

LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 8th November 2022 Leigh Parish Council meeting (7:00 PM) in Leigh Village Hall

	<div>Village Hall</div> <div><u>Agenda items</u></div>																																			
1.	<div><u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u></div> <div>M. Read did not attend.</div> <div>Otherwise, all councillors present. DCllr M Penfold present until 7.30pm. One member of public present.</div>																																			
2.	<div><u>DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST</u></div> <div>None.</div>																																			
3.	<div><u>LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES</u></div> <div>3.1. <u>Minutes signing</u></div> <div>Minutes of 13th September 2022 Leigh Parish Council Meeting were approved and signed by the vice-chairman.</div> <div>3.2. <u>Matters arising which are not otherwise on this agenda</u></div> <div>None.</div>																																			
4.	<div><u>FINANCES OVERVIEW</u></div> <div>4.1. <u>Reconciliation of bank account</u></div> <div>Council endorsed and approved the Bank Reconciliation (£23,951.20 on 25 October), as circulated at the foot of the meeting Agenda.</div> <div>4.2. <u>Sums allocated to various Sub Accounts</u></div> <div>On 25th October 2022, sums allocated to the ‘sub accounts’ stood at</div> <table><tr><td>Play Park</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>£ 1,898.87</td></tr><tr><td>Heritage Signage</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>£ 323.36</td></tr><tr><td>Village Green</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>£ 1,383.20</td></tr><tr><td>Community Infrastructure Funds</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>£ 7,479.60</td></tr><tr><td>Repair and Replace Fund</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>£ 1,500.00</td></tr><tr><td>National Lottery Environment Talks Fund</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>£ 1,077.24</td></tr><tr><td>F</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>£ 13,662.27</td></tr></table> <div>4.3. <u>2021/2 Financial Year-end accounts and AGAR review</u></div> <div>A Notice of Completion of FY 2021-22 External Audit has been published on the Village Hall board and on the Leigh website.</div> <div>4.4. <u>VAT reclaim for FY 2021-22</u></div> <div>Will be completed by clerk by 1st December.</div>	Play Park				£ 1,898.87	Heritage Signage				£ 323.36	Village Green				£ 1,383.20	Community Infrastructure Funds				£ 7,479.60	Repair and Replace Fund				£ 1,500.00	National Lottery Environment Talks Fund				£ 1,077.24	F				£ 13,662.27
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5.	<div><u>APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS</u></div> <div>5.1. <u>Invoices Received.</u></div> <div>The following were unanimously approved by the parish council for payment:</div> <table><tr><th>Invoice Date</th><th>Payee</th><th>Goods / services received</th><th>Cheque number</th><th>Amount</th><th>Budget line</th></tr><tr><td>31-10-22</td><td>T Holder</td><td>Grass Cutting Oct</td><td></td><td>£220.00</td><td>VG</td></tr></table>	Invoice Date	Payee	Goods / services received	Cheque number	Amount	Budget line	31-10-22	T Holder	Grass Cutting Oct		£220.00	VG																							
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13-10-22	G Bugler	Defibrillator pads		£60.00	VAR	
20-09-22	PKF Little John	Audits 2022-2022		£240.00	VAR	
08-11-22	A Mahot	*Clerk's Backpay increment: 5 May to 3 Nov (26 weeks)		£104.00	VAR	
01-12-22	A Mahot	*Clerk's Pay for Nov		£198.48	VAR	
01-01-23	A Mahot	*Clerk's Pay for Dec		£198.48	VAR	
25-10-23	A Mahot	Clerk's Expenses since 5 May 2022		£54.51	VAR	
	DAPTC	New councillor training course		£49.00	VAR	

*Note: The above figures reflect the NALC E02-22 2022-23 National Salary Award dated 2 Nov 22. Increases are backdated to 1 Apr 2023, and reflect NJC pay point 6 rates.

- Backpayment reflects an adjustment to the 26 weeks worked (5th May-2nd November), originally paid at the old rates.

- Clerk monthly payment (in arrears) starting 3rd November will now be £198.48 pcm to reflect the recent increase.

5.2. Pre-Approval of forthcoming payments

One invoice has been received for 1 out of 3 councillor courses.

Invoice for Cllr Adey's completed Procurement training to be chased down by clerk.

Invoice for Cllr Adey's Finance Training to be chased down by clerk after completion (post-17th November).

5.3. Grants – approved for payment

From main account, the payment of the following grants (total £820.00), as budgeted in January 2022, were approved by council:

- Leigh Parish Church's Fabric Fund £520.00
- Nordcat Transport £300.00

5.4. Internal 'Cash' Transfers

The transfers below, as earmarked in January 2022 budget, were approved by council:

- From main account to PlayPark sub-account: £500.00
- From main account to Repair and Replace sub-account: £1,500.00
- From CIL sub-account to Village Green sub-account: £1,500.00

6.

ONLINE BANKING

6.1. Update to LPC Online Banking

- A unanimous decision was made to move to 'Sole Authorisation' for online banking. Clerk to make the necessary amendment with the bank by 22nd November.
- Once this has been achieved, it was agreed that another councillor (name to be decided) should have 'viewing-only access' to the account. This would enable visibility while awaiting the next monthly statement.

