

LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at Memorial Hall on Monday 17th June, 2024

Present: Cllrs Vicki Taylor (Chair), 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

Cllr Taylor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

Cllr Paula Freeland; Cllr Philip 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 an approved request for dispensation in relation to Leigh on Mendip War Memorial Hall until June 2027.

(c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

None.

5 Public Session

One member of the public, Joanna Hudson, spoke to existing and potential developments on her land. This was a continuation from a dialogue at a previous council meeting. The existing development of three bungalows is almost complete and will be followed by a planning request for four more. Ms Hudson and her husband, Alan, also present, indicated they are taking into consideration the view (which is limited) to the village's Grade 1 listed church, the offer of making some of her land available to the village for a range of potential purposes and her intention to reach out to parishioners about the development via open days or some other forum. There followed a brief discussion.

Cllr Taylor welcomed the update and reiterated that the Parish Council cannot develop a view on the proposed development until the appropriate planning application has been referred to it by Somerset Council.

6 County Councillor Reports

Cllr Clarke had already provided a written update which was forwarded to councillors by the Clerk.

He provide some additional comments:

- The voluntary redundancy programme in Somerset Council will be completed by March, 2025; 49 people have already left.
- Somerset Council is seeking land for phosphate mitigation.
- Road surface dressing, including pothole fixing, which will commence in July will include the Leigh On Mendip area.
- Nominations are being sought for the Chairman's Community Awards.
- Heart monitors and infrared cameras are still available from Frome and other libraries.
- The new Somerset Council constitution is now in place.

7 Monthly update from Tom Kemp – Parish Tree Officer

None.

8 To confirm the minutes of the Annual Council meeting held on 20th May, 2024, previously circulated (Attachment 1).

RESOLVED. Approved.

9 To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 20th May, 2024, previously circulated (Attachment 2)

RESOLVED. Approved.

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

None.

11 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) 2024/0841/HSE

Erection of a single storey rear extension.

2 Westleigh, Towns End Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA3 5QT

Council considered this application from the points of view of design and appearance, highways implications and amenity. Material and compatible and there are no public views; there is no change from the existing highways situation; structure is single storey and any neighbour impact is not visible from the public domain. Council resolved to recommend approval of the application; Clerk to apply comments appropriately on Somerset Council's planning portal.

12 Planning Applications – Decisions to be noted from Somerset Council

(a) 2024/0574/HSE

Erection of detached garage (Retrospective)

1 The Orchard, Park, Hayes, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset, BA3 5BW

Decision. Approval.

(b) 2024/0279/FUL

Operational development relating to proposed flood alleviation scheme

Great House Farm, Hollybush Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset BA3 5QZ

Decision. Approval.

13 Finance

(a) To approve (or not) bank reconciliation to 14 May 2024 (Attachment 3)

RESOLVED. Approved.

(b) To approve (or not) receipts and payments as identified in the Cashflow 31 Mar 2024 to 14 May 2024 (Attachment 4).

RESOLVED. Approved.

14 Clerk's / Councillors' Report

The Clerk spoke to expand one item on the report.

(a) NS&I were contacted re closing the council's investment account. Clerk will give verbal update at the meeting.

NS&I had responded to the request to close the account and move funds into the Council's Unity Trust current account by requiring the signature of all signatories including one former clerk of some years ago who is now deceased. The Clerk pursued this and resolved the following actions:

- a withdrawal form will be completed and signed by Cllrs Taylor and I Kirby to remove virtually all of the funds from the NS&I investment account to the current account

- as advised by NS&I, the Clerk will then submit a further form to close the account with a covering letter indicating the Clerk's signature (on the letter – there are only two spaces on the form) completes the list of all current signatories

- (b) Following the annual council meeting, all policies were updated on the website.
- (c) The AGAR forms were completed and posted on the website, including the Public Rights Notice. The Exemption Form was sent to the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn, indicating that the council is exempt from external audit because neither its income nor expenditure for 2023-34 exceeded £25,000.
- (d) Information and an application form were posted on the usual channels for the Halecombe Quarry Community Fund.
- (e) Comments applied at Somerset Council planning portal for applications 2024/0649/HSE and 2024/0386/HSE.
- (f) Advert posted inviting people to come forward as candidates for cooption as councillors. There were no responses.
- (g) An update was received from Somerset Council indicating new signage had been ordered for Park Hayes and should be in place early July.
- (h) Traffic Management at Somerset Council confirmed that a 20WLS sign had not been incorporated into the project which delivered the flashing lights to Leigh On Mendip School and the project has no plans to revisit the school and fit one.
- (i) Upcoming planning application for consideration 2024/0841/HSE posted to council website and Facebook pages.
- (j) The council's insurance was renewed for 2024-25 with Zurich Municipal.

