



LIMPSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL – MONTHLY MEETING

*Minutes of the Limpsfield Parish Council held on **Monday 9th September 2024**,
7pm at Limpsfield CofE Infants School.*

In attendance:

Parish Councillors: Tom Briggs, Mark Wilson, Bernie de Haldevang, Sophie Kemp, Ann Osborn, Bob Harvey, John Thompson and Antony Taylor.

District Councillors: Ian Booth and Claire Blackwell; County Councillor, Cameron McIntosh. Clerk, Sophie Martin.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Jenny Williams

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE INTEREST

None

3. MINUTES FROM LAST MEETING

No changes signed as circulated

4. PUBLIC SESSION - *Any member of the public wishing to discuss an item in the public session, should email the Clerk. clerk@limpsfield.org*

5. COUNCILLORS' REPORTS (Surrey CC & Tandridge DC)

- AONB Review – next consultation starts on 17th September – The extension area under consultation also includes the area additional area of land around Staffhurst Wood, although this has been upheld by Natural England.
- Hillview Farm application has gone in, and as it stands it looks like a viable application. See planning section below.
- Chic Grooming – Apparently only operating 2 days a week. Cliff Thurlow has visited the business himself. The owners weren't there, but their intention is apparently to submit an application, though they have had some months to do this and nothing received yet. CB will continue to chase this.
- EV Charging points – BH asks why Oxted doesn't have any. CMcl says there is a county-wide strategy that is being rolled out but it takes time and is tricky with regards to street side EV charging, due to historic high streets and rural locations. Last communication from TDC was that EV Charging points are scheduled for public car parks and TDC car park but subject to supplier contracts.
- AT asks about the email that was circulated about public toilets in Tandridge District. CB says this was brought up by a councillor at a meeting but is not going to have any bearing on upcoming Ellice Road refurbishment or any other public toilets in the area. It is apparent that most people will be in favour of having and refurbishing public toilets.
- AO asks if Jumping Jacks / The Studio on Limpsfield High Street has now applied to SCC for dropped kerb/VCO as requested by SCC. CB asks CMcl to check where they are on the SCC request. BH brings up the high cost of application process for VCOs, which is discouraging, and not surprising people don't want to apply for them.

- Parking Review proposals for the next schemes – there may be more restrictions imposed for next year around Water Lane and around Hazelwood School. CMcl will circulate proposals as soon as he can.
- Road Lining programme on key roads around the county and should be complete A22/A25 in the next two weeks.
- MW/BH remark that the drain at the end of Hookwood has all lifted again in the bad weather and road surface is now breaking up. A highways officer has been out and there is a permit in place for the works. There is cordon around the site. MW would like to know how many times it has now been reviewed. CMcl will ask what measures can be taken. He believes a drainage investigation has already been done and it is not going to be a priority compared to other more pressing issues in the area.
- CB asks about Station Road East outside of the council offices as this affects pedestrians and bus users. CMcl will follow this up.
- AO mentions that one of the lime trees opposite St Peter's Church will be removed shortly because it is dead.

6. CHAIRMAN'S NOTE(s)

At this point Antony Taylor requests that Community Hall discussion is moved up the agenda before CMcl has to leave. Agreed. See 8.

7. FINANCE & GOVERNANCE - Cllr Antony Taylor/Clerk

7.1. Note of end of August balances – as circulated, the balances of all accounts combined stood at £73,588.73. The liquidity account received £88.33 in interest for August.

7.2. September expenditure items for approval/to note. The Clerk reviews the upcoming expenditure for September, with a few items (Biodiversity grants and TVA grant request) as well as ironstone repair to be discussed during the meeting.

Note of August payments (no meeting held in August) – all payments had already been agreed in previous (July) meeting.

7.3. Grant or expenditure requests for discussion and vote:

7.3.1. TVA Community Companions – this is a re-branding of the former “Befriending Scheme” to provide company to vulnerable or isolated people in the community.

Motion to approve request by TVA for £250 grant. MW proposed, AO seconded. All agreed.

7.3.2. Motion to approve request purchase of early flowering daffodil bulbs for village. £55.95. AO proposed. TCB seconded. All agreed. Expenditure approved.

7.3.3. Ironstone paving expenditure proposals, including kerbstones (CAAMP budget)

a. AO proposes small area of cleaning to some of the remaining ironstone cobbles around Kiwi Cottage. Cost would be £975 + VAT and contingency= £1200 maximum, pending conversation with and approval of the owner. This would come from the CAAMP earmarked budget (see 2024-5 budget).

AO proposed, TB seconded. All in favour.

b. Ironstone paving stones in the high street that need to be repaired or replaced.

