be decided.

No limit had been set on the number of Councillors attending, and the Chairman, Cllr. Butler, Cllr. Parsons, Cllr. Welch and the Clerk would attend.

(iii) Roadworks - Borough Lane

It was reported that work on improving the drainage between Giddywell Lane and the A51 had begun the previous week and was expected to be finished soon.

(iv) Community Paths Initiative - Bids for Funding 2005/2006

Cllr. Mrs. Meere reported on a meeting of the Footpaths Working Group which had taken place at her home on Monday 25th January 2005 and at which she, Cllr. Bird, Cllr. Bramley, Cllr. Butler and Cllr. Welch had been present.

The principal item on the agenda had been the choice of a project which could be funded under the County Council's Community Paths Initiative.

Cllr. Bird had suggested a circular "Three Longdons Walk" which would start and finish at any of the three public houses. Such a walk would be approximately four miles in length, but could be shortened. Existing stiles could be replaced with kissing-gates to broaden the appeal of the walk.

It would be necessary to walk the route in order to identify and photograph the stiles to be replaced; Cllr. Meere thought that her husband would be prepared to do this, accompanied by Cllr. Bird.

The Council gave its support to this proposal and invited Cllr. Mrs. Meere to submit an application on its behalf.

A number of concerns had been raised at the meeting: in Tithe Barn Lane, a public footpath sign had been removed, and Cllr. Mrs. Meere would speak to the farmer responsible for its removal; the area around the sub-station in Upper Way needed clearing of leaves, possibly as part of the Highway

Maintenance Agreement; the stile on FP. 32 next to Church Cottage was completely overgrown, and FP. 69 needed way-marking, both of which tasks would be referred to the County Ranger Service by Will Rose; and overhanging branches in Brereton Hill Lane needed cutting back.

Cllr. Butler had asked that possible encroachment onto the highway verge at Upper Way be investigated; his proposal that a sign indicating that Brereton Hill Lane led to Upper Way be attached to the existing street nameplate at its junction with the A51 was not supported by the Council.

At the completion of her report, Cllr. Mrs. Meere was thanked for convening and reporting on the meeting.

9. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

(i) Longdon Hall S. B. I.

The Clerk reported that he has received an e-mail from Marieke Tomlin, Countryside Officer, Lichfield District Council, dated 21st January 2005 in which she had informed him that, following a conversation with the County, she thought that no action should be taken regarding the above Site of Biological Importance until ownership was resolved.

In the meantime she would shortly be speaking to the District Council's Enforcement Officer about what could be done to enforce appropriate management.

Cllr. Welch expressed concern that the three trees planted in the centre of the Site would deprive the surrounding orchids of essential moisture.

(ii) Beaudesert Park Farm, Horsey Lane, Upper Longdon

The Clerk reported that there was growing concern about the conspicuousness of the grain silos for whose erection planning permission had been given twelve months previously.

These had not been painted in a subdued colour and could be seen as far away as the railway line between Lichfield and Sutton Coldfield.

He had spoken to Rob Duncan, the planning officer who had handled the original planning application, who had thought that the conditions attached to the planning permission did not give him the authority to insist that action should be taken to reduce the conspicuousness of these silos, adding that he doubted whether a galvanised surface would accept paint, and he thought that, in any case, they would grow duller as the result of weathering after six months.

However, Councillors rejected this, not least because the silos had already been in place for that time, and argued that there were ample examples of such buildings being painted in a more suitable colour.

The Clerk was instructed to write to Mr. Duncan, asking him to take the necessary action to ensure that the present visual impact of the silos, which had been erected on the edge of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, were made less obtrusive.

(iii) Robinia outside 12 Berkeley Way, Longdon

The Clerk reported that, earlier that day, he had received a telephone call from Gareth Hare, Arboricultural Officer, Lichfield District Council, saying that the above tree was covered by a Tree Protection Order and that, consequently, the Parish Council would need formal permission from the District Council before commencing work on it.

He had expressed reservations about employing a mowing contractor who was also a tree surgeon and promised to send the Council a list of District-Council-approved tree surgeons from which the Parish Council could choose

It was felt, however, that Graham McCulloch had in the past carried out similar work to the satisfaction of the Parish Council, and, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Welch and seconded by Cllr. Bramley, the Clerk was instructed to invite Mr. McCulloch to carry out this work as soon as the required permission had been obtained.

(iv) Renewal of Mowing Contract

The Clerk reminded the Council that it was time to advertise the mowing contract for the forthcoming season.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Welch and seconded by Cllr. Juxon, he was authorised to arrange for the publication of an advertisement in one of the local papers.

