

LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting 12th September 2023

Clerk's Report

Report from the Parish Clerk

1. Meeting With Chair and Vice-Chair

I met with Julie and Sue in the Orchard Centre on 4th September from 7pm onwards. The meeting helped to keep us up to date and to refine the way we progress the parish council business.

2. Signposts

Having exchanged a sample of the sign which had broken off from Sue, I am now more able to find the appropriate contractor for making up the signs. This is proving more difficult than expected.

3. Lloyds Bank Account

I have the necessary forms to be signed to set the new account up and these will be available at the meeting for the signatories to sign.

This has still been done for the Parish Council Account only thus far, as it is sensible to keep the **Church Green Trust** account separate from the parish council one. That is not to say that this account cannot be transferred to Lloyds as well, but it should not be shown as part of the parish account, which it is currently.

A list of Church Green Trustees is required to be able to set the account up.

4. Action List

The completed matters have been removed from the Action List and new ones have been added. There are matters on the list that need to be updated. These include:

- Follow-ups on the overgrown hedge at Yeo Vale Cottage, Section 106 for the Playing Field and Football Club, Youth Council.
- Setting up a public meeting for the Neighbourhood Plan
- Organising the new signs
- Cleaning the signs, possibly using a contractor for the work
- Update on Councillor Profiles
- Update on the Orchard Centre toilet door lock
- Update on the progress of the telephone box work
- Publicity for the Volunteering Day

If there are updates available by the date of the meeting, these will be shared here.

Rob Martin

05 September 2023

Lapford Parish Council

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 15th August 2023

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

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Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

There was a meeting of Lapford Parish Council on Tuesday 15th August 2023 at 7.30pm held in the Orchard Centre, Lapford

Members Present: Cllrs Julie Down (Chairman); Sue Briant-Evans; Ian Wilkie; Alex Shapland; John Burrows; Roy Andrews.

Also Present: District Cllr. Steve Keable.

In attendance: Rob Martin (Clerk)

Others: 3 members of the public.

MINUTES

2324-082 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Bill Graham, Steven Fletcher, Stacey Lumsdon and Abigail Whittaker.

County Cllr. Squires also expressed her apologies.

2324-083 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

No declarations were made.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow public participation.

2324-084 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION & UPDATES FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

Someone had tried once more to light a fire public toilet. The door was always unlocked and maybe it was time to refit a timed lock to the door so that it was unavailable overnight. This matter would be investigated and it was agreed that such a lock be fitted, provided the door does not also need to be replaced. The clerk would pull this together with councillors.

2324-085 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

- a) **Devon County Council** – Cllr. Squires did not attend and there was no report.
- b) **Mid Devon District Council** – Cllr. Keable reported that the new MDDC administration was looking to sort out some of the urgent financial problems, particularly in relation to the 'arms-length' 3 Rivers Company'. It was likely that there would need to be a 'soft closure' of the company to limit the eventual pressure on the precept.

The financial outlook for the next few years was going to mean a reduction in services as government grants were predicted to fall significantly.

There would also be a motion in front of the District Council to encourage the County Council to do something about the appalling state of the roads.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in line with Standing Orders

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2324-086

CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk had circulated a report, as follows:

1. Meeting With Chair and Vice-Chair

I met with Julie and Sue in the Orchard Centre on 2nd August from 7pm onwards. The meeting helped us look at continuing the improvement in PC operations and focussed on the tasks identified at the last council meeting and the work necessary to complete them. The revised action list is the result – see below.

2. Defibrillator Pads

The acquisition of new pads became more urgent when the existing one had to be used for real. I contacted ZOLL, the original suppliers of the defibrillator who had supplied subsequent parts orders only to find that they no longer supply parts. They did however put me in touch with their parts 'partners', trading as the **defibshop**, part of the Imperative Training Ltd group who were very good at supplying the required pads within two days, even though the price had doubled since the defibrillator was acquired in 2018.

3. Signposts

I researched the companies supplying signposts only to find that they were numerous, and all provided different styles and sizes, so it will be down to defining exactly what style of sign is required in each case. The materials supplied vary from wood to plastic to metal. Once we have decided what style is required, the right companies can be identified and replacements bought.

4. Land Next to Orchard Centre

I was required to ascertain whether any of the land around the Orchard Centre 'belonged' to the parish council, either as part of the owned building site or the leased car park. Having looked at both the sale documents (land registry) and the signed lease, the conclusion is that these parcels of land are not the parish council's.

5. Lloyds Bank Account

A Lloyds Online Account has been applied for and the confirmatory documents are awaited from the bank. Once these documents are received, I will be requiring the signatories to sign the paperwork and then we can transfer the money in the NatWest account across. The possibility of doing an account automatic transfer between the banks was discussed, but this requires both accounts to have the same signatories which they will not.

