

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL OF LONGDON HELD IN  
THE W. I. HALL, LONGDON, ON TUESDAY, APRIL 12TH, 2005

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

Also present were the Clerk; Cllr. N. J. Roberts, Lichfield District Council;  
and one parishioner - Mr. Robert McNeil, of The Calf-Pens, Lichfield Road.

1. APOLOGIES

Cllr. Mrs. A. Meere; and County Councillor F. W. Lewis.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in the Meeting Room of Christ Church, Gentleshaw, on Tuesday, March 8th, 2005, were, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Juxon and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Nichols, approved and signed.

3. PARISHIONERS' QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

There was none.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(i) Waste Skip at Longdon Village Hall

The Clerk reported that a waste skip had been made available in the Village Hall car park for parishioners' use during the previous weekend and had been well used.

(ii) Robinia outside No. 12 Berkeley Way

The Clerk reported that he had completed and returned the form provided by the District Council's Tree Officer requesting permission to carry out work on a tree covered by a Tree Protection Order.

He had also written to two tree surgeons - Acme Tree Services, of Burntwood, and A. Dunford and Son, of Hednesford - inviting them to quote for the work.

In addition, he had received a letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Cauldwell, dated 6th April 2005, asking when the work would be carried out, to which he would respond.

(iii) Invitation to Stephen Hill

Cllr. Roberts confirmed that Mr. Hill, the District Council's Development Control Manager, was willing to come to a meeting of the Council and suggested that the Clerk send him a list of dates of Council meetings so that he could indicate one for which he would be available.

The Clerk was instructed to write to Mr. Hill providing him with such a list.

(iv) A51 Route Management Strategy

The Clerk reported that he had been advised that all the proposals contained in the above plan had been approved with the exception of an extension of the 40 mph speed limit south of Longdon Green.

While no reason had been given for this, it was thought that the consequent need for speed de-restriction signs at the point of entry into Longdon Green might have been why this proposal was deemed unacceptable.

Furthermore, the Council had already been advised that the highways authorities did not favour too long an area of speed restriction, which, it was believed, invited confusion or contempt on the part of motorists.

(v) Mowing Contract

The Clerk reported that Graham McCulloch had accepted the Council's invitation to continue mowing the greens and verges in Longdon for the next two years and had promised to send the Council a copy of his current insurance policy.

(vi) Burial Grounds Survey

The Clerk reported that he had sent the two copies of the Home Office Burial Grounds Survey to the Rev. Martin Butt and the Rev. Michael Jefferson.

(vii) Sewage outside Lilac Cottage, Church Hill

The Council was advised that the householder was aware of the problem and was acting to remove the nuisance.

(viii) Post Box at Bradley Lakes

The Clerk reported that he had, as instructed, written to the Area Manager, Royal Mail, Wolverhampton, asking if the post box at Bradley Lakes could be re-located to a site where it would be less of a visual obstruction.

5. DECLARATION OF COUNCILLORS' PERSONAL, PREJUDICIAL AND FINANCIAL INTERESTS

None was declared.

6. PLANNING

(i) Report of Working Group

Cllr. Welch reported that the Working Group had met the previous evening, when it had considered the following applications:

05/ 00255/COU: Ocean View Properties: Change of use with alterations and extensions to form offices: Coach House, Longdon Hall, Longdon

There had been no objections to the proposed alterations and extensions, which were within the footprint of the existing buildings and gave its appearance a better balance.

However, there had been reservations about the stark appearance of the extensive area of parking space proposed, which was unrelieved by landscaping, and tree planting had been recommended as a condition of planning approval.

05/00268/FUL: Mr. N. Hyslop: Single-storey extensions and alterations to form dining area, kitchen, lobby, dressing room and conservatory: 61A Upper Way, Upper Longdon

The dwelling stood within a half-acre plot, and the proposed development, which was of the size of a conventional room, was well within the curtilage of the property.

There had therefore been no objection to this application.

05/00290/FUL: Mrs. R. Davidson: Single -storey side garage and utility extension: 6, St. James Close, Longdon

There had been no objection to this application, which would be putting an apex on an existing flat roof.

05/00112/FUL: Mr. & Mrs. A. Parton: Amended plans to show existing driveway to be blocked: New Stoneywell Farm, Longdon

There had been no objection to this amendment, which would provide safer access.