- Motion to waive requirement for second quote as Historic Buildings Officer, Chris Reynolds has already seen and recommended the provider. AO has been unable to find another specialist to do the work. **TCB proposes, JT seconds. All in favour**

- Motion to accept quote by Signal Services, for maximum of £5,000 including VAT and contingency. **AO proposes, TCB Seconds. All in favour.**

7.3.4. Biodiversity small grant application – Stanhopes to Bull Laneway. £250. Request for grant to create a Wildflower corridor along the laneway (public footpath). There is no formal Stanhopes residents' association anymore, but an agreement has been reached by residents of the laneway. David Bell is the representative.

TCB proposes, AO seconds, MW abstains. All remaining councillors in favour.

7.3.5. Community Orchard Grant request for £250 approved. Robin Masefield is the group representative.

7.4. Statutory documents for discussion and final approval 2024/2025 – The following documents have been reviewed and amended by the Finance Committee with recommendation for approval:

Financial Regulations 2024-25; Risk Assessment 2024-25, Standing Orders 2024-25

NB. The Financial Regulations document is based on the NALC new model Financial Regs and amended in line with our previously agreed.

All documents were circulated with changes highlighted.

Motion to approve documents with changes, proposed by Antony Taylor (Chair Finance), seconded by John Thompson. All agreed.

TCB proposes change to Banking Resolution as circulated to include access to online banking for Antony Taylor (signatory). John Thompson seconds. All in favour.

7.5. Review of outstanding project budget items for 2024/5 ahead of 2025/6 budget planning

No remarks. All current project expenditure items should remain for the rest of the year.

The Pebble Hill lighting project (£8000) has been abandoned as per previous meeting decision due to unviability.

7.6. Update on .gov.uk domain name transfer progress. Clerk explains procedure of transferring to the government domain, to follow auditors'/NALC's recommendations to parish councils to adopt a .gov.uk domain name as a public / government supported and regulated entity.. All agreed cost of £120 for 2 years (£60 pa). Clerk to continue process for application with Freethought - recommended domain provider as per Government list.

7.7. Conclusion of Audit 2024 – AT noted that the conclusion of audit documents were received (on 24 August 2024) – as circulated to Finance Committee. A successful audit with no queries, recommendations or remarks from the external auditor. Closure documents are on the LPC website.

8. COMMUNITY HALL PROJECT – Cllrs Mark Wilson / Antony Taylor.

- Motion proposed by Mark Wilson and Antony Taylor with St Peter's Church business plan accompanying note circulated to all councillors regarding *North Downs Community Hub project* led by St Peter's Church.
- The proposal is for a new building to service the local community, costing approximately £1m, on the site of the existing hall. It is hoped that YFS will fund the majority, in conjunction with LPC investment of £100,000 plus TDC CIL, funding from the Titsey Estate and other local private funding.
- AT would like to note that the community hall project proposal has not yet been discussed or agreed by the Church's own council (due to meet at the end of the month).
- In the meantime, the circulated plan and outline paper is lacking in detail.

- The proposal is for a Charity to be set up to develop and operate the project. The Church will issue a lease to said Charity. If the LPC were to participate, it would require a loan from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) to fund its investment. The note circulated by MW/AT provided examples of payment schedule with potential increase our precept by 50% to service the loan.
- MW says that the building of the hall could block the potential development of residential homes on The Glebe Meadow (Local Green Space and recreational area by Limpsfield Fitness/Panda), which is thought to be a long-term goal of the Diocese.
- He suggests that the parish council partners with the Church to develop the project and there would be equal representation of LPC and St Peter's Church on the governing board.
- AT asks CMcl about viability of Your Fund Surrey (YFS) loan. CMcl says that the YFS is being wound up and applications will need to be in by November (realistically) to stand a chance of getting funding. The Oxted area has already received a fair amount of funding (Master Park Hub) and Hurst Green community centre already has an application in, and is more likely to be seen as a priority. However, it is worth putting in an application, if it is properly supported and has additional funding in place. CMcl believes a hub style model is likely to be favoured, particularly if it extends to Tatsfield and Titsey areas which are lacking in community facilities.
- AO asks about timing, with the concern that timing is so tight it may not be viable. CMcl believes there is some flexibility, and a good application with a funding package ready to go has more chance of being successful.
- Several councillors raised concerns about the lack of supporting information, including the project (build) cost estimate. Other concerns included, but were not limited to, insufficient business plan, lack of analysis on refurbishment alternative, capability of the development team, the suggestion and legality of LPC as a partner in the legal structure, and the magnitude of the risk being assumed by the parish council.
- SK believes it is a huge ask of the LPC to even consider investing with so little information and is concerned about the legal aspects of a partnership with the church and the amount of time and organisation these sorts of projects take. The Chair noted that participants in such an organisation would then be conflicted and would not be able to vote on related matters at the Council.
- AO worried that any consultation on our part is premature on something that is so poorly thought through and in its infancy. SK agrees and questions the legality of a consultation at this stage. The councillors agreed that a consultation at this time is premature. MW does not want the LPC to be the organisation to pull the plug on the project. JT is worried about the proposal being so ill-equipped. AO believes we should be supportive, but we should not have a consultation until The Church has done more work on the costs and details.
- There was a general feeling that the above concerns could not be resolved at this meeting and a doubt that the project would be able to meet tight information deadlines and filing requirements for YFS application.
- Nonetheless, most councillors are in general support of the development of a community hall subject to resolution of the concerns. Several councillors state that they do not want to be seen to say no to the project as this may reflect badly on the council. The Chair expressed dismay at this concern, as all activity must be based on sound decision making first and foremost.