This has been done for the Parish Council Account only thus far, as it is sensible to keep the **Church Green Trust** account separate from the parish council one. That is not to say that this account cannot be transferred to Lloyds as well, but it should not be shown as part of the parish account, which it is currently. A charity account can be set up through the bank website whereas a parish council has to be done by phone and the trustees should look to have their own minute defining who the signatories are and not rely on the decision taken by the parish council. The Trustees have to do something as their current signatories are out of date as well and setting up a new separate account might be beneficial.

6. Action List

The Action List sent out with this agenda is based on that produced by Cllr. Briant-Evans for our meeting earlier in August. It is still in its infancy and is still all shown as one set finished or not. The intention is, as time goes by, to separate the completed

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tasks into various sets dependent on whether they are completed, pending or still to be finished.

It is necessary for the description of each task to be complete and detailed, so that there is no confusion about what has been authorized by the council.

2324-087 MINUTES

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 18th July 2023 were a correct record and were signed as such.

2324-088 ACTION LIST

The action list was discussed, and the updated version is at Appendix A below.

2324-089 ORCHARD CENTRE WORK

The clerk outlined the need to prioritise the various tasks identified for the Orchard Centre against the other work that is being pursued to ensure that the parish council worked within the funds available. The health and safety matters identified within the building had now been addressed and further work was a matter of choice going forward.

Following the potential for fire damage, as discussed in the public session, there was a need to ensure that the public toilet was locked overnight, so it was agreed that this be put in hand as soon as possible. This led to the question of whether it would be necessary to replace the door which was reportedly rotten at the bottom. It was agreed for the time being to replace the lock with one that could be timed to close the facility overnight.

2324-090 TELEPHONE BOX

It was **Resolved** that the telephone box would remain where it was, still owned by the parish council. There were a number of uses made of these boxes around the country, the most likely possibility for Lapford would be to use it as a book exchange point/swap shop working possibly in conjunction with the Ark. The parish council would refurbish the box, replacing broken glass with plastic and repainting the metalwork. A quotation would be obtained by Cllr. Andrews from Paul Essen for stripping the surface and repainting the outside, as this would take a long time for him to do.

The actions would be for Cllr. Andrews to ensure the electricity supply was appropriately made safe, with an electrician's certificate obtained, and the supply point boxed in.

Cllr. Andrews undertook to install some shelves and arrange for necessary electrical work to be done as well as arranging the painting.

2324-091 HIGHWAYS

Cllr. Briant-Evans had circulated a report of the meeting held with Steve Tucker (DCC Highways) and Councillor Margaret Squires on the many highways issues in Lapford which resulted in the following recommendations for the Parish Council:

- Write directly to Meg Booth, Director of Climate Change, Environment & Transport DCC, regarding any unresolved local roads issues. Also, to request costings for the repair of the road over the bridges as discussed above; the possibility of the DCC contractor carrying out work paid for from Parish Council funds; or the possibility of using a private contractor for the work.

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- That the Parish Council considers using £3k of reserve funds to pay for the work mentioned in the bullet point above.
*It was **Resolved** that a letter be sent to Meg Booth to outline that the Parish Council might be prepared to assist with this work.*
- That the Parish Council resolves to join the Road Warden scheme.
*It was **Resolved** that the parish council nominate someone like Cllr. Wilkie as a Road Warden and that he undertakes training.*

In addition, Cllr. Andrews had written through the website to ask about Snow Warden training but had heard nothing yet. Steve Tucker had asked that anyone willing to do this should contact him directly and he would arrange the training. Cllr. Andrews would write directly to Steve Tucker to request this.

2324-092 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (NP)

The Neighbourhood Development Plan Area was under its consultation period with representations being made until 18th September 2023. The clerk had put a notification of this on the front page of the website.

The clerk explained that the parish council would need to draw up an initial pool of volunteers to form a **Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group**, and needed to ensure that representation was as wide as possible. He explained that the first thing to do would be to invite the previous people who had been active with considering the future of the parish to try to draw them into the group and then to invite members of the whole community to come on board on a volunteer basis. The aim is that no-one should be excluded from the invitation to take an active part. The clerk would draw up a list of the initial invitees on the basis of his previous experience both in the Lower Town Place report and in starting a NP process elsewhere.

2324-093 LAPFORD VOLUNTEERING DAY

District Cllr. Keable explained that the weed-spraying activity was no longer conducted by Mid Devon DC so it would be down to individual communities to undertake this type of work for the future.

Cllrs. Briant-Evans & Down proposed that a further 'tidy-up' day in the autumn to do things like clearing weeds from the roadside. The precise activities still had to be determined, but it was necessary to put a date in the diary now. The agreed date was Saturday 14th October 2023, from 10am to 1pm, which would give enough time to advertise it in the Lookout. Cllr. Burrows would provide Bacon Sandwiches which he would cook in the Victory Hall kitchen.

