

# *LEAFIELD PARISH COUNCIL*

## **Minutes for the Parish Council Meeting**

**To be held as a Video Conference at 8pm on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

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

**In attendance** (County Cllr Liam Walker, District Cllr Gill Hill, District Cllr Kieran Mullins)

**Members of Public:** 4

**1. Welcome & Apologies for Absence:**

There were none

**Ordinary Council Meeting Standing Items**

**2. Declarations of Interest in items on the Agenda:** Cllr Caunt declared an interest in 14.2 & 14.3 as he is a close neighbour.

**3. Approval of Draft Minutes:**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2020 were approved.

**4. Clerk's Report/Matters Arising:**

- 4.1. McCrackens have not responded to the enquiry about the playground cleaning and their invoice has not yet been paid. The grass was not cut in August but was been cut today.
- 4.2. Dry stone wall near smallpox memorial – There has still been no response from fixmystreet.com about the dry stone wall near the smallpox memorial. This will need to be chased using information from Sharon Henley. Cllr Hamilton offered to report it also on fixmystreet.com
- 4.3. The contractors who had been awarded the burial ground contract, had confirmed that they would like to tender for the car park project.
- 4.4. The first Junior Goal Posts will be installed on the weekend of 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> Sept. The Gym Committee have enlisted the services of Tom from Cotswold Landscaping and Charlie Clews who is a chartered landscape architect. They have the installation guide that came with the goal posts and believe it is a very straightforward job. The installation will be undertaken in a safe and professional manner in accordance with the manufacturer specifications and Charlie will personally ensure this is the case.

**5. County & District Councillors' Reports**

- 5.1. Cllr Gill reported that James Mills has stepped down from his role as the leader of WODC. A new conservative leader for the Council has been elected – Michelle Mead.
- 5.2 Cllr Kieran Mullins reported that: scrutiny committees are now working again so the council can begin to operate again properly; a consultation plan for Salt Cross Garden Village has been announced; there is a national Covid spike, please call 119 for testing locally rather than asking for postal kits.
- 5.3 Cllr Liam Walker reported on the successful trial of the super user program to mark-up potholes and to speed up the process, if anyone is interested in becoming a "super user" volunteer please contact Liam. Liam reported that Witney Lane drainage issues are being addressed and an additional drain at the point the water exits Church Farm will be installed to take the water immediately underground and away from the road surface. The work is scheduled to be completed ahead of Winter 2020.

**6. Opportunity for the Public to Speak: –**

Helen Keen, PCSO based in Woodstock, joined the meeting at this point to discuss recent instances of anti-social behaviour in the village. Current incidents are in hand and being investigated. LPC's CCTV is now registered on their system and footage can be uploaded almost instantly; she congratulated the village on having a pro-active Facebook page; she emphasised that patrols can happen only where there is demand and when there have been reports and she re-iterated the importance of reporting any anti-social behaviour as it is only then that they can

address the problem. If anyone sees or hears anything, please contact Helen directly via email on [witneynhpt@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:witneynhpt@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk); for any non-emergency please call 101 or use the Thames Valley Police website (there is a "Report" button on front page); and of course for emergencies call 999. She stressed that greater credibility is given when multiple people report problem rather than single sources.

## Policy & Finance

### 7. Clerk/RFO

#### 7.1 Confirmation of interim arrangements during recruitment

Sharon Henley had stepped down on 25 August but has kindly agreed to continue RFO duties on a part-time basis (approx. 5/6 hours per month) until a new Clerk/RFO is in post. Cllr Pearce reviewing email inboxes and responding to correspondence, creating Agendas and pre-meeting notes, updating the website and posting to Facebook with additional support from individual Councillors.

#### 7.2 Update on recruitment process

There had been 12 applications for the role and only advertised on OALC website and on Facebook so no cost to us. Five candidates were interviewed on 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and an offer will be made w/c 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

### 8. Update on current financial situation

The Budget is in line with where we expect to be. Cllr Caunt noted that we have not done a VAT reclaim so far this financial year, Cllr Pearce advised that one will be done at the end of September 2020 after we have paid the significant invoices for the Burial Ground Construction project.

### 9. Resolution to approve insurance valuations provided by BCH

Councillor Russ noted that a Document issued by BCH had been sent to the insurers. Councillors unanimously approved the insurance valuations.

### 10. Resolution to approve updated Fixed Asset Register for onward transmission to insurers

The new valuations have been fed into the Fixed Asset Register. While they do not include the Flagpole and the recently acquired Junior Goal Posts, these will be in due course and are not expected to fundamentally affect the insurance premium. Councillors unanimously approved the resolution.

### 11. Resolution to approve annual insurance premium from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 with Came & Co at £1,196.80 on a 3 year long term agreement to finish in 2021.

There could be a change in the annual premium due to our providing Came & Co with an updated Fixed Asset Register which will include the Flagpole. Councillors unanimously approved the current payment. If the payment increases as a consequence of the updated valuations submitted, this will be put forward for approval at the next meeting.

