

# Minutes of a Meeting of Leigh Parish Council on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in Leigh Village Hall.

Present: Cllr A Bennett (Chairman); Cllrs C Dixon, J Dixon, S Scutt, and S Vincent.

In attendance: Members of the public x 4, Dorset Cllr M Penfold (from Item 4 (less 12)) Beverley Harrison (Parish Clerk)

Opening Remarks. The Chairman welcomed all attending the meeting and described process for the meeting and any input from members of the public attending.

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllr A Ward.

2. Declarations of Interest: Nil

3. **LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES**

3.1. The minutes of Leigh's Parish Council Meeting on 5 October 2021 were circulated and displayed with no further input. Accordingly, the minutes were agreed and:

3.1.1. The Chairman signed a copy for the record.

3.1.2. Matters Arising not covered elsewhere on the meeting's agenda were:

3.1.2.1. Item 12. Standing Orders and Processes:

- **Standing Orders** (NALC Template 2018) – parish revision carried forward – Cllr Bennett.
- **Asset Register.** Carried forwards – Cllr Ward
- **Risk Register.** The Risk Register addresses financial impact and included in the local council insurance and audit processes. Cllr J Dixon reported that he had added Chairman's revisions to his draft. The Clerk had since updated the document for process changes and checked the scoring before circulating both versions, for visibility, to the councillors.
  - Cllr J Dixon addressed his concerns about parish information back up in the context of the parish's risk assessment. The Clerk confirmed that safe retention is regularly addressed by parish clerks as a group to share best practice within the role:
    - Hard copy key documents and minutes were deposited in the County Record Office.
    - Electronic versions of policy and administration documents were on the Parish Section of the separately maintained village website.
    - Everything is periodically backed up to a hard drive, further to the Clerk's personal laptop in parish use.
  - Cllr Scutt referred to her experience of information stored on councillors' computers, which are necessarily in use. Processes are covered by the ICO certificate particularly over retention. Standard data policies, previously offered for upload to 'Policy', would be uploaded in light of subsequent experience and change of councillors.
  - The Chairman further asked Cllr J Dixon to investigate further appropriate back up and agree a compliant way forwards at the next meeting.
- **On-line Register of Interests (ROI).** On-line registration meets the

accessibility requirements for public service websites

- ROI completion is a legal requirement for every councillor. Last date for on-line registration of extant councillors was 31 October 2021 and six of the seven had completed the task. The Clerk was asked to remind the remaining councillor once more, of the mandated obligation. The current registrations will be linked to the county website provision for the parish.

3.1.2.2. Item 13. Community Governance Review. The Chairman noted that the review (CGR) was a routine local government process and that Leigh had made no input at this stage in common with many other parishes. It was noted that the next CGR stage should be reviewed for any unexpected proposals.

#### 4. FINANCES OVERVIEW:

The accounts spreadsheet updated to 31 October 2021 reflected a balance of £24435.15, updated to £23925.15 reflecting the direct debit taken on 10 Nov '21. Funds were allocated to: Main fund: £10976.94; ring-fenced sub-accounts were: Play Park £1505.27; Village Green £1649.64; Heritage Signage £483.70; CIL £9309.60 and R&R £0

4.1. Update on forecast for FY21/22 and in-year transfers.

4.1.1. Grants to St Andrew's Fabric Fund (£500) and NORDCAT (£300) were included in LPC Budget 2021/22 and their payment was proposed by: Cllr Bennett; seconded by: Cllr Scutt – Unanimous.

4.1.2. It was further agreed that the following transfers between accounts be:

4.1.2.1. 2021 grass cutting costs to date (£555) to Play Park from CIL

4.1.2.2. 2021 grass cutting costs to date (£1275) to Village Green from CIL.

