

## Lapford Parish Council Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023

Email: [clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk) Phone: 07768 829511 Website: [www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk)

### There was a meeting of Lapford Parish Council on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7.30pm held in the Orchard Centre, Lapford

**Members Present:** Cllrs Julie Down (Chairman); Sue Briant-Evans; John Burrows; Roy Andrews; Stacey Lumsdon; Bill Graham; Alex Shapland; Steven Fletcher.

**Also Present:** No-one

**In attendance:** Rob Martin (Clerk)

**Others:** 8 members of the public.

## MINUTES

### 2324-164 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllr Wilkie (Illness) which was approved by the parish council.

### 2324-165 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

No declarations of interest were made.

*The Chairman to adjourn the meeting to allow public participation.*

### 2324-166 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION & UPDATES FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

The October Parish Council notes had not been sent to the the Lookout editors by the due date (14<sup>th</sup> November) and the clerk undertook to do this the following day.

A member of the public questioned some of the parish council procedures and was informed that things were dealt with in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and other decisions by the council.

### 2324-167 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

To receive a verbal report for information.

- a) Devon County Council – County Cllr. Margaret Squires was not present.
- b) Mid Devon District Council – District Cllr. Steve Keable was attending a MDDC meeting and hoped to be arriving later.

*The Chairman to reconvene the meeting in line with Standing Orders*

### 2324-168 COUNCILLOR VACANCY

The clerk had notified the MDDC Electoral Services team that Abigail Whittaker had resigned as a councillor and he had produced the notification for a possible by-election which would be displayed on the noticeboard as from 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023. If no by-election were called in the following 14 working days, the parish council would look to fill the position by co-option. Anyone wishing to become a parish councillor should contact the parish clerk or chairman for further information.

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### 2324-169 NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS

The chairman proposed that council consider an increase in the number of parish council positions from the current 10 to either 11 or 12. Her research had indicated that this was the level of local councils of a similar population operated with. In the light of Lapford being a very active council, one or more extra person to share the workload would be helpful. The clerk indicated that in order to achieve a change in councillor numbers he would have to make a request of Electoral Services at MDDC which would be considered over time. He believed that any such change would only become effective from the date of the next full Parish Council Election, which would not be until May 2027.

On the proposal by the Cllr. Briant-Evans, seconded by Cllr. Fletcher, it was **Resolved** that the clerk request an increase in councillor positions from 10 to 12.

### 2324-170 CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The clerk had circulated the following report:

#### 1. Meeting With Chair and Vice-Chair

I met with Julie and Sue in the Orchard Centre on 31<sup>st</sup> October from 7.30pm onwards. The meeting helped to continue to keep us up to date and to refine the way we progress the parish council business. There will be continuous changes to make parish business more efficient and effective.

#### 2. Lloyds Bank Account

The necessary forms have been signed by signatories and have been submitted. A response is still awaited from the bank, but a six-week timescale is quoted as being how long it can take to get to this stage.

This has still been done for the Parish Council Account only thus far, but when I get access I will be able to set up the **Church Green Trust** account separate from the parish council one, as the Church Green AGM set the signatories.

#### 3. 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. Some of the matters on the action list have been placed on the agenda for this meeting but others still have to be addressed.

He had also exchanged correspondence with Steve Densham of MDDC about the need to clear the play equipment site because it has been condemned by the latest safety inspection report. The proposal was to use all of the available Section 106 finance to replace the equipment.

### 2324-171 MINUTES

Cllr. Briant-Evans pointed out that she had be attributed as a contact in minute 2324-141, when it should have been Cllr. Wilkie. On a proposal by the Chairman, it was **Resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

### 2324-172 ACTION LIST

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The following matters on the circulated Action List were discussed:

- Section 106 for the football club – Cllr Briant-Evans was awaiting some correspondence from the clerk before she could speak to Nick Tucker.
- Ash Die-Back – the clerk had written to both of the landowners with no success so he would now forward the problem to DCC Highways for them to take the necessary action on health and safety grounds.
- Sign-Posts – the clerk had now got information on the method for affixing the fingers to the posts and the vice-chairman had brought the remaining finger examples to the meeting. The clerk would look to progress this further once he had received a response from the potential supplier. The chairman had searched for the missing Lapford sign but had not found it.
- Sign-Post Cleaning – the volunteer had offered the chairman the use of the pressure-washer but she believed this would be a task better done in Spring 2024, which was agreed.
- Telephone Box – the clerk had arranged with, and paid for, National Grid (NG) to disconnect the electricity supply. There was a need for NG to contact BT to make the arrangements, whereupon BT then came back to say that they should be doing this. This has resulted in the NG contract being stopped with a refund due back to the parish council and BT undertaking the disconnection free of charge. Further developments and timescales were awaited from BT and would be reported in due course.
- Community Broadband – the Ark already had broadband connected so there was a polite thank you, but no thank you from there to financing a connection. The other two potential beneficiaries for the financing of connections would be contacted again to ask for their thoughts.
- Sandbags – MDDC do not provide free empty sandbags so the clerk would order some fairly immediately.
- D-Day Commemoration – the Events Committee would be meeting for this on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November.
- Grit Bins – these had been delivered and located in the village.

