

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2024

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk Phone: 07768 829511 Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

There was a meeting of Lapford Parish Council on Tuesday 13th February 2024 at 7.30pm held in the Orchard Centre, Lapford

Members Present: Cllrs Julie Down; Sue Briant-Evans; Steven Fletcher; Roy Andrews; Alex Shapland; Ian Wilkie.

Also Present: District Cllr. Steve Keable

In attendance: Rob Martin (Clerk)

Others: 3 members of the public.

MINUTES

2324-229 APOLOGIES

Apologies had been received from Cllrs. Lumsdon, Burrows & Graham and these apologies were accepted by the parish council.

County Cllr. Squires had also apologised for her absence.

2324-230 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY)

No declarations of Interests were made.

The Chairman adjourned the meeting to allow public participation

2324-231 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION & UPDATES FROM LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

- a) Phil Bridges from Coldbridge had been allocated a space to offer his comments on the current status of the Openreach fibre installation project but had been called away at the last minute.
- b) A question was raised about whether the parish council had been notified of the road closure at the top of the village. The clerk confirmed that no notification had been received.
- c) District Cllr. Keable wanted to pick up the fibre broadband issue. The clerk explained that the reason for putting this on the agenda was that there was a belief that the number of people and businesses signing up in Lapford was too low. Cllr. Keable observed that one of the reasons why there was a relatively low take-up was that people were concerned about what it might cost them once they had to sign up or full-fibre services, the answer to which was not much of an increase, if any at all, to what was being paid for the service currently. He believed that this very simple message should be put in the Lookout. The clerk indicated that he would also put the same message on the website.
- d) On a proposal by the chairman, it was **Agreed** that Lapford Parish Council fully supported the aims of the project with the expectation that every home and business be connected to the fastest broadband available. It had demonstrated this support by signing the Orchard Centre up early in the process and would encourage

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2024

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk Phone: 07768 829511 Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

all residents and businesses in the parish to do the same.

2324-232 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

To receive a verbal report for information.

a) Devon County Council

Cllr. Squires had been unable to attend.

b) Mid Devon District Council

District Cllr. Keable had circulated a report on District Council activities, a copy of which will be attached to these minutes.

The Chairman reconvened the meeting in line with Standing Orders

2324-234 MINUTES

On a proposal by Cllr. Andrews, seconded by Cllr. Wilkie, it was **Resolved** to adopt the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 23rd January 2024.

2324-235 ACTION LIST, CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

The clerk had circulated the following report:

1. General

This report is now combined with my actions taken from the Action List which has also been attached. This is to avoid the need to cover the same ground twice at each meeting.

2. Covid

As councillors are aware, I have suffered another bout of COVID since the last meeting which fortunately was fairly short-lived, probably because I had been vaccinated for it alongside the flu jab in December. This has continued to leave me feeling a little jaded, but I have continued regardless. The following are the main actions taken in the three weeks since the last meeting.

3. Previous PC records

Councillors are aware of the death of Juliet Cross, former Clerk of the PC, and the chairman has taken delivery of a box of the missing paperwork. This would be sorted and all relevant materials filed and stored.

4. Dog Bins

A success story with MDDC agreeing to repair or replace several dog/waste bins in the parish.

The chairman confirmed that this work had been completed since the agenda was sent out.

5. Prospect Cottage

The approach made by the clerk to both MDDC Environmental Health (EH) and Planning Enforcement (PE) teams has resulted in EH responding with the statement that they would be investigating whether rats were on the premises. PE have sent an acknowledgement but have not provided a response to date.

The clerk would send a reminder to PE.

6. BT Disconnection

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2024

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk Phone: 07768 829511 Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

At the last meeting I reported that BT were due to attend for the disconnection on 26th January, which they did. Unfortunately, the box was still chained up so access could not be gained. A new date needs to be arranged with the box opened beforehand so that this work can be done.

The clerk would request another date and time from BT and ensure these were communicated so that councillors would be present to open the box.

7. Councillor Numbers

The request to potentially increase the number of councillor positions from 10 to 11 or 12 was not enthusiastically received by Electoral Services mainly because they had done a district-wide review in 2023 with no such request being made by Lapford at that time.

In addition, an offer had been received for a framed picture of HM King Charles for parish and town councils. On a proposal by Cllr. Andrews, seconded by the chairman, it was **Resolved** to request one picture and that it would be hung in the Orchard Centre.

Turning to the Action List, most of the other matters were on the agenda for this meeting.

The clerk reported he had made a suggested approach to the PROW team leader at DCC for the possibility of using P3 grant finance to make the repair to the driveway affected by water and debris run-off. He was awaiting a response to this suggestion.

