

# LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of a Leigh Parish Council Meeting at Leigh Village Hall on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Present: Councillors A Bennett (Chairman); G Bugler; C Dixon; A Ward.

7 x Members of the public – including DCllr M Penfold.

### AGENDA ITEM NO

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#### **ADDITIONAL CONTINGENCY ITEM OUTSIDE THE FORMAL AGENDA**

Prior to the start of the PC meeting, the Chairman declared an open session in order to develop plans to mitigate in-village issues concerning restrictions stemming from the coronavirus pandemic (the room had accordingly been set up to maintain separation).

Julia Jepson's emailed proposals had been circulated in advance of the meeting, outlining a 'Leigh Lifeline' facility in order to assist 'self-isolating' residents. A communications system was being established: the mobile phone number 07942 646052 (wef 18 March 2020) would be used to enable requests for assistance (eg. shopping etc); this would link to a WhatsApp group of local volunteers to which requests for such assistance would be routed. The Leigh Life Facebook page contains details. It was intended to put a note advertising the facility through doors, and a Covid-19 related support page would be available on the Village Website. Details would also be given in the April edition of the Wriggle Valley Magazine.

A response was awaited from Yetminster Health Centre regarding the practicalities of third-party prescription collection. It was confirmed that a trader selling fresh vegetables would be at the Post Office / Store once per week; details TBC.

It was noted that the Village Hall Committee had decided that the Hall would be closed from 12 noon, 20 March 2020. Some year groups in the Yetminster school were already closed, due to staffing issues. As at the date of the meeting the Gryphon was still operating as per national guidelines.

On behalf of the village, the PC expressed its thanks to Julia and Russell Jepson for initiating this facility, and undertook that submission of associated expenses would be welcomed by the PC for its consideration.

#### **Opening Remarks.**

Further to above – the Chairman provided opportunity for any Leigh parish residents present to raise any further issues for the Parish Council for future consideration. Five of the seven public attending departed on completion of the initial item.

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Received from: Councillors S Scutt and D Vincent.

#### **2. Declarations of Interest – Nil from those present.**

#### **3. LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES**

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Minutes of the previous Leigh Parish Council Meeting on 21 January 2020 had been circulated and displayed in advance of the meeting. There were no revisions requested before the meeting or at the time.

3.1. The Chairman signed the minutes for the record.

3.2. Matters Arising were included in the subsequent agenda items.

#### 4. **FINANCES – OVERVIEW AND END OF FINANCIAL YEAR FORECAST**

The Chairman described the parish finances as the end of the financial year approached, based on the finance spreadsheet as at end of February and circulated in advance of the meeting.

As of that date, the total LPC balance was £21,509; this included the two ring-fenced development funds for the Play Park (£8,558) and the Village Green (£8,145) projects, leaving an unallocated balance of £4,805. It was anticipated this latter figure would reduce by some £500 by the end of the FY. At that stage, the in-year budgeted expenditure for footpath gates (£600) would probably be carried over to the next financial year. The Play Park and Village Green projects were ongoing.

4.1. **Financial Regs - Reconciliation check** with the bank statement as at 29 February 2020 was completed by Cllr Ward, after the meeting.

4.2. The Chairman had prepared an **LPC Historical Financial Record**, providing figures for the beginning of each financial year and major in-year events. It was agreed that the spreadsheet would be incorporated as an extra tab to the parish financial spreadsheet.

#### 5. **PAYMENTS SCHEDULE.** The In-meeting schedule included:

5.1. Retrospective for agreement. Nil beyond agreed standing orders (£400)

5.2. Listed invoices held for payment (and cheques raised). Value at £48 - authorization in meeting.

5.3. Beyond standing orders there were no other projected payments for pre-authority/ planning before next meeting. Recent drainage work for the Play Park was yet to be billed: £400 + VAT.

5.3.1. **Grass Cutting Contract** - see Village Green and Play Park Items. The current contractor was being asked to quote to extend the current Play Park grass cutting contract for 2020 to include the Village Green. Other tenders would then be sought for 2021, as a larger cutter was probably required.