- After discussion, it was agreed that the second part of the motion regarding the PWLB loan application would not be appropriate at this stage. The vote was limited to part one of the motion.

MW proposes the motion, as outlined in part 1 of the paper circulated that: The LPC agrees to discuss the North Downs Community Hub project with St Peter's Church and other relevant parties regarding LPC's possible part funding of the Community Hub Project. To allow LPC to better understand the benefits and feasibility of the proposal but without giving any formal commitment or undertaking to participate in the project.

MW proposes, AT seconds. For: AO. BH. BdH. JT. SK (with reservations).

TCB against.

JW absent.

9. PLANNING – Cllr Antony Taylor.

9.1. Any urgent planning applications needed for discussion (see website for list if applicable) Hillview Farm. Planning committee recommends no objection, as it is in line with support for rural economy, but recommends several requests for conditions, as circulated by JW. All agreed.

9.2. Recent determinations of note (see draft planning minutes on website) – none of note.

9.3. Outstanding applications (see draft planning minutes on website) – Orchard Cottage Farm, Trevereux Stables, The Grasshopper – no update.

9.4. AONB boundary review – The next phase commences on 17th September with consultation on extension areas. Email and webinar links have been circulated. The specific area of interest is the extension area to the south of the parish along Red Lane and including Staffhurst Wood.

9.5. NPPF changes – Green Belt/Grey Belt discussion and implications to planning/LNP. No specific discussion was had. Will be discussed at future meeting as new details emerge.

10. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN – updates on any activity if applicable. No specific updates. To agree date for next LNP Committee meeting to review overall strategy, activities, biodiversity etc. Clerk and AO to circulate dates.

11. CAAMP – updates on any project activity [AO/JW/MW]

See ironstone repairs in section 7.

12. BIODIVERSITY PLAN – Cllr Ann Osborn

12.1. Updates and review of projects from working group meeting

12.2. Biodiversity Projects budget items for discussion and approval

AO outlines the biodiversity proposal and its various components, as circulated (attached) with a total of £1848 requested for identified activities.

TCB would like to know if we can do more with the water testing. SK can test the Crooked River if we can buy more than one testing kit = 115 x 2 + £15 donation – £245.

Biodiversity Proposal £1900 inc. VAT

AO proposes. JT seconds. All agreed.

13. HIGHWAYS (Cllr Bob Harvey) – any highways issues of note.

Limpsfield High Street drain is a concern as mentioned above in discussion with Cameron McIntosh.

14. CHART PLAYGROUND (Cllr Bob Harvey)

14.1. Condition report. All Ok.

14.2. Update on Spring horse replacement – currently STILL awaiting date for this. The spring is being sourced from Europe. Clerk has requested alternative solution as this is taking too long.

15.AOB

- Bob Harvey is unhappy with the number of bins left out on the street all week long. Asks if we (and TDC) can please encourage residents to collect in their bins each week and store them out of sight – particularly in the conservation area.
- Ann Osborn reports that the Tidy's Green trees are doing well and Detillens Lane residents who funded them would like to install a bench there. TDC is happy with this from a location point of view. The residents' group is happy to part fund. To be discussed at next meeting.
- No Access signs in Hookwood spur. It is agreed to remove the no access signs put up by LPC at the launch of the LW/CR as they are unnecessary and causing complaints. The spur is owned by Titsey Estate with access for the two houses Becketts and Pastures. It is not a public footpath, but walkers do use it as such to access the footpath down to Stanhopes.
- MW would like to get a meeting in the diary for the next LNP Committee Meeting. AP and Clerk to circulate some dates.

Meeting ends 21.33

Signed Thomas Briggs, Chair 14/10/24

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Briggs', written in a cursive style.