

MINUTES
LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2026 AT 1900

Present – Councillors

Steve Humphries (SH) – Chairman
 Sam Vincent (SV)
 Alan Bennett (AB)
 Leonora Stewart (LS)
 Julie Taylor (JT)

Clerk

Kaye Elston (KE)

Dorset Councillor Chris Kippax (until 1945)

Members of the public: 3

1 **OPENING REMARKS by CHAIRMAN**

- The chairman thanked everyone for attending and welcomed the audience to the meeting.
- Chair also advised there is still a vacancy on the parish council if anyone would like to consider joining.
- There were no declarations of interest.

2 **APOLOGIES for ABSENCE**

- Alfie Southwell (AS) - these were accepted.

3 **LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES 13 JANUARY 2026, EXTRA ORDINARY MEETING 27 JANUARY 2026 AND MATTERS ARISING**

- Minutes of 13 January 2026 Leigh Parish Council meeting were formally approved and signed by the Chair.
 - Minutes of 27 January 2026 Leigh Parish Council Extraordinary meeting were formally approved and signed by the chair.
- Actions from the last meeting are covered on the agenda

4 **DORSET COUNCILLOR CHRISTOPHER KIPPAX**

- Dorset Council have set their budget and the council tax is to increase by 4.9%. Cllr Kippax advised that Dorset Council did not have a choice in making that increase, as central government has mandated local authorities to do this. Dorset Council has allocated additional money in its budget for transport and highways, as there is less budget coming from central government now to run services.
- AB asked Cllr Kippax about what Leigh Parish Council believe is an unauthorised development. AB stated there is an indication that enforcement has not dealt with the unauthorised use of land south of Brookfield Farm, Wriggle Valley Lane and the Poplars. AB has received an email from Dorset Council which states that; as four years has passed and the matter has not been dealt with then it can no longer be challenged. AB has requested the contact email of the CEO of Dorset Council, to bring this matter to their attention, as he has found all officers previously contacted to be incompetent. Cllr Kippax said he would have to challenge AB on the last comment but agreed to pass on the email contact of the CEO.
- SH questioned Cllr Kippax on his involvement with the ongoing pollution issues within the River Wriggle. Cllr Kippax advised that he is currently in discussions

with Paul Hollick, of Yetminster, who has set up a petition to stop Wessex Water from polluting the river and to do further improvement works. At this point the parish council unanimously gave their support and backing to Mr Hollick, AB later agreed to make contact with him to ask if we could do anything to help his cause.

5

FINANCES OVERVIEW

5.1 Reconciliation of bank account

Council approved the Bank Reconciliation:

£15 911.07 (as at 28.02.2026)

5.2. Sums allocated to various Sub Accounts

On 28.02.2026 the sums allocated to the sub-accounts stood at

Play Park (£230.01 ring fenced)	£1145.08
Village Green	£519.29
Repair and Replace Fund	£5639.66
FUNDS SUMMARY TOTAL	£7304.03
Non ring fenced funds	£8607.04

SH requested an additional line be added in the allocated sub accounts for the donations for legal fees.

5.3 Grass cutting contract – awarding contract 2026

- Clerk advised that the tender pack was sent to four contractors, three completed and submitted the required documents. The chair has reviewed all three tenders and recommended that the tender from Mr Holder is the best option, based on his costings and reputation. Mr Holder has quoted £120 per cut for Zone A and £210 for Zone B, with a 3% uplift per annum. The other quotes came in more expensive. Councillors agreed to award Mr Holder the contract based on price and also his current familiarity with the current contract. Mr Holder has already provided details of his public liability insurance. Clerk to advise Mr Holder he has been awarded the contract and also advise the two other contractors that they have been unsuccessful on this occasion but thank them for their time in preparing their tenders.

Proposed: Cllr Humphries

Seconded: Cllr Bennett

All councillors present in agreement

The contract will run up to the end of March 2029.

