

MINUTES

LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL MEETING held on 18th February 2013 at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall

Councillors Present: C Cudmore – Chairman (CC), G Boden (GB), A Dagger (AD) and D Sparkes (DS)
In attendance: S Vaillant (SV; Clerk) and 3 members of the public, V Horler and P Ham (District Councillors) and G Cawood (County Councillor)

		Action
1.0	Apologies	
1.1	Apologies were received from I Barnes (IB) and D Mattick (DM).	
1.2	The Chairman advised that the order of the meeting would be altered to accommodate visitors.	
2.0	Declarations of Interest & Dispensations	
2.1	No interest was declared and no dispensation was requested.	
3.0	Minutes of meeting held on 21.01.13 and matters arising (where not dealt with later)	
3.1	The minutes of the meeting were agreed as true and accurate record of the meeting held.	
3.2	(4.3) Change to the number of signatures required – The relevant forms were distributed. Clerk to collate and forward to Nat West in due course.	SV
3.3	(4.4) New Village Packs – Village pack has been updated. It was agreed that packs would be printed as and when necessary. Action complete. It was agreed that new packs should be distributed to new residents at the following properties:- Park Hayes (new build house), Manor Farm and The Old Post Office.	SV
3.4	(7.1) Part Time lighting – Clerk to advise SCC we are happy to take part in the first pilot.	SV
3.5	(8.3) Pre-application consultations – Clerk has sought advice from SALC, which will be circulated once received and before the site visit at Grove Shute Farm on 2 nd March.	SV
4.0	District & County Councillors Reports	
4.1	G. Cawood (County Councillor) reported as follows:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update on unsuccessful Community Enablement Grant application.• Health & Well Being Grant awarded to the Rec Field Committee towards the BMX track project.	
4.2	P. Ham (District Councillor) reported as follows:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Confirmation of 0% increase to council tax at MDC.• Communication Strategy briefing• Update on current available grants (including New Homes Bonus Legacy Fund)	
4.3	V. Horler (District Councillor) reported as follows:- <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MDC Assets Meeting• Brief report on fracking and the unlikelihood of any application being granted in the area if there is a chance it might affect the hot springs in Bath.	
5.0	Consultations	
5.1	Somerset Minerals Plan: Preferred Options Consultation – Councillors were broadly in favour of the proposals, but noted that the government's 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' was worrying/alarming. Some concerns were raised regarding fracking but it is difficult to ascertain what is a scaremongering or true information at the moment.	

5.2 It was also agreed that documents were difficult to understand and assimilate to formulate a fully informed response. It was therefore unanimously agreed not to comment on this round of the consultation.

6.0 Planning

6.1 Latest status of existing applications/decisions:-

- App. 2011/3232; Halecombe Quarry (variation of conditions) – no decision.
- App. 2011/2109 & 2110; Rookery Farmhouse – no decision.
- App. 2012/2354; Land South of Old Wells Rd; Bristol Water – no decision.

6.2 Planning Application 2012/2982; Land at Soho Farm, Soho; Installation of a Solar PV array and associated infrastructure – Unanimously agreed to recommend refusal. Although the council is not against the installation of solar panels, the following concerns prevented members from recommending approval:-

- **Visibility and impact on the surroundings**
The visual impact of the panels is unacceptable and we would welcome further remedial proposals to negate the impact. For example, the South hedge running along the road is currently not planted with evergreen: the panels would therefore be clearly visible to the public for several months of the year. Planting with evergreen would effectively screen the panels.

The proposed mitigation hedge to be planted on the Western boundary does not run along the whole length of the proposed development. The hedge needs to start again on the other side of the footpath access gate to finish screening this side of the development for the benefit of the neighbouring properties (situated to the West of the field at Soho).

