

LEIGH ON MENDIP PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of meeting held at Memorial Hall on Monday 16th March, 2026

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

Attending: Barry Clarke (Somerset Council); Tom Kemp (Tree and Biodiversity Adviser); one member of the public

1 Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for absence

None.

3 Absent

None. All councillors present.

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.

No further requests.

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

None.

5 Public Session

No comments from members of the public at this point.

6 County Councillor Reports

Cllr Clarke made several points in support of a newsletter already circulated:

- Council tax has been increased by 4.99%.
- Significant funds are being spent on roads surface dressing.
- Somerset Council has funding of £2.5M per year for four years to improve bus services; parish councils may apply for new or improved services as part of this.
- The Hardship Fund has been extended for another year.
- Following the LGBC review, new ward boundaries have been published.

7 Monthly update from Tom Kemp – Parish Tree Officer

A meeting was held between TK, the Clerk and the current ground maintenance contractor. See item 14(a) below.

8 To confirm the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 16th February, 2026, previously circulated (Attachment 1).

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.

None.

11 Planning Applications – Decisions to be noted from Somerset Council

(a) 2025/1374/FUL

Erection of an attached 3-bedroom dwellinghouse.

Land at 368913 147215, Park Hayes, Leigh On Mendip, Radstock, Somerset.

Appeal against refusal of planning application withdrawn.

Noted.

12 Finance and Annual Reporting

(a) To approve (or not) bank reconciliation at 11 Mar 2026 (Attachment 2)

Resolved. Approved.

(b) To approve (or not) receipts and payments as identified in the Cashflow 11 Feb 2026 to 11 Mar 2026 (Attachment 3).

Resolved. Approved.

Cllr Clarke left the meeting at 19:30.

13 Clerk's / Councillors' Report

(a) Various items were published:

- Notice on the plans for a repair shop

- Advert inviting parishioners to consider applying to be a parish councillor (further information subsequently sent to two interested parties)

- Updated website Accessibility Statement (published by Chris Cudmore)

(b) A meeting was held between the Clerk, Tom Kemp and the maintenance contractor, Hill & Hill Ground Maintenance, to discuss moving the biodiversity plan forward. The plan was updated following the discussion by TK and sent on to the contractor (see item 14 below and Attachment 4).

(c) Cllr Taylor and the Clerk attended a meeting of the Halecombe Quarry Community Fund, at which approval of funding for an SID was granted subject to the appropriate agreement of a Memorandum of Understanding with Somerset Council.

(d) The planning agent for Great House Farm was approached about the hedge opposite Island Cottage; it is not part of a maintenance scheme (covered under item 14 below).

(e) The agenda for the 2025 Annual Parish Meeting was circulated to councillors for information.

(f) Tom Kemp updated the schematic of the fencing plan for the new cemetery, and the Clerk forwarded it to councillors (see also item 14 below).

(g) The Somerset Council Estates Surveyor involved in devolution of land at Park Hayes to the Parish Council sought an update from their Legal Department. Documentation has been sent by the latter to the Clerk who will assess and report.

Clerk to send on information to councillors Taylor and Kirby; they will have a meeting with the Clerk at 6:30 on 20th April to discuss then report to the council meeting immediately afterwards.

(h) It wasn't possible to determine if the police had retained finger post components following an accident at the Soho junction; a report has been raised with Somerset Council Highways who have yet to respond.

Clerk to pursue response to the report.

14 To Be Discussed / Resolved**(a)** Churchyard maintenance, including:

- biodiversity plan (Attachment 4)

Biodiversity plan is being put into practice; Clerk and TK to ensure PCC is kept informed and comfortable with the plan.

- maintenance for 2026 season

Council resolved to continue contract with Hill & Hill Maintenance at the same cost as 2025 season and incorporating actions for biodiversity plan. Clerk to inform the contractor.

- one-off maintenance of bushes around old PC cemetery area

Council approved one-off piece of work to trim bushes around old PC cemetery area; Clerk to inform contractor.

(b) Annual Parish Meeting.

Newsletter to be distributed in week commencing 4th May.

Councillors to send text on their respective topics to Cllr Taylor by Monday 13th April.

Clerk to confirm cost and timescales for printing newsletter.

(c) Move to triple authority for payment approval.

Council resolved to move to triple authority for BACS payments and to have Cllr Trundle added as a signatory/approver. Cllr Kirby to confirm successful bank login. Clerk to progress move to triple authority and have Cllr Trundle added as signatory/approver.

(d) Overgrown bank opposite Island Cottage.

Clerk confirmed this is not part of a maintenance scheme; Clerk to raise as a Highways issue with Somerset Council.

(e) EV charging points.

EV charging points have to be installed on land owned by Somerset Council or adopted by its Highways department. Ability to suggest locations for EV points as part of the Somerset Council scheme, and general information, to be publicised.

(f) Councillor recruitment.

Three parties have expressed interest. Information and application forms being sent with a view to co-option(s) at the April PC meeting.

The advert inviting applications will also go into the next edition of Village Connection.

(g) New cemetery

Work on gates continues.

T Kemp left the meeting at 20:38.

Discussion held on bids to install fence in new cemetery area. Council resolved to award the work to Chrysalis Landscaping (without optional extras). Clerk to inform contractor.

(h) Repair shop

Council resolved to incorporate information on a repair shop in the newsletter prior to the Annual Parish Meeting. E Kirby will also talk about proposal at the APM.

(i) Invitations to complete surveys:

- SALC survey

- Somerset Council – Public Space Protection Orders and dog fouling

Council resolved no need to respond to SALC survey and to publish information on the PSPO survey on the usual channels.

(j) Admin of Parish Council Facebook page

Cllr Trundle agreed to be a backup admin on the Parish Council Facebook page.

15 Matters to report / items for next agenda.

Councillor co-option.

Text for APM newsletter.

Cemetery.

16 Date and time of next meeting: Monday 20th April, 2026, 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.