It was agreed that there should be no change in the specifications.

(v) Gentleshaw Common

The Clerk reported that he had received from Marieke Tomlin, Countryside Officer, Lichfield District Council, copies of two letters which she had written, one to an un-named resident and the other to the local member of Parliament, both dated 3rd February 2005, in which she had listed the earlier uses to which the Common had been put and outlined proposals for its future management.

A copy of each of these letters had been sent by the Clerk to every Councillor.

The Clerk further reported that he had down-loaded a fifty-four-paged draft of a proposed management plan, together with an eighteen-paged supplementary species list, adding that, when he had received the map which should accompany the plan, he would arrange for it to be bound for circulation amongst Councillors.

10. PARISH WEBSITE

Cllr. Hemmingsley presented the Council with a list of roles and responsibilities relating to the Parish Website on which he wanted the Council's decision.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Welch and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Meere, it was agreed that the Clerk would administer and receive communications from the public on the Council's own e-mail address; that Cllr. Hemmingsley should be web-master and administrator of the Parish Website; that Cllr. Juxon would prepare a history page; and that the website address should be www.Longdon-staffs.info.

11. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION 2000

The Clerk reported that he had received from Phil. Hope, MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, an undated letter enclosing a short Information Note outlining the requirements which the Act placed on all public authorities, including parishes.

A copy of this note had been distributed to every Councillor prior to the meeting, and the contents noted.

Full Details of the Act and its implications could be found on the Information Commissioner's website at <http://informationcommissioner.gov.uk>.

12. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(i) Accounts for Payment

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

Longdon W. I.	Hire of Hall	£ 12. 00
“Local Council Review”	Renewal of Subscriptions (12 copies @ £12. 00 each)	£144. 00
Longdon Village Hall Management Committee	Contribution towards the cost of two flags	£100. 00
Audit Commission	Audit Fee 2003/2004	£141. 00

(ii) Payments Received

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

Staffordshire County Council	Highway Maintenance Agreement	£520. 00
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(iii) Current Balances

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

NatWest c/a: £2240. 91

The Halifax s/a: £11918. 65

(iv) Applications for Grant Aid(a) Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall

The Clerk reported that he had received from Gary Powis, Chairman of the Committee of Management of the Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall, a letter dated 24th January 2005 in which he informed the Council that his Committee had obtained quotes for the complete re-wiring of the Hall ranging from £16920 to £13042, exclusive of VAT, and were considering accepting the lowest.

Applications grants had been submitted to Awards for All, Staffordshire County Council and Cannock Wood Parish Council, and Mr. Powis was now writing on behalf of the Management Committee to ask for details of the Parish Council's contribution to the scheme following the Council's earlier agreement in principle to provide financial help.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Hemmingsley and seconded by Cllr. Welch, the Council agreed to award a grant of £500. 00, to be taken from the Council's budgeted figure of £1000 for community halls in the next financial year.

(b) Longdon Village Hall

The Clerk reported that he had received from Neil Vyse, Chairman of the Longdon Village Hall Management Committee, a letter dated 5th January 2005, enclosing a copy of the sales receipt for two flags, the Cross of St. George and the Union Flag, costing £126. 55.

This exceeded the £100 set aside by the Council for the purchase of these flags, but Mr. Vyse expressed the hope that the Council would be prepared to meet the full cost.

However, Councillors decided that, since the figure of £100. 00 had originally been agreed upon and was known to the Committee in advance of the purchase, this should be the limit of the Council's contribution.

In his letter Mr. Vyse had suggested that the Council might consider sponsoring a village flag. The Clerk pointed out that the Parish Council already had a logo, which appeared on its compliments slips and on occasional posters.

(v) Appointment of Independent Internal Auditor

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Hemmingsley and seconded by Cllr. Bramley, it was agreed that the Council should appoint John Blount, Clerk to Stowe-by-Chartley Parish Council, as Independent Internal Auditor for the financial year ending 31st March 2005.

(vi) Expansion of Finance Sub-Committee to become Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee

Discussion on this proposal was deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

13. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE THE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from Haydn Selwyn-Jones, Head of Community Relations, The Local Channel, a letter dated 4th January 2005, reminding the Council of its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act and inviting the Council to register with The Local Channel.

Since the Council was about to publish its own website, the invitation was rejected.