05/00165/FUL: Punch Taverns: Amended plans to show pitched roof over porch area: The Redmore Inn, Cannock Wood

There had been on objection to this application.

(ii) For Consideration

The Clerk reported that no further planning applications had been received.

(iii) Approved by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that Lichfield District Council had issued the following Notices of Approval of Planning Permission:

04/01309/COU//04/01310/LBC: Mr. Paul Williams: Amendments to planning permission 01/00015/COU and Listed Building Consent 01/00565/LBC to include the relocation of roof lights, an additional window to the north elevation, alterations to the size of openings and alterations to the south elevation to form window in place of garage doors: Broomy Lodge, Broomy Fields, Longdon Green

05/00051/FUL: Janet Tomkins: Erection of 2 timber tables (3.66 x 7.32m) on concrete base (7.5 x 5.5m)(Retrospective): Forge Cottage, Broomy Fields, Hay Lane, Longdon Green

(iv) Refused by Lichfield District Council

The Clerk reported that Lichfield District Council had issued the following Notice of Refusal of Permission to Develop:

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

(v) Other Planning Matters

(a) Erection of two timber stables on a concrete base (retrospective) at Forge Cottage, Hay Lane, Longdon Green

The Clerk Reported that he had received from Stephen Hill, Development Control Manager, Development, Building Control and Business Investment, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 16th March 2005, explaining why the District Council had approved the above application although the Parish Council had expressed concerns about the granting of planning approval.

The proposed stabling had been considered to be closely related to the existing agricultural building in this locality and would preserve the character and openness of the Green Belt. It would not give rise to demonstrable harm to neighbours' amenity.

Cllr. Welch commented that there was growing concern over what was being described as "the horsey culture"; the increase in the number of individual stables on open sites to which this was giving rise would be discussed at the next meeting of the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership.

(b) Repair and change of use of barn for stables and change of use of land for horses - land north of Borough Lane, Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Christine Hibbs, Principal Planning Officer, Planning, Development, Building Control and Business Investment, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 4th April 2005, in which she had confirmed that the two areas of hard standing had been approved under the provisions of application 03/00466/COU for the repair and change of use of barn for stables and a change of the land for horses. The building was also approved under this application.

While it was acknowledged that the new building replaced an existing barn in poor condition, it was nonetheless felt that the extensive area of hard-standing was an intrusive feature and the site now accommodated large machines.

The Clerk was instructed to make these ongoing concerns known to Mrs. Hibbs.

## 7. REPORTS OF MEETINGS

(i) Governors' Meetings, St. James School, Longdon: March 15<sup>th</sup>

Cllr. Mrs. Nichols gave a brief report on a meeting of the Governing Body of St. James School, Longdon, which had taken place at the School on Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005 and at which she had been present.

Numbers remained constant at 105. The School was looking at the possibility of setting up a foundation class for younger children.

There had been delight at the proposals for the traffic management on the A51.

There was a problem with dinner-time supervision, and volunteers were being sought.

Generally, parents were very supportive, and the reputation of the School amongst parents was very high.

(ii) Governors' Meeting, Gentleshaw Primary School: March 15<sup>th</sup>

Clr. Hemmingsley gave a brief report on a meeting of the Governing Body of Gentleshaw Primary School which had taken place at the School on Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005, and at which he had been present.

The Head Teacher was currently on secondment to a failing school, a situation which the Governors wanted time-limited and non-repetitive.

The School was being run very efficiently by the Deputy Head Teacher, but the Governors wanted to avoid standards slipping as a result of the increased pressure on staff.

The School is involved in a very successful joint science project with Chasetown Technological College.

There was renewed concern over parking outside the school at the beginning and end of the school day, and the Chairman of Governors, Ian Bamford, had been in touch with the Community Beat Officer, who would be visiting the school the next day. If parents did not respond, he would be returning and issuing parking tickets.

Clr. Hemmingsley thought that it was time to arrange a return visit by Kevin Yates, the District Council's Parks Manager, to assess the effectiveness of the planting opposite the school.

There would shortly be a "Walking to School" Week; unfortunately, support for the "Walking Bus" had diminished after the first two or three weeks.

The Clerk asked whether the School would be adopting the two flower tubs provided by the Parish Council. Cllr. Hemmingsley said that he would enquire.

