

LIGHTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of The Ordinary Meeting of Lighthorne Parish Council - Held at Lighthorne Village Hall -
On Tuesday 20th January 2026 At 6.45pm

PRESENT: Parish Councillors: Cllr Lewis (Chair), Cllr Thomas, Cllr Eason, Cllr Mills (WCC) and Cllr Parry (SDC).

IN ATTENDANCE: 1 member of the public.

1. Apologies

Cllr Reynolds, Cllr Hickman and Cllr Driver.

2. Declarations of interests and consideration of dispensation requests

Clerk mentions that one of the planning applications relates to her trees.

3. Acceptance of minutes from November

The minutes were agreed and accepted

4. Public Participation

A representative of Khalsa Cricket Club attended to update LPC. The verti-draining has been completed at the outfield. Weed/moss killing due to take place Feb/March. Their application for a solar grant was not successful but they can apply again this year. They are looking at putting working showers in the shower area, these would be used after matches, so once Café is closed. Once the new tenant is in place a meeting will be arranged between her and Khalsa.

5. To consider whether to replace the 2 street lights on Church Lane and Old School Lane.

LPC was made aware mid November that the 2 lights had failed. LPC was asked to consider replacing them to assist visibility for a dog walker. LPC received an email requesting that they be replaced to assist road safety, finally today an email was received from a resident asking it be replaced for visibility/safety reasons. There have been multiple verbal requests not to replace the lights from a number of residents. A resident has asked that the light on Church Lane be left dark as it shines directly into their bedroom. Due to the age of each light and the fact they are attached to a telegraph pole rather than being an independent unit, a new column would be required in each case. The cost is approx. £1,500 to £2,000 each.

Arguments to turn street lights off:

Environmental Benefits and Wildlife Protection: Artificial light at night can be harmful to wildlife by disrupting the natural circadian rhythms and behaviours of insects, birds, bats, and other animals. Reducing light pollution helps improve biodiversity, nature recovery, and protects intrinsically dark landscapes.

Energy and Cost Savings: Switching off street lights significantly reduces energy consumption and operational costs for local councils, with annual savings.

Climate Change Mitigation: Turning off lights is a measure to help local authorities meet their carbon emission reduction targets and contribute to the goal of achieving net zero.

Preservation of Dark Skies: Rural areas can regain the ability to see the night sky and stars, which is often lost in urban areas due to light glow. This preserves the character and tranquillity of the countryside.

Human Health and Well-being: Excessive artificial light at night can disrupt human sleep patterns (circadian rhythms), which has been linked to various health issues.

Sufficiency of Alternatives: In rural settings, where traffic and pedestrian numbers are lower, it is argued that people can use personal torches or adapt to the darkness, making permanent street lighting unnecessary.

There is no statutory duty for local authorities to provide street lighting in the first place. However, there is a Duty of Care and Risk Assessment: If a council decides to implement a policy of switching off lights (either permanently or for certain hours), they still have a general duty of care to road users and are required to make a suitable risk assessment. All Councillors are resident in the village and felt able to assess any dangers – it was felt that there was no danger presented by not renewing the light fittings – the roads have ambient light from nearby light fittings and there is very little traffic (being rural in nature). Most residents take personal torches if they feel lighting is insufficient. It was noted that there were much darker lanes in the village where no complaints or issues had been raised about safety etc. It was also noted that in the 3 months since the issue was raised it has been the darkest part of the year and almost the busiest for night time foot traffic (Xmas/new year) and yet there had been no complaints or reported incidents regarding insufficient lighting.

Considering all of the above it was deemed appropriate **not** to replace the lights. This decision can be re-considered another time if deemed appropriate. *Item closed.*

6. To consider transferring the Pavilion Café lease to new ownership

It was agreed that LPC would consent for the lease to be transferred from Helen Smith to Emma Barnsley on the exact terms contained within the current lease. Personal and financial references have been checked. *Item closed.*

7. To agree the precept for 2026/2027

It was agreed that the precept for 2026/2027 would be £18,000 – this would meet LPC's projected budget for the same period. *Item closed.*

8. To consider adding support to residents' complaint to police regarding the owner of the Sharpei on The Green

LPC has received a number of written and verbal complaints raising concerns about the Sharpei on The Green, the number of attacks on other dogs and an attack on a child whilst on its lead. Concerns raised about the safety of both children and dogs in the village as the owner appears incapable of controlling it and has historically refused to muzzle it. There is an ongoing investigation into it having bitten a child in the village. LPC are aware that the dog warden has visited the owner numerous times and advised that it be muzzled at all times. It has been witnessed being walked without a muzzle on numerous occasions. It has, however been witnessed being walked with a muzzle a number of times this week. It was agreed that a letter would be sent to the owner from LPC setting out the above and that we would take no other action at this time, but should any report be received of it being walked without a muzzle we would reconsider our position and consider requesting the police to take action for the safety of all villagers. *Item closed.*

