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Minutes of the meeting of Longden Parish Council held on
Wednesday 5th April 2023 at 7.30 pm in Longden Village Hall

Present:

Cllr. Paul Carter – Chairman	Cllr. R Evans – Vice chair	Cllr. P Arnold
Cllr. N Evans	Cllr P Fotheringham	Cllr K Lovegrove
Cllr K Roberts	Cllr. C Rigby	

Also present: Caroline Higgins, Clerk

191/2022 Chairman’s Welcome - The Chairman welcomed all present.

192/2022 Apologies – Cllr C Roberts

193/2022 Declarations of Pecuniary Interest – None

194/2022 Minutes - The Council RESOLVED that the draft minutes of the full council meeting held on 1st March 2023 be amended to show the correct date in the header and then be approved as a true and accurate record.

195/2022 Public Participation – There were no members of the public present.

The public session closed at 7:45pm

196/2022 Co-option of Councillor – The Clerk witnessed the signing of Mr Fotheringham’s declaration of acceptance of office and he joined the meeting as a Co-opted Councillor

197/2022 Annual Parish Meeting – The minutes were not yet available but the Chairman reported that traffic speeding and safety had been the key concerns of parishioners.

198/2022 Reports

198.1 Clerk’s Report – The Council noted the Clerk’s report published with the agenda including a summary of correspondence with Shropshire Council Highways regarding the traffic safety measures in Longden.

The date proposed for the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meeting was incorrect as it fell on a Saturday, so the Council agreed to change it to a Wednesday evening.

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The thanks of Shropshire Council's Street Scenes department were passed to the volunteers taking part in the recent Community Litter Pick in Annscroft.

198.2 Chairman's Report – The Chairman thanked Cllrs C and K Roberts for organising the refreshments at the Annual Parish Meeting and proposed a letter of thanks be sent to the speakers.

He expressed great frustration at the disruption to local businesses caused by the recent road closures outside the parish which caused great confusion within it. Signs had been left long after the completion of the works and gave no end date. He suggested a strongly worded letter be sent to Shropshire Council as such incidents had been repeated over many years.

198.3 Shropshire Councillor's Report – Cllr R Evans reported on the following issues:

- The road closure signs caused problems in Pulverbatch, prompting a strongly worded letter from their parish council. He reported the signs related to emergency works undertaken by Severn Trent who failed to remove the signage. He supported the proposal to write to Shropshire Council to address the problem.
- Place Plans – He had attended a members briefing which would be repeated for parish clerks on 17 April. It was noted that Shropshire Council had input their priorities prior to circulation to parish councils who were being informed rather than consulted about the priorities listed. Any priorities for CIL Local funding identified by parish councils must be linked to development.
- Customer Service hours being reviewed. Consultation documents on SC website
- Coronation Street Closures – revised date to submit applications is 16th April 2023
- Roundabout sponsorship – charges have increased significantly following the outsourcing of the contract for the next three years. Cllr Evans has asked for more details.
- Housing allocations under current SAM.Dev Local Plan are being updated. Current allocation in Longden village = 27 during the 10 year plan period
- Speeding – Article in the Shropshire Star highlighted parents concerns
- Local Government Boundary Commission will publish their proposals for SC divisional wards on 25 April 2023. There will then be a further consultation period.
- Residents of Lyth Hill had complimented the parish council on the new noticeboard at Lower Common and requested a new one at Lyth Hill.

198.4 Councillors' Reports

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Cllr Lovegrove reported a rotten gate post at Annscroft play area. She offered to seek quotes from local contractors for repair. It was not considered to be dangerous.

She reported that residents had expressed concern about recent tree felling in the orchard next to Longden rectory. She offered to write to the tree officer to make them aware. Residents had been invited to a meeting by the Diocese to explain the plans of the church to develop the site for housing although no plans had yet been submitted. Concerns about opening an access route into a larger field beyond were noted and the church had suggested a protective strip of land could be created to prevent this.

Cllr R Evans reported that the vicar had made a similar suggestion at the recent Annual Parish Meeting.

Cllr P Fotheringham spoke in support of the recent efforts to calm traffic in Longden which he felt would support local businesses.

199/22 Traffic and Highways

199.1 Longden VAS – The Council considered the suggestion by SC Highways that the existing VAS and post could be relocated but that it would only read speeds from one direction if located opposite the Tankerville Arms. An alternative suggestion to position the VAS at the crossroads was thought to result in roadside clutter and could add to driver distraction. It was noted that automatic traffic counters had been installed and that the results of that survey were not yet available. It was recognised that a properly designed scheme was required to improve safety in the village and it was therefore RESOLVED unanimously to defer the decision on relocation of the VAS until a suitable traffic calming scheme had been developed.