2324-094 FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES

Parish Council representatives on other bodies to feedback important information from the meetings held since the last council meeting.

(LEAP) Lapford Emergency Action Plan 'Committee'

The LEAP group met on 31st July 2023, and the minutes of this meeting were circulated with the agenda. These minutes were received and **adopted**.

The clerk had been requested to look over the draft LEAP Terms of Reference and to attempt to locate the old LEAP files. He had found no such files.

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A **HOLD** directors meeting had been held on the previous Saturday and some notes had been circulated to councillors on their discussions. One of the conclusions was that *'The Youth Club's request for a graffiti board on the inside face of one of the containers was under consideration.'*, which was a surprise to Cllr. Wilkie who was under the impression that this had all been agreed and had arranged for the boards to be purchased already. The delay in making the decision had been caused by concerns about how the boards were going to be attached to the containers without compromising their integrity.

The **Victory Hall** minutes had not been forwarded to the clerk, but Cllr. Andrews summarised the latest meeting. He stated that there was a window looking out over Lower Town Place that was to be changed to a doorway for which planning permission had been applied.

2324-095 CHURCH GREEN TRUST REPORT

To consider the conclusions of the latest meeting of the trust and parish council matters arising therefrom. The clerk had attempted to set up the method for claiming tax rebate but had not yet had a response from HMRC to his application.

2324-096 PLANNING MATTERS**a) APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED**

Reference	Location	Proposal
23/01144/CAT	Lapford Church Green & War Memorial Lapford Devon	Notification of intention to remove 1 Chestnut tree and lift the crowns of 3 Chestnut trees to 7.5m above ground level within the Conservation Area. This application had been withdrawn, see below.

b) APPLICATIONS AFTER THE AGENDA WAS ISSUED

There were no applications notified after the agenda had been set.

c) MDDC DECISIONS

The following MDDC decisions were **noted**.

Reference	Location	Proposal	MDDC Decision
23/01144/CAT	Lapford Church Green & War Memorial Lapford Devon	Notification of intention to remove 1 Chestnut tree and lift the crowns of 3 Chestnut trees to 7.5m above ground level within the Conservation Area	Withdrawn

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23/00859/FULL	Land at NGR 272906 108696 West Lane Lapford Devon	Erection of an agricultural storage building	Permission Granted
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2324-097 BANK RECONCILIATION & BUDGET MONITOR STATEMENT

The Bank Reconciliation and Receipts and Payments statement, as at 31st July 2023 were received and **noted**.

2324-098 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SCHEDULE

On a proposal by Cllr. Burrows, seconded by Cllr. Briant-Evans it was **Resolved** to approve the following payments.

PAYMENTS

Payment to	Services	Amount £	Payment No.
2023/2024			
S Hemsworth	Salary August 2023	57.37	SO
RJ Martin	Salary August 2023	505.50	2324-17
HMRC	Tax Deducted August 2023	140.60	2324-17
EDF Energy	Orchard Centre Electricity	56.57	DD
Everflow	Orchard Centre Sewage & Water	3.01	DD
BT Group Ltd	Orchard Centre Broadband	45.12	DD
IONOS	Village Website Hosting	16.84	DD
Steve Munday	Orchard Centre Electrical Inspection	175.00	2324-18
PKF Littlejohn	External Audit	252.00	2324-18
Imperative Training	Defibrillator Pads	412.80	2324-19
Microsoft	Office 365	79.99	2324-20
McAfee	Computer Security	59.99	2324-20
A&S Paving & Supplies	Ply Board	39.31	Card

RECEIPTS

Receipt from	Services	Amount £	Method
2023/2024			
None			

In addition, payments will be made for invoices received since the agenda was set.

2324-099 SCRIBE ACCOUNTS

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The clerk had attended a Zoom meeting with a representative from Scribe, a company that provides accounting facilities solely for parish councils. He had been concerned that the current method of keeping and providing financial information was very much personal to him and would be difficult to maintain for someone less versed in financial matters than he was. The system is very easy to manage and has the features that allow each transaction's details to be recorded at the point of entry, including the order, the Council minute number and the Legal Power used to make the payment.

It was agreed that this would be a good further step in improving the parish council's governance and financial probity in the future and allow a less experienced clerk a better financial tool than the current spreadsheet.

The cost of using this system would be an annual fee of £408 with an additional £249 'onboarding fee' for the initial set-up. The clerk was tasked with finding someone relatively local to show how it works in practice to ensure it was as good as it was portrayed in the webinar and then report back at a future meeting.

2324-100 MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

The Chairman referred to the DALC website and the services they offer. She advised that councillors should log on to the site and consider whether there were matters of training they would want to attend. The clerk had received a response from the Training Officer and was looking to organise a local event for all councillors. Other training on Neighbourhood Plan processes were all available for example.

