

LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at Memorial Hall on Monday 15th April, 2024, starting at 7:00pm

Present: Cllrs Vicki Taylor (Chair), Paula Freeland, Estelle Kirby, Iain Kirby, Sue Sweet

Attending: Cllr Barry Clarke (Somerset Council); Joe McGhee (Clerk); two members of the public.

1 Welcome by the Chairman

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

Cllr P Ham (Somerset Council).

3 Absent

None.

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

None.

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

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

There were no comments from members of the public at this time.

6 County Councillor Reports

Cllr Clarke delivered a verbal report.

There will be a meeting later in the week to consider flooding which occurred in Dean.

There will be no changes to parish boundaries from the review being carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission.

Parishes may combine meetings if beneficial. This could be an effective alternative or supplement to involvement in Local Community Networks.

The Winter Hardship Fund has been extended to the end of September.

Blood pressure monitors are available for hire from Frome library; infra-red cameras are also still available for hire.

Everyone is encouraged to report potholes via the online form to Somerset Council's Highways Department.

A new constitution for handling planning applications will be ratified in May. Processes for dealing with objections will be updated along with membership of committees. Cllr Taylor asked Cllr Clarke to feed back to Somerset Council the disappointment of the Parish Council with the fact that it hadn't been consulted on this.

Electors can take postal votes to the council offices and hand them over, but council was reminded that they can be posted as normal and that is the easier and safer option.

7 Monthly update from Tom Kemp – Parish Tree Officer

None.

8 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18th March, 2024, previously circulated (Attachment 1).

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 18th March, 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) 2024/0477/HSE

Removal of existing chimney, one and a half storey side extension, replacement front porch and associated works.

Clifton Lodge, Knapp Hill, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset

No significant impact on the character or appearance of the area; scale and material appropriate. No highways implications. No immediate neighbours. Council **RESOLVED** to recommend approval of the application.

(b) 2024/0478/FUL

Proposed general purpose barn (retrospective).

Land at 368121 146641, Tadhill Lane, Stoke St Michael, Shepton.

The scale, form, materials are appropriate for an agricultural building. There are no concerns with access. There are no immediate neighbours. It was noted that no justification or design and access statement has been provided as part of the application. Furthermore, the application follows a previous one at the same property for approval of conversion of a barn to a holiday let, and part of the justification was that the barn was no longer needed for agricultural use.

The Council also noted a strongly worded note from a parishioner about this application, raising concerns about the lack of justification for a barn. The note also repeated the fact that previous consent had been given for change of use of the other barn to a holiday let partly based on an assertion that a barn was not longer needed for agricultural purposes.

Council **RESOLVED** to leave the decision on this to the planning officer.

(c) 2024/0527/FUL

Construction of 3m wide track, 150m to the north-west of the existing combined commercial/residential access & run east for 375m.

Land at Whitehole Farm, Whitehole Hill, Leigh on Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

It is considered that this development would result in significant, and unjustified, harm to the local landscape and ecology. It is considered that the existing track is adequate for both commercial and residential uses and there is no justification in terms of highway safety, indeed it is considered that the proposed track would represent an additional highway safety issue. Council **RESOLVED** to recommend the application be refused.

(d) 2024/0574/HSE

Erection of detached garage (retrospective).

1 The Orchard, Park Hayes, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

The garage matches the materials of the recently constructed buildings on the site and is of an appropriate scale. There is no change from the existing position in terms of access or highway safety. There are no immediate neighbours, and so no impact from that point of view. Council **RESOLVED** to recommend approval of this application.

Clerk to apply comments for Parish Council at the Somerset Council Planning Portal.

- (e) Mendip Local Plan Part II - Sparks Farm sites identified by Somerset Council for housing (Attachment 2).

