

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD IN THE JUBILEE HALL ON 13<sup>th</sup> MAY 2024

Present: Mrs Caroline Hjorth (Chair)  
Mr Duncan Boulton  
Mr Les Gordon  
Mrs Margaret Poole  
Mr John Poole

Ms Barbara Drysdale (Clerk)

Also present was: Cllr Georgina Heritage (SODC)

Apologies were received from: Cllr Ray Hudson (LPC) & Cllr Freddie van Mierlo (OCC)

**Item 1: CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS** The election of a Chair and Vice-Chair:  
Duncan Boulton proposed Caroline Hjorth to be Chair; Margaret Poole seconded and the meeting formally voted to approve her appointment.  
Cllr Hjorth signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Chair.  
Les Gordon proposed Duncan Boulton to be Vice Chair; John Poole seconded and the meeting formally voted to approve his appointment.  
Cllr Boulton signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office as Vice Chair.  
Both documents were countersigned by the Clerk.

**Item 2: MEMBERS’ DECLARATION OF INTEREST**  
None were received.

**Item 3: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL**  
The minutes of the parish council meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were accepted as being a true record of proceedings by councillors and signed accordingly by the Chair.

**Item 4: MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**  
- OCC will “consider accordingly” LPC’s request for culverts, feed pipes etc to be cleared regularly; the Clerk had forwarded the correspondence to Cllr van Mierlo.  
- Village shop: the prospective new tenant said the legal process was very close to being completed.

**Item 5: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN SESSION**  
No requests had been received by the Clerk.

**Item 6: THAMES VALLEY POLICE**  
There was no police report.

**Item 7: DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS’ REPORTS**  
The council noted the receipt of the monthly and annual reports from both District and County councillors.

Chair: .....

Date:.....

**Item 8: REVIEW OF COUNCIL PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTATION**

a) The following documents were reviewed:

- i) Review of Clerk's Contract. It was revised in Oct 2023; no amendments necessary.
- ii) Review of Code of Conduct. No amendments were considered necessary (on LPC website).
- iii) Review of Individual Declarations of Interest. All councillors present confirmed they had reviewed their DoI and had no changes to make. (link on LPC website to SODC website).
- iv) Review of Financial Regulations. The council noted receipt of the new model policy; it was formally agreed that time was needed to consider all the changes. Therefore approval of these new regulations would held over until LPC's July meeting by which time Cllr Boulton (finance) and the Clerk would have drawn up proposals and circulated them to all councillors for consideration.  
The council approved a formal resolution for LPC to continue with Lloyds online banking, the Direct Debits for the Clerk's phone and ICO fee and the Standing Orders for the Clerk's pay and tax.
- v) Review of Banking Arrangements. The current banking arrangements were considered to be satisfactory (in Risk Assessment).
- vi) Review of Budgeting Arrangements. LPC's budgetary procedures were considered to be satisfactory and all members present confirmed that they had a personal copy of the Outturn for the 2023/24 budget and the budget for the current year as adopted in December 2023 (on website).
- vii) Review of Property and Insurance. The council agreed that were no amendments to be made at present to the Property Register but that when the Postcombe planters were installed these would be added to the Register.  
The council also noted receipt of the annual insurance documents and agreed that the current insurance policy provided adequate cover.
- viii) Review of Risk Assessment. Councillors approved annual revision and formally resolved to continue with the same risk assessment grading.
- ix) Review of Financial Procedures. It was agreed that LPC's financial procedures, as reflected in the Risk Assessment and the minutes of meetings were adequate and appropriate.
- x) Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit. Members approved the annual revision and agreed this represented an adequate approach for LPC and that it would, therefore, be appropriate to minute that the effectiveness of the current arrangements had been reviewed and been found satisfactory, given that the Internal Auditor had inspected and approved LPC's finances and procedures for 2023/24.
- xi) Confirmation of Chair's Allowance. The decision of 16 June 2008 to provide for a Chair's Allowance of up to £100 per annum under the terms of LGA 72, S.15(5) was re-endorsed for 2023/24.
- xii) Review of Publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act. No changes were considered necessary.(on website)
- xiii) Review of provisions under the Data Protection Act:
  - Information and Date Protection Policy
  - Privacy Notice
  - Data Protection Consent Form
  - Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy
  - Data Protection breach reporting policy (all on website)
 No amendments were considered necessary.
- xiv) Review of Play Policy. No amendments were considered necessary (on website).
- xv) Review of Safeguarding Policy. No amendments were considered necessary (on website).
- xvi) Review of Equal Opportunities Policy. No amendments were considered necessary (on website).