6

INVOICES RECEIVED – PRE-APPROVED TO PAY

6.1 The following invoices were presented:

- Lloyds Bank (19.01.26) Monthly service charge - £4.25
- Leigh Village Hall (21.01.26) Hire Fee - £25.00
- Leigh Village Hall (21.01.26) Hire Fee - £175.00
- PCC St Andrews (27.01.26) Grant - £420.00

- Sarah Brockway (28.01.26) Payroll fee - £20.00
- HMRC (30.01.26) PAYE - £93.60
- Kaye Elston (30.01.26) Clerk salary - £140.80
- Lloyds Bank (17.02.26) Monthly service charge - £4.25
- Reformed Plastics (23.02.26) Benches - £2100
- Mark Harrod Ltd (25.02.26) goal posts - £1205.35
- HMRC (27.02.26) PAYE - £93.60
- Kaye Elston (27.02.26) Clerk salary) - £140.80

6.2 Forthcoming payments for advanced approval

- Legal fees for purchasing freehold of Village Green – yet unknown.
- ROSPA Playground inspection to be carried out in May – councillors agreed to authorise a payment of up to £150 to pay the invoice for this annual inspection once it has been presented.

Proposed: Cllr Humphries

Seconded: Cllr Vincent

All councillors present in agreement

6.3 Payments/Income received

- Leigh Pop-up Inn has donated £2760 to the parish council to purchase equipment for the community.
- Benches and goal posts purchased with the grant have been added to the parish council asset register.

6.4 Budget Monitoring for 2025/6

- The parish council budget has been monitored closely during the year and the final outcome for the year will be confirmed after 31.03.2026. The reserves remain strong which will enable a carry forward into 2026-27.
- Income and Expenditure spreadsheet has been partially updated but there is still a glitch in it that will be resolved before the year end. The income and expenditure on the spreadsheet reconcile with the balance in the bank account. AS and clerk will continue to work on the spreadsheet.

6.5 Authorised Banking Signatories

- LS has now been set up on the bank account and has full access to the bank account.

6.6 VAT Reclaim

- To be completed at the end of March 2026.

6.7 INSURANCE POLICY

- Insurance Policy – this is due to be renewed on 01.06.2026 as the three year agreement has now come to an end. New quotes for 2026 to be obtained by the clerk and presented at the May meeting for a decision to be made ahead of the renewal date.