(iii) "Linking the Future" – Managing the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty: March 16<sup>th</sup>

Clr. Welch gave a short account of the above event, which both he and Cllr. Hemmingsley had attended.

The purpose of the event had been to study methods of managing lowland heathland, thirty per cent of the world's being in the United Kingdom.

After coffee and biscuits at Ye Olde Windmill Inn, the party had left by coach for Sutton Park, where heathland had been managed for the past ten years, principally by grazing ponies introduced to the park.

The feasibility of introducing Dexter cattle to Gentleshaw Common for the same purpose had been discussed.

Following lunch and a demonstration of the manufacture of historic heathland products, the afternoon had been spent walking on Gentleshaw Common, during which ways of getting it to revert to what it was like three or four hundred years before were discussed.

Clr. Roberts, who had also attended, added that a period of public consultation would now follow, and a questionnaire was being prepared for distribution to residents of Gentleshaw and Boney Hay. Information about the District Council's proposals would also be posted on the District Council's website.

(iv) Cannock Chase AONB Workshop: March 24<sup>th</sup>

Clr. Welch gave a short report on a workshop run by the Community Council of Staffordshire under the auspices of the Cannock Chase AONB Partnership on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

Its purpose had been to encourage wider local involvement, and its focus had been on the wilderness aspects of AONBs, such as heathland, forest and woodland.

Two principal concerns had been identified – litter and traffic.

The Partnership was very supportive of Parish Plans, for which the Government was making £1m. available through The Countryside Agency.

(v) Cannock Wood & Gentleshaw Village Hall Management Committee: March 31<sup>st</sup>

Cllr. Hemminmgsley gave a brief report on a meeting of the Management Committee of the Cannock Wood and Gentleshaw Village Hall which had taken place at the Hall on Thursday, March 24<sup>th</sup>.

The Committee was still seeking quotations for the electrical work it proposed carrying out at the Hall. The meeting heard that Cllr. John Tonks, Chairman of Cannock Wood Parish Council, had been able to secure a grant of £25, 000 from an agency called “Central Funds”.

## 8. NOTICE OF MEETINGS

(i) Lichfield District Parish Forum: April 20<sup>th</sup>

Cllr. Mrs. Nichols reported that the next meeting of the Lichfield District Parish Forum would take place in the Committee Room at District Council House, Lichfield, on Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, when the new licensing regulations relating to community halls would be outlined.

She and Cllr. Stanfield would be attending.

## 9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTPATHS

(i) Speed Management in Upper Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received from Simon Edwards, Project Engineer (Engineering Services), Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> March 2005, enclosing drawings illustrating preliminary proposals for speed management in Upper Longdon.

These consisted of an informal footway indicated by coloured surfacing running from North Lodge to “The Chetwynd Arms” and a gateway feature outside North Lodge.

The AONB Partnership had been consulted but were in the process of drawing up standards for highway furniture within the AONB, including gateway features, and had asked if a decision on the design of the Upper Way gateway could be delayed until April 2005, when these standards would be produced.

The Clerk reported that a copy of Mr. Edwards’ proposals was on display on the notice – board at Upper Longdon.

Cllr. Butler believed that the proposed red surfacing did not have the support of many of the local residents.

Cllr. Welch reminded the meeting that Mr. Edwards was inhibited by the necessity of working within a remit which was more favourable to an urban environment; for example, chicanes and mini-roundabouts needed a level of signage and lighting which might not be acceptable to a rural community.

Amongst other measures suggested, flashing speed signs, such as the one at Kings Bromley, were found to have only a limited impact.

Cllr. Juxon asked whether the police had entirely abrogated their responsibility in the matter of monitoring and controlling speed levels.

Councillors noted that Mr. Edwards would be contacting the Council to arrange a meeting with himself and members of the AONB Partnership.

(ii) Request for Litter Bin at Startley Lane

The Clerk reported that he had received a request for a litter bin to be installed in Startley Lane, at the side of the track next to North Lodge leading to Cannock Chase.

Cllr. Hemmingsley reminded Councillors that they had already received a request for a dog waste bin at the car park opposite Gentleshaw Church for the use of dog-owners exercising their dogs on Gentleshaw Common.

The Clerk was instructed to obtain prices for each of these items.