5.4. **VAT Reclaim (January -December 2019)** The Parish Clerk described a current major VAT reclaim, still to be submitted as it was pending receipt of one supporting invoice to replace a pro-forma invoice, not suitable for VAT reclaim in its current form. All payments for a period had to be submitted together, to avoid duplication. If all recoveries are viable something over £3.5K is recoverable, with nearly £3K-worth applying to the Playpark, although some will require explanation with the claim.

To claim under VAT 126, the **supporting invoices must** be from VAT

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registered businesses, and plainly **addressed to Leigh PC** (taken to be at the Parish Clerk's address) be paid within the claim period.

6. **VILLAGE GREEN PROJECT.** Cllr Scutt had sent her apologies for the meeting; the Chairman reported on the updates received from her:

6.1. **Fencing Work.** The contractor was still waiting for improved weather and ground conditions before work could start.

6.2. **Insurance.** Increased premium and extent was applicable once the fencing was completed and the Green established, most likely close to the beginning of the new insurance year – June 2020.

6.3. **Agricultural Rent** – rental for the entire 4 acres for 6 months was up to date, to Jan 2020. Rent for southern 2-acres section for 2020 (£180) was now due, as agreed 20190917 Item 7.5.

7. **PLAYPARK**

Cllr Bugler updated on the Playpark, mainly that in common with everywhere else the ground was very wet. Improved ground drainage had now been incorporated. The invoice from Gregory's for the remedial drainage work was still to be received. The Clerk undertook to follow up.

The next phase of the project – installation of a slide - was awaiting the ground drying, post a wet winter. Materials and equipment had been costed in outline and were greater than the current Play Park account balance. The addition of anticipated VAT refund funds would help towards achieving anticipated total costs, but further fund raising was likely to be needed.

8. **DORSET LOCAL PLAN**

The Chairman described the parish's response to consultation regarding the draft Dorset Local Plan. The survey had been completed, and a more extensive emailed response submitted. The Parish had broadly supported DC's approach and drawn attention to matters such as local road capacity, distance to main facilities and general town-based assets.

9. **LEIGH PC PROVISIONAL POLICY FOR PLANNING APPLICATIONS ON GREEN FIELDS WITHIN THE PARISH**

Leigh still has no Neighborhood Plan. In its continued absence, a draft 'Provisional policy about Planning Applications on greenfield sites within the parish' had been circulated pre-meeting. Details are at Annex A to these minutes. It was unanimously agreed that this provisional policy was now endorsed.

Comments and suggestions on this provisional policy were now invited from parishioners; an article to this effect would be in the April edition of the Wriggle Valley Magazine. It was intended to further consider the policy at the May 2020 PC meeting, with a view to it then being formally ratified.

10. **PLANNING**

10.1. To consider Planning Matters. Following applications are listed on public planning site for LPC consultation (LPC Parish Clerk "In-tray"):

10.1.1. WD/D/19/002700. Guyers DT9 6HL. Consultation with LPC about

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alterations to existing windows, due by 23 March 2020. LPC's response lodged 11 March 2020.

10.1.2. WD/D/20/000311. Land east of Holly Tree House, Chetnole Road. Outline planning permission to erect 3 detached dwellings; response is required before 31 March 2020.

10.1.2.1. See minutes 21 Jan 20 Item 9.4 for previous discussions. The Landowner's Agent attended the meeting and drew attention to the nature of the application, that it was outline planning permission and in effect simply defining the footprint extent only.

10.1.2.2. The PC discussed the application further, and ultimately narrowly voted to support the application, albeit with some reservations which would be detailed in its response to DC.

10.1.3. WD/D/20/000333. Drover's Cottage Request for compliance with conditions – 3 & 4 of WD/D/18/001955. For information only, no input required.

10.2. WD/D/19/002257 – Field West of Village Hall. Partial change of use and fencing. Permission for partial change of use granted since last meeting.

11. **LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL (LPC) STANDING ORDERS.** The current NALC template for Standing Orders is dated July 2018, as circulated. Financial Regulations and Standing Orders are intended to be read together and uploaded as a reference to the parish website. The changes were based on legislative update, and the basis had been circulated. LPC's adopted Financial Regulations referred to the most recent NALC template and as result did not match the earlier retained (2014) Standing Orders so would require closer integration. Held over.

12. **ANNUAL LITTER PICK.**

The Chairman provided a short update on the village litter pick over late January /February. DC had requested the location of hotspots.

