

LEAFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held as a Virtual Meeting at 8pm on Wednesday 12th August 2020

Those Present: Cllr Gina Pearce (Chairman), Cllrs Luke Caunt, Richard Hamilton, Jeremy Russ & Kevin Ward

In attendance: Sharon Henley, Clerk/RFO, District Cllr Gill Hill (part meeting).

Members of Public: 6 attended.

1. **Welcome & Apologies for Absence:** County Cllr Liam Walker

Ordinary Council Meeting Standing Items

2. **Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda:** Cllr Caunt declared an interest in item 12.2 as he was a neighbour.
3. **Approval of Draft Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings held on Wednesday 8th July 2020:** These were unanimously approved.
4. **Clerk's Report/Matters Arising:**
 - 4.1. Came & Co insurers had sent through a pre-quote questionnaire as the insurance expired 30th Sept. The Fixed Asset register to be updated following receipt of the valuations for approval at the September meeting. Cllr Russ to complete the pre-quote questionnaire for sending to insurers along with the updated Fixed Asset Register.
 - 4.2. McCrackens had completed the grass strimming around the rear of the Pavilion. They also completed cleaning and disinfection of the play equipment but councillors had requested additional work prior to approving invoice payment.
 - 4.3. Witney Radio had stated that there was nothing harmful in the transmitter signals, so the Village Hall Committee had confirmed that they were happy for the transmitter to be installed.
 - 4.4. The contractor had refurbished the noticeboard at Lower End. He also quoted for the refurbishment of the wooden bench in the play area but it was thought to be beyond economical repair. The poor state of the bench had been highlighted in the ROSPA risk assessment. Cllr Russ to discuss potential disposal with the burial ground contractor who had a skip currently in use.
 - 4.5. Simon Holloway, OCC Highways was arranging for the drainage in front of the Fox pub to be investigated. Cllr Hamilton reported flooding following recent heavy rainfall and would send photos for review by Highways.
 - 4.6. South Central Ambulance Service confirmed that the defibrillators required checking every couple of weeks and had outlined the checking requirements which had been circulated to councillors who were now assisting with regular checks.
5. **County & District Councillors' Reports:** Cllr Gill Hill reported the main discussions at WODC at present were around the viability of creating a unitary authority.
6. **Opportunity for the Public to Speak:** A resident expressed concern about a public footpath that, in his opinion, had been omitted from the maps in the public consultation on Church Farm, Witney Lane – OCC Notice of Landowner Deposit as this was regularly used by residents. The Chairman advised that, whilst this was not Parish Council business, it would be investigated following the meeting. The resident also expressed concern about the erection of a gate between two fields on private land relating to the consultation. The Chairman advised that she had been approached by several residents on this subject and had spoken directly to the landowner concerned who confirmed a right of use and that they were currently in the process of purchasing the additional land.

Policy & Finance

7. **Clerk/RFO Role**

7.1 Resignation of current postholder: The Clerk had resigned and was leaving at the end of August to take up a full time Clerk's role. Gina thanked the Clerk for her hard work during her time at the Council.

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7.2 Resolution to recruit a new Clerk/RFO on a 15 hour/week contract: This resolution was unanimously approved. The Oxon LGPS had confirmed that the previous resolution for the current Clerk to join the LGPS included the facility for future postholders to also become members so it was agreed to include LGPS membership for the postholder. It was further agreed that Cllrs Pearce, Caunt and Hamilton would form an interview panel following the advertisement closing date on 31st August.

Cllr Gill Hill joined after this item and items 5 and 6 were taken following item 7.2.

8. Approval of Receipts and Payments for August

Payee	Reason	Payment inc VAT	Receipt	Power To Spend
EE	Clerk's mobile phone July	£13.27		LGA 1972 s.111
Zoom	Monthly Fee July	£14.39		LGA 1972 s.111
Ionos	Website & Domain Hosting July	£1.20		LGA 1972 s.111
McCracken & Son	July grass cutting Inv 9626	£796.80		LGA 1972 s.133
McCracken & Son	Jetwash play equipment Inv 9626.	£330.00		LG (MP)A 1976 s.19(3)
WODC	2019 Election Fees Inv 33367940	£84.82		RPA 1983 s.36(5)
Alan Smith	Noticeboard refurb inv 1191	£48.00		LGA 1894 s8(1) (i)
ICCM	Membership	£71.00		LGA 1972 s.2124(2)
Sharon Henley	Clerk's Salary for August	Personal		LGA 1972 s.112(2)
Local Govt Pension Scheme	Sharon Henley Clerk's Pension for August - Employer & Employee Contribution	Personal		LGA 1972 s.112(2)
HMRC	Sharon Henley Clerk's NI & Tax for August	Personal		LGA 1972 s.112(2)
Playsafety Ltd	Annual ROSPA Safety Inspections on Play Areas Inv 50694	£193.80		LG (MP)A 1976 s.19(3)
Community Gym Post	Quarterly Rent July-Sept		325.00	
OALC	Refund of Training Fee for cancelled session		108.00	