It was further agreed that representatives of Shropshire Council be invited to an extraordinary meeting at school drop off time to view the traffic problems and then meet with residents immediately afterwards.

200/2022 Planning

Note: Council decisions are based on the information available at the time of the meeting. Members representing other bodies reserve the right to take new information into account and review their position should they be required to consider an application at a later date.

200.1 Planning Applications – None

200.2 Planning Decisions – None

201/22 Neighbourhood Planning – The Council agreed to change the date suggested on the agenda (which fell on a Saturday) to Wednesday 10th May 2023 at 7:30pm. Members suggested the names of two residents who had expressed an interest in joining the steering group but the meeting is open to any interested resident.

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202/2022 Play Areas – It was RESOLVED to continue with monthly and annual play area inspections carried out by Shropshire Council at the revised rates of £28 and £80 respectively.

203/2022 Environmental Maintenance Grant – It was RESOLVED that the Council has complied with the conditions of the grant in the year ending 31 March 2023 and to apply for the third payment of the three-year grant (£587)

204/2022 Lyth Hill Funding Agreement - The Council RESOLVED unanimously to continue to pay a maintenance contribution to Shropshire Council of £8,656 in 2023/34.

205/2022 King’s Coronation – It was RESOLVED to purchase reusable bunting to decorate the parish noticeboards and bus shelters. A budget of £120 was unanimously approved.

206/2022 Finance

206.1 Payments for retrospective approval – The Council approved the following payments made since the last meeting to meet contractual obligations or collected by direct debit:

	£
• SSE (Street light electricity – February 23)	93.89
• Staff payment (March salary)	783.25
• HMRC (March deductions)	11.60
• NEST (March pension contributions)	46.55
• Geoff Rogers (Pest control)	60.00

206.2 Payments for approval – The Council RESOLVED unanimously to approve the following online payments:

	£
• C Higgins (April Salary)	652.95
• HMRC (Tax & NI contributions)	11.40
• NEST (Pension contributions – combined)	46.55
• C Roberts (Annual Parish Meeting expenses)	36.45
• Cloudy IT (April IT support & licenses)	77.52
• DM Payroll (Annual payroll service fee)	120.00

207/2022 Bank Reconciliation – The Council approved the reconciliation to the statement dated 31 March 2023 and the Chairman signed it.

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208/2022 Internal Controls – The Council reviewed the Internal Checks report circulated with the agenda. Cllr R Evans stated no changes were recommended and the report was unanimously approved.

209/2022 VAT Position – The Council noted that VAT of £1,728.24 would be reclaimed.

210/2022 Reserves - The Council noted a report detailing the balances of Earmarked Reserves and considered a number of year end adjustments;

210.1 CIL Reserve – The Council approved the transfer of £8,820 from CIL Earmarked Reserve into General Reserve to replenish expenditure on CIL projects in 2022/23 and leave a year end balance of £16,829.24 (*corrected from mistyped figure shown on agenda*). It was noted that although CIL can be reclaimed if not spent within five years, it is not Shropshire Council policy to do so.

210.2 Traffic Management Reserve – The Council approved the transfer of £5,000 unspent Traffic Management budget from 2022/23 budget to the Traffic Management Earmarked Reserve to bring the total for a major project to £8,518.88.

210.3 Elections Reserve – The Council approved the transfer of £400 into the Elections Expenses Reserve to bring the balance to £500. It was noted that this exceeded the £200 budget but was required to bring the budget up to a sufficient level to meet potential election costs by 2025.

211/22 Correspondence & Consultations – All correspondence circulated to members by email.

212/2022 Date of next meeting – It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Council Meeting would be held on Wednesday 3 May 2023

213/2022 Exclusion of the Press and Public – It was **RESOLVED** that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public in order to discuss confidential quotations.

214/2022 Confidential Quotations –

214.1 Street Light Maintenance Contract – The Clerk reported that only two quotations had been submitted despite efforts to contact additional suitable contractors. The Council therefore agreed to consider the two and it was **RESOLVED** to appoint Highline Electrical Ltd to undertake streetlight maintenance for the next three years with effect from 1 May 2023.

The meeting closed at 9:10pm

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