

# SOUTH LENCHES PARISH COUNCIL.

<b>Minutes of the Full Parish Council meeting held on 3rd July 2017 at 7.05 pm in Church Lench Village Hall, Church Lench.</b>
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<b>Present:</b>	Cllrs. Mr. Shore (Chairman), Mrs. Fletcher, Mr. Worton, Mrs. Hailwood Mr. Jackson and Mr. Ball. In attendance: Mrs. Holland (Clerk), County Cllr. Mr. Hopkins, Dist. Cllr. Mr. Wilkinson and 79 parishioners.
<b>14/17</b>	<b>Apologies:</b> Cllr. Mr. Fletcher (reasons accepted by Council) and Dist. Cllr. Mrs. Steel.
<b>15/17</b>	<b>Declaration of Interests:</b> Nil.
<b>16/17</b>	<b>Written requests from Councillors for the Council to grant a dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) – nil received.</b>
<b>17/17</b>	<p><b>Reports received from County and District Cllr.</b></p> <p><u>County Cllr. Mr. Hopkins</u> reported that he has spoken with the Highways Department as he has received several complaints about how many road works are being dealt with in the area which are causing some delays and frustration. He confirmed that the department are trying to arrange works which do not cause conflict but with several works in the same area the purpose is to make better use of the equipment required</p> <p><u>Dist. Cllr. Mr. Wilkinson</u> reported that following the tragic fire in London he was able to report that there were no high rise flats in the Wychavon area.</p>
<b>Public Question time:</b> meeting suspended at 7.10pm, reconvening at 7.35pm. Notes appended to these minutes.	
<b>18/17</b>	<b>Minutes: resolved</b> that the minutes of the Annual Parish Council meeting held on 15.05.17 were an accurate record, duly signed by the Chairman.
<b>19/17</b>	<p><b>Clerk's report:</b></p> <p><u>New Homes Bonus</u> – currently available £5530.</p> <p><u>Sheriffs Lench Notice Board</u> – repairs carried out by Chairman.</p> <p><u>Parking Croft junction</u> – matter referred to the Police, waiting on update.</p>
<b>20/17</b>	<p><b>Reports from representatives:</b></p> <p>a) <u>Wychavon CALC area meeting</u> - Cllr. Mr. Shore reported that the West Mercia's Police Commissioner is proposing changes that would significantly improve local police and fire services, whilst saving the taxpayer £4m a year, by assuming the role of the area's two fire authorities. Consultation information available at: <a href="https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/working-together/west-mercia-fire-governance-consultation/">https://www.westmercia-pcc.gov.uk/working-together/west-mercia-fire-governance-consultation/</a> Commissioner Campion is very keen to hear from as many people as possible on the proposals before the deadline of the 11th of September.</p> <p>b) <u>Neighbourhood Plan</u> - Cllr. Mr. Jackson gave a report on the progress of the Plan (Appendix 1).</p> <p>c) <u>Play area</u> - Bark topped up.</p>
<b>21/17</b>	<b>Planning Matters.</b>
21.1	<p>The following planning applications were considered:</p> <p>a) 17/00001/PP – Mayfield, Atch Lench Road, Church Lench.</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> Formation of rooms in roof space with rear dormer and rear extension.</p> <p><b>Comments:</b> None.</p>

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b) 17/01122/FUL – The Paddock off Low Road, Church Lench.

**Proposal:** Erection of 5 dwellings.

The Parish Council **object** to this proposal for the following reasons:

Wychavon District Council has a five year land supply in place.

The proposed development is outside the settlement development boundary as defined under saved Policy GD1 of the Wychavon District Local Plan 2006 and is in a countryside location with limited facilities which makes it one of the least sustainable villages in the District.

Church Lench is designated in the SWDP as a Category 3 village and has been described by a Secretary of State Inspector in appeal ref: APP/H1840/A/14/2227893 as:

*The village of Church Lench is identified as a category 3 village in the 'Village Facilities Survey' and the 'Rural Public Transport Survey', which results in the village being considered one of the least sustainable villages in the District.*

*Indeed, as I saw on my site visit the village contains limited facilities including a Church, village hall, and a first and pre-school. The public transport options are also very limited and include a bus route to Evesham and Pershore, Monday to Saturday, with restricted opportunities for use early in the morning or later in the evening. The land in question is on a Greenfield site - not permitted except in very specific circumstances (SWDP 16).*

The Parish Council challenge wording in the application of "infill" and feel strongly that the development would be "backfill".

