

LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at Memorial Hall on Monday 19th February, 2024, starting at 7:00pm

Present: Cllrs Vicki Taylor (Chair), Martin Carter, Paula Freeland, Iain Kirby

Attending: Cllrs Barry Clarke, Philip Ham (Somerset Council); Joe McGhee (Clerk); two members of the public (Nick Hiscox, Dale Rowe)

1 Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

Cllrs Estelle Kirby, Sue Sweet.

3 Absent

None

4 (a) To receive declaration of interest from Councillors on items on the agenda

Cllr Carter pointed out that he is acquainted with the member of the public, D Rowe, present to speak to planning application 2024/0077/VRC and that he is on the list of consultees; he would therefore speak to the application as a member of the public but would not vote. This was confirmed by the Chair and the Clerk.

(b) To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests

Cllr Martin Carter has a written request for dispensation in relation to Leigh on Mendip Recreation Association for four years (June 2027). Cllr Vicki Taylor has a written request for dispensation in relation to Leigh on Mendip War Memorial Hall for one year (June 2024)

(c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

None.

5 Public Session

At this point, D Rowe raised the possibility of having a dropped kerb at Park Hayes, and that a representative of Somerset Council Highways Department would be visiting the village to assess and discuss this. Cllr Carter pointed out that this was a topic to be raised later as item 12(i) and it was deferred until then.

6 County Councillor Reports

Cllr Clarke delivered a brief verbal report. A meeting to ratify the Somerset Council budget is set for 20th February. It is likely to be approved, and as mentioned before will include significant measures such as capitalising assets, using reserves and reducing services. Cllr Clarke had already sent notes on such actions, which had been forwarded to councillors by the Clerk.

There had been a change to arrangement with regard to postal voting; it had been said that they had to be delivered by hand but it is now clear that they can be sent by Royal Mail.

A drop-in session with various agencies on the subject of recent flooding is scheduled for Shepton Mallet library on 28th February.

Cllr Ham joined the meeting at 19:17.

7 Monthly update from Tom Kemp – Parish Tree Officer

(a) Including agreement of Tree Officer role description, including biodiversity (Attachment 1).

This is covered in item 13(i) below.

8 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th January, 2023, previously circulated (Attachment 2).

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January, 2024, as a true record; these were signed and dated by the Chair.

9 Matters arising from the minutes but not on the agenda.

None.

10 Planning Applications – If other planning applications are received between the date of this notice and the date of the meeting, they may be considered.

- (a) **2024/0133/LBC** Replace Existing Wooden Arched Front door to Annexe. Oak Cottage Stocks Lane Leigh On Mendip Shepton Mallet Somerset.

Cllr Freeland summarised this application as not being a significant change and that the new door might be considered not to harm the character or appearance of the listed building. Cllr Carter proposed recommending approval; Cllr I Kirby seconded. Council **RESOLVED** to recommend approval. Clerk to post recommendation of approval on the Somerset Council planning portal.

- (b) **2024/0077/VRC** Variation of condition 1 - Plans List (Compliance) of Planning Consent 2022/1855/REM (Application of reserved matters for the erection of a single dwelling and associated access). 6 Park Hayes Leigh On Mendip Shepton Mallet Somerset BA3 5QN
Cllr Freeland summarised the key aspects of this application. It represents no real change from the highways perspective and might be considered to have minimal impact on appearance and visual amenity. Cllr Freeland proposed recommending approval; Cllr I Kirby seconded. Council **RESOLVED** to recommend approval. Clerk to post recommendation of approval on the Somerset Council planning portal.

11 Planning Applications – Decisions to be noted from Somerset Council

- (a) **2023/0375/FUL** Change of use to commercial livery and erection of new stable building and associated facilities – Land at 368591 147812 Pitten Street Leigh On Mendip Radstock Somerset. **Decision.** Approval.

12 To Be Discussed / Resolved

- (a) Draft budget for 2024-25, incorporating training (Attachment 3).

RESOLVED Approved.

- (b) Approach to Somerset Council re land at Park Hayes (Cllr Taylor).

Email sent to Somerset Council by Clerk. Response awaited.