2324-101 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Cllr. Briant-Evans asked about the email received that day on a Broadband initiative which should perhaps find its way onto the Lookout for general consumption.

Cllr. Mackie asked about the diseased trees and whether owners had been notified. The clerk would ensure this was done. He had done a risk assessment on the fence on the bridge where there was an 18-foot drop, which should be sent to highways and Steve Tucker in particular.

2324-102 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Parish Council meeting would be Tuesday 12th September 2023 at 7.30pm in the Orchard Centre.

2324-103 CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Signed: Chairman Date:

2324	062	Hedge by the burnt down Yeo Vale Cottage very overgrown, impacting on the highway. Owner to be contacted re trimming it back	Clerk	A letter has been sent to the owner requesting hedge reduction.
2324	062	Park Meadow Close – footpath. Further work required to stop debris falling onto MOP's drive.	Clerk & Cllr Shapland	<i>No response had yet been received.</i> Cllr. Shapland has installed boards on either side of the path to stop the detritus washing straight onto the drive. <i>He was thanked for doing this and would keep a watching brief on whether it was working.</i>
2324	062	106 funding for the Playing Field. Cllr Andrews to be contacted.	Clerk	Cllr. Andrews contacted but no response yet. <i>Cllr. Andrews and the clerk would get together an action plan.</i>
2324	064	106 funding for the Football Club	Clerk	Awaiting a response from Nick Tucker who has been sent a follow-up email. <i>A response had been received explaining that a FC committee had looked at what was required and had put forward answers to the questions which still had to be finalised.</i>
2324	064	Youth Council. Reply awaited from Cat Seymour. She is to be contacted about it.	Clerk	Response awaited.
2324	064 & 078	Response to be sent to Austin's letter. Neighbourhood Plan. Contact to be made with MDDC.	Cllr B-E Clerk	<i>This still had to be sent.</i> Contact made, the Development Plan Area designation applied for and subject to public consultation with end-date 18 th September 2023. <i>The clerk had advertised the consultation on the parish council</i>

2324	064	MDDC Housing Needs supplementary document. Issues to be summarised.	Clerk	website. The aim now was to gather a team to form a Steering Group, starting with those known to be active in the past, but also putting feelers out to the whole community for volunteers.
2324	064	MDDC Walking Festival. Positive response to be sent.	Cllr Burrows	Still to be undertaken.
2324	067	Orchard Centre issues. £100 granted for a replacement board for the external notice board. Costs for an OC sign to be investigated. Ownership of the adjacent land to be determined.	Cllr Wilkie Cllr Graham Clerk	Interest in the project had been notified. Item purchased and awaiting fitting. Cllr. Wilkie had arranged for the sign to be produced and it had been fitted. The clerk had researched using the transfer documents for both the car park lease and the Orchard Centre purchase and confirmed that neither included the land in question.
2324	069	Ash Dieback. Ownership of affected trees to be researched and addresses passed to the Clerk.	Cllr Burrows	Cllr. Burrows had confirmed the details of two trees affected. The clerk to notify both.
2324	069	Signposts, prices to be obtained for replacement arms. Request that the Playing Field be added to the central village one.	Clerk	The clerk had researched this online and had identified a number of companies able to do the work. He believed, however, that he needed more specific information sign-by-sign to complete the task. Cllrs. Burrows and Briant-Evans would attempt to get pictures of each sign in order to enable these to be ordered.
		Cleaning of signs to be arranged.	Cllr Lumsdon	This had been arranged for the following Thursday, but now had to be

		Highways to be notified of defective signs which they hold responsibility for.	Cllr B-E	changed due to availability.
2324	073	Councillor profiles. Proforma to be filled in for inclusion in the Lookout and sent to Cllr Lumsden.	All Councillors	This had been done, See report of meeting with Steve Tucker.
2324	074	Planning – Eastmere farm. Additional comments to be sent in to MDCC.	Clerk	Cllr. Lumsdon had produced a set of profiles and pictures which would be used but presented without being stylised both on the website and for the Lookout. There were a few matters of fact to be sorted.
2324	077	To arrange Councillor training, possibly in conjunction with Chawleigh PC	Clerk	This was done promptly.
2324	078	Neighbourhood Plan. When appropriate a public meeting to be called re progressing this.	Parish Council	Dates are still awaited.
				Discussed as part of the main meeting. The clerk would draw up a list of those to be invited initially and a general advertisement for the community at large.