(iii) Quotation for New Roof to Bus Shelter at Longdon Green

The Clerk reported that the roof of the bus shelter at Longdon Green had been vandalized and holes poked in the roof, and he had received the consent of the Chairman to obtain a quotation for its repair from Alan Johnson, of Aqua Jet Services.

Mr. Johnson had submitted a quotation for £292. 00 to remove the old roof and replace with green mineral roofing felt.

However, Cllr. Mrs. Nichols suggested that, since this bus shelter was within a Conservation Area, the Council might first consider replacing the missing and rotten wooden roof tiles, and the Clerk was instructed to ask Mr. Johnson for a quotation for this work.

(iv) Cast-Iron Roadside Direction Signs

The Clerk reported that he had received from Alison Richards, Project Implementation Co-ordinator, Planning, Development, Building Control and Business Investment, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> March 2005, reminding the Council that Lichfield District Council had a Conservation Improvement Area Grant which funded up to 75% of the costs of approved works and that the restoration of the finger-post at Longdon Green might qualify for such a grant.

She had provided the names and addresses of two more companies specializing in this work, to which, with the Chairman's consent, the Clerk had written for quotations.

He had subsequently received from Ted McAvoy, of Fletcher Foundry, Buxton, Derbyshire, a letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> March 2005, in which he had stated that it was quite possible that his company had made the existing signposts and would still retain some of the casting patterns.

He had hoped to visit the area to inspect the signposts and to submit a quotation for the work, but, in the absence of a second letter, it appeared that he had not been able to do so.

It was agreed that the Clerk should pursue the matter further with Mr. McAvoy.

The Clerk also reported that he had received a phone call from Ken Owen, the Divisional Engineer, in which Mr. Owen had said that there had appeared to have been a misunderstanding regarding his last letter and that a charge of £122. 50 would only be made if the work of removing the signs were carried out by an independent contractor.

If this work were to be carried out at Mr. Owen's direction, no charge would be made.

Finally, the Clerk reported that he had received from Mrs. Tracey Benger, Traffic Sign Technician, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> April 2005, in which she had said that she had no objections to the removal of these signs for restoration and that they could be replaced as the original signs with fractions.

## 10. GREENS AND OPEN SPACES

### (i) Mowing Contract 2005/6

The Clerk reported that Graham McCulloch had accepted the Council's mowing contract for 2005/6 and would be sending the Clerk a copy of his insurance policy.

The Clerk had written to the other applicants, informing them that the Council would not be using their services.

### (ii) Distribution of New Footpath Leaflets

The Clerk reported that he had collected the new footpath leaflets from the printers and asked how they should be distributed.

He reminded Councillors that parish councils were legally barred from trading and could not therefore sell the leaflets.

A problem arose from the fact that, whereas, last time, Lichfield Tourism had put a price of 10p on each of the leaflets to recover part of the cost of printing which they had incurred, this time they had nothing to the cost and were not therefore entitled to retain any of the payments.

It was agreed that the Clerk should discuss a suitable arrangement for the disposal of the money with Catherine Higham, of Lichfield Tourism, from whom he had received a letter dated 4th April 2005, in which she had asked whether the Council wished Lichfield Tourism to proceed with the printing of the leaflets.

It was agreed that any income from the sale of the leaflets at Longdon Post Office should continue to be donated to the Longdon Village Hall Management Fund.

## 11. PARISH WEBSITE

It was agreed that, while the launch of the parish website at St. James School on March 16<sup>th</sup> had gone well, attendance had been disappointing.

It was stressed that the website would have to be continuously updated if it were to be function as a living entity.

Cllr. Hemmingsley said that a diary page had been added which allowed users to enter their own contributions after authorization.

He reported that Alrewas were preparing their own website and had asked for permission to use some of Longdon's graphics, which he saw no reason for refusing.

It was suggested that the services for which Parish, District and County Councils respectively were responsible should be listed.

## 12. ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

The Clerk reported that he had written to a total of twenty-two local organizations asking for their annual reports.

It was confirmed that the meeting, which would take place in the Hall of St. James' School, would begin at 7. 30 p.m.

Andrew Halden, Chief Executive of the Community Council of Staffordshire, would be speaking on parish plans.

Refreshments would be served by members of Longdon Women's Institute.