**Chair:** .....

**Date:**.....

- xvii) Review of Standing Orders for Clerk’s salary & PAYE. The council formally noted the changes made last month to reflect the Clerk’s salary increase.
- xviii) Disposal of LPC records. Minutes from 1894-2017 are stored at the Oxfordshire Records Office; the more recent Minutes are held by the Clerk. Various books are held by the Clerk or Chair, plus some other LPC documents are stored in a locked cabinet in the village hall.
- xvix) Duplicate Archive. To cover the possibility of a catastrophic loss of the original materials, the Clerk has copies of all important correspondence/documentation raised by LPC for at least the past six years on separate CDs/USB sticks and/or in a password-protected DropBox in the cloud and/or in files, plus an external hard-drive.
- xx) Appointment of Representatives to Outside Bodies. This was reviewed and agreed in Feb 2024.
- xxi) Update of contact details. Members confirmed their details were up-to-date (on website). The council formally resolved that their addresses would remain on the council website.
- xxii) Review of assignment of specialist topics. This was reviewed and agreed in Feb 2024.
- xxiii) Review the terms of reference for the staffing committee. No changes were considered necessary.
- xxiv) Review the Dispute & Grievance Policy. No amendments necessary (on website).
- xxv) Review Dignity in the Workplace (Bullying) policy. No amendments were considered necessary (on website).
- xxvi) Disciplinary Policy. No amendments were considered necessary (on website)
- xxvii) Health & Safety policy. No amendments were considered necessary (on website).
- xxviii) Standing Orders. No amendments were considered necessary (on website).
- xxix) Review of LPC’s Emergency Mandate. No amendments were considered necessary.
- xxx) Review of Volunteer Policy. No amendments were considered necessary (on website)
- xxxi) Review of Transparency Policy. No amendments were considered necessary (on website)
- xxxii) Approval of Environment and Biodiversity Policy. The council resolved to formally adopt this new policy (now on website).
- b) Councillors confirmed that inspections of LPC property around the parish were being carried out regularly.

**Item 9: END OF YEAR FINANCES 2023-24**

- a) The council received and discussed the Internal Auditor’s report. It was formally agreed the councillors would consider her report in full at LPC’s July meeting.
- b) The council received and approved the Annual Governance Statement (Annual Return Section 1) 2023-24. It was signed by the Chair and RFO/Clerk.
- c) The council received and approved the Accounting Statements (Annual Return Section 2) for 2023/24. It was signed by the Chair and RFO/Clerk.
- d) The council noted that the RFO would now submit LPC’s documents for External Audit and display the Notice of Public Rights from 3<sup>rd</sup> June to 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

Clerk

**Item 10: FINANCE**

- a) The council received and noted a budgetary control report for the year to date from the RFO which showed balances as of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024:  
Treasurers Account: £3,798.56  
Business Savings Account: £20,204.97  
Hall Account: £9,199.90

And noted the RFO had transferred £4,000 from LPC’s Treasurers account to savings account.

- b) The council approved payment of the following outstanding accounts:

i) Community First	Insurance	£260.04	S.111 LGA 1972
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**Chair:** .....

**Date:**.....

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| ii) TDP                | Planters         | £709.50 | CIL            |  |
| iii) PetWasteSolutions | Dog bin emptying | £92.95  | S.111 LGA 1972 |  |
| iv) Jane Olds          | Internal Audit   | £200.00 | S.111 LGA 1972 |  |
- c) The council noted receipt of LPC's annual grasscutting grant of £1,111 from OCC. Clerk
- d) A quote of £821 (+ VAT) from Tencer for renewal of the hall replacement heating pump was approved for payment in June, if needed. (The Chair explained talks were still ongoing regarding the hall boilers). It was decided that the Clerk would research the possibility of installing solar panels on the hall; and whether any grants would be available. Clerk
- e) The council formally agreed to make a donation of £100 to Enrych in June.