A discussion was held with Cllr Clarke on the possibility mooted in the Mendip Local Plan Part II that an area for up to 160 homes had been earmarked at Sparks Field. He was asked what weight this holds for planning in the future, and what would be intended in terms of liaison with the Parish Council (Cllr Freeland noted the lack of liaison to date in respect of this recommendation in the Local Plan). Cllr Clarke said he would discuss this with Andre Sestini at Somerset Council and provide feedback to the Parish Council.

Council asked Cllr Clarke to pass on the request that the Parish Council is notified/consulted on any such suggestions for development possibilities in future.

11 Planning Applications – Decisions to be noted from Somerset Council

(a) 2024/0386/APP

Approval of details reserved by condition 6 (surface water drainage) on planning consent 2022/2363/FUL – 11 Park Hayes, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA3 5QN

Decision. Approval.

(b) 2024/0477/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.

Decision. Approval.

(c) 2024/0158/APP

Approval of details reserved by conditions 4 (Lighting) and 5 (Wildlife) on planning consent 2023/1084/FUL – Land at 369311 147357 Quarry Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

Status: Conditions Split Decision

12 To Be Discussed / Resolved

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

Cllr E Kirby indicated that this is expected to be complete by the end of April. This will include clarification of access via Bellfield, including possibly having to determine ownership of the land which would have to be crossed.

- (b) Community Plan update – Cllrs Taylor, Sweet.

Cllr Taylor suggested a number of changes to communications in the village, which can be considered at the council meeting after the annual parish meeting. These include a review of the use of notice boards, with perhaps one for Parish Council business and the other, outside the Bell Inn, as a general purposes notice board.

It was noted that all planning applications to be considered by the Council are now publicised on Facebook so that parishioners can have some advance warning

The possibility of establishing a 'men's café' or 'men's shed' is being considered. Coleford PC have offered a contact. Cllrs Taylor and Sweet will investigate examples.

A meeting has been held with the Chair of the Recreation Committee on extending the use of the Recreation Pavilion.

Cllr Sweet is investigating the possibility of a post office from one of the nearby villages operating one day a week from Leigh On Mendip.

Cllr Taylor has identified someone to take on a neighbourhood watch role for the Bellfield area, meaning the whole of Leigh On Mendip is now covered by the scheme.

- (c) Consideration of Local Government Boundary Commission Review (deferred from 18th March) – Attachment 3.
Given no changes to parish boundaries, council resolved to allow this review to take its course and simply note the implications for Somerset Council.
- (d) Hardstanding at Park Hayes - update (Cllr Taylor).
This work awaits favourable weather to be completed. It can be taken off the agenda.
- (e) Update on additional dog bin at Sparks Field – Cllr Taylor, Clerk.
The donated dog bin has been installed. Idverde, the contractor who deals with the bins, and Somerset Council have been informed and the bin is now being emptied.
- (f) Highways – use of SIDs
A proposal was submitted to provide £100 to the Mendip area Community Speedwatch to cover the 2 weeks hire of Speed Identification Devices, one at each end of the village, providing detailed information of traffic speeds over the period, along with a further donation of £50. Cllr I Kirby proposed this is done; Cllr E Kirby seconded. **RESOLVED.** Unanimously approved.
- (g) Confirmation of clerk hours for 2024-25 – 6 hours per week, average of 26 hours per calendar month. **RESOLVED.** Approved.
- (h) Annual Parish Meeting planning.
Cllr Taylor read a draft introduction/report. The Recreation Field Allotment Association will be invited to report on the day, and each councillor will deliver a report on their area.
Planning continues.
- (i) Crime statistics – Appendix 4.
Noted.
- (j) Resignation of councillor – reallocation of duties.
Martin Carter has resigned as a councillor. He will continue with specific volunteer duties such as the Community Speedwatch. Other duties will be assigned to councillors as necessary.