### 13. BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Welch and seconded by Cllr. Juxon, it was agreed that a budget of £450. 00 should be allocated to the Best Kept Village Competition.

The Clerk said that he would carry out a temporary repair on the roof of the bus shelter at Longdon Green.

It was agreed that close attention should be paid to the state of the church car park and the verge at the side of Church Hill.

### 14. VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF COUNCILLOR

The Clerk reminded the Council that, following the resignation of Cllr. Bramley, the Council should declare and advertise the vacancy “within a reasonable time”.

It was agreed that it would be reasonable for the Council to delay advertising the vacancy until after the General Election on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

### 15. FINANCIAL MATTERS

#### (i) Accounts for Payment

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

*The Benhill Press	1000 copies of “Longdon Village Walks” Nos. 1-4	£678. 00
*Insta Print	650 copies of “Longdon Life” 600 inserts	£212. 86
*Hazel Crosbie	Delivering “Longdon Life” and inserts	£ 35. 00
*A. J. Juxon	Editor’s Expenses	£ 15. 00
Christ Church. Gentleshaw	Hire of Room	£ 10. 00
Longdon W. I.	Hire of Hall	£ 12. 00
Staffordshire Parish Councils’ Association	Annual Subscription	£345. 00
Staffordshire Playing Fields Association	Annual Subscription	£ 15. 00
Campaign to Protect Rural England	Annual Donation	£ 20. 00

(\* confirmation)

(ii) Payments Received

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

Central Networks	Wayleaves	£ 30. 72
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(iii) Current Balances

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

NatWest c/a: £333. 55	The Halifax d/a: £11668. 65
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(iv) Appeals for Grants Aid

(a) St. James Church, Longdon

The Clerk reported that he had received a phone call from the Rev. Michael Jefferson asking if the Parish Council would once again make a grant towards the cost of maintaining Longdon Churchyard.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Hemmingsley and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Nichols, it was agreed that the Council should make an immediate grant of £500. 00.

(b) Longdon Produce & Flower Show Committee

The Clerk reported that he had received from Mrs. Val Heseltine, Secretary of the Longdon Produce and Flower Show Committee, a letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> March 2005 in which she asked if the Parish Council would meet the cost of hiring the W. I. Hall for the Rose and Sweet Pea Show on July 14<sup>th</sup> (£12. 00) and the cost of hiring both the Village Hall and the W. I. Hall for the Produce and flower Show on September 11<sup>th</sup> (£160. 00).

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Juxon and seconded by Cllr. Bird, it was agreed that the Council should meet the full cost of £172. 00.

(c) Longdon Post Office

The Clerk reported that he had received from Eva and Barry Overton, of the Longdon Post Office and Store, a letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005, in which they had asked if the Council would contribute towards the cost of a sign on the A51 showing that there was a Post Office in Brook End.

They had already been in correspondence with the Development Services Directorate at Stafford, who were prepared to permit such a sign and provide it at an approximate cost of £155. 00.

The Clerk had established that the Council could make such a payment under Section 137 of the 1972 Local Government Act.

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Bird and seconded by Cllr. Butler, it was agreed that the Council should meet the full cost of erecting this sign.

(iv) Presentation of Reconciliation Statement

The Clerk next presented a Reconciliation Statement for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005.

This showed the Council's final balance as £12279. 34, including uncleared cheques amounting to £307. 86, a total of £11971. 48.  
Total receipts had been £24368. 74 and total payments £12397. 26, making a final balance also of £11971. 48.

(v) Report of Finance Sub-Committee

The Chairman presented a report on the meeting of the Finance Sub-Committee which had taken place in the W. I Hall, Longdon, on Wednesday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005.

This meeting had been attended by the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman, Cllr. Hemmingsley and Cllr. Juxon, but no members of the public had been present.

The Chairman explained that the Sub-Committee had looked closely at expenditure and decided that, where this had exceeded budget, there had always been a good reason.

He reminded Councillors that one of the functions of the Parish Council was to spend its money for the benefit of the community, not to allow it to accrue.

He invited Councillors to study the detailed Financial Statement prepared by the Clerk in support of the Reconciliation Statement. This was then discussed. The only aspect of it which attracted debate was the cost of photocopying, which raised the question of whether the Council should obtain its own photocopier. However, it was recognized that storage might create a problem for the Clerk.