### 2324-173 LAPFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

This would be picked up when District Cllr. Keable arrived.

(Post meeting note: Steve Keable was unable to attend this meeting so this and other matters were not discussed further)

### 2324-174 LAPFORD EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN COMMITTEE (LEAP)

The circulated minutes were discussed and Cllr. Briant-Evans went through the questions they raised:

1. The promised bridge surface repair was questioned in terms of the type of repair being proposed. The clerk said his understanding was that it would not just be surface dressing but would be patched and compacted which will improve the surface. The long-term proposal would be for a reconstruction job. He would email his contact in DCC Highways to clarify this.

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2. The road would be closed whilst the work was carried out and prior warning would be required for that. The clerk would include this in his correspondence.
3. Another question was, would pedestrians be able to pass the works when they were being undertaken?
4. A second defibrillator for the village would be desirable because even though Rose Removals have said their machine could be used by the general public it was not always accessible. The clerk would report back on whether a second PC one would be possible attached to the Spar Shop.
5. With all of the inclement weather a large quantity of water was flooding across the A377 which should be reported to highways, as well. This was particularly a problem when freezing temperatures followed the rain.

The LEAP minutes for the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were adopted.

### 2324-175 FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr. Burrows reported from a Heart of Lapford Development Company (HOLD) meeting he had attended, as follows:

- The HOLD AGM was held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2023.
- The retained profits for the last year amounted to £4,113.
- Sue Briant-Evans and Andy Epstein were re-appointed as Directors.
- It was agreed to invite representatives from LYPFT and the Church Green Trust to future meetings.
- At a short ordinary meeting following the AGM the officers for the next twelve months were appointed:
  - Chair – Peter Norman.
  - Treasurer – Andy Epstein.
  - Secretary – Sue Briant-Evans.
- The next meeting will take place on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

### 2324-176 CHURCH GREEN TRUST REPORT

To consider the conclusions of the Annual General Meeting and the last normal meeting of the trust both of which took place on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and any parish council matters arising therefrom. The trust minutes had been circulated.

An assessment on the condition of the Chesnut Tree was being undertaken and the answers would be considered at a future meeting.

The budget request for support from the parish council for 2024/25 would be £1,500 so the clerk would ensure this was included when considering the precept for 2024/25.

The minutes of the Church Green Trust for the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2023 were adopted.

### 2324-177 TELEPHONE BOX

Cllr. Wilkie had requested that the matter of the refurbishment of the telephone box should be taken forward before the electricity supply was removed. The parish council concluded that this would be brought forward when the weather was more conducive to painting than

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currently.

### 2324-178 ORCHARD CENTRE BROADBAND CONNECTION

The clerk had signed the Orchard Centre up to the BT proposal to fit a fibre broadband connection to the building following which he would look at the service contracts of the various suppliers for the faster connections. He had carried out initial research on this and concluded that the offers by BT seemed to be expensive compared to other providers and he would do a more complete comparison for a future meeting. The problem with signing up with a BT contract on the current basis is that it would be for a new two-year period, so it was probably best to leave it as it is for the time being.

### 2324-179 CLERK'S SALARY AWARD APRIL 2023

The national agreement for public sector salary increases, as applied to local councils, and its effect on the Lapford PC salary was noted.

### 2324-180 PLANNING MATTERS

#### a) APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED

To consider the following Planning Applications and to agree comments:

| Reference      | Location                                                           | Proposal                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 23/01460/FULL  | Watersmeet Cottage<br>Lapford<br>Crediton                          | Erection of a dwelling and associated works<br><br><b>Decision: No comment</b>                                                                                                                             |
| 23/01653/HOUSE | West Great Hole<br>Lapford<br>Crediton                             | Installation of flue on roof for wood burner<br><br><b>Decision: No comment</b>                                                                                                                            |
| 23/01463/FULL  | Land at NGR 272610<br>106518<br>Kelland Barton<br>Lapford<br>Devon | Erection of a farm shop and cafe with associated parking<br>Parish councillors conducted a site visit on 13 November 2023<br><br><b>Decision: Support</b>                                                  |
| 23/01597/HOUSE | Stonegate Cottage<br>Popes Lane<br>Lapford                         | Erection of a two-storey extension<br><br><b>Cllr. Lumsdon declared a personal interest in this application and did not take part in the discussion or decision on it.</b><br><br><b>Decision: Support</b> |
| 23/01584/FULL  | Stonegate Cottage<br>Popes Lane<br>Lapford                         | Erection of a dwelling<br>Parish councillors conducted a site visit on 11 November 2023                                                                                                                    |