The above payments were approved with the exception of McCrackens invoice for Jetwash of Play Equipment which still required additional work. The Clerk to chase up the contractor.

9. RFO Update on current financial situation: An Actual vs Budget report and Bank Reconciliation had been circulated and the RFO reported that all expenditure was in line with budget. The balance in the Community Direct Account at 31st July was £119,852 following the receipt of the PWLB loan but much of the loan amount was required in the next couple of months to pay for project costs.

10. Appointment of IAC Internal Auditors for financial year 2020-21 at £285 plus VAT. It was proposed to appoint IAC who had audited for 2019-20 and this was unanimously approved.

Minute 45/2020

Recreation & Leisure

11. **Play Area** – the Clerk reported as follows:

- 11.1. **Monthly Report:** Following the insurer's advice, Councillors had undertaken weekly inspections and various remedial actions had been identified, including deliberate twisting of the basket swing across the high metal frame and damage by burning of the wooden footholds in the Trim Trail.
- 11.2. **Review of ROSPA Risk Assessment and recommended actions:** The ROSPA reports from Playsafety had been circulated and they highlighted various remedial actions in the two play areas but nothing required in the skate park. The Clerk had contacted the usual contractor to request a quote for all remedial actions in the report and recommended that this was reviewed at the next meeting, when available.

12. **Village Hall General**

- 12.1. **General Updates:** Cllr Pearce reported that the Committee were putting all necessary Covid related actions in place in order to open the hall and all was progressing well. The new cleaner was completing the deep clean of hall and some additional remedial actions had been completed, including automated hand sanitisers, new soap dispensers, lever taps in toilets and the kitchen sink removed and mixed taps installed. The lounge and front hallway had been repainted. They had requested a quote to replace the toilet doors and other items to make them easier to keep clean. Signage was being made up and there was a possible booking on the weekend of 21st Aug.
- 12.2. **Report on Anti-Social Behaviour and further actions required:** The Clerk reported there had been instances of verbal abuse and threats issued by youngsters congregating around the Village Hall and play areas. These had been reported to the police who had yet to investigate. The Chairman had emailed the police officer in charge of PCSOs and was waiting to speak to him and hoped the police would attend future PC meetings, as had been the case in the past. The Chairman reported that, following the May 2019 break in, three individuals had been arrested and prosecuted for forced entry into village hall. Cllr Gill Hill offered to check on the police contact for Leafield.

13. **Village Hall Car Park**

- 13.1. **Update on Progress of Project:** Cllr Caunt reported that, despite the tender process in March, the position was still the same as the quotes had been too expensive. Councillors had recently met with the civil engineering consultant who had sent proposals for future actions.
- 13.2. **Resolution to re-tender:** Following the above meeting, Wilsham Consulting had proposed approximate costs to re-tender with an amended specification would be a maximum of £5,530. This was not a fixed cost and would depend on the amount of work required. Cllr Caunt outlined that it was necessary to re-tender to obtain a price for the job which would be required in order to obtain the required funding. Without a price, the project could not be progressed any further. Following discussion, councillors resolved to work with Wilsham Consulting to progress to re-tender at the maximum cost quoted of £5,530.

14. **Cracks in the Pavilion Building:** The Clerk had advised the insurers of the cracks and had been advised that a claim had been raised. The insurers wrote requesting additional information and Cllr Russ had agreed to research the information and complete the questionnaire.

15. **Farmer's Market: Discussion on progress with setting up a monthly market on the Village Green in collaboration with local traders.** The Clerk circulated emails from the organiser of the market with reference to a proposed date of 16th August. A Covid risk assessment has been requested from the market organiser and insurance documents from each market trader but it was not possible to get this information in order within timescales. Cllr Hamilton to contact the Clerk at Freeland to ask how their market is organised.

