**BOXWELL WITH LEIGHTERTON PARISH COUNCIL**

**COMMUNITY PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

**HELD ON 12th MAY 2025 AT 7.00pm**

**MINUTES**

Councillors: Simon Gale (SG)

 Martin Weaver (MW)

 Gary Mackenzie (GM)

 Dan Say (DS)

 Felicity White (FW)

Guest: Tony Slater (TS) District Councillor Avening & Gumbolds Ash

1. SG welcomed fellow PC members as well as several residents of Leighterton to whom he introduced the members of the Parish Council.
2. The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th March were approved and signed.
3. SG outlined the purpose of this meeting and why residents of the village had specifically been encouraged to attend. In particular he wished to extend his thanks to those residents who had completed the Parish Plan Questionnaire and planned to use this meeting as an opportunity to update on a number of items, namely:
* The Poole Farm development and the PCs current understanding in the wake of a revised Planning Application and street naming.
* Local environment, including buildings, natural environment and the pond
* Road safety

3.1 **Poole Farm** - There has been a revision to the Planning Permission, the original of which the PC and village residents had largely supported. The PC has lodged some objections in respect of the revised documents.

Fundamentally, changes have been made to three of the properties. MW and SG advised that this included:

* a comment on minor height change to the properties (although this was not substantial), and an objection to metal garage doors has been lodged as garages in the village are either open car ports or have wood doors.
* SuDs pond: Most houses have a soakaway and we have queried not only whether the proposed SuDs pond was a waste of time, but who would be responsible for maintenance and why it appeared to have been re-sited on land closer to Bleak Cottage.
* Public space: the old meadow is referenced this way in the latest plan. Who will be responsible for owning and maintaining it? The walkway highlighted in the plans implies that it is for the use of the village but confirmation is required MW also stressed that the grass should be left long, as barn owls hunt in that area.

In essence, the architectural quality seems inferior to that outlined in the original, agreed plan; there is no landscape detail, the use of less vernacular materials and although bird and bat boxes have been included, there is no reference to any other steps to maintain the rural feel around the site.

The meeting was opened up to questions/observations from residents. The comments received included the following:

* a lack of architectural integrity which implies that Mackenzie Martin’s new architect has not visited the site. Some matters formally highlighted to CDC by Mark Osborne include that elevations are different to approved scheme; side windows are not narrow as would be usual in a barn; PVC windows to replace timber joinery; roofing appears to be of artificial slate rather than Cotswold stone as approved; paths are of a different material; bird boxes omitted; the new, proposed SuDs is not necessary and dangerous for children; he has stressed that the development in a natural landscape.
* other comments received highlighted that there is little landscape detail although plans show trees being planted too close to boundary walls.
* complete lack of communication from Mackenzie Miller when queries raised, in particular about the natural springs on the site and proposed planting of trees close to boundary walls.

**Addendum:** Following our meeting we have noted that Cotswold District Council Planning Department have refused developer proposals in respect of Landscaping (the use of 1.8m close-board fencing) and ground drainage (not enough detail provided on plans) whilst accepting the developer proposal for bird & bat boxes. The detailed findings can be found on the Planning website.

SG advised that he had reviewed the developers compliance document in respect of working hours and site-traffic management which are as follows:

**Construction work** **Deliveries**

07.30 am to 18.00 Monday to Friday 08.30 - 16.00

08.00am to 14.00 Saturday 08.30 - 12.00

It is important that all residents are aware of the working hours in order that representations can be made should these be breached.

Access for construction traffic is shown as Millway Lane (aka Bath Road) from the A46 once demolition is complete. However, the address is given as GL8 8UN, which is The Street. Real concerns were raised that lanes will be blocked and cause problems for farm traffic and machinery and that verges on Bath Road will be seriously damaged if traffic flow is not managed effectively.

The time scale is for marketing of the houses to commence in the Summer of 2026.

**Street and house naming** - As part of the development, the PC has been approached regarding the naming of the small access road off what is currently known as Back Lane. The PC was asked to comment on naming the access road plus the names of the houses after some of the airmen buried in Leighterton Cemetery. This was deemed a very bad idea and, in some instances, described as objectionable. SG has formally advised CDC that the proposal was felt to be at the very least in bad taste, something which was reinforced by official and unofficial attendees at the ANZAC Day service and also subsequently by two Australian visitors to the cemetery and the church, both of whom found it offensive.