The Chairman then invited Councillors to consider two recommendations being made by the Sub-Committee – that tenders should be obtained for work in excess of £1500. 00 (instead of, at present, £500. 00) and that, where it was necessary for payment to coincide with purchase, a cheque not exceeding £250. 00 might be paid without first being authorized by full Council provided that the Council had already given general approval to the purchase and that one of the signatories was the Chairman (instead of, at present, £75. 00).

On a motion proposed by Cllr. Stanfield and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Nichols, these recommendations were adopted as part of the Council's financial procedures.

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

The Chairman proposed that the Finance Sub-Committee should in future be known as the Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee and that its remit should be extended to the consideration of wider aspects of Council business.

He gave, as an example, the Council's need to draw up Standing Orders and suggested that a smaller group could provide an initial draft for consideration by the full Council.

He argued that a Finance and General Purposes Sub-Committee would enable the Council to keep abreast of developments.

He stressed that the Sub-Committee would have no powers of decision and that its remit would be limited to making recommendations.

After it had been agreed that it was important that non-members of the Sub-Committee should be informed in advance of the Sub-Committee's agenda, the Chairman's proposal was, on a motion proposed by Cllr. Stanfield and seconded by Cllr. Mrs. Nichols, accepted by the Council.

## 16. CORRESPONDENCE SINCE LAST MEETING

(i) The Clerk reported that he had received from the Rt. Hon. Alun Michael, M. P., Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality, and Mike O'Brien, M. P., Minister of State for Energy and e-Commerce, Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, a letter dated 8<sup>th</sup> March 2005, enclosing a CD-ROM which demonstrated how people throughout the United Kingdom were using Broadband to improve their daily lives.

(ii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Paul Rochfort, Ranger South, Development Services Directorate, Staffordshire County Council, a letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2005, enclosing details about forthcoming walks and events in the Staffordshire countryside, which he had posted on the parish notice-boards.

(iii) The Clerk reported that he had received from the Rt. Hon. Alun Michael, M. P., Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality, Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, a letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> March 2005 in which he announced that £1m. would be available from April for Parish Plans and that DEFRA would be offering continuity support from 2006.

He also urged support for the Quality Parish and Town Councils Scheme and, in due course, DEFRA's Rural Social and Community Programme.

(iv) The Clerk reported that he had received from Maria Bailey, Principal Development Plans Officer, Planning, Development, Building Control and Business Investment, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 21<sup>st</sup> March 2005, acknowledging receipt of the Parish Council's comments on the Lichfield District Local Development Framework, and advising that, following collation of all the responses received and presentation to members of the District Council's Development (Overview and Scrutiny) Committee for consideration, draft documents would be prepared for submission to the Secretary of State, after which the Parish Council would have the opportunity to send in further representations.

(v) The Clerk reported that he had received from Mrs. Janet Allen, Clerk to the Trustees, Longdon Parochial Charities Trust, a letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> March 2005, in which she had enclosed a copy of the Trust's Annual Report together with a copy of the latest accounts of the Cotton Almshouses Trust, of which she was also Clerk.

(vi) The Clerk reported that he had received from Beth Williams, Senior Development Officer (Canvassing), The Recycling Consortium, Bristol, a letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> March 2005, in which she had introduced her company as consultants employed by Lichfield District Council as part of the Waste Resource Action Programme grant funding project to promote recycling in Lichfield District and advised that, in the week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> March 2005, a team would be doorstepping householders to provide them with information and enthusiasm to recycle, or recycle more.

(vii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Richard King, Corporate Director – Democratic and Legal Services, Lichfield District Council, a letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005, advising that The Local Authorities (Members Allowances) (England) Regulations of 2003 had been amended so as to enable Members of Parish Councils to be eligible for travelling and subsistence allowance (including co-opted Members and not just elected Members, as had been previously the case).

(viii) The Clerk reported that he had received from Richard Storey, Managing Director, Signs & Labels, Stockport, a letter dated March 2005, in which he had announced that his company had retained its contract with OGCbuying solutions, which meant that his company could continue to offer discounts to its public sector customers on its range of safety and signage products until the end of 2008.

(ix) The Clerk reported that he had received from Sarah Russell, Office Manager, Sutcliffe Play (South West) Limited, a letter dated March 2005 enclosing her company's new flyer showing various items of equipment on offer.