### 12. Approval of Receipts and Payments for September 2020

| Payee                     | Reason  | Payment inc VAT | Receipt | Power To Spend    |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------|---------|-------------------|
| EE                        | Clerk's mobile phone Aug  | £13.32          |         | LGA 1972 s.111    |
| Zoom                      | Monthly Fee Aug   | £14.39          |         | LGA 1972 s.111    |
| Ionos                     | Website & Domain Hosting Aug  | £1.20           |         | LGA 1972 s.111    |
| Sharon Henley             | Outstanding Holiday Pay & Locum RFO   | 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 Sept                      | Personal   |  | LGA 1972 s.112(2) |
| Eamonn Bull                   | Renovation work to Red Phone Box                             | £534.63    |  | LGA 1972 s.137    |
| X2 Connect Ltd                | Items for renovation of Red Phone Box                        | £1,093.86  |  | LGA 1972 s.137    |
| Came & Co                     | Annual Insurance Premium                                     | £1196.80   |  | LGA 1972 s.111    |
| Cemetery Development Services | Project Management Fees to August Inv 72677                  | £3,600.00  |  | LGA 1972 s.214(2) |
| AT Bone Sport Solutions       | Construction Phase of Burial Ground (part payment) Inv 12252 | £38,425.85 |  | LGA 1972 s.214(2) |
| Barrett Corp Harrington       | Insurance Valuations inv 53984                               | £624.00    |  | LGA 1972 s.111    |
| Total                         |  | £45,932.75 |  |                   |

Councillors unanimously approved receipts and payments for September.

## Recreation & Leisure

### 13. Play Area Monthly Report

#### 13.1 Monthly Report – report on weekly inspections

Weekly inspections continue to be completed by Councillors. Further remedial actions have been identified including damage to the slide caused by a pickaxe and grids being forced from some of the smaller items. Cllr Caunt reported that given recent vandalisms in addition to general wear, tear and age of equipment most items (except the children swings) are now damaged. He suggests that small play area should now be closed (get Alan Bower to close off the entrances) until we review the damage and the most appropriate rectification option. He also suggested that the small child swing set inside the fenced area be moved onto the swing stand housing the other swings so that there is still something for smaller children. Councillors unanimously agreed this plan of action but recognized that it would be disappointing to those villagers who use the playground regularly.

13.2 Councillors unanimously agreed to go ahead with the repairs to the equipment outside the small play area, identified in the ROSPA risk assessment and contained within the quotation from Reids Playgrounds. This excludes replacement of the wooden bench which is going to be repaired by a Villager and moved to the new Burial Ground. If seating is required in that area, going forward, this will need the cost will need to be revisited.

### 14. Village Hall

14.1 **General Updates:** Cllr Pearce reported that the Village Hall is now open, they have a couple of “spot” hires scheduled that comply with current guidance (and will be refunded if that changes and their event is not permitted to run). A couple of regular hires are either back or starting shortly and the VH Booking Clerk is in regular communication with the pre Covid-19 regular hires to work with them to get them back as and when they feel it is safe and viable to do so). A new cleaner has been appointed and has done a fantastic deep clean during lockdown and cleans are carried out after every hire. Jane Digby has stepped back from the Village Hall Committee (will still attend meetings to represent Guides) and therefore numbers are too low for it to continue to be run as a separate committee. Cllr Pearce noted that unless new committee members can be found by October 2020 it may have to revert to be run by the Parish Council, as defined by their constitution.

14.2 **Update on Anti-Social Behaviour and liaison with TVP:** There have been many recent instances of anti-social behaviour and damage to property within the village. This includes the Gym, playground area, new

burial ground contractor equipment and School storage areas. CCTV and local resident witness testimony has been gathered and sent to the Police, who are actively engaging with the Parish Council on this matter and will follow up in relation to the individuals identified. The Parish Council and wider village community have NO appetite for this behaviour that is spoiling the environment for all of us. Further updates will be provided in due course.

#### 14.3 Discussion to identify and approve additional security measures needed at the Village Hall site, the sourcing of any additional equipment and where/when this should be installed.

Cllr Pearce said that two additional CCTV Cameras (pointing towards gates and playground) were required but that the WiFi situation at the Village Hall/Pavillion needed to be addressed first. Cllr Pearce proposed the installation of a gate at the entrance to be closed between the hours of 10pm and 6am (walking access available at the side at all times), galvanising the support of local residents to open and shut the gates. The gate would cost £250 with installation. Nick Birtley agreed to talk to the Gym Committee. Councillors agreed to proceed with this project.

#### 15. Village Hall Car Park

Cllr Caunt updated the meeting on progress of Project. Compliance and Confidence is currently underway, the amendment of design and specification towards achieving budget is likely to occur during the last two weeks of September with the retender of proposals to contractors. Discussion deferred until next meeting.

#### Environment

#### 16. St Michael & All Angels Churchyard

Cllr Hamilton reported that the Churchyard Working Group would meet on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2020 at 11am during which time he hopes to draw up list of actions, prioritise autumn and spring actions, identify dates for workdays. He agreed to talk to AT Bone for advice on how best to look after the newly grassed burial ground. Depending on the outcome of these discussions it was felt that the Current Churchyard Grasscutter should remain at present but in January we should seek quotes from the current Council Grasscutter, McCrackens and/or any other contractors to get quotes for churchyard and burial ground (separate and combined) in preparation for the 2021/2022 budget process and agreement.