**Conservation boundary:**

The proposed site abuts the Conservation area which includes the listed property known as 'The Steps', Main Street, Church Lench.

The development will not improve or enhance the Conservation area (SWDP 25).

The proposed site sits on the top of a hill approximately 5m higher than Main Street and Low Road. This means that the proposed development will overlook the existing houses on Main Street and Low Road with consequent loss of privacy and damage to their amenity e.g. security lighting, light from windows and car lights will intrude into neighbouring properties.

**Sustainability**

There is limited or no sustainable access to the range of services and facilities required to support the proposed development. Future occupiers of the development would be highly dependent on the need to travel by means of private car. Therefore, the proposed development fails to accord with the provisions of saved Policy GD1 which directs all new development to defined development boundaries.

The bus service is infrequent and would not be suitable for all but the most flexible part time employment. With the absence of a shop and post office even the most basic requirements would almost certainly lead to the use of a car.

**Ecological survey**

The Parish Council requests that a full Ecological Survey is carried out as the survey mentioned in the Planning Statement does not give a complete picture of the area as there are several garden ponds nearby some of which are within 25 m of the proposed site. The whole area around Church Lench has colonies of Great Crested Newts and there is likely to be other wildlife affected by this development on an historic Greenfield site.

**Highways/Traffic issues.**

It is noted that the Highways Department have expressed concern about "run off" along the sloping access road which could have serious consequences for the integrity of Low Road and traffic safety as well as for houses to the east of Low Road.

The Highways Department should be asked to measure the gradient of the access road which must have at least a 5m height differential top to bottom which would create a serious danger of slippage onto Low Road in icy conditions.

The access road is very narrow and would just take two cars, not a car and/or a van/lorry. It appears to have been intended to provide access to the private garage to the first house to the

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	<p>North. This is clearly not a safe or viable route to access or exit 5 houses with at least 10 vehicles, as well as access for delivery vans. The developers have had to include a turning circle to the west of the estate to allow vehicles to get out.</p> <p>Low Road is a regular 'rat' run for vehicles from neighbouring villages and towns. The proposed access is close to the T junction with Main Street and Atch Lench Road. The Parish Council have been in consultation with residents along Low Road regarding speeding along this road, as well as parked cars along Main Street, causing visibility problems to users exiting on this road.</p> <p><b><u>Flooding/ Environmental issues.</u></b></p> <p>Due to the raised position of the development, which lies at the top of the plateau on the Lenches Ridge, there will be an inevitable increased risk of rainfall "run-off" downhill along Low Road and Main Street. It is locally known that springs and underground land drainage carry water away from the plateau. The land is heavy clay described as 'slowly permeable calcareous clayey soil' of very low permeability. Residents on Main Street will confirm that they experience water "run off" with evidence of old land drainage and standing water in basements.</p> <p>Residents at the lower end of Atch Lench Road have had long standing issues with the ability of the sewerage system to cope with heavy rain/snow melt before the construction of several new homes recently built along Low Road. There is limited pipework capacity feeding the sewage plant to deal with high volume water flow. The Council believes that the drainage plans for the proposed development will feed into the same system which is already outdated and over burdened.</p> <p><b><u>Neighbourhood Plan.</u></b></p> <p>This development would be in direct conflict with the views of the community as expressed in the recent Neighbourhood Plan opinion survey completed in January 2017 and deposited with Wychavon District Council. The majority of respondents are against any large developments, any backfill, any building outside of the development boundaries and wish to preserve the existing character of the village. The Housing Needs Survey completed at the same time produced only 8 responses.</p> <p>c) 17/01152/FUL - The Dairy, Farm Lane, Atch Lench.</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> Change of use from agricultural land to domestic garden and erection of greenhouse/store and fencing.</p> <p><b>Comments:</b> None.</p>
21.2	<p>Planning process/feedback following applications that have been presented to the Planning Authority duly noted:</p> <p>a) 17/00659/HP - Highfields, Atch Lench. <b>Permission granted with 5 conditions/reasons.</b></p> <p>b) 17/00139/LB The Smithy, Sheriffs Lench. <b>Permission granted.</b></p> <p>c) 17/00299/HP - Cherry Tree House, Evesham Road, Church Lench. <b>Permission granted with 4 conditions/reasons.</b></p>
21.3	<p>Planning applications dealt with by delegation noted:</p> <p>a) 17/00809/FUL - Little Acre, Evesham Road, Church Lench.</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> Change of use from holiday accommodation to dwelling. (RB/MS/MW). <b>Comments:</b> None. <b>Planning permission refused.</b></p> <p>b) 17/01079/HP – The Old Stables, Sheriffs Lench Barns, Sheriffs Lench.</p> <p><b>Proposal:</b> Proposed single storey extension to an existing dwelling. <b>Comments:</b> None.</p>
<b>22/17</b>	<b>South Lenches Parish matters for discussion/decision.</b>
22.1	<p><u>Speeding traffic along Low Road, Church Lench</u> – data has been collected by the Safer Roads Partnership Unit and is at present being collated.</p>
22.2	<p><u>Bus Shelter, Main Street, Church Lench</u> – Chairman reported that the retaining wall is bowing and although not causing concern it would be advisable to get an up to date surveyors report. Clerk requested to obtain quotes to remove the infill and quotes for a surveyors report.</p>