16. **Church Farm, Witney Lane – OCC Notice of Landowner Deposit – Decision on any comments to be submitted by the Council:** The documents had been circulated and the consultation already discussed in the public session. There were no further comments.

17. Red Phone Box Project

17.1 **Update on current progress of project:** The resident co-ordinating the project updated that a survey on the most suitable location had been prepared but had not been circulated previously due to Covid.

17.2 **Discussion and agreement on method of public consultation on location of phone box:** After discussion, it was agreed to drop a consultation leaflet to all villagers and place ballot boxes in the shop, pub and the Pearl restaurant. The Clerk to send details of the contact at Burford School to Cllr Hamilton to request assistance with photocopying. It was agreed that the leaflet would contain an email address for residents to respond to the consultation if preferred. Cllrs Hamilton and Russ to help deliver the leaflets.

Environment

18. St Michael & All Angel's Churchyard:

18.1. **St Michael & All Angels Churchyard: Update on Churchyard Working Group** –Cllr Hamilton updated that there would be a Working Group meeting in the Churchyard on Saturday 26th September at 11am. The Churchwarden had agreed to attend and be part of the group. It was agreed to discuss grass cutting contractors for the existing Churchyard and new burial ground at the September Council meeting.

19. Burial Ground Project

19.1. **19.1 Update on progress of Construction Phase** – Cllr Pearce updated that the project was progressing well and was expected to be completed at the end of the week, or the following week, depending in the weather. The burial ground was taking shape well and looked good.

19.2. **Resolution to arrange for consecration of 45 of the 68 grave spaces in Phase 1. Remaining plots to be non-consecrated to allow non-denominational burials and interment of ashes.** After discussion, this was resolved by councillors. The Chairman to send over to the Clerk an improved map of the burial plots annotated with numbers. It was confirmed that additional plots could be consecrated at a later date if required.

19.3. **Review & Approval of the following draft documents:**

- **Burial Ground Charges September 2020**
- **Memorial Safety Policy**
- **Burial Ground Rules**

Cllr Russ advised that the above drafts documents were still pending completion and would be included on the September agenda for consideration. The content to be discussed with the Churchwarden and Vicar to ensure it was broadly similar to what was currently in place for the Churchyard.

19.4 **Discussion and agreement on further actions required:**

Cllr Russ had researched consecrations with the vicar and Diocese and has been advised that the process required a fee of £450 from the Oxford Diocesan Registry Manager. Councillors approved this in principle as a requirement of opening the burial ground.

Documentation was required by the Diocese prior to permission being granted for the consecrations by Bishop of Dorchester. It was hoped that the consecration would take place during the last two weeks in September in order to meet the proposed deadline of October for burials.

The Clerk to review the recent Churchyard Survey to determine whether any additional work was required prior to the handover of the existing churchyard.

20. Planning

Planning Applications Received & Decision Notices

Received				
Ref	Address	Proposal	Deadline	Comments by LPC
20/01411/HHD	Church Row Witney Lane Leafield	Replacement of shed with timber garden office/shed. Alterations to main house lean-to structure.	Passed	n/a

Ref	Address	Proposal	Deadline	Comments by LPC
20/01853/HHD	67 Lower End Leaffield Witney	Alterations and erection of single storey rear extension	20/08/2020	No comments
20/01824/S73	Forest Edge 93 Lower End Leaffield	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 18/02660/FUL to allow changes to doors, fenestration and layout with the addition of a rear conservatory. 18/02660/FUL PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing greenhouse and shed. Erection of detached dwelling and partial demolition of stone walling to form vehicular access (Amended plans)	28/08/2020	No comments
20/02010/PN56	Stables Fairspear House Fairspear Road Leaffield Oxfordshire OX29 9NY	Change of use from light industrial (class use B1) to dwelling	04/09/2020	No comments
Decision Notices				
Ref	Address	Proposal	Decision	
20/01224/LBC	Old George House The Green Leaffield	Remedial work to three of the existing chimneys. Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act	Approved	
20/01536/S73	Roselyne 60 Lower End Leaffield	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 20/00675/S73 to allow amended storage space above the garage together with the removal of conditions 11 (relating to the installation of protected species measures), 12 (relating to boundary treatment), 13 (relating to water consumption) and 14 (relating to permitted development rights).	Refused	
20/01570/HHD	Studley View 113 Lower End Leaffield	Alterations to existing first floor roof and gable end with addition of two new dormers. Alterations to existing loft to include new front facing conservation roof light.	Approved	