Action List

12th September 2023 Meeting

Minute ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
2324 062	Hedge by the burnt down Yeo Vale Cottage very overgrown, impacting on the highway. Owner to be contacted re trimming it back	Clerk	A letter has been sent to the owner requesting hedge reduction. Still no response had been received.
2324 062	106 funding for the Playing Field. Cllr Andrews to be contacted.	Clerk	Cllr. Andrews contacted but no response yet. Cllr. Andrews and the clerk would get together an action plan. This still has to be done.
2324 064	106 funding for the Football Club	Clerk	Awaiting a response from Nick Tucker who has been sent a follow-up email. A response had been received explaining that a FC committee had looked at whui was required and had put forward answers to the questions which still had to be finalised. Still to be done
2324 064	Youth Council. Reply awaited from Cat Seymour. She is to be contacted about it.	Clerk	Response awaited. To be chased up
2324 064 078 092	Neighbourhood Plan.	Clerk	Contact made, the Development Plan Area designation applied for and subject to public consultation with end-date 18 th September 2023. The clerk had advertised the consultation on the parish council website. The aim now was to gather a team to form a Steering Group, starting with those known to be active in the past, but also putting feelers out to the whole community for

**Action List
12th September 2023 Meeting**

Minute ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
			volunteers. A public meeting should be arranged inviting all to take part.
2324 064	MDDC Housing Needs supplementary document. Issues to be summarised.	Clerk	Still to be undertaken. This was not completed as deadline passed. The effect on Lapford was not clear from this document.
2324 069	Ash Dieback. Ownership of affected trees to be researched and addresses passed to the Clerk.	Cllr Burrows	Cllr. Burrows had confirmed the details of two trees affected. The clerk to notify both. Letters now sent
2324 069	Signposts, prices to be obtained for replacement arms. Request that the Playing Field be added to the central village one.	Clerk	The clerk had researched this online and had identified a number of companies able to do the work. He believed, however, that he needed more specific information sign-by-sign to complete the task. Cllrs. Burrows and Briant-Evans would attempt to get pictures of each sign in order to enable these to be ordered. The information had been gathered and sent to the clerk who was researching the matter.
	Cleaning of signs to be arranged.	Cllr Lumsdon	This had been arranged for the following Thursday, but now had to be changed due to availability. Now looking for a potential contractor to do this work.

**Action List
12th September 2023 Meeting**

2324-111

Minute ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
2324	073	Councillor profiles. Proforma to be filled in for inclusion in the Lookout and sent to Cllr Lumsdon.	All Councillors Cllr. Lumsdon had produced a set of profiles and pictures which would be used but presented without being stylised both on the website and for the Lookout. There were a few matters of fact to be sorted. Update required.
2324	077	To arrange Councillor training, possibly in conjunction with Chawleigh PC	Clerk Arranged for 14 September 2023 at 6.30, in the Ark.
2324	089	Orchard Centre To replace the lock on the toilet door for a timed one.	Update on progress required.
2324	090	Telephone Box Arrange for safe boxing in of the electricity supply, replace glass and installation of shelves	Cllr. Andrews Update on progress required.
2324	093	Lapford Volunteering Day	The date was set for 14 th October 2023. Publicity of the event needed to be sorted.

Lapford Parish Council

Lapford Emergency Action Plan Committee (LEAP)

Terms of Reference

2023 Revised Draft

1. Authority

The Lapford Emergency Plan Committee is appointed by and responsible to Lapford Parish Council. The Committee's duties and powers are as agreed by the Parish Council under Standing Order 4 and these can be modified by a simple majority decision of the Council. The Committee will meet at least once a year, but as often as business requires & will produce an annual report.

2. Membership

The Committee will consist of no fewer than four Parish Councillors together with the co-option of at least three additional members from the local community to provide balance, expertise and guidance. The Committee will be chaired by a member of the Parish Council elected at its first meeting and annually thereafter.

A councillor will be elected as vice-chair and a volunteer Flood Warden appointed.

Instructions to the parish clerk to act in an emergency or to use their financial delegation will only be voted on by councillors but for all other matters all members will have full voting rights.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parish Council will have automatic membership of the committee with full voting rights if they attend meetings.

3. Quorum

A quorum will consist of four members, including at least one of the Committee Chair and/or Vice-Chair.

4. Meetings Procedures

- a) Agendas for LEAP meetings will be posted on a noticeboard at least three clear days prior to the meeting.
- b) The meetings will be open to the public.
- c) Written minutes will be taken to record each meeting of the Committee with particular attention to its recommendations to the Parish Council.
- d) The minutes will be circulated to all members of the Committee and the Parish Council as soon as practicable following each meeting.
- e) All agendas and minutes the LEAP committee will be posted on the parish council website, in the normal way.
- f) The committee's minutes will be adopted by the parish council at its next meeting at which its recommendations will be considered.