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	<p>6.2. <u>Circulation of bank statements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The council expressed its appreciation that Bank Statements, upon receipt by the clerk, were now immediately being uploaded to the parish council 'Cloud'. Most recent statement: period ending 25th October
7.	<p><u>PROGRESS OF INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS</u></p> <p>7.1. <u>Update on CIL Accounting and Expenditure</u> – Chairman had yet to discuss issue with internal auditor. He undertook to do this prior to the next meeting.</p> <p>7.2. <u>Current 'Leases and Contracts' (as per tab on Council Finance Spreadsheet)</u> – Chairman and Clerk to meet to update.</p>
8.	<p><u>VILLAGE GREEN</u></p> <p>8.1. <u>Grass Cutting Contract</u> – Cllr J Dixon outlined the recent 'invitation to tender' and associated bids, as detailed in his email dated 1/11/22.</p> <p>The council accordingly approved the award of a 3-year contract to T Holder. Cllr J Dixon to inform T Holder, and discuss and agree with him any subsequent minor matters arising.</p> <p>8.2. <u>Additional Fixtures or Fittings</u> - Cllr J Dixon outlined his view on how the council might encourage wider use of the green; presently it only seemed to be used for exercising dogs and their walkers. He suggested the provision of perhaps a moveable goal post, and / or the provision of baseball / cricket equipment or the like might broaden the user-base.</p> <p>The Chairman drew attention to the original concept of establishing the green, the basis upon which the village voted at the 2017 poll, and the policy adopted by the council at its November 2021 meeting. This policy repeated the original concept and stated that for the time being, to maintain its 'uncluttered' state, there should be no further development beyond the trees already planted and the establishment of a few benches. The policy was due for review following the next formal elections to parish councils.</p> <p>After some debate, it was agreed that Cllr J Dixon and C Adey would draft a survey, in order to establish the views of residents.</p> <p>8.3. <u>Dog fouling</u> – In the Nov 2022 WVM, the Chairman had drawn attention of reported incidents of dogs fouling the green without their owners picking up immediately afterwards. Councillors were generally keen that the exercising of dogs should remain permitted activity, but, mindful of other users (especially children) were simultaneously concerned to hear of this development.</p> <p>Since the publication of the article, a member of the community has approached the Chairman, proposing a possible way of tackling the issue. The idea was well received by the council; the Chairman accordingly agreed to take it forward with the proposer.</p>
9.	<p><u>PLAYPARK</u></p> <p>9.1. <u>RoSPA Playsafety pick up points</u></p> <p>Refurbishment of rubber step: The rubber step manufacturer coupled with volunteer work provides best value for money: estimated cost £160 plus VAT, including delivery. LPC will replace the step itself, with the help of a volunteer,</p>

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	<p>to save the parish £750 of manual labour fees.</p> <p>Councillors thanked Cllr Adey for her work and proposal. She was authorised to proceed on this basis.</p> <p>Matting: it was proposed that the current state would suffice until a longer term solution became necessary. This was endorsed by councillors.</p> <p>Weeding of Fort's mound: Regular strimming of the mound (c. once a month when grass is growing) has been added to the contract on village green and playpark maintenance. It was assessed that this more regular strimming should minimise undue weed proliferation.</p> <p><u>9.2. Future equipment project: update on ideas for future equipment</u></p> <p>Cllr Adey updated the council on progress achieved to date. There had been no response to a call for a volunteer to lead on fundraising for a zipwire. This means that there remains a very significant gap in funds available / funds needed for this project, and therefore brings it to a halt for the time being.</p> <p>Cllr Adey is investigating an alternate play module for toddlers instead. A possible tinys' climbing frame and slide that might enthuse toddlers with outdoor activities will be researched.</p>
10.	<p><u>HIGHWAYS – Chairman</u></p> <p><u>10.1. Three Gates speed limit application</u></p> <p>The application for a reduced limit has very recently been refused by Dorset Council's Highways Safety Manager. The Chairman undertook to consider how the issue might now best be progressed. If anyone (particularly from Three Gates) would like to take over from Cllr A Bennett's work, he would be most interested to hear from them.</p> <p><u>10.2. Heritage fingerpost refurbishment</u></p> <p>Yetminster and Ryme Intrinseca parish council has reimbursed LPC for their share of the work undertaken to date on the Stake Ford Cross fingerpost. The Leigh refurbishment team intend to complete the roundel by Christmas. YRIPC will then be invoiced for their share of this remaining work.</p> <p><u>10.3. Litter Pick – January</u></p> <p>Indemnity insurance for the initiative is now in place. Councillors expressed their continued appreciation for all the work that Andrew Little continues to do on 'Litter Pick' on the parish's behalf.</p> <p><u>10.4. Footpaths – Stile at Totnell.</u> There was no clear understanding as to the current situation with regard to rectifying the unsatisfactory state of this stile. Cllr A Bennett agreed to contact Rachel Graham in order to ascertain where the action currently lay.</p> <p>Over the past decade, a 'gate vice stile' programme has been progressed in partnership with Dorset Council, on a 50:50 cost basis. This has recently fallen into abeyance; Cllr Vincent mused that he'd heard that there were no funds currently available. The Chairman corrected this misapprehension: LPC holds sufficient funds in reserve to continue the programme for one year; thereafter, further years could always be considered for funding during the annual budget setting process.</p>

