

LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at Memorial Hall on Monday 17th February, 2025

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

Attending: Joe McGhee (Clerk); Cllr Barry Clarke (Somerset Council); 3 members of the public.

1 Welcome by the Chairman

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

Cllrs E Kirby, S Sweet; Cllr P Ham (Somerset Council)

3 Absent

None.

4 Co-option of Councillor

This item was moved up the agenda.

Vicki Trundle (present) had submitted an application form to fill one of the vacant councillor positions through co-option. Cllr I Kirby proposed that she be co-opted; Cllr Freeland seconded. Ms Trundle was unanimously elected to the council. She signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting as a councillor.

Cllr I Kirby left the meeting at this point (18:40).

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

Cllr Trundle pointed out that she is on the Recreation Field Committee.

(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 Memorial Hall until June 2027.

(c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate

None.

6 Public Session

There were no comments from members of the public.

7 County Councillor Reports

Cllr Clarke spoke to a number of items which appeared on a newsletter provided by him and circulated by the Clerk to councillors.

- The deadline for phase 2 of consultation on the Boundary Commission review for Somerset has been extended to 4th March.
- Somerset Council has agreed to sell a 12 acre heritage site on Frome to Mayday Saxonvale Development Ltd.
- A call for sites has been launched whereby landowners, developers, residents can suggest suitable plots for development.
- A 7.5% increase in council tax has been approved by central government.
- There is a council meeting to approve the budget on 5th March.
- Car park charges are likely to rise from between 10% and 25%, with charges being introduced for overnight parking.

8 Monthly update from Tom Kemp – Parish Tree Officer

TK not present; update deferred to next meeting.

9 To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 20th January, 2025, previously circulated (Attachment 1)

Resolved. Confirmed.

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

None.

47/24-25

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) 2025/0062/HSE

Single storey extension and alter access to create off road parking

1 Spring Cottages, Blackers Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset

In terms of design, the modification to the wall involved was considered appropriate (James Hiscox was present and spoke about the application). Highways impact is positive since it gets vehicles off the road, and there is no significant impact in terms of amenity. Cllr Freeland proposed recommending approval; Cllr Taylor seconded; council voted unanimously in favour. Clerk to apply appropriate comments at the Somerset Council planning portal.

(b) 2025/0064/FUL

Proposed agricultural access and storage building

Land at E 367364 N 145940 Old Wells Road, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset

In terms of design, it was felt that the development proposed would have a negative impact on the character of the landscape. There were strong views on highways impact (including parishioner comments which council noted) – it was felt that the development would significantly increase the risk of accidents at a point which had a history of incidents, including fatalities. Serious concern was expressed on this point. It was not felt that there was any amenity impact since there are no immediate neighbours.

Principally for reasons of highways safety, Cllr Taylor proposed recommending refusal of this application; Cllr Trundle seconded. Council voted unanimously in favour. Clerk to apply comments appropriately.

(c) 2025/0162/FUL

Alteration to Leigh Street vehicular entrance and provision of new timber entrance gate, pedestrian timber gate and associated works

Great House Farm, Hollybush Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset

Chris Beaver of PlanningSphere, agents for the application, spoke to this application and the others related – 2025/0163/LBC and 2025/0172/FUL.

Comments were made about the appropriateness of the design, specifically that the walls should terminate with strong quoins and a single large irregular coping stone in the manner of the cock and hen detail, or that the prominence of the piers be masked by their finishing with the top of the wall. Council resolved to suggest such an amendment. The development was considered an improvement to highways safety in that it provides better drop off to the site and waiting access. There is no traffic generation. It was felt that appropriate drainage should be secured as part of the development. There is no amenity impact – no neighbours.

Cllr Freeland proposed recommending approval, with the inclusion of comments on the amendment and drainage; Cllr Taylor seconded. Council voted unanimously in favour. Clerk to apply comments appropriately.

(d) 2025/0163/LBC

Alteration to Leigh Street vehicular entrance and provision of new timber entrance gate, pedestrian timber gate and associated works

Great House Farm, Hollybush Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset

The comments in item 11(c) apply here. Cllr Freeland proposed recommending approval; Cllr Taylor seconded. Clerk to apply appropriate comments.