(x) The Clerk reported that he had received from Michael Fabricant, M. P., a letter dated 6<sup>th</sup> April 2005, thanking him for his letters of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005 regarding the A51 and policing in Staffordshire.

## 17. OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

Report of Corporate Director - Development Services for Meeting of Council on Monday, 4<sup>th</sup> April 2005;  
Executive Arrangements – Forward Plan 2004/2005 Version 1 (to take effect on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005);  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2005;  
Calendar of Meetings, fortnight ending 17<sup>th</sup> April 2005.

(ii) From The Electoral Registration Officer, Lichfield District Council:

Monthly Applications for 1<sup>st</sup> April 2005.

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

Public Transport News - April 2005 (2 copies).

(iv) From The Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association:

Booking Form: SPCA Seminar – “Roles, Responsibilities and Procedures” at Colwich Community Centre on Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2005, from 2. 00 p.m. to 4. 30 p.m.;  
Booking Forms: CiLCA Portfolio and “Working with your Council” Mentoring Evenings – Spring Semester 2005;  
Leaflet: Services Available to Member Councils 2005/06;  
Publications List 2005/2006 (2 copies);  
Executive Committee of SPCA 2004/05;  
NALC Employment Update: 2005/6 National Salary Award for Local Council Clerks.

(v) From The Cannock Chase AONB Partnership:

“Chase Trails News”: Issue 1, Winter 2005/05;  
AONB News: Spring 2005 (10 copies);  
Leaflet: Countryside Events: January to December 2005.

(vi) From The Staffordshire Wildlife Trust:

“Staffordshire Wildlife”: No. 93, April 2005;  
“Natural World”: Spring 2005;  
Cannock Group News;  
Wildlife What’s On: May to August 2005;  
Wolseley Centre Events 2005;  
Nature Reserve Volunteer Parties – May to August 2005;  
Heather Hike 2005: Sunday, 11<sup>th</sup> September – Annual Sponsored Walk  
across Cannock Chase;  
Short Courses 2005;  
Invitation to Members’ Open Day at The Wolseley Centre: Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup>,  
from 11. 00 a.m. to 3. 00 p.m.

(vii) From The National Probation Service for England and Wales (West of England Region):

“Testing Times”: No. 2, Spring/Summer 2005.

(viii) From Signs and Labels, Stockport:

Catalogue: Safetyshop Special Offers.

(ix) From Wicksteed Leisure, Kettering:

Leaflet: “Toddlers to Teens”.

## 18. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

(i) Cllr. Roberts reported that, following expressions of concern over work at Holly Farm, Chorley, including the fencing off of part of a grass triangle and the disruption of part of a Site of Special Scientific Importance, he had arranged for a site visit on April 21<sup>st</sup> which would be attended by Christine Hibbs, Principal Planning Officer and he invited representatives of the Parish Council to be present.

It was agreed that the Chairman and Cllr. Hemmingsley would represent the Parish Council at this meeting.

Cllr. Roberts would advise the Clerk of the time of the meeting, not yet agreed.

(ii) Cllr. Roberts said that he would use the occasion to draw Mrs. Hibbs’ attention to the presence of four caravans in a field at the side of Commonsides, next to “Ye Olde Windmill Inn”.

(iii) Concern was expressed by both the Chairman and Cllr. Mrs. Nichols over the state of Smithy Lane, parts of which seemed to be permanently flooded.

The Clerk was instructed to invite Ken Owen, the Divisional Engineer, to arrange a site inspection, preferably after three or four days without rain.

(iv) It was noted that the trees planted on the Site of Biological Importance outside Longdon Hall had still not been removed.

(v) The Clerk reported that he had contacted the County Council's Passenger Transport Unit about a damaged bus stop outside "Ye Olde Windmill Inn" and had been assured that appropriate action would be taken.

(vi) The Clerk reported that he had written to John German, the house agents, asking for two "For Sale" signs advertising a property at Redhill to be removed, the one having been erected at the junction of Borough Lane and Horsey Lane nearly three-quarters of a mile from the property and the other at the entrance to Bardy Lane, in Upper Longdon, half a mile away from the property.

The company had responded by removing both signs within days.

#### 19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2005, in the W. I. Hall, Longdon, commencing at 7. 30 pm.  
This meeting would be preceded by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.