5. Committee Powers

- a) The Committee is responsible for producing an Emergency Planning Document for Lapford Parish, including a Parish Flood Plan.
- b) The Committee is responsible for reviewing, revising & updating the information contained in the Plans as necessary.
- c) The Committee will make recommendations to the Parish Council in regard to the purchase and deployment of equipment in order to fulfil the aims of the Plans.
- d) It will work with the Parish Council to test the working of the plan at least annually.
- e) It will work with other community groups, individuals and the Emergency Services as appropriate with regard to dealing with emergencies.
- f) It will liaise with other village organisations, individuals and groups as it sees fit in order to progress the plans and have regard to the ideas of others.
- g) It will liaise with Mid Devon District Council, Devon County Council and other public bodies as appropriate and keep itself informed of local and national developments which might inform or influence its decision making.
- h) Members will take advantage of Emergency Planning conferences, training sessions & other events run by the local authority or other agencies.
- i) The Committee has the power to co-opt further persons with specialist knowledge from time to time in order to help with and advise on specific projects.

5 September 2023

2324 - 121



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Our Ref: MARK/LAP001

Mr R Martin
Lapford Parish Council
14 Station Road
Yeoford
Crediton
Devon
EX17 5HU

30 August 2023

Dear Mr Martin,

Engagement Letter – Local Authority

We are pleased to accept the instruction to act as internal auditors for the Council and are writing to confirm the terms of our appointment outlined below. The purpose of this engagement letter is to set out the basis on which we are engaged to act as internal auditors and our respective areas of responsibility, it should be read in conjunction with our standard terms and conditions.

We are bound by the ethical requirements of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, and accept instructions to act for you on the basis that we will act in accordance with those ethical requirements. A copy of these requirements can be viewed at our offices on request or can be seen at www.accaglobal.com.

1. Period of engagement

- a. This letter is effective for accounting periods ending on or after 31st March 2024. (The 2023/24 Council year)
- b. It replaces all previous engagement letters. The previously agreed commencement date for this engagement still applies.
- c. We will deal with matters arising in respect of periods prior to the above period as appropriate.

2. Responsibilities of the Council and Internal auditors

- a. The council is responsible for ensuring that the council maintains adequate accounting records and for preparing financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with current practices and guidelines.
- b. You are also responsible for making available to us, as and when required, all the council's accounting records and all other relevant records and related information, including minutes of all meetings. We are entitled to require from the council's officers and employees such other information and explanations as we think necessary for the performance of our duties as internal auditors.
- c. We have a statutory responsibility to report to the external auditors whether in our opinion the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with current practices and guidelines as outlined in JPAG Practitioners guide. In forming this opinion, we shall:
 - i. Review the accounting records and all other relevant records and related information, including minutes of all meetings.
 - ii. If deemed necessary, conduct two or more reviews per annum to verify both the procedural and financial aspects of the council.

- iii. Report to you in writing any such adjustments that we may consider necessary, or those areas where we think your systems may require improvement.
- iv. Sign off the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) as internal auditors.
- d. We have a professional responsibility to report if the financial statements do not comply with applicable proper practices, unless in our opinion the non-compliance is justified in the circumstances. In determining whether or not the departure is justified we consider:
 - i. whether the departure is required in order for the financial statements to give a true and fair view; and
 - ii. whether adequate disclosure has been made concerning the departure
- e. As with other professional services firms, we are required to identify our clients for the purposes of the UK anti-money laundering legislation. We are likely to request from you, and retain, some information and documentation for these purposes and/or to make searches of appropriate databases. If we are not able to obtain satisfactory evidence of your identity within a reasonable time, there may be circumstances in which we are not able to proceed with the audit appointment.
- f. The provision of audit services is a business in the regulated sector under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 and, as such, partners and staff in audit firms have to comply with this legislation which includes provisions that may require us to make a money laundering disclosure in relation to information we obtain as part of our normal audit work. It is not our practice to inform you when such a disclosure is made or the reasons for it because of the restrictions imposed by the 'tipping off' provisions of the legislation.

3. Scope of Audit

- a. Our audit will be conducted in accordance with current practices and guidelines, and will include such tests of transactions and of the existence, ownership and valuation of assets and liabilities as we consider necessary.
- b. We shall obtain an understanding of the accounting and internal control systems in order to assess their adequacy as a basis for the preparation of the financial statements and to establish whether proper accounting records have been maintained by the council. We shall expect to obtain such appropriate evidence as we consider sufficient to enable us to draw reasonable conclusions there from.
- c. The nature and extent of our procedures will vary according to our assessment of the council's accounting system and, where we wish to place reliance on it, the internal control system, and may cover any aspect of the business's operations that we consider appropriate. Our audit is not designed to identify all significant weaknesses in the council's systems but, if such weaknesses come to our notice during the course of our audit which we think should be brought to your attention, we shall report them to you. We accept no duty or responsibility to any other third party as concerns our reports.
- d. As part of our normal audit procedures, we may request you to provide written confirmation of certain oral representations which we have received from you during the course of the audit on matters having a material effect on the financial statements. In particular, where we bring misstatements in the accounts to your attention that are not adjusted, we shall require written representation of your reasons.
- e. In order to assist us with the examination of your financial statements, we shall request sight of all documents or statements, including minutes and reports, which are due to be issued with the financial statements. We are also entitled to attend all general meetings of the council and to receive notice of all such meetings.
- f. The responsibility of safeguarding the assets of the council and for the prevention and detection of fraud, error and non-compliance with law or regulations rests with the council. However, we shall endeavour to plan our audit so that we have a reasonable expectation of detecting material misstatements in the financial statements or accounting records (including those resulting from fraud, error or non-compliance with law or regulations), but our examination should not be relied upon to disclose all such material misstatements or frauds, errors or instances of non-compliance as may exist.