#### 17. Burial Ground Project

Cllr Pearce reported that we are 75% complete on Construction Phase, grass will be seeded later in the week once levels have been confirmed and approved by Alex Vickers, the Project Manager from CDS.

Cllr Russ reported on the progress of consecration of plots. A provisional date for part consecration has been set for 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020, however this is unlikely to be achievable as we do not have all of the necessary documentation (from AT Bone & CDS) to satisfy the Di. We have also had to work with the Diocese Register Manager regarding approval (acquisition of a faculty) for the path through the existing churchyard, for which we do get responsibility for until the end of the month. Councillors Reviewed & unanimously approved the following draft documents in relation to the new Burial Ground: Burial Ground Charges September 2020; Memorial Safety Policy; Burial Ground Rules.

#### 18. Planning

| Received     |                                       |  |            |                 |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|--|------------|-----------------|
| Ref          | Address                               | Proposal   | Deadline   | Comments by LPC |
| 20/01983/HHD | 11 Fairspear Road<br>Leaffield Witney | Erection of a single<br>storey rear<br>extension               | 15/09/2020 | No comments     |
| 20/02200/HHD | 4 Chapel Close<br>Leaffield Witney    | Alterations and<br>erection of two<br>storey rear<br>extension | 15/09/2020 | No comments     |

## **19. Review of Government Planning Consultations & decision on representations to be made:**

The following documents and deadlines had been table for review: Changes to the Current Planning System (deadline 17<sup>th</sup> September); 19.2 White Paper: Planning for the Future (deadline 15<sup>th</sup> October); Transparency & Competition: Data & Land Control (deadline 16<sup>th</sup> October). It was generally recognised by those present that the consultation documents were not clear, overly weighty and does not solve the problem that it sets out to solve. The tight deadlines were also noted. Cllr Ward offered to put together a synopsis of the main areas of change, in plain English, for Villagers (and Councillors to read). Cllr Pearce agreed to pull together comments on behalf of the Council and needs input from other Councillors to do this. It was also agreed that a notice should be included in LWO asking villagers to respond individually. NALC is seeking responses, with evidence, by 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020 so it can do a sector wide response. Please send to [policycomms@nalc.gov.uk](mailto:policycomms@nalc.gov.uk). The Council can put its own response in directly, by 29<sup>th</sup> October 2020 via MHCLG's website <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future> or email to [planningforthe-future@communities.gov.uk](mailto:planningforthe-future@communities.gov.uk)

## **Transport & Highways**

### **20. Burford Town Centre Experimental 7.5 tonne weight limit consultation from OCC – Decision on any actions required to enable factual comments to be submitted by the Council.**

Cllr Pearce reported that she has been in touch with Crawley Parish Council who advise they have carried out a small survey before Burford's new weight limit came into effect and they will be carrying out another in the next couple of weeks to see the difference. They are happy to share those results with LPC. Crawley PC are also proposing new weight restrictions on roads around Crawley to help minimise the impact of the change in Burford and would welcome the opportunity for Mark McCappinn and Colin Dingwall to attend our next meeting to discuss the changes and how they might affect Leafield. They will send us a copy of their explanatory leaflet to distribute to our parishioners before the October meeting. Cllr Walker said that he would wait to see what is said at the next meeting. After a lengthy discussion about a potential increase of HGTV traffic in the village due to Burford's experiment (particularly at a few points in the village) it was agreed that we should look at this following the discussion with Crawley PC.

## **Consultation & Communication**

### **21. Covid-19**

#### ***Review/Update on the Village Volunteer Group***

The Village Volunteer Group was formed in March as we went into lockdown. The initiative was led by the Parish Council given issues surrounding insurance for volunteers and GDPR and the council appointed Christina Wilson as Village Volunteer Co-ordinator. The group was most active on Whatsapp but since lockdown it has developed into more of a community forum. After some discussion, it was agreed that the VVG should continue without the Council's involvement, until such time as it might be needed again (e.g. a nationwide lockdown). The Council would like to formally minute their thanks and appreciation to both Christina Wilson (who recently stepped down as Volunteer Co-Ordinator) and to Olly Webb for all of the help and support provided to Villagers. Letters of thanks will be sent.

### **22. Correspondence Register**

There were no items for discussion.

All members of the public left the meeting.

## Confidential Session

23. **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.

Councillors unanimously approved the signature of the Land Transfer documents issued by Wellers Hedleys – three councillors to sign the document on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 and for it to be posted back to the Solicitors on that same day.

The Chairman re-opened the public meeting.

## Ordinary Council Meeting Standing Items

24. **Around the Village – Items to note or for future discussion**

Cllr Caunt suggested the need for a co-ordinator for Neighbourhood Watch facebook page.

He also suggested that it might be useful to contact OCC highway officers and come out to discuss the issue of traffic calming near the church.

25. **Date of Next Meeting:** Ordinary Parish Council Meeting on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October at 8pm via video conference.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.25pm

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_