The signposts replacement had been complicated by the fact that no two of the fingers were the same size configuration, each with different fixing brackets. On a proposal by the chairman it was **Agreed** that all of the replacement signs would be the same configuration, each with a suitable bracket and the clerk would contact Ken White signs once more to make this happen, subject to the overall cost.

The missing **LAPFORD** sign needed replacement. A member of the public had indicated that she had one stored at her home and this could be gifted, but it needed some tlc to make it suitable and it was agreed that this would be the best course of action, initially. Cllr. Andrews would go to her house and sort this out.

The setting up of a Youth Council would be put in ice for the time being as, whilst it is a good thing to set up, councillors and others were fully committed at the current time.

2324-236 FEEDBACK FROM REPRESENTATIVES

Cllr. Andrews had attended the Victory Hall Committee meeting and reported that use of the shipping containers had moved forward with a community sharing project for equipment available to all. Cllrs. Fletcher and Wilkie provided an update on this by explaining that they had taken part in a clearance of the containers in order to make room for the equipment and that all appeared to be pleased with what had been achieved.

2324-237 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLOR

There had been four applications for the vacant councillor position and the proposal was that an Extraordinary meeting of the parish council, duly advertised and held in public,



Lapford Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2024

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

Phone: 07768 829511 Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

would be held to interview each one in turn to make the decision. His approach was **Agreed** and the meeting date was to be on Wednesday 28th February 2024, at 7.00pm in the Orchard Centre. Councillors were asked to arrive at 6.45pm in order to prepare for the first candidate.

2324-238 COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Celebrations Committee

There had been no meeting to report on.

b) LEAP

Cllr. Briant-Evans reported that the LEAP minutes had just been circulated. The first request of the parish council was that the clerk write once again to highways to make the point that the bridge repairs had still not taken place and to stress the urgency for this. This would also be necessary for the fencing opposite the entrance which was dangerous. She also said that the recruitment of a road warden was essential and that Cllr. Wilkie would do a presentation at the Annual Parish Meeting on what this involves.

2324-239 CHURCH GREEN TRUST FEEDBACK

The Church Green minutes had been circulated and there were no parish council matters to consider.

2324-240 STANDING ORDERS & FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The clerk outlined the process he had gone through to make the Model versions of the two documents to those presented to this meeting. On a proposal by Cllr. Andrews, seconded by Cllr. Shapland, it was **Resolved** to adopt the presented:

- a) Standing Orders and
- b) Financial Regulations documents.

2324-241 GRASS CUTTING 2024

It was **Agreed** that the advertisement for quotations would be posted on the website and in the Lookout with some changes to the number of cuts and a revised deadline of 15th March 2024. The start date of the work would also be brought forward to April 2024, not May.

2324-242 LAPFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The clerk reported that he had heard from Corinne Waterfield at Devon Communities together that her window of opportunity meant that if the Housing Needs Survey questionnaire could be sent for printing the following day, 14th February 2024, the process of sending them to residents could start on Monday 19th February 2024. She would then be able to write the report once the deadline had passed whereas if it was started later, the eventual report would be months away. It was **Resolved** to instruct Corinne to make an early start which the clerk would arrange for the following morning.

It was believed it was necessary to ensure that the community was informed of the importance of getting the forms back as a high turn-out would give the results more weight. A submission to the Lookout would be arranged immediately and the clerk would ensure the website was updated also. It was believed to be important that this was shown on social

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2024

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk Phone: 07768 829511 Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

media as soon as possible following this meeting.

2324-243 LITTER PICKING DAY

It was **Agreed** that the date for a village litter-pick would be 23rd March 2024.

2324-244 BIG HELP OUT DAY 7th TO 9th JUNE 2024

It was **Agreed** that the parish council would organise a village clear-up for Saturday 8th June 2024. The details for this would be discussed at future meetings.

2324-245 MID DEVON DC - STATE OF THE DISTRICT DEBATE 2024

District Cllr. Keable stressed the importance of attending this meeting to help improve the District/Parish partnership that was envisaged for the future.

In addition to the clerk, it was **Agreed** that the attendees for Lapford PC would be Cllrs. Briant-Evans, Down and Andrews with the venue being Phoenix House on 20th March 2024 at 5.30pm.

2324-246 BUS SHELTER PROPOSAL

A request had been made for the installation of a new bus shelter at the top of the village. The clerk would investigate what grants were available for this and would look for suitable suppliers and prices once the chairman had supplied him with photographs of the existing village bus shelters, alongside a location plan for the new one.