- g. Once we have issued/uploaded our report we have no further direct responsibility in relation to the financial statements for that financial year. However, we expect that you will inform us of any changes occurring between the date of our report and submission to the external auditor.
- h. We appreciate that the present size of your council may render it uneconomic to create a system of internal control based on the segregation of duties for different functions within each area of the council. In planning and performing our audit work we shall take account of this.

4. Electronic Publication

- a. Where audited financial information is published on a website or by other electronic means, it is your responsibility to ensure that any such publication properly presents the financial information and auditor's report. We reserve the right to withhold consent to the electronic publication of our report or the financial statements if they are to be published in an inappropriate manner.
- b. It is your responsibility to ensure there are controls in place to prevent or detect quickly any changes to electronically published information. We are not required to carry out ongoing review of the information after it is first published. The maintenance and integrity of electronically published information is your responsibility and we accept no responsibility for changes made to audited information after it is first posted.

5. Communication

- a. In order to ensure that there is effective two-way communication between us we set out below the expected form and timing of such communications
 - i. We may arrange a meeting to discuss the forthcoming audit prior to the expected start date.
 - ii. We may arrange a meeting to discuss any matters arising from completing the on-site work.
 - iii. We shall of course contact you on a regular basis regarding both audit and other matters.
 - iv. Our report will be issued in .Pdf format via a secure server, which is password protected.

6. Other services

- a. You may request that we provide other services from time to time. We will issue a separate letter of engagement and scope of work to be performed accordingly. Because rules and regulations frequently change you must ask us to confirm any advice already given if a transaction is delayed or a similar transaction is to be undertaken.

7. Limitation of liability

- a. We specifically draw your attention to our standard terms and conditions which set out the basis on which we limit our liability to you and to others.
- b. There are no third Parties that we have agreed should be entitled to rely on the work done pursuant to this engagement letter other than the external auditors.

8. Fees

- a. Our fees are calculated using a stand rate per hour, plus disbursements and VAT at the standard applicable rate.
- b. Our fees for the 2023/24 council year are £65 per hour + VAT
- c. Where applicable we charge £0.45p per mile for travel from the auditors home address.
- d. Our fees are payable on presentation of invoice.

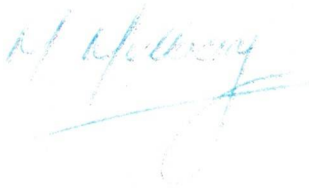
9. Cancellation of Services

- a. Services can be cancelled at any time in writing
- b. Cancellation will be effective from the end of the period to which this letter of engagement applies. (para 1a.)
- c. All outstanding fees become payable

10. Agreement of terms

- a. This letter supersedes any previous engagement letter. Once it has been agreed, this letter will remain effective until it is replaced.
- b. If this letter is not in accordance with your understanding of the scope of our engagement or your circumstances have changed, please let us know
- c. This letter should be read in conjunction with the firm's standard terms and conditions.

Yours faithfully,



Mulberry & Co

We confirm that by electronically approving this document we are agreeing that we have read and understood the contents of this letter and related terms and conditions and further agree that it accurately reflects our fair understanding of the services that we require you to undertake.

LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

BANK RECONCILIATION AS AT
31-Aug-23

		£	£
Bank Balances 31/08/23			
	NatWest	10,803.28	
	NS&I	21,561.52	
	Petty Cash	-	
			32,364.80
Uncleared Payments			
Uncleared Credits			
			-
TOTAL BALANCES			32,364.80
Balance at 1/4/2023	Current Account	8,643.40	
	NS&I	21,561.52	
	Petty Cash	-	
			30,204.92
Plus Receipts		15,282.42	
Less Payments		(13,122.54)	
			2,159.88
TOTAL BALANCES			32,364.80
Reconciliation			-

2324-122

Account Name
LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Account No 04515099 **Sort Code** 52-30-06 **Page No** 1 of 2



NatWest

ROB MARTIN
LAPFORD CHURCH GREEN
LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL
14 STATION ROAD
YEOFORD
CREDITON
EX17 5HU

Current Account

Summary	
Statement Date	01 SEP 2023
Period Covered	02 AUG 2023 to 01 SEP 2023
Previous Balance	£14,638.23
Paid In	£0.00
Withdrawn	£3,842.72
New Balance	£10,795.51
BIC	NWBKGB2L
IBAN	GB88NWBK52300604515099

Welcome to your new look NatWest Statement

Why file and store your statements when we can do it for you? Manage your statements online at www.natwest.com
If you have changed your address or telephone number please let us know.