- (c) Update on application for the new cemetery.

- a. Chrysalis Design quote for landscaping of new cemetery (Cllr E Kirby).

Acceptance of quote of £160 for landscaping design proposed by Cllr I Kirby and seconded by Cllr Carter. **RESOLVED** Proposal accepted. It was noted that this will be funded from the existing allocation for the new cemetery in the 2024-25 budget.

- b. Request to the Memorial Hall Committee for approval to mount memorial plaques on the wall of the hall (Cllr Taylor).

It was noted that this referred to the wall not of the hall but adjoining the Memorial Hall premises and the new cemetery area. Cllr Taylor reported that the Hall Committee had agreed to this.

- c. Clarification of ownership of land at Bellfield from the point of view of access across it to the new cemetery (Clerk).

Clerk had assessed available information in the Council records and could not clarify. The records were passed to Cllr E Kirby who had offered to review.

- (d) Community Plan – ratification.

The Chair reported that a meeting had been held on the Community Plan; Council

RESOLVED to approve it. She had updated and circulated the action plan derived from it.

She has drafted a communication to be delivered to every household covering desires identified in the Community Plan and actions arising from it. This would be delivered around the end of April along with the Parish Council report for the year, in time for the Annual Parish

Meeting. This will be moved forward by the Chair and Cllr Sweet and will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

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- (e) Hardstanding at Park Hayes (Cllr Taylor).
Continues. Target date is end March/early April.
- (f) Update on additional dog bin at Sparks Field – sponsorship and Idverde (Clerk).
Clerk reported that a post had gone out on the Council website and various Facebook pages seeking sponsorship. No response yet. Clerk also clarified the mechanism for reporting a new bin (Somerset Council web form) and appropriate points of contact both in Idverde and Somerset Council.
- (g) Grant request from Recreation Field committee.
Clerk to review available funds at end of the financial year and report to the Council meeting on 18th March, when a decision will be made on funding to the Recreation Field.
- (h) N Hiscox presentation to school and other parishes.
The Chair resummarised the request from Somerset Council with respect to education and advice on biodiversity. Somerset Council must report on this, but parish councils need not. N Hiscox indicated he is happy to talk about the approach to biodiversity taken on his farm. It was decided to initiate these presentations with one to Leigh On Mendip School. Cllr E Kirby will resend an email on scheduling this to Mr Hiscox. Cllr I Kirby will take a proposal for the same presentation to be given to interested parish councils to the next Shepton Mallet LCN. If that proceeds, the Parish Council will host for other councils in the Memorial Hall.
N Hiscox left the meeting at 20:08.
- (i) Highways, including Speedwatch, PCSOs (Cllr Carter).
Cllr Carter provided a report on a number of items.
Speedwatch – this was carried out 8 times at different times in 2 locations in the village. Three vehicles were reported for travelling at speeds of 47, 46 and 36 mph. He proposed the purchase of several Speedwatch signs to alert the community that Leigh on Mendip is a Speedwatch area; these would cost £32 each; council agreed that these should be incorporated from the approved budget for 2024-25. A poster will also be put up inviting more people to take part in Speedwatch and thus alerting villagers once more that Speedwatch is in operation.
A response was received from Sara Davis of Traffic Management at Somerset Council to an email drafted by Cllr Carter and the Clerk on signage at Park Hayes and the addition of a '20mph when lights flashing' sign at the school. She advised of a web form to request the signage; Clerk to complete. She also said she would investigate why the 20mph sign wasn't incorporated when the flashing lights were installed and would provide an update.
A new Neighbourhood Watch sign has been put up.
Foliage is partially obscuring the notice board at the west end of Leigh St; the Chair will investigate.
Cllr Carter will ask T Kemp to investigate an issue with a copper beech tree overhanging the road at the Recreation Field.
PCSOs have 3 visits to the village scheduled; 20th February from 12:00-13:00, 28th March from 19:00-20:00 and 27th April from 16:00-17:00.
The possibility was discussed of removing the inner ring of pavement at Park Hayes and having a dropped kerb to ease the flow of traffic and mitigate the issue of parked cars.
Councillors to email comments to Cllr Carter who will draft an email for Somerset Council; Clerk to review email and submit to Somerset Council.
D Rowe and Cllr Clarke left the meeting at 20:32.