2324-247 GRANT REQUEST

A proposal had been made by Cllr. Andrews that a grant be given towards the improvement in library facilities in Lapford. At this time, there were discussions taking place between Cllr. Briant-Evans, Lapford School and the Ark about what is to be done. It was **Agreed** that these conversations should continue to the point where firm proposals could be detailed with any costs and income (including possible DCC grant) clearly shown and the residual costs then identified for potential support by the parish council.

2324-248 PARISH COUNCIL LOGO COMPETITION

There had been only one entry to the competition so the proposal was to run a day of workshops in the Victory Hall to invite people to come up with further potential logos.

2324-249 PARISH COUNCIL DISPLAY IN THE ARK

The display currently in the Ark on parish council activity was available now and Cllr. Briant-Evans encouraged all to take a look at it. The clerk requested that photographs of each display be taken, alongside a wider view so that this attempt to make people aware of the work being done could reach a wider audience.

2324-250 LAPFORD PLAYING FIELD

- a) The clerk had produced a draft set of Terms of Reference for the proposed Joint Playing Field Working Group. Concerns had been expressed that this had not yet been put before the Lapford Youth and Playing Field Trust and that adopting these TORs was jumping the gun. It was **Agreed** that there was no urgency for this group

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2024

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

Phone: 07768 829511

Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

- to be set up and that it would be put on the back-burner until some of the other matters had been finalised.
- b) A draft lease has been submitted by MDDC legal team for the Toddler Play Area land which had been sent to councillors. The clerk had expressed concern to Steve Densham at MDDC because the request had clearly been for Lapford Parish Council to own the freehold. This matter was then discussed with matter c) below.
 - c) The removal of existing district council play equipment from the field on health and safety grounds was required following the condemnation of the existing equipment by a recent safety report.
 - d) At this point, District Councillor Keable stated that he had been in email correspondence with Steve Densham to try and get some clear answers to questions he had asked. The first was in relation to the removal of the current equipment which the officer had indicated was going to cost more than £5,000 but it was unclear whether the expectation was that the parish council pick up this cost, perhaps as recompense for the land transfer.

The parish council view on this was that the removal of the District Council's equipment from its own land was not going to be financed by the parish precept but should be paid for by the district. In addition, the use of the section 106 finance should not be used for the site clearance but reserved for the replacement equipment.

Cllr. Keable then said that a different email indicated that the lease had been drafted because the officer had thought that was what was wanted and not the freehold. The parish council viewpoint was that it should own the freehold.

There were a number of potentially conflicting matters within the correspondence and Cllr. Keable undertook to clarify precisely what was being said. When that had been done, the clerk would contact Steve Densham about the final outcome and the use of the Section 106 finance.

2324-251

PLANNING MATTERS

a) APPLICATIONS NOTIFIED

To consider the following Planning Applications and to agree comments:

Reference	Location	Proposal
24/00133/FULL	Land at NGR 273433 108439 (Sandhurst) Lapford Devon	Erection of 3 animal shelters and greenhouse Decision: On a proposal by Cllr. Wilkie, seconded by Cllr. Fletcher, it was Resolved to Support this revised application.

b) APPLICATIONS AFTER THE AGENDA WAS ISSUED

There were no such applications.

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2024

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk Phone: 07768 829511 Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

c) MDDC DECISIONS

Reference	Location	Proposal	MDDC Decision
23/01768/FULL	Land at NGR 273411 108426 (Sandhurst) Lapford Devon	Change of use of part of agricultural land to horticultural/domestic use, erection of two animal shelters, greenhouse and new access gateway	Withdrawn

2324-252 BANK RECONCILIATION & BUDGET MONITOR STATEMENT

The Bank Reconciliation and Receipts and Payments statement, as at 31st January 2024 were **Noted**.

2324-253 RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS SCHEDULE

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

PAYMENTS

Payment to	Services	Amount £	Payment No.
2023/2024			
S Hemsworth	Salary February 2024	57.30	SO
WEP Protection	PAT Testing OC	36.00	2324-34
RJ Martin	Salary February 2024	533.53	2324-35
HMRC	Tax Deductions	149.00	2324-35
EDF Energy	Orchard Centre Electricity	72.02	DD
Everflow	Orchard Centre Sewage & Water	20.77	DD
BT Group Ltd	Orchard Centre Broadband	51.62	DD
IONOS	Village Website Hosting	18.28	DD
T & G Garden Maintenance	Grass Cutting	160.00	2324-36
Scribe	Accountancy System	788.40	2324-36
Ofcom	Emergency Radio Licences	75.00	2324-36

RECEIPTS

Receipt from	Services	Amount £	Method
2023/2024			
None			

Lapford Parish Council Meeting 13th February 2024

Email: clerk@lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk Phone: 07768 829511 Website: www.lapfordparishcouncil.org.uk