Date	Description	Paid In(£)	Withdrawn(£)	Balance(£)
02 AUG 2023	BROUGHT FORWARD			14,638.23
	OnLine Transaction TO A/C 24553840 VIA ONLINE - XFER		1,750.00	12,888.23
04 AUG	OnLine Transaction JULIE DOWN CHAIRS ALLOWANCE VIA ONLINE - PYMT FP 04/08/23 10 2410081999727500C N		200.00	12,688.23
	OnLine Transaction PKF LITTLEJOHN DV0222 VIA ONLINE - PYMT FP 04/08/23 10 22102108584091000N		252.00	12,436.23
	OnLine Transaction STEVE MUNDAY ORCHARD CENTRE VIA ONLINE - PYMT FP 04/08/23 10 10101934918833000N		175.00	12,261.23
07 AUG	Standing Order SUSAN HEMSWORTH SALARY FP 07/08/23 30 09013639284543000N		57.30	12,203.93
08 AUG	OnLine Transaction DEFIBSHOP INV 1000141899 VIA ONLINE - PYMT FP 08/08/23 10 37095954497266000N		412.80	11,791.13
	Direct Debit 1&1 INTERNET LTD. V73144437-65070020		16.84	11,774.29
14 AUG	Direct Debit EVERFLOW LIMITED B264080A		32.00	11,742.29
15 AUG	OnLine Transaction R MARTIN INV378 ONLINE LICENSES VIA ONLINE - PYMT FP 15/08/23 10 17131325728379000N		139.98	11,602.31
16 AUG	OnLine Transaction IAN WILKIE ORCHARD CENT SIGN VIA MOBILE - PYMT FP 15/08/23 10 31212044343336000N		39.31	11,563.00
	Direct Debit EDF ENERGY 671171872806		62.00	11,501.00
18 AUG	OnLine Transaction HMRC CUMBERNAULD 475PP01227889 VIA ONLINE - PYMTB FP 18/08/23 40 17023541491403000N		140.60	11,360.40
	OnLine Transaction RJ MARTIN SALARY JULY 23 VIA ONLINE - PYMTB FP 18/08/23 40 18023541497173000N		505.50	10,854.90
29 AUG	Direct Debit BT GROUP PLC GP00449335-000058		51.62	10,803.28
01 SEP	Direct Debit EDF ENERGY 671171872806		7.77	10,795.51

LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

ACCOUNTS 2023/2024

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

2022/2023 Outturn		2023/2024 Budget	2023/2024 To Date	Percent of Budget
£		£	£	
RECEIPTS				
22,216	Precept	25,000	12,500	50%
2,217	Other Receipts	1,050	1,054	100%
1,311	VAT Receipts	-	1,729	0%
25,744	TOTAL RECEIPTS	26,050	15,282	59%
PAYMENTS				
1,556	Administration	3,795	1,682	44%
7,724	Staffing	8,200	3,160	39%
263	Councillors	600	200	33%
280	Subscriptions	310	326	105%
-	Car Park	300	-	0%
5,087	Orchard Centre	2,930	2,917	100%
-	Telephone Kiosk	-	-	0%
50	Defibrillator	200	344	172%
161	Community Website	160	70	44%
8,001	Maintenance - General	4,535	39	1%
595	Public Rights of Way	1,000	-	0%
-	Emergency Planning	200	-	0%
1,317	Grants Made	1,490	1,300	87%
-	COVID Emergency	-	-	0%
1,568	Section 137	1,170	454	39%
2,668	Lower Town Place	-	-	0%
4,499	Loan Repayments	4,500	2,250	50%
2,703	VAT Expenditure	-	380	0%
36,472	TOTAL PAYMENTS	29,390	13,123	45%
General Reserve				
29,989	b/f		23,085	
25,744	Receipts		15,282	
(36,472)	Payments		(13,123)	
3,823	Transfers		(678)	
23,085	c/f		24,567	

LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

ACCOUNTS 2023/2024

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

2022/2023 Outturn		2023/2024 Budget	2023/2024 To Date	Percent of Budget
£		£	£	
RESERVES				
23,085	<u>General Reserve</u>		24,566	
	<u>Earmarked Reserves</u>			
200	Car Park Refurbishment		200	
-	Church Clock Overhaul		-	
1,305	Calor Gas Rural		1,305	
-	Transparency Code		-	
755	PROW		755	
4,744	PWLB		4,744	
116	Village Event Reserve		794	
-	Lower Town Place		-	
30,205	Total Balance in Hand		32,365	