

# LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

## MINUTES

Held at Leigh Village Hall on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015 at 7 p.m.

Present; Sandra Scutt, Graham Bugler, Mark Stillitano, Richard Smith.

### **1. Welcome by Chairman of Leigh Parish Council**

1. Sandra Scutt welcomed those present and thanked them for coming. Particular thanks was given to Councillors past and present for their support and help over the past year.

2. **Apologies for absence** - David Vincent, Alan Bennett & Clerk for being late.

3. **To receive Minutes of previous Meeting** – these were agreed.

### **4. Report by Chairman of Leigh Parish Council**

First of all I would like to thank those who have left the Parish Council this past year. I took over from Brian Read, the previous chair, who had several years both as Councillor and Chair. Paul Orchard and Tim Holder also left after being long standing members.

To say I didn't know what I was taking on is an underestimate. Although as a member of the PC, I was familiar with most of the work that passed through. I suddenly found myself at the forefront of fending queries. One of Leigh's attractions is the number of countryside walks in our area. However, thanks to the help of Trevor Evans, I now know what goes into keeping these walks pristine and attractive to walkers and safe for farmers. We have attracted funding as well as reserved some of our budget to purchase suitable gates to replace stiles, where it proves difficult for the more elderly and infirm of our locals to access walks, but not overcome the stiles. The gates have yet to be sited, but we hope to do so in the coming year. We are also entering into a SLA with West Dorset to do some extra cutting, above their planned schedule along a stretch of some popular paths. As this will be the first year, we will monitor how this proceeds.

There is also a planning enquire to be held in September regarding Sievers Lane, since part of it was designated a BOAT. Although this is not led by the PC, it is something we have supported.

By far the biggest task this year has been the appeals to the Boundary Commission, where they have moved Leigh from Cam Vale Ward to the Frome Valley. Although there may be little to notice in the short term, apart from having only one councillor to represent a large rural ward that stretches to Dorchester, we cannot be guaranteed what the impact may be, particularly on services in the long term. However, to sever our long term ties with Chetnole and Yetminster without consultation with us seemed both unfair and undemocratic. However, despite our appeals through the boundary Commissions' complaints procedure, we then appealed to the Parliamentary Ombudsman, with our MP's support, only to be told that as we are a publicly funded body they cannot deal with us. A suggestion was to get a village petition, which is where we are now at. An ongoing saga indeed – one that continues to roll. But what a revelation in terms of how our publicly funded bodies work – but in our interests – who knows.

We are in the process of investigating if we should have a speed watch patrol in Leigh. Speeding has been an ongoing issue in Leigh, with complaints from many, who

walk our lanes without footpaths. This scheme has been successful in other villages, but as yet there are various hurdles to overcome.

We have come through a general election, as well as the existing councillors of your PC being confirmed in post for another five years. However, we are one person short and I sincerely hope that this report will not put anyone off!

There is a sub group preparing an emergency plan for Leigh. Whilst we do not have regular large scale floods or have suffered with other emergencies, we still need to know what to do should one arise. Once again, when this is complete it will be posted on the web site and distributed locally. Likewise there is a snow plan, updated annually, also on the website.

This is an opportune moment to thank Karen Bugler for all the work she has done, alongside Graham, in running the web site over the past few years. This task has now been passed onto Jack Patterson. There is now a weekly distribution of what's on in Leigh and surrounding villages, so I urge people who have access to the internet to subscribe to this – it is free – so they can support the many activities that are on in our area.

Planning applications are sent to us electronically every week. They can often be controversial, but sometimes straightforward. Although we may send comments to the planning officer, they make the decision and only take into account our comments.

The numerous emails of circulars from Dorset County Council and West Dorset, Police, Health and Housing goes to show how many trees we are saving. Most do not need responses, but are interesting to highlight how much change and work goes on in those areas of our life

Finally, all this would not happen if it were not for the sterling work of our Clerk, Carina Vickers, who keeps us all in order and manages this volume of circulars, meeting agendas, meetings and enquiries.

## **5. Reports by elected representatives**

Mary Penfold introduced herself and reported on activities of WDDC.

## **6. Reports by local organisations**

**Play Area Report** – David Reason reported: . The perceptible increase of young families I mentioned this time last year moving into Leigh has continued in 2015. Similarly with the visiting 'Holiday Makers' from afar, now 'returning' holiday makers. This has meant a constant use of the Play Park, and when it is not being used it is being 'mowed' – weather permitting.

The 'burning' question – if I can call it that – is the future of the Play Park, not immediately but some 5 years down the line, when the lease on the land expires in September 2020. Two sites have been identified as being possible ones. One on Leigh Village Hall land and the other on land adjacent to the Village Hall owned by an absent landlord. Negotiations are at an early stage.