Transport & Highways

21. 20mph Speed Limit/Traffic Calming Measures in the Village – review of areas of concern and further actions

required – The Chairman read out correspondence from a resident with suggestions for improvements. This was then discussed and the Chairman to ask Cllr Liam Walker about the possibility of some additional white lining. There was a lot of foliage on the left hand side of Lower End past the church which restricted sightlines for drivers. It was agreed to take pictures of issues and send to Cllr Walker but it was thought that OCC would need to contact landowners who owned the trees to ask them to be cut as a safety issue. Cllr Hamilton to take photos and send them to Cllr Walker and offer to meet up on site to discuss issues and potential remedial actions. It was thought that funding for the 20mph speed limit was yet to be secured by OCC as previously anticipated funding had now been directed to other areas. Cllr Walker had reported that over 70 people had responded to the survey in favour of the 20mph speed limit so it was important to pursue the issue.

22. **Burford Town Centre Experimental 7.5 tonne weight limit consultation from OCC – Decision on any comments to be submitted by the Council:** Cllr Pearce outlined that people had concerns about lorries being diverted through Leaffield as a result of the scheme. There was no evidence at present that this was the case but councillors agreed that it was a possibility. The Clerk to send email to Cllr Walker outlining that the Council was concerned that there

bridge at Burford. Cllr Gill Hill noted that Crawley PC had recently objected and the Clerk to check what objections had been raised and potentially send similar feedback.

Consultation & Communication

23. **Correspondence Register.** The only ongoing item was recent correspondence from the Gym, which was now open in line with Covid-19 government recommendations. The Gym Committee wished to install a ventilation/extraction system in the Gym and sought quotes as well as the Council's approval for this project. They also recommended forced ventilation/extraction for the meeting room in order for air flow to be compliant with recommendations. A member of the Committee attended the meeting to explain this further to councillors. It was agreed that the Gym Committee should go ahead and spec out this work but thought unlikely that the Council would use the meeting room in the foreseeable future due to social distancing requirements.
- The Gym Committee member also advised that they had applied to Highways for a new road sign on Lower End to have to include signage to the Community Gym sign. This would be paid for by the Committee and would be on the Village Hall sign.
- The Committee had recently agreed to fund junior football goalposts funded by Gym and would arrange installation at their own cost, following permission from the Council. Cllr Russ to liaise with the Committee on a suitable position for the goalposts on the field.
24. **Resolution to create and distribute an advice leaflet for residents on caring for the village green.** The Chairman outlined an advice leaflet idea to address some of the issues with maintenance and care of the Greens. However, after discussion it was agreed that forming a Working Group to address some of the issues would be more likely to have a positive effect than a leaflet. It was suggested a Saturday during October for the working group to meet. The working group to review issues around the Green including the positioning of the No Parking signs put up by the Council. A resident at the meeting offered to prune some shrubs back where they impede vehicles around the Green.

All members of the public were asked to leave the meeting for the confidential session. Cllr Ward was forced to leave the meeting due to internet disruption.

Confidential Session

25. **Resolution: That in view of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, specifically a dispute on land ownership, that public and press be excluded from the meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, section 1(2)** This resolution was approved.

25.1 **Review of solicitor's advice:** The Chairman reviewed the most recent solicitor's advice and progress on the matter in which part of the area currently registered as Parish Council land that was being claimed by a resident was also being claimed by another party. The second party had not responded to requests for proof of ownership by the Council's solicitor over many months.

The solicitor advised that the Council should not become involved in the dispute, thereby incurring further costs. He further advised that the transfer document be amended so only the undisputed area of land was included in the transfer. Once the two claimants had agreed on ownership, the Council could transfer the disputed land to at a later date.

The second party had recently contacted the Clerk directly but had been advised that the matter was being dealt with by the Council's solicitor.

25.2 **Resolution to amend draft Land Transfer documents and proceed as per solicitor's advice:** Councillors discussed the advice given and unanimously passed the resolution, thereby adhering to the advice received. The Clerk to advise the solicitor. It was agreed that when there was clear claim of title to the disputed area of land then the Council would act upon it to transfer the land and would therefore pay for further transfer only.

The Chairman re-opened the public meeting.

Ordinary Council Meeting Standing Items

26. **Around the Village – Items to note or for future discussion** – There were none.
Minute 49/2020

27. Date of Next Meeting:

Ordinary Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 9th September via Zoom.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 22.13 hours.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

DRAFT