9. To consider applying for free tree saplings from The Woodland Trust

Cathy Stacey has requested a number of saplings from the Woodland Trust which will be planted in agreed locations around the village. *Item closed.*

10. To consider being a joint applicant for ongoing grants with the Village Hall Committee to assist in funding the rebuild of the North Wing

It was agreed that LPC would assist by being a joint applicant for grants for funds to rebuild the north wing of the hall. It was agreed that LPC would assist in any way it could going forward. *Item closed.*

11. Matters arising from minutes of previous meetings

(a) To consider LPC's response to the issue of Primary Health Care at GLH

No update except that work is anticipated to start soon. *Carried forward.*

(b) Neighbourhood Plan update

No update. *Carried forward.*

(c) Update regards Severn Trent work on Moreton Morrell Lane

WCC Highways informs us that works are due to commence on 16th March 2026. *Carried forward.*

(d) To consider cutting back the trees in the playground

The tree surgeon is completing the cutting back on 22nd January 2026. *Item closed.*

(e) To consider applying for a grant to install solar panels at the pavilion

A third application has been made and we are awaiting the outcome. *Carried forward.*

(f) To consider the feasibility of measures to improve mobile phone coverage around the village

Update due from Cllr Reynolds. *Carried forward.*

(g) To consider action following Flood Management team meeting

Update due from Cllr Hickman. *Carried forward.*

12. Planning

12.a. Applications for comment since last meeting

| | | | |
|----------|---------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 12.a.i | 25/02730/TREE | LPC | Trees in the playpark |
| 12.a.ii | 25/02644/FUL | Village Hall | New Extension to the North |
| 12.a.iii | 25/02922/TREE | 1 The Bank | Reduce various trees |
| 12.a.iv | 25/02940/TREE | Bishops Farm Cottage | Fell box elder |
| 12.a.v | 25/03025/TREE | Wishing Well House | Various reductions |
| 12.a.vi | 25/03026/TREE | Forest Lodge | Reduce leylandii |
| 12.a.vii | 26/00057/TREE | Forest Lodge | Fell leylandii |

(b) Decisions to note since last meeting

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|----------|---------------|----------------------|---------|
| 12.b.i | 25/02387/TREE | The Old Rectory | Granted |
| 12.b.ii | 25/02730/TREE | Village Hall | Granted |
| 12.b.iii | 25/02940/TREE | Bishops Farm Cottage | Granted |
| 12.b.iv | 25/02922/TREE | 1 The Bank | Granted |

(c) Enforcement

13. Parish Council Reports

(a) Playground – once the trees have been trimmed a tidy up date will be looked into.

14. Reports from Ward Representatives of SDC and WCC

On website

15. Financial Administration

(a) Cash book balances at 31st December 2025

| | | |
|---------|----------------------------|-----------|
| 15.a.i | Current Account | £13128.06 |
| 15.a.ii | Allocated Reserves Account | £16620.20 |
| | TOTAL | £29748.26 |

(b) Income for November & December 2025

| | | |
|---------|----------------------------------|---------|
| 15.b.i | November Rent from Pavilion Café | £740.00 |
| 15.b.ii | December rent from Pavilion Café | £823.00 |

(c) Expenditure for November & December 2025

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|-----------|--------------------------------|---------|
| 15.c.i | Clerk's wages 30 hours @£18.05 | £541.66 |
| 15.c.ii | Clerk's wages 30 hours @£18.05 | £541.66 |
| 15.c.iii | Bank Charges (November) | £4.25 |
| 15.c.iv | Bank Charges (December) | £4.25 |
| 15.c.v | Water (November) | £142.00 |
| 15.c.vi | Water (December) | £136.27 |
| 15.c.vii | Electricity (Nov) | £1.44 |
| 15.c.viii | Electricity (Dec) | £227.42 |
| 15.c.ix | Cathy Stacey – bulbs | £90.00 |

| | | |
|----------|--------------------------|---------|
| 15.c.x | ICO annual renewal | £47.00 |
| 15.c.xi | SPE Ltd – Empty Klargest | £282.00 |
| 15.c.xii | Xmas Tree – Paul Tait | £30.00 |

16. Correspondence

17. Other reports and items for future agendas

The clerk will draft a Biodiversity Policy for LPC to consider adopting at the February meeting.

18. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 10th February 2026.

MEETING CLOSES at 7:35pm