15 To Be Discussed / Resolved

- (a) Update on application for the new cemetery.
An ecology report has to be produced for the application. Cllr Freeland is developing this with a colleague. Some finance and time may be required – Council will be advised. Progress on this will be reviewed after three weeks and the Council updated at its next meeting.
There was one response to the letter which was sent out to neighbours of the proposed new cemetery. Cllr E Kirby will discuss with the parishioner.
- (b) Community Plan update – Cllrs Taylor, Sweet.
Cllr Sweet produced and spoke to a sheet of notes on how a community notice board could be administered. She will look at new notice boards to replace the one outside the Bell Inn which is in a poor state, and provide an update at the next meeting. Cllr I Kirby suggested an A5 sheet of rules could be provided on the notice board, with parishioners posting their own notices in line with those rules and councillors monitoring the use of the board.
- (c) Chair's ideas on how the Parish Council might work over the next year.
This was covered at a previous meeting.
- (d) Management of trusteeships and annual trustee meetings
Cllr I Kirby clarified that the Parish Council is the landlord of the Recreation Field including allotments; there is no consideration of being trustees. The Parish Council is custodian trustee of the Memorial Hall, and appoints the Memorial Hall committee which runs it, so doesn't need an annual meeting with the committee. Cllr Taylor will discuss and clarify with the Memorial Hall committee.
- (e) Report on the annual parish meeting
The Council discussed items to be actioned in the coming year from the draft minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting:
 - The Chair's ideas for the coming year have been previously covered
 - It will be suggested that the Recreation Field and Memorial Hall committees and the Allotment Association will hold their annual meetings in conjunction with the Annual Parish Meeting and deliver reports to it. Cllr Taylor will write to those bodies inviting them to have

their annual meetings along with the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr I Kirby will work with them and the Clerk to ensure the agenda for the Annual Parish Meeting covers everything necessary.

22/24-25

(f) Report on the Clerk's annual review

Cllrs Taylor and I Kirby provided a report on the Clerk's annual staff review which coincided with the end of his probationary period. The report was very positive; the overall result would have been outstanding had it been after a full year rather than the probationary. The Clerk thanked the Council for the review and councillors' for their kind words.

(g) Forward planning

Cllr I Kirby provided his thoughts on forward planning.

The idea would be to develop a 12-month plan for the Council with appropriate actions at given times; for example -

- In January, discuss and progress the annual budget
- in March/April develop planning for the Annual Parish Meeting
- At the anniversary of the Community Review Action Plan, hold a review of progress on the plan

He invited councillors to think of things to be included in a forward plan and send them to him; he will develop those into a forward plan and present to Council for its consideration.

Cllr E Kirby suggested councillors think of parish priorities for the coming year.

(h) Shepton LCN Yearly Report; communication of LCN proceedings to parish. (Attachment 5)

Cllrs E and I Kirby provided an update on the Shepton LCN Annual Meeting which they had attended.

They discussed how the LCNs operate, with the Shepton LCN working well. There are some very good inputs although suggestions are not always followed up within Somerset Council. Consideration was given to how LCN information can be delivered to parishioners. Some items at LCN meetings are general and common to multiple LCNs, prompting questions on how LCNs can cooperate to optimise efforts and resources.

At the next LCN meeting, the new Avon and Somerset PCC along with a senior officer will be invited to talk about petty crime.

Shepton LCN is developing a number of working groups. Flooding and Transport & Highways groups have been formed and more are planned.

Cllrs E and I Kirby will be obtaining more information about such initiatives to be put on the parish website for the information of parishioners.

The Clerk was tasked with publishing the Shepton LCN Yearly Report on the parish website.

16 Matters to report / items for next agenda.

The Chair tendered her apologies for the next meeting as she will not be available.

The forward plan will be an agenda item for the next meeting; Cllr I Kirby will provide more information then.

17 Date and time of next meeting: Monday 15th July, 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.