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22.3	<u>Slide children’s play area</u> – Chairman reported that to move the position of the slide is not an easy matter. Clerk to contact Creative Play manufacturers for advice.
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<b>23/17</b>	<b>Financial matters.</b>
23.1	<b>Resolved</b> to authorise payments as listed on ‘Schedule of Payments’. (Appendix 2).
23.2	<b>Resolved</b> to transfer £1500 from general reserves into Play budget heading.
23.3	<b>Resolved</b> to recommend a New Homes Bonus application for funds to refurbish the BT Kiosk. Application to be forwarded to Wychavon District Council for decision.

<b>24/17</b>	<b>Freedom of Information Act</b> document reviewed with no changes. Next review 2021.
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<b>25/17</b>	<b>Cllrs. report and items for future agendas:</b> New Homes Bonus application regarding adult fitness equipment; Defibrillator.
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**Meeting closed at 8.40pm.**

Following the closure of the meeting an urgent decision was taken to nominate 2 members to be on the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group following resignations. Cllrs. Mr. Shore and Mrs. Fletcher agreed to join the Group.

<b>Items of correspondence circulated to members.</b>	
	Weekly CALC updates provided via email to all members.
	Weekly Worcestershire Roadwork Report via email to all members.
	Weekly Neighbourhood Watch reports.

**Public Question Time - 79 parishioners in attendance.**

Concerns were raised in regard to:

- a) Planning application No: 17/01122/FUL - The Paddock, Low Road, Church Lench for 5 dwellings:
  - Outside development boundary, backfill, non compliance with the SWDP, unsustainable, adverse visual effects on conservation boundary, neighbouring properties, questions raised over inaccuracy of Ecological Study, already problems with sewerage system at the bottom of the Village, issues over access of road onto Low Road and its users.
- b) Sheriffs Lench - land recently purchased by Heart of England. Concerns over consequences if became visitor centre. Chairman confirmed he had spoken to the Planning Department at Wychavon District Council who have not received any planning application regarding this to date.

**Appendix 1 - Neighbourhood Plan Update.**

**Character Assessment**

The investigation stage of the Character Assessment exercise is almost completed. This document describes the character and important features of the parish. Two teams of volunteers and committee members have been walking the villages with maps and notepads and identifying:

- Points of interest / architecture / design.
- Important (valued) Landscapes which may want to be protected e.g. views from the Sports Club across to the Malvern's and from The Ridgeway in Atch Lench.
- Important green spaces to protect, e.g. the sports field, the school playground, the village orchards, certain other fields - and even possibly The Paddock.
- Important views including limited ones between houses.

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- Possible sites for low cost /retirement homes to meet the future needs of an ageing community (although the Housing Needs analysis did not support this). The housing needs analysis (HNA) of the whole adult community (350 forms) produced only 8 responses of which 5 were under 40 and 3 over 55.

Both teams included experienced photographers who have taken over 200 photographs so far.

Now visited all of Church Lench, Atch Lench and Ab Lench and only have the public footpaths left to do around these villages. Sheriffs Lench is still outstanding but hopefully will be completed in the next few weeks. Sheriffs Lench does not have any Development Boundaries, and the Group could have considered asking for some. Advised by our consultant that that the boundaries would create an envelope within which it would be easier to apply for development, so the Group are of the view that we will not go along that route.

