

## LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at Memorial Hall on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> June, 2025

Present: Cllrs Paula Freeland, Estelle Kirby, Iain Kirby, Vicki Trundle

Attending: Joe McGhee (Clerk); Cllrs Barry Clarke, Philip Ham (Somerset Council)

### 1 Welcome by the Chairman

The meeting was chaired by the Vice-Chair, Cllr I Kirby. He welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### 2 Apologies for absence

Cllrs Vicki Taylor and Sue Sweet.

### 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 Memorial Hall until June 2027.

Cllr Vicki Trundle has an approved request for dispensation in relation to Leigh On Mendip Recreation Field Committee until March 2029.

#### (c) To grant any requests for dispensation as appropriate.

To approve, or not, request from Cllr Paula Freeland for a dispensation in relation to St Giles Church until June 2029.

Council resolved to approve Cllr Freeland's request.

### 5 Public Session

No members of the public were present.

### 6 County Councillor Reports

Cllr Clarke gave a verbal report, making the following points:

- Somerset Council has made a loss to date of £7M on property sales
- £3M has been spent on a salary and grading analysis of council staff
- Somerset Economic Futures has received an invitation for a cultural collaboration with Ukraine; this has been mentioned previously and the parish council can comment if so minded.
- The work for ground maintenance has been taken in-house from the beginning of June.
- There will be a review of Local Community Networks, their effectiveness and progress made in the time they have been in existence.
- There continues to be an issue with road signs being moved between locations by an unknown party.
- There is a debate being had about the large number of planning enforcement issues and the small number of enforcement officers available to deal with them.

Cllr Ham added several points:

- A bill on planning application assessment is going through parliament which could result in Somerset councillors being unable to challenge applications.
- The council property which was being sold to Saxonvale is now on the open market again.

### 7 Monthly update from Tom Kemp – Parish Tree Officer

Tom Kemp was not present so there was no report.

**8 Confirmation of Minutes**

- (a) To confirm the minutes of the Annual Full Council Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2025, previously circulated (Attachment 1).

**RESOLVED.** Confirmed.

- (b) To confirm the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2025, previously circulated (Attachment 2).

**RESOLVED.** Confirmed.

**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) 2025/0849/HSE**

Dismantle, relocation and rebuilding of courtyard walls to principal dwelling and associated hard landscaping works.

Great House Farm, Hollybush Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

Following a site visit, councillors resolved to recommend approval of this application. It is considered that overall there are public heritage benefits to the application, and no highways or amenity implications. Cllr Freeland will forward notes on the application to the Clerk who will apply appropriate comments at the Somerset Council planning portal.

**(b) 2025/0849/LBC**

Dismantle, relocation and rebuilding of courtyard walls to principal dwelling and associated hard landscaping works.

Great House Farm, Hollybush Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset.

Comments as for item 10(a).

**11 Planning Applications – Decisions to be noted from Somerset Council****(a) 2025/0064/FUL**

Proposed agricultural access and storage building

Land at 367365 145942 Old Wells Road, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset

**Decision.** Application withdrawn.

**(b) 2025/0303/FUL**

Proposed field shelter, tractor shed & store

Clearwood, Leigh Street, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset

**Decision.** Approval.

**(c) 2025/0613/VRC**

Removal of condition 3 (Self-Build/Biodiversity Net Gain Exemption Development) to consent 2024/1471/FUL for erection of 4 self-build detached dwellings

Land at 369339 147367 Quarry Lane, Leigh On Mendip, Shepton Mallet, Somerset

**Decision.** Approval.

All decisions noted.

**12 Finance and Annual Reporting**

- (a) To approve (or not) bank reconciliation at 11 Jun 2025 (Attachment 3)

**RESOLVED.** Approved.

- (b) To approve (or not) receipts and payments as identified in the Cashflow 14 May 2025 to 11 Jun 2025 (Attachment 4).

**RESOLVED.** Approved.

**13 Clerk's / Councillors' Report**

- (a) Updated list of meetings for the coming year sent to the Memorial Hall secretary.

- (b) All policies updated and republished on the website.

- (c) Site visit arranged at Great House Farm in relation to planning applications. An extension to the deadline for comments was obtained from the planning officer to allow consideration of the applications at the next council meeting.
- (d) An update was received from the manager of Radstock Fire Station regarding a review of fire tender access to Park Hayes. He advises that this actually comes under the remit of a different fire service area. He has provided contact details and the Clerk will make contact.
- (e) Chris Cudmore has advised that Somerset Council has been cutting several verges recently including the crossroads at the top of Knap Hill. Chris has cut back some outgrowing hedging on the junction of Old Wells Road and Tadhil Lane. Visibility in these areas is improved but care still required. The Village Rangers will soon be strimming the grass around the stone village signs.
- (f) Details of an urgent road closure in Coleford were published to the usual channels.
- (g) Updated details on the recommendations from the Local Government Boundary Commission were circulated along with means of providing feedback.

#### **14 To Be Discussed / Resolved**

- (a) Management of churchyard/cemetery maintenance (Clerk)  
The Clerk proposed a practical arrangement for the maintenance contract in which the contractor will invoice for cuts done per month in arrears (cost per cut as per original quotation) and agreement will be made when it is appropriate to end cuts for this season (final number of cuts will be less than originally quoted for). Council resolved to approve this proposal.
- (b) Responsibility for churchyard/cemetery (Cllr Freeland)  
Cllr Freeland provided hard copy documentation of her research into responsibility for St Giles churchyard/cemetery, indicating clearly as described in the minutes of the parish council meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> May that responsibility lies with Somerset Council but Leigh On Mendip Parish Council has agreed to responsibility for ground maintenance.
- (c) Development of biodiversity plan for churchyard/cemetery  
Cllr I Kirby will invite Tom Kemp to talk about this proposal at the next council meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> July.
- (d) Somerset Council cultural collaboration with Ukraine  
The parish council will not be commenting on this proposal.
- (e) Appointment of internal auditor for 2025-26.  
The Clerk proposed that the internal auditor used for the past two years, Eleanor Greene of Do The Numbers Ltd, be reappointed as the internal auditor for 2025-26. Council resolved to reappoint Ms Greene.
- (f) New cemetery (Cllr E Kirby)  
Cllr E Kirby provided a verbal report:
  - the two benches for the new cemetery will be installed on 17<sup>th</sup> June
  - the plaques for the benches will be installed at the same time
  - drawings for the new gates are being produced
  - investigations continue into improving the path along the side of the cemetery;
  - a note is going out to neighbours in the vicinity of the cemetery to alert them to the work which is imminent
- (g) Parking/speed restrictions (including 20mph signage) at the school (Cllr P Ham).
  - Cllr Ham will continue discussions with Sara Davis of Somerset Council.
- (h) Community notice board – sketch and costings from Bell Inn landlord (Cllr Taylor).
  - Continued to next meeting.

- (i) Repair shop (Cllr Taylor)
  - Continued to next meeting.

**15 Matters to report / items for next agenda.**

Cllr Trundle advised she will be unable to attend the July meeting and offered apologies.

**16 Date and time of next meeting: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2025, at 7:00pm in the Memorial Hall.**

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.