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|  |  |                                                                                              |
|--|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  |  | <b>Decision: Support with a comment that the access arrangements need to be appropriate.</b> |
|--|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### b) PLANNING APPEAL AFTER THE AGENDA WAS ISSUED

| References                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Location                     | Proposal                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 22/01910/MOUT<br><br>Appeal Reference<br>APP1Y1138/W/23/3327516                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Land at Sandhurst<br>Lapford | Outline for the erection of 14 dwellings to include a footpath link with all matters reserved. |
| <b>Parish Council Appeal Response</b><br><i>The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow residents potentially affected by this application to speak.</i><br>The matters that were brought up included the developers attempts to work around the system with an attempt to bring forward an application that deals with none of the detail, including any justification for building affordable housing and yet still wanting it to be treated as an Exception Site.<br>Other points made were that there were a number of houses for sale already that were not selling, so the apparent need is not there. Without the evidence of a Housing Needs Survey to back the application up, particularly for affordable housing, there was no evidence that there was a local housing need. This looks like an attempt to play both ends against the middle to get the principle of building houses on land outside of the built-up area boundary agreed.<br><i>The Chairman reconvened the meeting.</i><br><br>On a proposal by the chairman, it was <b>Resolved</b> that the parish council's <b>Objection</b> to the project be reaffirmed and that the clerk work up an additional response highlighting the further principles involved in why this is the wrong place to build in Lapford. This would be circulated to councillors before being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. |                              |                                                                                                |

### c) MDDC DECISIONS

| Reference | Location | Proposal | MDDC Decision |
|-----------|----------|----------|---------------|
| None      |          |          |               |

2324-181

### BANK RECONCILIATION & BUDGET MONITOR STATEMENT

The Bank Reconciliation and Receipts and Payments statement, as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2023 were **Approved**.

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### 2324-182 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SCHEDULE

On a proposal by Cllr. Lumsdon, seconded by Cllr. Burrows, it was **Resolved** to approve the payment of the invoices on the schedule below for the period since the last meeting:

### 2324-183 PAYMENTS

| Payment to          | Services                      | Amount<br>£ | Payment<br>No. |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| <b>2023/2024</b>    |                               |             |                |
| S Hemsworth         | Salary November 2023          | 57.30       | SO             |
| RJ Martin           | Salary November 2023          | 729.74      | 2324-28        |
| EDF Energy          | Orchard Centre Electricity    | 28.52       | DD             |
| Everflow            | Orchard Centre Sewage & Water | 21.10       | DD             |
| BT Group Ltd        | Orchard Centre Broadband      | 51.62       | DD             |
| IONOS               | Village Website Hosting       | 18.28       | DD             |
| Mr & Mrs Duddridge  | Lighting Energy               | 85.00       | 2324-30        |
| DALC                | Training                      | 355.58      | 2324-30        |
| Victory Hall        | Litter Pick Day               | 18.70       | 2324-30        |
| WEP Fire Protection | Fire Extinguisher Inspection  | 36.00       | 2324-30        |

### RECEIPTS

| Receipt from     | Services        | Amount<br>£ | Method |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------|
| <b>2023/2024</b> |                 |             |        |
| HMRC             | VAT Refund      | 445.57      | BAC    |
| Cash             | Coronation Mugs | 37.00       | BAC    |

### 2324-184 2024/2025 BUDGET AND RESERVES

The clerk had circulated an analysis of the potential spend for the current year, alongside a set of budget numbers for 2024/2025. He said that this was a first step in considering what could be achieved next year whilst seeing the effect of various actions on the council's reserves, together with looking at the potential need for precept income to be able to put the plans into effect. He requested councillors to look in detail at this analysis and come back to him with questions and ideas for items in the budget. The timescale is to conclude the precept decision by the January 2024 meeting.

Matters discussed were the need to include an item for benches and other tasks planned to be undertaken during the next. The clerk would like councillors to put their ideas forward before his meeting with the Chairman and Vice Chairman.



# Lapford Parish Council

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### 2324-185 MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

The chairman raised the subject of dealing with the section 106 finance matter outlined in the clerk's report above. The conclusion of this discussion was that the parish council should request Steve Densham at MDDC to remove the equipment and let the parish council determine what was going to replace it. The clerk would converse with Steve Densham on what exactly the options are.

The chairman also brought up the condition of Prospect Cottage and it was agreed she would send pictures of it to the clerk who would contact MDDC to request action on it.

### 2324-186 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Cllr. Fletcher wished to say that he thought that the 'Nutcrackers' made by the Beccy Fletcher were brilliant and all agreed this to be so.