The first draft of the Character Assessment is in the process of being out together and this will be supplemented by desktop research/ consultation with bodies such as Natural England and Historic England as well as the Conservation area department of Wychavon District Council and several other bodies.

The draft will be sent to the planning consultant in due course for guidance and direction.

At some point the Group will propose holding an open day or presentation to let the community see what has done and to seek their views on preliminary proposals.

David Chambers from Atch Lench, in collaboration with David Wilkinson, has provided a history of the Parish going back to the earliest records in AD750. Notices of interest received from the Headmistress of the First School and the Playgroup following the results of the surveys.

One point of order is that according to our constitution the Steering Group should have 2 or more Parish Councillors. In practice, Mrs. Fletcher had stepped down but remained involved behind the scenes and she has offered to be reinstated as a Steering Group member.

Ian Jackson

Chairman SLNP Steering Group.

## **Appendix 2 Minute No: 23.1 - Payments authorised for payment to 3rd July 2017.**

V: No:	Chq. No.	Reason	Income	VAT	TOTAL
R17-1		Wychavon District Council - precept.	5197.00		
R17-2		HMRC - VAT Refund	723.74		
R17-3		Harvington PC - use of A3 printer	9.60		
P17-15	1002/3	Administration + Salary		N/A	<b>415.66</b>
P17-16	1004	Lengthsman.		N/A	<b>425.00</b>
P17-17	1005	Church Lench Village Hall Hire		N/A	<b>15.00</b>
P17- 18	1006	Neighbourhood Plan expenses		N/A	<b>40.50</b>
P17-19	1007	Maintenance to Village Pool/Play area		N/A	<b>176.00</b>
P17-20	1008	Avon Planning Services		63.00	<b>378.00</b>
P17-21	1009	Internet purchase printer cartridge.		1.75	<b>10.48</b>
P17-22	1010	Purchase of play bark.		24.00	<b>144.00</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5930.34</b>	<b>88.75</b>	<b>1604.64</b>

## **Summary of Accounts.**

South Lenches Parish Council				
	Receipts/ Payments	Budget 2017/18	Under/Over Spend	% Spent
<b>Receipts</b>				
Precept	5197.00	10843.80		

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WCC re P/L	0.00	2039.00		
VAT Refund	723.74	0.00		
Other receipts	9.60	0.00		
<b>Total</b>	<b>5930.34</b>	<b>12882.80</b>		
<b>Payments</b>				
Salary	316.16	4000.00	3683.84	8%
Locum Clerk	84.00	0.00	0.00	0%
Admin	45.21	300.00	254.79	15%
Training	0.00	100.00	100.00	0%
Insurance	339.89	400.00	0.00	85%
Subscriptions	347.08	400.00	52.92	87%
Audit Fees	80.00	200.00	120.00	40%
Grants	0.00	1000.00	1000.00	0%
RRR	0.00	100.00	100.00	0%
Village Pool	100.00	600.00	500.00	17%
Play area	1709.63	1000.00	-709.63	171%
Parish Plan/NP	0.00	1000.00	1000.00	0%
Maintenance	0.00	50.00	0.00	0%
Contingency	0.00	1000.00	1000.00	0%
Parish Lengthsman	0.00	1000.00	1000.00	0%
Transfer to reserves	0.00	694.00	0.00	0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3021.97</b>	<b>11844.00</b>		
WCC PL	425.00	2039.00	0.00	21%
VAT to recover	789.54	0.00	0.00	
NHBS (VAS)	0.00	170.00	0.00	0%
NHBS (Play)	2050.00	2050.00	0.00	100%
WDC (NP)	787.32	5000.00	4212.68	16%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7073.83</b>			

Treasurers Account 01.04.17	17907.95
Income received	5930.34
Minus payments	-7073.83
Minus unpaid chq 16-17	-1701.70
Minus transfer to Bus. A/C	-7000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>8062.76</b>
Bank statement to 31.05.17	9865.90
minus unrepresented cheques	-1803.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>8062.76</b>
Minus NHB VAS	-170.00
Minus NHB Play	0.00
Minus WDC NP	-4212.68
	<b>3680.08</b>
Business Instant Access AC	<b>22114.12</b>