(ii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Beth Williams, Senior Development Officer -

Canvassing, The Recycling Consortium, Bristol, a letter dated 10th January 2005 asking the Council to display a poster advertising for a local co-ordinator for teams canvassing householders to provide them with the information and enthusiasm to recycle, or recycle more.

A copy of this poster had been displayed on each of the parish notice-boards until January 31st, the deadline for applications.

(iii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Cllr. Edward Bowden, Chairman of Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 19th January 2005, inviting the Council to enter a team in a charity quiz being held in aid of his chosen charities, North Staffordshire Heart Committee and Staffordshire Air Ambulance.

The quiz would take place in St. Leonard's Sports & Social Club, St. Leonard's Avenue, Stafford, on Friday, 11th February 2005, commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Each team would consist of four members, and the entry fee would be £50.00 per team, a basket meal being provided.

However, no team would be entered by the Council.

(iv) The Clerk reported that he had received from Michael Fabricant, MP, a letter dated 19th January 2005, in which he acknowledged receipt of the Council's letter of 6th January 2005 regarding local policing issues, which he had referred to the Minister responsible at the Home Office, Hazel Blears.

He would contact the Council as soon as he had heard from Ms. Blears.

(v) The Clerk reported that he had received from Rebecca Bohane, Environmental Consultant, The Countryside Agency, a letter dated 21st January 2005, enclosing a draft of the criteria for undertaking a review of the National Park of Area of Outstanding Beauty and inviting the Council's comments.

He had forwarded this document to Cllr. Welch to study.

(vi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Alison Bowen, Policy and Performance Officer, Organisational Development, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 24th January 2005 informing the Council that the District Council would shortly be launching a new Awards Scheme - Access made Easier, designed to encourage the business community in Lichfield District to enable people with disabilities to access premises and use services more easily.

She asked the Council to assist by displaying a poster to attract volunteers who would be willing to assist in this scheme.

A copy of this poster had been displayed on each of the Council's notice-boards.

(vii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Paul Rochfort, Ranger South, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 24th January 2005, enclosing posters advertising countryside walks and events in February and March.

A copy of the poster advertising events in February had been displayed on each of the Council's notice-boards and would be replaced by copies of the March poster at the appropriate time.

(viii) The Clerk reported that he had received from the Rt. Hon. Nick Raynsford, MP, Minister for Local and Regional Government, The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, an undated letter enclosing two discussion documents - "Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter" and "Vibrant Local Leadership" - and inviting comments by e-mail or post.

14. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

(i) From The Corporate Director - Democratic and Legal Service, Lichfield District Council:

Report of Corporate Director - Development Services for Meeting of Council to be held on Monday, 31st January 2005;

Agenda of Meeting of Council to be held on Monday, 31st January 2005;
Executive Arrangements - Forward Plan 2004/2005 Version 1 (to take effect from 1st February 2005);
Executive Arrangements - Forward Plan 2004/2005 Version 2 (to take effect from 1st February 2005);
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 6th February 2005;
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 20th February 2005;
Lichfield District Council Yearbook 2005 - Amendments.

(ii) From The Performance and Policy Manager, Organisational Development, Lichfield District Council:

Agenda for meeting of Lichfield District Parish Forum to be held at Fradley Village Hall on Wednesday, 19th February 2005;
Minutes of meeting of Lichfield District Parish Forum held in The Guild Room, Guildhall, Lichfield, on Wednesday, 1st December 2004.

(iii) From The Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association:

Advisory Notes and Newsletter: Issue 102, 2005;
Form for candidate nominated for election to the Executive Committee: Lichfield District;
Report of 65th Annual General Meeting and Conference;
Booking form for seminar on "Planning and the new Local Development Frameworks - Understanding the role of the Parish Council" on Saturday, February 26th, 2005, at The Frank Jordan Centre, Stone, from 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.;
Legal Update: Terms and Conditions of Employment;
Legal Update: Freedom of Information Act - General Rights of Access, January 2005;
"Speaking Out": Journal of The West Midlands Regional Assembly - Issue 7, January 2005;
Leaflet: ROSPA play Safety - Parish, Town and Community Councils.

(iv) From The Passenger Transport Unit, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council:

Public Transport News - February 2005.

(v) From Signs & Labels, Stockport:

Safetyshop: The Definitive Safety Buyers' Guide: Spring 2005.

(vi) From St. Giles Hospice, Whittington:

Hospice News: Spring 2005.

15. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was none.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, March 8th, 2005, in The Meeting Room of Christ Church, Gentleshaw, commencing at 8.00 p.m.