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	<p>10.5. <u>Flood Alleviation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West River FWAG(SW) Proposal. Council authorised the Chairman to continue negotiations with regard to establishment of a possible 'leaky dam' flood risk reduction project. Yeovil Rivers Community Trust / Wriggle Natural Flood Management project. The Chairman would discuss possible joint action.
11.	<p><u>LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL – FUTURE REPRESENTATION</u></p> <p>11.1 and 11.2 <u>Candidates for Election as Chairman May 2023</u></p> <p>The Chairman reiterated what he had said at the May 2022 meeting: by May 2023, having been chairman for five years, he did not intend to stand again for the post. It was important that councillors started thinking now about who could and would Chair the council thereafter. If no person was elected as chairman, the parish council could fall into abeyance; in this event, Leigh issues could well be decided by Sherborne Town Council.</p> <p>No councillor indicated that they might be in a position to take on the role of Chair in May 2023. After some discussion, Cllr J Dixon agreed to draft – for publication in the December WVM - an announcement for the position, highlighting everything the parish council has achieved over the past decade for its community. Leigh is authorised for a maximum of 7 councillors; space could be made on the council by a current councillor or two stepping down. Suitable co-opted councillors would be well supported in his duties by his fellow councillors.</p> <p>11.3 <u>Cllr responsible for close working with FRO (Clerk)</u></p> <p>The LPC will also in need of a councillor who is prepared to maintain a detailed understanding of the state of PC's finances. The present Chairman currently fulfils this role. Although the clerk is the designated Responsible Financial Officer (RFO), it is unfair to expect the clerk to undertake all that is involved without the close support of an informed councillor.</p> <p>There were no immediate volunteers to take over this role.</p>
12.	<p><u>COUNCIL ORDERS – REVISION</u></p> <p>12.1 <u>Standing Orders</u></p> <p>Council adopted a revised version at the September's meeting. These are now published on the Leigh website.</p> <p>12.2 <u>Financial Regulations</u></p> <p>Following circulation of proposed amendments prior to the meeting, Council unanimously agreed to adopt these. An associated version will now be published on the Leigh website.</p> <p>The completion of this work satisfies one of the key recommendations made by the internal auditor in April 2022. The Chairman and council expressed their profound appreciation of Cllr J Dixon's work on both these documents.</p>
13.	<p><u>PARISH CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE – Cllr C Dixon</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 17 Nov, 7 to 9 PM: <i>Steven Jermy - Offshore renewable energy</i>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19 Nov 'Make Do & Mend' Workshop - Other future dates (topic tbc): 12 Jan / 16 Feb / 16 March <p>The Climate Change group has now either spent or earmarked for future spend all but £46 of the money granted by the National Lottery Fund (£3000) on its Leigh Talks! initiative this year. Some additional income is due from the sale of tickets for the Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall event; VAT charges will also be reclaimed. LPC agreed to allocate those two sums to future Leigh Talks! events.</p> <p>It was noted that records of all finances (grant, invoices, etc.) from the National Lottery Fund have to be kept for 7 years.</p>
14.	<p><u>PLANNING</u></p> <p><u>Applications:</u> None</p>
15.	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED</u></p> <p>14.1. <u>September Crime Report</u> Nothing to report in Leigh. 2 new incidents in neighbouring communities.</p> <p>13.2. <u>Lloyds</u>; Complaint closed.</p> <p>13.3. <u>Dorset Council Grant</u>; Information circulated to relevant parties.</p> <p>13.4. <u>Training opportunity for Clerk</u> – On pause for the time being.</p> <p>13.5. <u>Register of Interests</u> – Issue of access to the ROI account is being investigated. Once access achieved, Cllr Adey and Cllr Humphries will be sent their link to complete their ROIs.</p> <p>13.6. <u>HMRC</u> – Invoice regarding employer's NI contribution has come to light – together with an outstanding £0.03 interest charge. The validity is being investigated, as the clerk's salary is believed to be below the NI threshold.</p> <p>13.7. <u>DAPTC – Cost of Living Crisis and parish council budget</u>; The Chairman and Clerk will keep those communications in mind while preparing the 2023-2024 budget.</p>
16.	<p><u>ITEMS OF AN URGENT NATURE</u></p> <p>The Chairman apologised for not having yet set in front of council a first draft of the FY2023-24 budget. He and the clerk will work on this in the next two weeks; the aim will be to circulate the draft before Christmas. A decision on the budget and the associated precept will need to be taken at the 10 January meeting.</p>
17.	<p><u>DATE(S) OF NEXT MEETINGS</u></p> <p>Leigh Village Hall, 7:00 PM: 10th January 2023; 14 March 2023.</p>