**Item 11: PLANNING**

- a) The council noted the status of the following applications:
- i) P22/S2744/HH & P22/S2745/LB Poplar Farm, Box Tree Lane, Postcombe Refused  
Proposed single storey rear extension, and internal/fenestration alterations to the existing house.
- ii) P23/S2490/LDE The Storeground, Aston Hill, near Aston Rowant Approved  
Mixed use of site for residential use workshops and storage  
Plus amendment with additional information
- iii) P24/S0616/HH Sheep Brook Cottage, Nethercote Lane, Lewknor Decision awaited  
Detached Oak frame garage on existing concrete base with storage & home office in roof space
- iv) P24/S1016/DIS Moorcourt Barn, Weston Road, near Lewknor Decision awaited  
Discharge of conditions 7(access), 10(hard landscaping) and 11(soft landscaping) on application P20/S0909/FUL (1. Demolition of existing green barn, closure of access to footpath track. 2. Erection of 1 dwelling with new access, garage, outbuilding and associated works. 3. Provision of additional parking/car storage area to adjoining commercial unit (at The Barn/Str8six).

**Item 12: HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT**

- a) Salt Lane bridge steps: councillors reported that a barrier had been installed at the bottom of the steps but that more work needed to be done to clear the steps. The Clerk would chase. Clerk
- b) Salt Lane to Nethercote Lane footpath: the Clerk reported that notices stressing it was a footpath not a bridleway had been put up at the path and on LPC's website and Facebook page plus two FB community pages; and a letter had been sent to the stud farm in Postcombe.
- c) FixMyStreet superusers: this item was held over again as Cllr van Mierlo could not attend.
- d) Hill Road steps: OCC was drawing up plans for a handrail to be installed.

**Item 13: CIL**

The following quotes for a new South Weston noticeboard were discussed:

Sign of of the Times: £2,256.68  
Greenbarnes: £1,944.24 (they supplied our Lewknor noticeboard)  
Noticeboard Warehouse: £2,061.53

All including VAT and delivery.

Quotes for removing the old one and disposing of it and installing the new one:

Allen Landscaping £220 +VAT (£264.00)  
CLB £200.00 +VAT (£240.00)

It was agreed LPC would wait to see what grants were available and consider this issue again nearer winter. The council also agreed a header would not be needed, saving around £120.

JP/MP

Chair: .....

Date:.....

The planters for Postcombe had been ordered (Item 10b(ii)) and Cllr John Poole said they were due to be delivered on 20<sup>th</sup> May.

**Item 14: WEBSITE**

The council discussed at length issues concerning LPC’s website provided by VisionICT, including pricing, new accessibility rules and an SSL certificate. The council considered the quote and comments from Parish Online; and the cost other parishes were paying for their websites. The council agreed that Vice Chair and finance councillor, Duncan Boulton, would follow on from the Clerk’s conversation with VisionICT on these issues; the council formally agreed that Cllr Boulton could negotiate on behalf of LPC.

DB

**Item 15: DOG BINS**

The council discussed the current positioning of the dog bins in Lewknor village, noting that one of them, near the noticeboard was not being used much. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact OCC to seek permission to move it to the pedestrian gate at the village hall. The council noted a quote from Allen Landscaping to move the bin of £130 +VAT.

Clerk

**Item 16: PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCILS**

The Chair reported that the voluntary probation group had been again to tend the Lewknor graveyard and that they would carry out maintenance on a regular basis.

Clerk

It was formally agreed that, as stipulated in the budget, LPC would give Lewknor PCC £200 and South Weston PCC £100 towards the upkeep of the churchyards when formally requested by the PCCs.

**Item 17: DEFIBRILLATORS**

The council noted that the battery for the Leathern Bottel defibrillator was due for renewal at a cost of £285 & £12.50 postage plus VAT. The Chair would place the order with Community Heartbeat.

Chair

Pads for both the Leathern Bottel and England’s Rose defibrillators would need replacing in August at a cost of £42 & £4.50 postage + VAT each. The Chair would place those orders too nearer the time.

Chair

The Chair proposed that another training session be organised for residents to be taught how to use the defibrillators. The session would be held on a Wednesday evening in the village hall, would last around 2 hours and cost around £175 +VAT. The council formally agreed that the Chair could book such a session.

Chair

**Item 18: CPRE**

The Vice Chair reported on his phone meeting with Director of CPRE Oxfordshire, Helen Marshall, to discuss CPRE’S plan for rooftop solar audits. He told the council the discussion had resolved that Lewknor parish was not suitable for the project because it did not contain the necessary mix of private and social housing, community and commercial properties needed.

**Item 19: CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

There was none.

**The meeting closed at 9.30pm**

**Chair:** .....

**Date:**.....