- (j) NS&I – completion of new signatories forms (Clerk).
Clerk reported that despite having sent in a form advised by an NS&I agent with supporting letter and extract of minutes, this had been declined and a different set of forms supplied. These were discussed with an NS&I agent; they were completed at the meeting and the Clerk will send to NS&I with supporting information, as advised
- (k) Clerk provided a verbal report on behalf of C Cudmore as follows:
 - a. Public footpaths
Way markers have been deployed to assist navigation around Tweed Farm.
 - b. LoMe Rangers
Two further volunteers joined and one pending.
26th January – cleared Sparks Field pavement and hedge, cleaned bus shelter.
2nd February – assisted planting Coronation Park hedge.
Rangers Risk Assessment and PC Volunteer Policy circulated to Rangers for their acceptance.

13 Clerk's / Councillors' Report

- (a) Precept form completed for 2024-25 and sent to Parish Precepts at Somerset Council; form acknowledged and confirmed in good order.
- (b) Response to open letter from Dave Milton of SALC drafted and sent.
- (c) Email of complaint re lack of five-year plan finalised and sent to Cllr Ros Wyke, Paul Hickson and Alison Blom-Cooper of Somerset Council.
Cllr Ham requested a copy of this email; Clerk to forward.
- (d) Invoice for community fund payment produced and sent to Mells Park Trust.
- (e) Notices posted on website and Facebook inviting sponsorship for new dog bin at Sparks Field.
- (f) Duplicated invoice from Idverde for January 2024. Mistake confirmed to them – awaiting credit note before settling invoice.
- (g) Delivery date of 29th February now notified for battery and pads pack for defibrillator at cricket club.
- (h) Email developed and sent to Traffic Management re signage at Park Hayes and school; response awaited.
- (i) Revised role description for Tree and Biodiversity Officer completed.
RESOLVED Approved. Clerk to publish on council website.
- (j) Website updated with Register of Members Interests information etc.

14 Finance

Bank reconciliation (Attachment 4).

Bank Balances as at: 31st January, 2024

Current Account £5,778.00

Reserve Account £9,583.86

Receipts

None.

Payments

- (a) J. McGhee – Land Registry fee - £29.95 – BACS 18 Jan 24
- (b) HMRC – income tax January - £71.20 - BACS 26 Jan 24
- (c) J McGhee – salary and expenses January - £291.50 – BACS 26 Jan 24
- (d) Ionos – web hosting - £15 – BACS 09 Feb 24
- (e) Clerk salary January - £285.00
- (f) HMRC income tax January - £71.20
- (g) Clerk expenses – working from home January - £6.50.

(h) V Taylor expenses – Rangers Christmas presents - £45.00

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the above receipts and payments.

15 Correspondence to be noted.

- (a)** B Clarke – Somerset Rivers Authority Report - forwarded 17 Jan 24
- (b)** A Laing – Parish Briefing Executive Committee Updates - forwarded 17 Jan 24
- (c)** J Hudson – Re: Parish Council Meeting 15/01/24 - forwarded 17 Jan 24
- (d)** A Laing – City, Town and Parish Council Clerks Working Group - forwarded 23 Jan 24
- (e)** Cllr E Kirby – Leigh On Mendip School newsletters - forwarded 12 Feb 24
- (f)** K Burrough – Dig In With Free Trees - forwarded 13 Feb 24
- (g)** B Clarke – Spending Cuts - forwarded 13 Feb 24
- (h)** B Clarke – Briefing Sheets – forwarded 13 Feb 24
- (i)** B Clarke – Local Government Finance Settlement and Storm Henk Flood Relief Grants – forwarded 13 Feb 24

Cllr Ham left the meeting at 20:49.

16 Matters to report / items for next agenda.

None.

17 Date and time of next meeting: Monday 18th March, 2024 in the Memorial Hall starting at 7.00pm.

Meeting closed at 20:59.