However, some suggestions were provided by the meeting, which have subsequently been relayed to CDC. This included **Hillmist**, in recognition of the herd which formed part of Poole Farm for many years. It was also suggested that perhaps new residents might like to name their own houses!

3.2 **The Pond** - whilst many residents are keen on ducks on the pond, their tenure is often short lived due to proximity to their lack of road-safety training and the volume of traffic. MW has conducted a considerable amount of research in order to understand how the pond might be changed in order to discourage the ducks from spending time on the road. He has visited Alderton, which has a large number of ducks on their pond, they have an ‘island’ in the middle of their pond as well as a large area of grass for them to feed on. This would not be feasible for Leighterton due to the fact there is believed to be a spring in the middle of the pond. Fencing was suggested, but this will also need to be carefully thought through as the Fire Service needs access to the pond in the event of an emergency.

Wild ducks would be the most suitable option for the environment and it was felt that Slimbridge WWT might be helpful. It was also suggested that Simon Ursell was approached for his thoughts and assistance.

In conclusion, MW asked for assistance on a plan to present to the village before proceeding further.

3.3 **Public, open spaces** - SG referred to small pieces of land in and around the village and that various conversations have taken place with the farmers as the PC would very much like to create a small, community orchard. The PC is currently trying to establish how and who to contact in order to obtain the necessary approval to proceed. The PC is seeking ideas from residents but warned it will take time to achieve.

**4.** **Road Safety** - DS has been the PC lead on Traffic Management, which he described as having been very difficult and frustrating as it is not easy or quick when engaging with the authorities concerned. He had a meeting earlier in the year with Gloucester Highways, which included the Clerk at Leighterton School. Concerns had been raised by village parents, who have to walk in the road due to cars parked on the pavement.

In order to reduce the speed limit through the village, a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) has to be sought and would cost £15,000 with no guarantee of a subsequent speed limit reduction. Painted Yellow lines would be subject to a further TRO at an additional cost of £15,000 and DS stressed that Boxwell with Leighterton has a small, limited budget (£15,000 represents approximately 10 years’ income).

He referred to Stefan Fifield, who had recommended that the PC applied for village gates to be paid for via ‘Build Back Better’ (no response has been received yet) and who also provided a contact name at GCC Road Safety.

DS has been in contact with the Road Safety contact, who has previously helped Coates implement new schemes to improve traffic through their similar village. The Road Safety representative (with bodycam) will be in the village, together with Highways on 6th June, in order to assess road safety in holistic terms around the village. TS advised that the new GCC is very keen on 20mph.

Planters and village gates were suggested, but these have to be located a certain distance from the road in order to accommodate farm vehicles and meet GCC Highways requirements, and with six access roads represent a very considerable investment. However, the PC has not ruled anything out and will continue to look at what other villages are doing, work with the Road Safety team and the local community.

DS concluded by stating matters are, unfortunately, moving very slowly. He cited the repainting of the lines outside the school, which was due to be completed in April, but is now planned for completion in the near future.

**5. Any Other Business**

5.1 MW advised that following a meeting with Jane Bullock who has devoted considerable time and energy to the production of the newsletter for a number of years - for which we all extend our thanks - the PC had offered to help with the BwL Newsletter. MW has obtained some examples of other parish magazines and hopes to include material from the school, church, Parish Council, the pub and the parish more broadly in future editions. He will be looking for volunteers to advertise, distribute, etc.

5.2 Jane Bullock referred to the village fete, due to take place from 3.00 - 5.00pm on 7th June. A Plant stall was very popular last time and she is hoping for a volunteer for this fete; she also extended an invitation to join the next and final planning meeting in the pub on Thursday 22nd May at 6.00pm.

5.3 Robert Bryant Pearson highlighted that the church was available for community use and would encourage BwL residents to utilise it more often.

**6.** The next PC meeting will take place at 7.00pm on Monday 7th July 2025

**BwL PC Meeting Minutes May 2025 Final.doc**