13 Clerk's / Councillors' Report

- (a) Several hours spent with internal auditor who was very thorough. Internal audit successfully completed. Auditor made some recommendations which will be implemented, including move of funds from NS&I to online-manageable savings account and minuted record of clerk's contractual hours for the coming year.
Cllr I Kirby proposed a vote of thanks to the Clerk for his work, in particular financial work, over the period since joining; councillors unanimously agreed.
- (b) Approach made to enforcement officer; online form completed.
- (c) A follow-up email was sent to the Devolution team at Somerset Council about taking over land at Park Hayes. Photos of recent damage included to bolster case. Response awaited.
- (d) A follow-up email was sent to Traffic Management at Somerset Council regarding signage at Park Hayes and a 20mph sign for the school. Response awaited.
- (e) Speedwatch signs handed over and installed by M Carter and C Ingram.
- (f) Confirmation received from NS&I that changes to signatories has been put in place.
- (g) Recommendations of approval posted on Somerset Council planning portal for applications 2024/0276/OUT and 2024/0279/FUL.
- (h) Query raised with Zurich Municipal about insurance for volunteers when work is urgent. So long as the work is known to the Parish Council, we have an appropriate risk assessment in place and the volunteer is trained/qualified, we appear to be covered.
- (i) Upcoming planning applications for consideration posted to council website and Facebook pages.

- (j) Request received to escalate an issue with the side of the road at Tadhill being degraded.
Awaiting precise location before raising issue with Highways.

14 Finance

Bank reconciliation (Attachment 5).

Budget Review (Attachment 6).

Bank Balances as at: 10th April, 2024

Current Account £4,615.81

Reserve Account £9,583.86

Receipts

Mells Park Trust – Community Payment - £2,000 – BACS 18 Mar 24.

Payments

- (a) V Taylor – Gifts to Rangers - £45.00 – BACS - 20 Feb 24
- (b) Leigh On Mendip Recreation Field Committee - £2,000 – BACS – 20 Mar 24
- (c) Unit Trust Bank – Service Charge - £18 31 Mar 24
- (d) Ionos – web hosting - £16.20 – BACS 10 Apr 24
- (e) Clerk salary April - £311.10
- (f) HMRC Income tax April - £77.60
- (g) Clerk expenses – Working from home April - £6.50.
- (h) Idverde – Inv 10909323 – Mar 24 - £113.53
- (i) Chrysalis Landscaping – Cemetery Plan & Design - £160.00
- (j) Do the Numbers Ltd. – internal audit - Inv 12/1558 – £190.00

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

Cllr Clarke left the meeting at 20:25.

15 Correspondence to be noted.

- (a) B Clarke – Household Support Fund, Flood Café, Magazine Printers - forwarded 13 Mar 24
- (b) GBR Share, Whatley Quarry Community – Work on Vallis Vale Footpath Bridge - forwarded 20 Mar 24
- (c) Consultations East – Planning Application 2024/0477/HSE - forwarded 20 Mar 24
- (d) Planning Policy East – Mendip Local Plan Part II - forwarded 20 Mar 24
- (e) Flood Wessex – Somerset Flooding Support Resources - forwarded 21 Mar 24
- (f) B Clarke – Postal Votes - forwarded 27 Mar 24
- (g) Shepton LCN – Minutes of Meeting Held on 11th March - forwarded 28 Mar 24
- (h) A Sestini – Response to Lack of Local Plan for East Somerset - forwarded 28 Mar 24
- (i) B Clarke – Briefing Sheet April 24 - forwarded 01 Apr 24
- (j) Administrator Halecombe Quarry – Draft Minutes of Meeting - forwarded 03 Apr 24
- (k) B Clarke – Waste Collection Changes - forwarded 03 Apr 24
- (l) Consultations Est – Planning Application 2024/0527/FUL - forwarded 10 Apr 24

Council resolved that given these items of correspondence are already inherently noted when received by councillors and are raised as agenda items as appropriate it is unnecessary to have them listed at this point in the agenda and they will be omitted from future agendas.

16 Matters to report / items for next agenda.

None.

17 Date and time of next meeting: Monday 20th May, 2024 in the Memorial Hall starting at 7.00pm.

Meeting closed at 20:35.