4.1.2.3. £1500 from Main account to R&R account

Proposed: Chairman (Cllr Bennett) Seconded: Cllr Scutt

4.2. Bank administration – signatures and on-line banking in progress with Lloyds Bank and Parish Clerk as RFO.

4.3. Draft budget for FY 22/23 (iaw LPC Financial Regulations 2019, para 3.2 where the Budget is agreed at the November meeting). The Chairman had circulated a proposed draft 2022/23 budget based on the current in-year and asked for any further input prior to finally agreeing the budget at the January 2022 LPC meeting when agreeing the parish precept application to meet that budget at the January meeting after receipt of that application information from Dorset County.

#### 5 APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

The Clerk had prepared a consolidated schedule of payments pre-meeting for review and agreement by Councillors:

5.1. Payments made since previous meeting, for formal record in minutes. Payment was taken directly for a previously agreed County Highways traffic survey and its payment was taken using the direct debit established for other parish services (bins). It was agreed that **£510** was legitimately applied, whilst noting that councillors should ensure that they did not accidentally authorize a payment or similar against this mandate. (LPC Financial Regulations 2019 Para 4.)

5.2. Payments for agreement in meeting – See the attached Schedule; with the addition of released grants proposed by the Chairman at Item 4, for St Andrews Fabric Fund and NORDCAT.

5.3. Payments expected before next meeting. It was noted that the parish's half-yearly loan repayment was due on 19 Dec '21; the Community Heart Start line rental for 2022 was due payment, as was Village Hall rental for meetings held in 2020.

6. **PLAYPARK UPDATE.** Cllr Scutt updated the meeting on initial steps towards the next phase of work on the Play Park. She reported that Play Park committee members were changing as parishioners with children moved around and children grew up.

Adjustments, following the RoSPA safety report (May 2021), were being followed up with the Toy Barn, in parallel with potential new equipment (zip wire) consideration for the next phase.

7. **VILLAGE GREEN UPDATE.**

7.1. The attached policy statement for Leigh Village Green had been circulated in advance of the meeting and was unanimously supported for adoption and upload to the Policies area of the Leigh Village website. Also see Item 8.

8. **CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE.**

8.1. Cllr C Dixon reported that she had circulated her draft before submission of a Lottery Grant bid, to meet its deadline of 18 Nov '21, to support a series of awareness talks.

She had also circulated options in support of the projected Queen's Canopy, which would be met by planting a tree. Options of tree-type, size and location were considered on the understanding that the tree would need to be planted November to March.

9. **FLOODING.** Recent in-village flooding occurrences were on 31 October and again a few days later. The extant leaky dams had been checked and they had worked as planned, but the scale of downpours had overwhelmed capacity.

Dorset Council had responded to reports of blocked culverts. The council website was commended to residents as the reporting route.

A flooding survey questionnaire was commended to householders on - <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/propertyownersandoccupiers/> which was to close on Monday 22 Nov '21.

- 10 **PLANNING**

**To consider Parish Planning Matters.** Updates since previous meeting.

- P/FUL/2021/03243 Proposal: Reconfigure dwellings. Location: Carpenters Arms, Chetnole Road, Leigh, DT9 6HJ; Deadline 11 Nov 21 – Nil response received or offered to Dorset Council Planning.

Parish council planning consultation responses on-line in the new website are: 'Supported', 'Object' all supported by 'Comment' within planning constraints, and 'Conditional Response'. No reply is taken as nil input required.

11. **HIGHWAYS**

11.1. **Speed limits**

11.1.1. Traffic survey equipment had been placed at Three Gates and an associated data readout received. This provides evidence for Leigh PC's application for extension of the 40mph limit to include Three Gates. See Item 5. The outcome was to be reviewed with Dorset Highways.

11.1.2. Cllr C Dixon reported that improved road markings and speed calming measures were on-going. The village Community Speed Watch (CSW) was progressing, although a few initial volunteers had stepped down; more were welcome. One Leigh CSW group had completed training and another group was due to be trained shortly.