7	<p><u>AUDIT 2025-26</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clerk has contacted the auditor and confirmed that they will receive the accounts after March and at the beginning of April. The auditor has agreed to work on them so that they can be returned in time for the next parish council meeting in May and be signed off. • IT Policy - clerk has circulated and councillors were all in agreement to accept. JT questioned the clerk on where the parish council documents are stored and if they are backed up at all. Clerk to look into and verify. • Risk Register and Asset Register- the new benches and goal posts have been added to the asset register and a minor adjustment to the risk register has been made. All councillors in approved the newly updated documents. • Website requirements (WCAG 2.2 AA) – information circulated to councillors which provides detail of how to ensure a parish council website is accessible. Councillors were in agreement that the requirements are complex. Clerk has also forwarded to website editor. There was not decision to move this forward at this stage, as all councillors are happy with the current website, but this can be reviewed in the future. • Financial regulations – these have been amended regarding how payments are set up online and authorisation – Clerk to set up and one other Cllr to authorise (not two). The document now needs to be cleaned up and finalised by the clerk and approved at the May meeting. • Information Commissioner Office – clerk advised that the parish council should have an annual subscription as it is a requirement but could not provide any relevant information on the benefits. Councillors decided not to subscribe at this time.
8	<p><u>PLANNING APPLICATIONS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unauthorised use of Land south of Brookfield Farm, Wriggle River Lane and The Poplars update – see Minute 4 above. Councillors agreed for AB to take the lead on following this up with Dorset Council.
9	<p><u>EMAILS AND POTENTIAL CHANGE TO GOV.UK</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No further update from clerk.
10	<p><u>PLAY PARK</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fence posts – SH has been to the park and has re-fixed some rails to the fence posts and one of the signs. • Small maintenance will be required, in due course, for the vehicle gate that leads from the wildflower meadow into the play park, due to rot setting in. SH agreed to monitor. • SH suggested that at the May meeting, councillors compile a list of any maintenance that needs to be done at the play park, green or greys field. Then contractors can be contacted to provide a quote for carrying out all of the works. All councillors to make a note of any repairs that they think need to be done.
11	<p><u>VILLAGE GREEN</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benches – The new bench and picnic table have been purchased and sited. One old wooden bench has been removed due to poor condition. • Goals – the posts have been purchased and are being stored until the nets arrive. • Councillors wish to express their thanks to the Pop Inn for donating the money for the benches and goals.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign – SH suggested a sign to set out rules, etc for use of the goals. He agreed to draft a paragraph and send round to all councillors. • SSE hedge trimming – Clerk to contact as if they are using a vehicle mounted cherry picker, they will need to access the field and this will require someone to open the gate. • Purchase of freehold update – the parish council solicitor is Porter Dodson who have not received any documents yet from the vendor’s solicitor. Donations so far are up to £4270 and this is near to the target required to cover the legal fees. The generosity of the community has been amazing and the parish council are very grateful for this support. Councillors agreed to thank those who have donated through an article in the Wriggle Valley magazine, on the notice board and contact directly. Councillors discussed the level of funding already achieved and agreed that the request should be closed at the end of 15.03.2026. This will be advertised on social media. LS will withdraw the funding from the Just Giving page and transfer it into the parish council bank account after 15.03.2026. If there are any excess funds after the legal fees have been paid, then councillors feel that this should pay for something tangible to locate on the green or ring-fenced for a future project on the green.
12	<p><u>FOOTPATHS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longbridge Drove Bridge – this has now been re-sited in the week commencing 02.02.2026. Stuart Semple from Dorset Council has indicated it will be replaced next financial year with a horse rated bridge, as currently it is only rated for pedestrians. • Dorset Council new Ranger – notification has arrived that Claire O’Rielly is new in the post. LS has resubmitted her spreadsheet of footpaths and infrastructure following her survey at the beginning of the year. • LS reported that there is evidence of motor vehicles using Longbridge Drove, even though there is still an active closure notice in place. • LS reported that the gate post from the wild flower meadow into greys field is rotten and requires replacement soon.
13	<p><u>RIVERS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Café – SV advised this event takes place on 12.03.2026 from 1900 to 2100 at the Friary and is an opportunity for people to drop in and see what funding is available for projects over the next year. Representatives from Wessex Water, YRT and WRIG will be at the gathering to provide information.
14	<p><u>TRANSPORT</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant request for Plusbus – at the last meeting there had been no further information provided by Councillor Toby Hartwell from Yetminster Parish Council. On 21.01.2026 an email came from Toby which provides data that shows that there are seven regular users of the service who travel from Leigh to Sherborne and Yeovil. Unfortunately, this email came after the grants had been allocated from the budget for 2025-6. Councillors were in agreement that if there is any surplus in 2026-7 budget as the year progresses, they could consider making a grant at that point.
15	<p><u>PARISH TRAFFIC CALMING AND SPEED AWARENESS.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20mph speed limit application – this should have gone to the Dorset Council panel in February but now has been pushed back to March, due to internal delays. • PSD signs – A survey was sent to residents who responded to the original study and most advised that they did not feel the signs had an impact and

	<p>were not effective. This information has been handed onto Dorset Council, who have advised that the signs will be removed in due course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian incident – a resident reported that there was an incident where his wife nearly got hit by a car and then the driver reversed back and was abusive to them. This incident has been reported to the Dorset Roadsafte team by the resident, who has also been advised to report it to the police. • Speed Indicator Devices (SID) – the parish council are waiting to see if the 20pmh application is successful and what costs are involved before committing funds to a SID. The cost of which would be C.£3000. There are two suitable sites in the village for a SID (one of which only applies if a 20mph limit is in force) as identified in the speed survey.
16	<p><u>INFORMATION CIRCULATED</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DAPTC Newsletters • NALC Newsletters • Communications from Councillor Kippax • Dorset Council regarding road closures in March • DAPTC Annual General Meeting 30.05.2026 • Dorset Council – closure of Stake Ford Bridge in April
17	<p><u>CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St John Ambulance – SH agreed to post their recruitment letter on the noticeboard.
18	<p><u>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wessex Internet – correspondence to advise the service will be coming to the village and would the parish council like a representative to come and speak with them and parishioners. Councillors agreed this would be good idea for the Annual Parish Meeting on 12 May. Clerk to invite.
19	<p><u>DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS IN LEIGH VILLAGE HALL:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 May 2026 at 1900 – Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Parish Council Meeting and parish council meeting. JT sends her apologies. • 14 July 2026 at 1900 • 08 September 2026 at 1900 • 10 November 2026 at 1900

Meeting closed at 2040

Signed.....

Steve Humphries 12 May 2026
Chairman, Leigh parish council