

LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at Memorial Hall on Monday 20th May, 2024

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

Attending: Cllrs Barry Clarke, Philip Ham (Somerset Council); Joe McGhee (Clerk); one members of the public.

1 Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcome everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

Cllr Paula Freeland

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 2027).

Dispensation to June 2027 approved by the Council.

(c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

None.

5 Public Session

No comments from the public.

6 County Councillor Reports

Council noted a written report which had been sent by Cllr Clarke and forwarded to them by the Clerk.

Cllr Ham made some additional points:

- There has been an issue with accepting new dog bins into the cleaning schedule.
- It is likely that a high number of redundancies will be approved at a council meeting on Wednesday, 22nd May.
- The Shepton LCN organiser is taking redundancy and will have to be replaced.
- Whatley Quarry planning application to be resolved shortly; Council to await and review.
- Constitution changes will affect the planning process. They will be voted on at the meeting of 22nd May. Section 8 changes will be important to planning.
- A £5k grant is available for emergency plan development from Somerset Prepared
- The Shepton LCN Flood Group will be looking for better preventative methods for flood planning, including defining new catchment areas.

7 Monthly update from Tom Kemp – Parish Tree Officer

Tom Kemp was not present but had given an annual report at the Parish Meeting on Saturday, 18th May.

8 To confirm the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 15th April, 2024, previously circulated (Attachment 1).

RESOLVED. Approved with one handwritten amendment by the Chair – text in item 12(h) change to “Recreation Field and Allotment Association”.

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) 2024/0649/HSE

Erection of double carport and garden shed.

Thrice Barn, Leigh Street, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet

Having considered appearance/materials, highways implications (none), amenity/impact on neighbours (non), council resolved to recommend approval of this application with the recommendation that local, natural stone should be used to ensure the carport is appropriate to its surroundings.

(b) 2024/0836/HSE

This application was notified shortly after the agenda was issued and so was considered appropriate for consideration at this meeting.

Proposed detached garage

13 Apple Meadow View, Park Hayes, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset

Since this application involved a garage nearly identical to one already approved and built, and there being no change to highways or neighbours impacts, council resolved to recommend approval of this application.

Clerk to apply appropriate comments at Somerset Council planning portal.

There was one other application notification which arrived after the agenda had been issued, but it was considered too late in the day for this meeting and will be considered at the meeting on 17th June.

11 Planning Applications – Decisions to be noted from Somerset Council

(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, BA3 5QY

Decision. Approval.

The Clerk was directed to seek an update on planning application 2024/0279/FUL concerning a flood alleviation scheme at Great House Farm, Hollybush Lane, following an incidence of flooding on Hollybush Lane recently.

12 Finance

(a) To approve (or not) bank reconciliation to 14 May 2024 (Attachment 2)

RESOLVED. Approved.

(b) To approve (or not) receipts and payments as identified in the Cashflow 31 Mar 2024 to 14 May 2024 (Attachment 3).

RESOLVED. Approved.

(c) To note bank balances at 14th May, 2024:

Unity Trust current account - £17,387.88

NS&I investment account - £9,583.86

RESOLVED. Noted. The meeting decided not to incorporate these figures at this stage in future minutes because they are already covered within the bank reconciliation.

13 Clerk's / Councillors' Report

(a) Comments applied at Somerset Council planning portal for applications 2024/0477/HSE, 2024/0478/FUL, 2024/0527/FUL and 2024/0574/HSE.

(b) No response yet from emails about signage at Park Hayes and '20mph when lights flashing sign at the school. Multiple emails have been sent on these topics so Clerk recommends they come off the agenda and we await updates.

Clerk to contact N Robertson of Somerset Council for an update.

- (c) Form with covering letter sent to NS&I to close the Council's investment account with them and transfer the balance to the Unity Trust current account.
NS&I had responded requiring the signature of all signatories, citing one who passed away some time ago. Clerk to seek clarity from NS&I and move to close account.
- (d) Upcoming planning application for consideration posted to council website and Facebook pages.
As suggested in the Parish Meeting of 18th May, Clerk will in future notifications include hyperlinks to planning application detail on the Somerset Council website.
- (e) Issue with deep pothole at the side of the road at Tadhill reported online on behalf of a parishioner. Somerset Council Highways responded saying it had been inspected and they would try to carry out work within a month.
- (f) Website updated and email account deleted following the resignation of M Carter as councillor. Democratic Services informed and notice posted of councillor vacancy in case of by-election request. If no request, vacancy will be advertised for co-option.
No by-election request was received; Clerk to advertise for candidates for cooption.
- (g) Migration of HMRC records to new tax year carried out, including issue of P60 and software upgrade.
- (h) Plan of existing cemetery modified slightly to show space for four additional ashes plots.
Discussions held with funeral director and family on the interment of ashes.
- (i) A notice was posted on the website and Facebook pages about maintenance work on the Whatley railhead.
- (j) Notices were also posted following four separate notifications of emergency road closures to the east of the village.

14 To Be Discussed / Resolved

- (a) Update on application for the new cemetery.
Cllr E Kirby provided an update. The planning application has been submitted. She will draft a letter to go to neighbours of the new cemetery area; councillors will be asked for comments before letter is distributed. Council approved payment of £359 to Cllr Kirby to reimburse her for the planning application fee, for which she had provided a receipt.
- (b) Community Plan update – Cllrs Taylor, Sweet.
 - It is proposed to use the notice board at the Bell Inn as a general community notice board. Cllr Sweet to draft structure/rules for its use and management.
 - Cllr Taylor suggested the full minutes do not need to be posted on a notice board, and that a one-page summary could be produced. She will draft such a summary and run a trial for six months.
 - Cllr Sweet reported that the idea of having a post office in the village for one day a week proved not to be feasible. Post offices in other villages approached about the possible service are too busy and indeed are contemplating cutbacks. The Council will consider alternative ways of helping villagers access such facilities.
 - A proposed Community Plan steering group meeting did not take place because of illness. Emails will be sent out to coordinate such a meeting.

(c) Chair's ideas on how the Parish Council might work over the next year.

- Cllr I Kirby as Vice-Chair will liaise with the Clerk on the agenda and minutes in future to ensure all necessary business is conducted and recorded; Cllr Taylor as Chair will chair the meetings. The aim will be to work more efficiently on agenda items. It will be expected that all information will have been read and considered before the meeting. Where possible/appropriate a report will be produced on discussion items and circulated before each meeting
- Advance planning will be developed as far as possible before each meeting.
- We now have a Parish Council logo. It is suggested that this is used on any Parish Council communication. Clerk to distribute to councillors to ensure everyone has a copy.
- One aim in future will be to make use of the volunteer pool wherever possible to augment/complement the work of councillors and allow a more 'slimline' council.

15 Matters to report / items for next agenda.

For the agenda of the meeting on 17th June:

- Report on the Annual Parish Meeting
- Report on the Clerk's annual review
- Forward planning
- Community Review update (this will be a standard agenda item)

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

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions; Equal opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, and any disability), Crime and Disorder, Health and Safety and Human Rights.