Halecombe quarry, on the other side of the road, had gone to great lengths to mitigate the visual impact of the quarry on the village (or were made to). A raised and environmentally friendly bank was created on which extensive planting has taken place to ensure the activities are not visible to the public and to preserve the character of the area. Request that similar conditions are put on this development to further help preserve the character of the area, which is widely used and enjoyed by walkers.

- **Neighbours & wildlife**
DS asked for the views of the residents at the neighbouring properties at Soho. Some neighbours accepted the development as a fait accompli but were not too happy with the design as the panels will be very visible (above current height of hedges). However, another neighbour has objected to the development on the grounds of 'loss of agricultural land and restriction to wildlife'.
- **Community Benefit**
Clause 3.3 of the Environmental Considerations Statement: *The applicant will make a contribution to the local community. The level of contribution will be negotiated during the application process but will be proportionate to the proposed development. The proposal will, therefore, provide a source of additional income for the local community.* The Parish council has not been approached by the developer during the application process, but should any party be approached and an agreement reached, a Section 106 Agreement should be put in place to reinforce this before planning application is granted.

6.3 Planning Application 2012/3084; Whitehole Farm, LoM; New Stables (for private use) – After review of the application documents and drawings, it was unanimously agreed to recommend approval. No comments or objections received from parishioners.

6.4 Proposals to install wind turbines at Torr Works - Clerk distributed letter from Aggregates Industries. To be discussed at next meeting.

7.0 Finance

7.1 Financial Statement – Financial Statement to 17th February 2013 was agreed and signed.

7.2.1 Grass Cutting Contract; Cemetery – After review of the quotations it was unanimously agreed to award the contract to local contractor Steve Pitt Gardening Services for the fortnightly grass cutting and the cutting back of the hedge twice a year.

7.2.2 Grass Cutting Contract; Recreation Field – It was agreed to obtain further quotes and to ensure the equipment to be used is appropriate for a site of this size.
Clerk to check with the school if they intend to make a contribution.
Extra meeting to be called if necessary.

SV
SV

7.3 The following invoices/payments were agreed and cheques signed:-

	£
700 S Vaillant; Clerk's Salary & Expenses	169.06

8.0 Councillors' Reports

8.1 **Highways** – CC reported as follows:-

- Finger on post at Whitehole Hill/Pitten Street junction has been reported to Highways.
- Potholes down Townsend lane have been patched; with plea to resurface the road.

8.2 **Rec Field** – Next meeting 25th February. Nothing further to report.

8.3 **PCSO** – Next meeting 28th February. Nothing further to report.

8.4 **Footpaths** – Clair Haskins has agreed to supply 2 kissing gates (free of charge), which the Rambling Association will install, also free of charge. Rick Massey's contact details were passed to C. Haskins to contact land owner.

8.6 **Memorial Hall** – Nothing further to report. AD has advised the Hall Committee that D. Mattick would now be the Parish Council Representative. SV to forward contact details.

SV

8.7 **School** – GB to attend a governors meeting. SV to speak to Mary Sturgess and V. Taylor.

SV

8.8 **Quarry** – March meeting coming up. Awaiting for agenda.
DS went to the quarry to introduce himself, met some of the staff there and reported on brief conversation. CC agreed to forward all information to DS.

CC

8.9 **New Cemetery** - Land for sale at the back of Pitten street – Chair to enquire to see if one of the sites might be suitable for a cemetery.

CC

8.10 **SALC** – Nothing to report.

9.0 Meeting attended/to be attended

9.1 No meetings attended.

9.2 Meetings to be attended:-

- Drop in on Minerals Strategy; Peter St. Rooms, Peter St., 12.30-7pm on 19th February.
- PCSO Liaison Meeting; 28th February 2013 - AD to attend.
- Torr Works meeting; 7th March 2013
- Grove Shute Farm Site Meeting; 2nd March 2013

AD

10.0 Correspondence

10.1 None.

11.0 Date & time of next meeting

11.1 The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 18th March 2013, at 7.30pm at the Memorial Hall, Committee room.