11.2. **Finger Post Project** – In-village signposts were mostly complete. Work had started on the State Ford post in cooperation with Yetminster PC and agreement was reached with Cam Vale PC about the costs for the Bailey Ridge post.

12. **APPLICATION FOR A DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION – BOUND LANE.** *This agenda item was dealt with higher up the order between Items 3 and 4, to permit members of the public to depart should they wish.*

An application has been made to change T638, named Bound Lane, between Leigh and Chetnole to a Byway open to all traffic (BOAT). Parishioners had been asked for supporting information about their understanding of the route, and a few were offered before the meeting; others were made by landowners along the route, some of whom attended the meeting. Main comment before and within the meeting indicated that the primary historical purpose of the route was to serve farmers' land abutting that route. It was reported by Mr & Mrs B Read that the route was classified as a 'track' in the early 1970s and believed to have been recorded in the Parish Council minutes at the time. It was agreed that the Clerk would follow this up with the County Record Office where earlier parish records were deposited.

12.1. While Dorset Council had indicated that it did not expect to start work on the application for some time, although it was agreed that it was better to identify all evidence of historical use soonest.

13. **CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED.** Not covered previously in meeting:

- **Annual Litter-pick.** Paul Orchard has kindly agreed to lead once more on organizing the annual litter pick. It will be conducted during the last two weeks of January. Parish Council recorded its thanks to Mr Orchard for this valuable contribution.
- **Community Heartstart.** A defibrillator listing was on-going and it was noted that the Village Hall unit was already listed.
- **Platinum Jubilee Beacons.** Options were considered for a Leigh-based commemoration on the defined date of 2 June 2022.
- **The Dorset Citizens' Advice Bureau AGM** was at 4-30pm on 25<sup>th</sup> Nov '21 in Dorchester.
- The local **wildlife trust** had drawn attention to a piece of ground possibly coming up for sale that was suitable for conservation, although without the location and it was left for the owner to contact the clerk.
- Leigh PC had not attended **Dorset APTC AGM** on 13 Nov '21 and the subsequent notes and recording links were circulated to councillors to pool experience on common issues.
- **Dorset Libraries Webinars.** Webinars were being hosted to discuss library services in Dorset. Posters being uploaded.
- **Newsletters** were circulated where appropriate and retained by the Clerk for reference. (DCllr Penfold referred to funding from one which would be re-circulated by the Clerk.)

14. **ITEMS OF AN URGENT NATURE – SUBJECT TO CHAIRMAN'S APPROVAL.** Nil

15. **DATE(S) OF NEXT MEETINGS:**

Next Leigh PC meeting is at 7-30pm on Tuesday 18 January 2022, in the Village Hall.

15.1. Meetings in 2022 until AGM are on Tuesdays: 15 March and 17 May 2022.

15.1.1. The Parish annual meeting would be held at 7pm on Tuesday 17 May 2022.

## **ITEM 7**

### **Policy for Leigh Village Green**

The Leigh village green was established in order to provide an open space that anyone could enjoy for short-term occasional activities such as: village events; picnics, informal family games and other such activities that families without access to a suitable garden might otherwise not be able to enjoy in the village (Annex G to the Leigh Village Green business case, 12 March 2019).

The planting of some 50 trees around the perimeter, together with the establishment of a few occasional benches within a wildflower border, now completes the green's intended development.

While the funding of the green was paid for by Leigh parish council, a significant proportion of the cost of the trees and benches was paid for by private donation. Leigh parish council remains extremely grateful to all who donated so generously.

Looking forward, Leigh parish council believes that the interest of our community is best served by maintaining the green in its present 'uncluttered' state, i.e. without an addition of further fixtures or plantings. Complementary to this, it is intended that the benches should remain without inscriptions or plaques, and that similarly the trees should remain unmarked.

This policy was adopted at the parish council meeting held 16 November 2021. The policy will be reviewed, with other parish policies, at the Parish Council AGM following the next parish council election (TBC- May 2024)