13. **FOOTPATHS.**

Gates locations - planned payment for programmed gates in-year was unlikely. Carried forward to next meeting.

14. **CLIMATE EMERGENCY.** Cllr Dixon reported that she had had asked for comments about a draft Parish Climate Emergency Policy through the WVM although she was yet to receive input from that source although she had also received a number of extra headings. It was considered that parking facilities at Chetnole Halt and more parking at Yetminster station would assist reducing miles driven. Charging points for electric vehicles was seen as an issue in Dorset as a whole; the provision of public charging points, perhaps at the Village Hall, was suggested. The Chairman undertook to contact the Village Hall committee to explore this concept.

15. **LEIGH PARISH 'FINGER POSTS'**

The Chairman thanked Graham Fudge and Gordon Morrison for their initial report identifying parish signposts ("finger posts"), and the likely work required to

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maintain and improve their appearance.

It was unanimously agreed to appoint Graham Fudge as Leigh's 'Finger Post champion'. The PC expressed its appreciation of his preparedness to undertake this responsibility.

### 16 **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.**

Much correspondence and notifications received since the previous meeting was superseded by recent developments as referred in the meeting pre-amble. The following correspondence was noted:

- Community Heartbeat Trust equipment cleaning advice ref: Covid-19, was actioned
- Best Kept Village entry forms were available.
- DAPTC Office was being run from staff working at home.

Newsletters and notifications were circulated and are retained by the Clerk

### 17 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING:**

The next PC meeting is on Tuesday 12 May 2020. It will be preceded by the Village AGM at 7pm. The PC AGM will start at 7-30pm, or on completion of the Village AGM, whichever the later.

*Secretary's Note:* During 18 March 2020 it was advised that Parish Council Meetings might be suspended but calling notices would be issued as and when the situation clarified.

Subsequent LPC meeting dates in 2020 are currently: 21 July; 15 September; 17 November 2020. All Tuesdays at 19:30.

Annex:

A. Provisional policy with regard to planning applications on greenfield sites within the parish

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The provisional policy below was adopted at Leigh PC's meeting of 17 March 2020. Parishioners are now encouraged to mail the Parish Clerk [leigh@dorset-aptc.gov.uk](mailto:leigh@dorset-aptc.gov.uk) with any comments.

## **Leigh Parish Council**

### ***Provisional policy with regard to planning applications on greenfield sites within the parish.***

*Leigh PC is aware of Dorset Council's emerging Local Plan, which proposes to concentrate future significant developments around the county's Tier 1 and 2 towns, and the larger rural villages (ie those with 500+ estimated population).*

*Leigh, being therefore categorised as a smaller village, would apparently thus be outwith the above proposal. As such, on adoption of the above Local Plan, it is taken that Leigh would be unlikely to be subject to having a significant development imposed upon it.*

*Given the limited facilities within the village, the minimal size of its surrounding approach roads, and the absence of any public transport, Leigh PC is fully supportive of Dorset Council's approach. Moreover, any larger scale development on one or more of Leigh's green field sites would make a marked change to the character of the village - which the PC is very keen to see retained.*

*Notwithstanding this, Leigh PC is conscious of the national shortage of housing, and recognises that it needs to play a part. Furthermore, where expansion of the village's existing housing can be blended in without infringing upon the principles outlined herein, the PC has no desire to entirely deny new housing for those aspiring to find a home in our village. As such, it has recently supported appropriate small scale developments on two green fields within the village's confines.*

*With regard to similar applications to build on any other green field(s) within the village's confines, these will continue to be considered on a case by case basis. Factors which will be taken into account include: the location of the field in question; the scale of the intended development; the design, number and density of proposed houses, especially with regard to their being in keeping with the immediate locality; the number of other remaining open spaces close by; the likely creation of a 'ribbon development' effect; and traffic considerations vis-à-vis the width of the immediate road.*

*This policy also applies to the hamlets within the parish (Totnell, Three Gates and Calfhay). The list of considerations should not be taken as exhaustive.*

**Leigh PC plans to adopt the above as a formal policy at its meeting on 12 May 2020. Thereafter, it will be reviewed every five years, or on Leigh's adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan should this occur sooner.**