- 2324-254 MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR**
The chairman had no further matters to raise.
- 2324-255 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)**
Cllr. Briant-Evans questioned when the annual Assets Inspection was normally carried out and the clerk responded by saying he believed it was in April. This would go on the next agenda.
Cllr. Fletcher asked about what the parish council was going to do about the general weed clearance around the village. This would be agenda for the next meeting.
- 2324-256 MEETINGS DATES 2024**
It was **Agreed** to change the meeting date in April 2024 from 9th to 16th due to the unavailability of the clerk.
- 2324-257 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
There will be an Extraordinary Meeting on Wednesday 28th February 2024 at 7pm in the Orchard Centre, in order to decide on the co-option.
The date of the next Ordinary Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 12th March 2024 at 7.30pm in the Orchard Centre.
- 2324-258 CLOSE OF MEETING**
The meeting closed at 10.12pm.

**Action List
13th February 2024 Meeting**

Latest Minute ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
2324 235	Hedge by the burnt down Yeo Vale Cottage very overgrown, impacting on the highway. Owner to be contacted re trimming it back	Clerk	Highways Notified, Steven Tucker to have a look, no response yet. Cllr. Lumsdon to take some action.
2324 235	106 funding for the Football Club	Clerk	Contact to be made again. Steve Densham has indicated that this is unlikely to meet Section 106 criteria.
2324 235	Ownership of the adjacent land to be determined.	Clerk	Clerk to meet Steve Densham
2324 069	Ash Dieback. Ownership of affected trees to be researched and addresses passed to the Clerk.	Cllr Burrows	Highways Notified, Steven Tucker to have a look, no response yet.
2324 235	Signposts, prices to be obtained for replacement arms. Request that the Playing Field be added to the central village one.	Clerk	Contact made with Ken White Signs to discuss options. This will now be for identical signs complete with brackets.
	Cleaning of signs to be arranged.	Cllrs Lumsdon & Briant-Evans	Postponed until Spring 24
2324 242	Neighbourhood Plan. When appropriate a public meeting to be called re progressing this.	Parish Council	PowerPoint for councillors drafted. Housing Needs Survey underway.
2324 099	Scribe Accountancy system	Clerk	Installed but not yet live
2324 235 6	Telephone Box – Make safe for use as book swap area.	Clerk & Cllr. Wilkie	BT arrived on 26 January but could not get access. Needs to be arranged again
2324 117	Community Broadband	Clerk	Contact Church/Congregational Church about what access the want.
2324 248	Logo Competition	Cllr. Briant-Evans	To be subject of workshops

**Action List
13th February 2024 Meeting**

Latest Minute ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
2324 137 3	Clerk's Hours Worked – to solve the disparity between the hours paid for, 35 hours per month, and the hours worked.	Clerk	Report written and with the chair/vice-chair for their thoughts.
2324 238 b	Lapford Emergency Action Plan (LEAP) Committee - Contact Highways on highlighted points - Investigate alternative Broadband for the Orchard Centre	Clerk	Highways Notified, Steven Tucker to have a look, no response yet. Clerk to write once more to highlight lack of action
2324 152	Citizen's Advice	Clerk	Openreach fibre project submitted To email Citizens' Advice to ask them to a meeting before applying for a grant.
2324 216	Defibrillator Additional Defibrillator to be placed on Spar wall	Clerk	BHF offer of free Defibrillator applied for, no answer yet. Conversation with Spar manager still to be had.
2324 235 5	Prospect Cottage Site Clearance	Clerk	Environmental Health and Planning Enforcement contacted. EH responded saying they are looking into it. PE acknowledgement but no contact yet.
2324 231	Openreach Fibre Connection	Clerk	To ensure that website is updated with current situation
2324 235 3	PC Historic Records	Clerk Cllrs Briant-Evans and Down	To look through records obtained and decide what needs to be stored and where.
2324 235	Picture of King Charles	Clerk	To order one for display in the Orchard Centre

LAPFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Action List 13th February 2024 Meeting

Latest Minute ref	Issue/Action	Responsibility	Update
2324	237	Council	To set up Extraordinary Meeting on 28 th February to appoint
2324	243	Cllr. Briant-Evans and others	Arrange with others for equipment and food to be available on the day
2324	244	All	Advertise date Publicise Date and put on future agendas
2324	246	Clerk	To investigate the cost and feasibility of installing a bus shelter at top of village.
2324	247	Cllr. Briant-Evans	Cllr. Briant-Evans would continue with project and come back with proposal
2324	250	Clerk, District Cllr. Keable, Cllr. Andrews and others	To oversee the removal of the current toddler play area. To arrange the transfer of this land. To work with the replacement of all equipment with the LYPFT.

9.