### 2324-187 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 7.30pm in the Orchard Centre.

### 2324-188 CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

*Julie Densham*  
*HR*

# LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## Action List 14<sup>th</sup> November 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<br>111<br>134          | Clerk                    | A letter has been sent to the owner requesting hedge reduction.<br><br>Reminder sent 26 September 2023.<br><b>Notify Highways</b>                                                                                                                                                                |
| 2324       | 062 106 funding for the Playing Field. Cllr Andrews to be contacted.<br>111<br>161                                                                      | Clerk                    | <b>LYPFT to provide list of equipment required.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| 2324       | 064 106 funding for the Football Club<br>111                                                                                                            | Clerk                    | <b>Reminder sent 26 September</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 2324       | 064 Youth Council. Reply awaited from Cat Seymour. She is to be contacted about it.<br>111                                                              | Clerk                    | <b>Reminder sent 26 September</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 2324       | 067 Grchurch Centre issues. £100 granted for a replacement board for the external notice board.<br>089 Ownership of the adjacent land to be determined. | Cllr Wilkie<br><br>Clerk | Item purchased and awaiting fitting.<br><br>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. <b>Email sent to Steve Densham, MDDC 26 September, response awaited.</b> |
| 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.<br>Letters sent, one response saying not on their land.<br><b>Notify Highways to see if a danger.</b>                                                                                                    |
| 2324       | 069 Signposts, prices to be obtained for replacement arms.<br>111                                                                                       | Clerk                    | The clerk had researched this online and had identified a number of                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

# LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

## Action List 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 Meeting

| Minute ref                       | Issue/Action                                                                                                 | Responsibility                | Update                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 149                              | Request that the Playing Field be added to the central village one.<br><br>Cleaning of signs to be arranged. | Cllr Lumsdon                  | 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.<br><b>Order to be sent</b><br>This had been arranged for the following Thursday, but now had to be changed due to availability.<br><b>Postponed until Spring 24</b> |
| 2324<br>078<br>092<br>113<br>140 | Neighbourhood Plan. When appropriate a public meeting to be called re progressing this.                      | Parish Council                | Production of list of things NP can do to be produced by clerk for Lookout. Public Meeting date to be set when response received from MDDC Planners on availability.<br><b>No planners available. The clerk to prepare a powerpoint.</b><br><b>To be installed</b>                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2324<br>099<br>111<br>148        | Scribe Accountancy system<br>Telephone Box – Make safe for use as book swap area.                            | Clerk<br>Clerk & Cllr. Wilkie | Contact Western Power to get supply turned off.<br><b>BT now arranging disconnect.</b><br><b>Further work postponed until Spring 24</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2324<br>117                      | Community Broadband                                                                                          | Clerk                         | The Ark already has broadband<br><b>Contact Church/Congregational Church about what access the want.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 2324<br>145                      | Logo Competition                                                                                             | Cllr. Briant-Evans            | <b>Competition set up and advertised in</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

**Action List  
14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 Meeting**

| Minute ref    | Issue/Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Responsibility        | Update                                                                                               |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                       | <b>Lookout</b>                                                                                       |
| 2324 137<br>3 | Clerk's Hours Worked – to solve the disparity between the hours paid for, 35 hours per month, and the hours worked.                                                                                                                        | Clerk                 | <i>To report at the December 2023 meeting on the possible solutions.</i>                             |
| 2324 141      | Lapford Emergency Action Plan (LEAP) Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact Highways on highlighted points</li> <li>• Investigate alternative Broadband for the Orchard Centre</li> <li>• Acquire Sandbags.</li> </ul> | Clerk                 | <i>Email to Highways<br/>Contact BT in first instance<br/>Email to District &amp; County Council</i> |
| 2324 146      | D-Day Commemoration – to decide what is to be done                                                                                                                                                                                         | Events Committee      | <i>Committee reconvened</i>                                                                          |
| 2324 152      | Citizen's Advice                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Clerk                 | <i>To email Citizens' Advice to ask them to a meeting before applying for a grant.</i>               |
| 2324 159      | 2024/25 Budget and Reserves                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Clerk                 | <i>To report to December meeting for decisions.</i>                                                  |
| 2324 160      | Dog & Refuse Bins                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Clerk & Cllr.<br>Down | <i>To investigate the possibility of replacing some bins in the village.</i>                         |
| 2324 168      | Councillor Vacancy                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Clerk                 | <i>Follow the procedure to potential co-option</i>                                                   |
| 2324 169      | Councillor Numbers                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Clerk                 | <i>Write to Electoral Services to ask questions</i>                                                  |
| 2324 180b     | Planning Appeal                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Clerk                 | <i>To write up and circulate a further response for this application</i>                             |