

MINUTES OF
LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY 11 JUNE 2002
IN THE SCHOOL

Councillors present: A Gould, G Jeanes, P Knowles, M Loten, P Moore and J Wright, Chairman.

The **MINUTES OF THE 7 MAY 2002** meeting were corrected to read – "Internal Auditor – to be appointed" and then accepted as a true record and signed.

The **MINUTES OF 2 APRIL 2002** were accepted as a true record and signed.

MATTERS ARISING – JW reported that SALC would not be providing an Internal Auditor, it had been suggested that adjacent Parishes be asked to audit each others books. The suggested remuneration was £25 for each audit, this means that audit costs under the new regime will be about the same as they were under the old system which is very disappointing.

PLANNING – MILLENNIUM SEAT. J Featherstone from the Millennium Committee explained that a new site needed to be found for the stone seat as it was not possible to site it at the corner of Bellfield as previously decided. The Committee had thought of either the land at Park Hayes adjacent to Herbert Dunn House or somewhere in the Rec Field. It was agreed that the ownership of the land at Park Hayes would be enquired into by the Clerk, that JF would find out about costs of moving and erecting the seat and PK will talk to local residents. JF said that the Millennium Committee had no money left for moving and siting the seat as it had all been earmarked. It was suggested that the Committee could apply to, for example the Fete or the PC for a grant. **CLERK/PK/JF**

CONVERSION OF IVY COTTAGE TO 2 DWELLINGS – Concern was expressed about making a single family home into 2 large homes when what was needed in the village were more small homes. Also the danger of cars being parked on the corner was discussed. It was decided not to object to the application but to say that the PC feel it is over development of the site. **CLERK**

MENDIP LOCAL PLAN – given to PK. **PK**

The Clerk had received notification from the Enforcement Dept at Mendip to say that Planning violations at WHITEHOLE FARM were being investigated.

CODE OF CONDUCT – Councillor's Declarations of Interests and Hospitality had been sent to the Monitoring Officer but the Clerk reported that no acknowledgement had been received and that no copy of the Notice that Mendip placed in the local press had been sent although she had enquired she had been unable to ascertain from the monitoring department which papers it was/had appeared in. She felt that the customer relations of this department left a lot to be desired.

Councillors signed the Code of Conduct form which has to be returned to Mendip by 30 June. **CLERK**

JW reported that a discussion paper entitled "Local Investigation and Determination of Misconduct Allegations" had been considered at the recent SALC meeting. MDC contract out the monitoring officer function. Concern was expressed that the impartiality of investigations of allegations of misconduct might be jeopardised because of this. A PC response to the paper will be formulated. **CLERK/JW**

Information regarding individual councillors indemnity under the code of Conduct was put in the circulation.

ROADS & FOOTPATHS – still no action on the signing at Townsend. **GJ**

Footpaths need to be cleared – a schedule of work will be made. **CLERK/GJ**

A request will be made to Hobbs Holdings for the footpath opposite Great House Farm to be kept walkable.
CLERK

REC FIELD – AG reported on the progress of the car park surfacing - he had delivered the boards and that 3 loads of gravel had arrived. The Clerk asked if arrangements should be made to clear the first part of the track donated by M Neilson. She will talk to JR. **CLERK**

QUARRY MATTERS - next liaison meeting on 19 June 2002.

HALL REPORT – no report.

MEETINGS ATTENDED

PARISH WARDENS - PK reported that Paul Hopkins had resigned as Parish Warden. The post was being advertised both internally and externally but the new appointee would not be in place for at least 2 months. In the interim John Hitchings will patrol alone. PK had suggested to him that he ask for a police radio to be fitted to his vehicle for his safety.

SCHOOL GOVERNORS – PM reported that the school’s OFSTED inspection had been very successful. JW asked Councillors to consider some sort of recognition of the staff’s efforts – to be discussed at the next meeting. **CLERK**

PC SEMINAR – JW. Exhaustive discussion took place on the Local Strategic Partnership, a committee of about 18 people representing various district bodies. As the formation of this committee would determine whether Mendip qualified for regional funding and development money there was no option but to set it up.

A recycling and composting scheme is to begin trials in the Frome area soon.

SALC are very short of both officers and attendees, only 6 councillors and 3 clerks were at the last meeting.

FINANCE

Details of the new external auditor – Moore Stephens – and a scale of costs had been received.

AG declared an interest in the first item as the PC’s rep on the Rec Field Committee.

GRANT request for the REC FIELD for a new seat costing £352.50. AG proposed payment, PK seconded all agreed. Cheque 364 on the current a/c was made out, signed and given to JR the RFMC Chairman.

BANK STATEMENT no 77 on Current a/c was examined and signed by JW.

It was agreed to make a VAT claim. **ML/CLERK**

COMMUNITY COUNCIL SUBSCRIPTION – PM proposed paying £15, GJ seconded, all agreed. Cheque 365 made out and signed. **CLERK**

FROME CAB grant request – the Clerk declared an interest as a CAB volunteer worker. ML proposed granting £50, PM seconded, all agreed. Cheque 366 made out and signed.

CLERK

Bill for CODE OF CONDUCT EVENT attended by the Chairman and Clerk - £10. PK proposed payment, GJ seconded all agreed. Cheque 367 made out and signed. **CLERK**

The Clerk reported that she had been to a new Audit Regulations training event. Thanks to work done on the accounts in the past by ML Leigh was in a very good position with regard to the Audit and would not have to make any changes to what was already being done. The new form to be filled in is 3 pages long, any ‘NO’ response in the Statement of Assurance section needs to be qualified by an explanation. Each council needs to

appoint an Internal Auditor – someone familiar with how the Council works – whom they may have to pay. They will need to check that risk management measures are in place e.g. safety and location of deeds; safety of clerk if books inspected by parishioners; provisions for making out cheques etc. It was suggested that checks need to be done at least 6 monthly.

The Clerk told Councillors that she no longer felt it right that she sign as the RFO and suggested that a new RFO be appointed who could be a Councillor, or that a new clerk be appointed to combine all the functions and that this be done well in advance of the next election. It was decided that the Clerk would continue to do letters etc connected with the financial aspects of the PC and ML agreed to be the RFO.

The Financial Report for June was accepted and signed by the Chairman and RFO.

The RFO reported that the cheque for the £100 grant made to the Parish Magazine had finally been presented.

CEMETERY ACCOUNT – MOWING BILLS for April 5 and 20 @ £75 and May 3 and 17 @ £75 were presented. GJ proposed payment, PK seconded, all agreed. Cheques 27 and 28 were made out to D Jarvis and signed. **ML**

A transfer of £2000 was made from the current a/c to the PO investment a/c. Cheque 368 was made out and signed. **CLERK**

The Clerk reported that she had ordered the new financial manual.

CORRESPONDENCE

CIRCULATED: Mendip Housing Strategy document comments by 14 June; London SW and South Wales Transport Study – comments by 10 July; Halecombe Liaison Group Minutes of 28/11/01 and Agenda for 19/06/02; Somerset Waste Action Programme; SCC Forum notice on 14/06/02; Notification of closure of Frome and Wells Magistrates Courts with request for letters supporting their retention; Road Safety Video and leaflet; The Clerk; Clerks & Councils Direct; NALC Development Strategy 2000; SALC draft annual report and accounts to 31/03/02; Mendip Local Strategic Partnership information;

Parish Council Newsletter; Mendip Social Car Scheme.

Councillors were given a copy of the 2002/03 Policing Plan Summary.

DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS – 9 JULY in the HALL at 1930h

6 AUGUST in the SCHOOL at 1930h.

11/06/02jal

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