The Committee of myself (Chairman), Julia Jepson (Secretary), Colin House (Treasurer), Graham Bugler and Les Wallis existing members, with Hannah Gillibrand and Sarah Knowles as added new ones since last year. Alan Hill retired during the year through ill health after many years of loyal service and much help. The merry band of lady and gentlemen mowers (9 of them) continue to do sterling service to the Leigh community in general and the visitors. I thank them all most sincerely.

The finances, with the future in mind, have benefited from other sources with a grant of £250 from the annual Leigh Village Candle Auction and a very successful Table Top Sale £230. At year end the balance on the accounts were Santander Current Account

£481.10 and Business Deposit account £1,422.87. Again I thank Colin House for looking after the finances and to Sharon Rose for auditing them. The Accounts are attached to this report for your inspection should you so wish.

Again I must thank Les and Connie Wallis for housing the mower, fuel etc. and for many cups of coffee!

All that remains now is to say that as of now I am standing down as Chairman and the Committee for Leigh Play Park after 12 years to make room for younger blood, which I am sure is there – they just need a nudge!

Elizabeth Turnbull expressed concern that the Play Area Committee were not getting full support from the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee with regards to relocation. And that the plans for relocation have not moved forward. It was agreed that the Leader of the Play Area committee should contact Cllr Scutt and discuss.

**Boyles Trust** – Councillors were unsure who now represents Leigh.

Report from Mrs P Castleman, Chairman, **Tuesday club** read by Cllr Scutt “We have had a busy year with 9 very interesting speakers, many of these local to Leigh, ranging from Fostering Dogs to the Royal School of Needlework, Nursery Rhymes to Life as a Country Doctor. We were delighted to welcome Rev Toney and Margaret Durbin at our Christmas Carol Service and tea again.

Our outing to Swanage in 2014 was very successful, the sun shone all day and hopefully our trips to Wells this year will be as lucky – visitors are always welcome too. At our AGM in January, membership was discussed. Sadly we have lost a number of members over the year due to illness etc. We hope the successful Fresher’s Day held in the Hall recently will produce some results and we are also happy to invite new members from the surrounding villages to join us. Hopefully the opportunity to come to an afternoon group will appeal to the 50+ range.

The Committee try to ensure a warm welcome and a relaxed atmosphere making an enjoyable afternoon. We have a car sharing rota, plus our Chairman ensures transport is available in an emergency! Do come and join us.

A Report from **Leigh WI** from Jill Evans. “Leigh WI was founded in 1927 and celebrated its 88<sup>th</sup>. Birthday this year. It has a strong membership with the majority of members coming from Leigh but also from Yetminster, Chetnole and Longburton.

Our meetings are held on the last Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. We have a very wide range of speakers and have a lunch club, theatre trips, outings and a yearly very successful jumble sale which raises much needed funds to support these activities. We are always willing to support village activities when asked to do so.

New members are always very welcome. For further information please contact either the President Jill Evans on 01935 873172 or the Secretary on 01935 872329.

## 7. **Question and answer session**

1. Julian Turnball enquired about development within Leigh with regards to the Local Plan. He asked when it was due to be reviewed and about plans for building within Leigh, believing that there was a moratorium on further development. Cllr Scutt replied that the PC were looking into the development of a Neighbourhood plan which should have an impact and would influence future development within the area...
2. Mary Penfold – mentioned the recent accidents on A37 and that a meeting was taking place at Holliwell Cross to discuss.

3. Luke Goddard spoke regarding the context behind his planning application at Carpenters Arms and the reasons behind the retrospective planning application. Discussion regarding parking issues in South Street were aired. Traffic measures have been reviewed by the PC and double yellow lines would not be allowed as not policiable.
4. Mr Goddard reported issues he had with a footpath over his land. Historically the footpath was originally along Church Lane, he was asked to clear the lane and it came to light from DC that the footpath was just within the field on the definitive map. A fence was put up to protect the public from livestock. Recently David Acroid has come back to indicate that the definitive map on which these footpath are shown is incorrect and in fact the footpath should be approximately 13 feet into the field. This requires the fence to be moved and also makes it less accessible for footpath users. The owners asks that the definitive map stays as described previously which would benefit both landowner and the community. He asked for PC support. It was agreed that Cllr Scutt would walk the footpath with Trevor Evans and the land owner and form an opinion on the best way forward and report back to Council.
5. Mark and Camila Frampton informed the meeting that if possible they would like to meet with planners regarding an application for work on their barn. If Councillors would like to meet with them to talk through his application then they would be happy to do so.
6. A request had been made for the hedge on the field in Chetnole Road on the right hand side of the bridge, to be cut. This request has been made by the Clerk but needs to be chased up. Ref 1037052.
7. The public asked if a new Playground site had been identified? It is understood that 2 sites have been identified and investigation for movement is underway but no decisions have yet been made.