(e) 2025/0172/FUL

Installation of 452m farm access track

Great House Farm, Hollybush Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset

The design was considered an improvement on the existing arrangements. There was thought to be a significant benefit in highways terms because of the improved access which would be set in from the road. There is no amenity impact.

Cllr Freeland proposed recommending approval; Cllr Taylor seconded. Clerk to apply appropriate comments.

12 Planning Applications – Decisions to be noted from Somerset Council**(a) 2024/2114/HSE**

Erection of garden room extension to east elevation, porch extension to west elevation, and installation of Velux windows to northern roof slope

Keepers Lodge, Leigh Street, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA3 5QP

Decision. Approval.

(b) 2025/0086/APP

Approval of details reserved by condition 6 (surface water drainage scheme) of consent 2024/1472/FUL

1 Park hayes, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA3 5QN

Decision. Approval.

(c) 2024/2059/FUL

Creation of new access to proposed barn conversion

Knaphll Farm, Knap Hill, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Bath, BA3 5QY

Decision. Approval.

(d) 2024/2221/PAA

Prior approval for a proposed change of use of agricultural building to 8 no. dwelling houses (Class C3) and for associated operational development

Tadhill Farm, Old Wells Road, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA3 5QX

Decision. Prior Approval Refused.

All decisions noted.

13 Finance

(a) To approve (or not) bank reconciliation at 12 Feb 2025 (Attachment 2)

Resolved. Approved.

(b) To approve (or not) receipts and payments as identified in the Cashflow 11 Jan 2024 to 12 Feb 2025 (Attachment 3).

Resolved. Approved.

14 Clerk's / Councillors' Report

(a) The investment account with NS&I has finally been successfully closed and remaining funds transferred to the council's Unity Trust current account – see bank reconciliation presented at item 13(a).

(b) Contact was made by the Clerk with the Somerset Bin Project team at Somerset Council to follow up the report sent in October last year on dog/litter bins in the parish. Nick Watkins (Case Manager – Parks and Open Spaces Tech) has confirmed that Somerset Council will continue to collect the bins as normal and there will be no charge for doing so.

(c) Admin access to the Unity Trust current account has been obtained by the Clerk. Those with access have been confirmed – one legacy access will be removed and another updated.

(d) The annual invoice related to the solar panel array at Soho Farm has been sent to Mells Park Trust.

- (e) The precept request form for 2025-26 has been sent to Parish Precepts at Somerset Council; they have confirmed receipt of the form and that it was in good order.

49/24-25

- (f) Cllr I Kirby and the Clerk will attend an emergency planning presentation by Bel Deering of Somerset Council at Stoke St Michael Memorial Hall on 4th March.
- (g) Chris Cudmore has produced a QR code for the Leigh On Mendip website; this will be used in notices in the future.
- (h) A response was received from a planning officer of Somerset Council noting the points which had been made about the self-build status of some planning applications and the fact that the village does not have a shop (as claimed occasionally in planning applications).
- (i) The volunteer report produced by Cllr Taylor was published as a notice on the website.
- (j) Budget for 2025-26 updated and issued.

15 Be Discussed / Resolved

- (a) Request for parking restrictions at the school

Cllr E Kirby had provided an update by email. D Hurrell for the school will issue a newsletter to parents with parking advice, including use of the Memorial Hall car park. General action considering formal parking restrictions continues.

- (b) Contact with fire service re width of road at Park Hayes (Clerk).

Following another attempt by the Clerk to determine if the fire service would review access at Park Hayes, he was advised to complete an online enquiry form. This has been done; a response is awaited.

- (c) Flooding at Barns Close (Cllr Ham)

Action to speak to R Massey continues.

- (d) Cemetery development – update (Cllr E Kirby)

Benches have been delivered. Action on general update continues.

- (e) Unit Trust Bank signatory update (Clerk)

Clerk now has Admin access and has raised a submission to remove access for one party who is no longer a councillor.

- (f) Grit bin replacement.

The lid of the grit bin has been replaced and it was considered sufficiently serviceable now to obviate the need for a replacement. It will be monitored.

- (g) Community notice board – sketch and costings from Bell Inn landlord (Cllr Taylor)

Continued.

- (h) Statement on BNG (T Kemp)

Clerk to liaise with T Kemp on BNG statement.

16 Matters to report / items for next agenda.

Items from Forward Plan.

VE Day celebrations.

17 Date and time of next meeting: Monday 17th March, 2025, 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.