

LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD REMOTELY VIA ZOOM MONDAY 6TH APRIL 2020 AT 8.00PM

PRESENT: Cllr J. Kaye (Chairman), Cllr R. Britain, Cllr R. Lake, Cllr G. Marchant, Cllr G. Rogers, Cllr S. Satterley, Cllr B. Skipper and Cllr S. Smith

APOLOGIES: Cllr P. Croft

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and District Cllr Osborne-Jackson. County Cllr Lake attended the meeting for the Open Session only.

Cllr Kaye advised that the meeting will be recorded.

Cllr Kaye welcomed everyone to the first meeting of Leigh Parish Council being held remotely. Members of the public are welcome to join the online meetings and are able to request a password from the Clerk after providing details of their address.

Open Session

Report by County Cllr Lake

County Cllr Lake reported that KCC is operating a 24 hour helpline for Kent residents (03000-419292). This helpline complements the help and support being provided by local voluntary groups and district and borough councils. KCC has had trouble distributing personal protective equipment (PPE), the army is now helping and hopefully all those who need the equipment now have it. There is a voucher scheme for children who have free school meals to allow them to have access to food at home during the Easter holidays and Coronavirus lockdown, this is working well. The Household Waste Recycling Centres are now closed and there is a concern that there may be an increase in fly tipping in rural areas. The KCC Social Services for the elderly and young is working well at the moment and there is a mental health line (0800 107 0160) which is free and open 24 hours a day.

Report by District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

District Cllr Osborne-Jackson reported that he is very proud of the SDC officers who are working very hard to keep services running during the Coronavirus lockdown. A team of four are working in the Revenue, Benefits & Council Tax department and received 1000 phone calls in one day. The office is open from 7am to 7pm every day. The out-of-hours phone number to contact is 01732-227000. If any residents need an emergency food package as provided by central Government please let SDC know. The SDC office is closed to the public and most officers are now working from home but services continue to be available by phone and online. Many thanks to the Sevenoaks District refuse collectors who are continuing their weekly collections. Garden waste is still being collected from those who had previously subscribed to the service, but at this time no new subscribers are being accepted. Cllr Osborne-Jackson commended the Leigh parish group of volunteers who are helping the community during this time. He also said that he has started a Facebook page where he will post updates on the current situation.

Closed Session

- 193. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr P. Croft and members accepted his reason for absence.
- 194. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
None.
- 195. The minutes of the Leigh Parish Council Meeting held on 2nd March 2020** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Marchant, seconded by Cllr Skipper, and all were in favour.

196. To hear update regarding current legislation regarding Parish Council meetings and functions

The Clerk reported that NALC has been working with the Government on how Town and Parish Councils can legally carry out their responsibilities and functions. NALC has reported that, on 2nd April, the Government published The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. These regulations came into force on 4th April and relate to all meetings until 7th May 2021. The Clerk reported that guidance attached to the legislation says that Annual Parish Meetings, which by law should be held between 1st March and 1st June, cannot be held remotely and cannot be held in person, so the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on 18th May will be cancelled this year.

The legislation states:

Meetings of local authorities: Remote attendance

4. (1) In respect of a reference in any enactment to a meeting of a local authority, that authority may, as they may determine—
 - (a) hold such meetings and at such hour and on such days; and
 - (b) alter the frequency, move or cancel such meetings, without requirement for further notice.
- (2) Where an appointment would otherwise be made or require to be made at an annual meeting of a local authority, such appointment continues until the next annual meeting of the authority or until such time as that authority may determine.
5. (1) A reference in any enactment to a meeting of a local authority is not limited to a meeting of persons all of whom, or any of whom, are present in the same place and any reference to a “place” where a meeting is held, or to be held, includes reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.
- (2) For the purposes of any such enactment, a member of a local authority (a “member in remote attendance”) attends the meeting at any time if all of the conditions in subsection (3) are satisfied.
- (3) Those conditions are that the member in remote attendance is able at that time:
 - (a) to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, the other members in attendance,
 - (b) to hear, and where practicable see, and be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by, any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting in order to exercise a right to speak at the meeting, and
 - (c) to be so heard and, where practicable, be seen by any other members of the public attending the meeting.
- (4) In this regulation any reference to a member, or a member of the public, attending a meeting includes that person attending by remote access.
- (5) The provision made in this regulation applies notwithstanding any prohibition or other restriction contained in the standing orders or any other rules of the authority governing the meeting and any such prohibition or restriction has no effect.
- (6) A local authority may make other standing orders and any other rules of the authority governing the meeting about remote attendance at meetings of that authority, which may include provision for:
 - (a) voting;
 - (b) member and public access to documents; and
 - (c) remote access of public and press to a local authority meeting to enable them to attend or participate in that meeting by electronic means, including by telephone conference, video conference, live webcasts, and live interactive streaming.

Modification of meeting and public access requirements

Frequency of local authority meetings

6. Schedule 12 to the 1972 Act (meetings and proceedings of local authorities) applies as follows:
 - (a) any reference to being “present” at a meeting includes being present through remote attendance;
 - (b) any reference to a “place” where a meeting is held, or to be held, includes reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers;

Public and press access

13. Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960(9) (admission of public to meetings of local authorities and other bodies) applies as follows:
 - (a) subsection (4)(a) is to be read as if, after “(or, if the body has no offices, then in some central and conspicuous place in the area with which it is concerned)” there were inserted “or publishing on the website of the body or, for a parish council, on the website of the principal council within the meaning of the Local Government Act 1972”;
 - (b) after subsection (9), there were inserted:

“(9A) In this Act, references (however expressed) to:

 - (a) a meeting being “open to the public” include access to the meeting through remote means including (but not limited to) video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming and where a meeting is accessible to the public through such remote means the meeting is open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend the meeting in person;
 - (b) being “present” at a meeting include access through remote means mentioned in paragraph (a) above.”.
14. Section 9G of the Local Government Act 2000(10) applies as if after subsection (6) there were inserted:

“(7) In this section, references to a meeting being “open to the public” include access to the meeting through remote means including (but not limited to) video conferencing, live webcast, and live interactive streaming and where a meeting is accessible to the public through such remote means the meeting is open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend the meeting in person.”.

197. To discuss how the Parish Council will operate during the Coronavirus lockdown

Members agreed the following:

- i. Planning – the Clerk will notify the Planning Committee of planning applications received, each member of the Planning Committee will look at the application on the SDC website, and comments will be relayed back to the Clerk who will, after agreement with the Chairman of the Planning Committee submit agreed comments within the timescale.
- ii. Finance:
 - i. Routine payments will be approved at Parish Council meetings held remotely and authorised in the normal way.
 - ii. The Clerk reported that the advice from NALC is awaited regarding the 2019-20 Year End Accounts and Annual Return, the deadline will be extended but Town and Parish Councils are waiting to hear how the internal audit and sign-off will work.
- iii. Discussions and decisions relating to non-essential items and items for large sums of money will be postponed until the Parish Council is able to meet again at an open public meeting.
- iv. The Annual Parish Meeting has been cancelled and the presentation of the Community Award will be postponed until the Parish Council can meet again.

198. To review and update Standing Orders and Finance Regulations

Members discussed the draft updates to the Standing Orders, which will allow the Parish Council to meet remotely as specified in The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020. Cllr Britain proposed that these changes to the Standing Orders be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Satterley and all were in favour. Members also approved the Finance Regulations, which were unchanged.

199. To review and update Risk Assessment

Members reviewed the Risk Assessment. It was agreed to add details of any risks relating to the volunteer group working in the community during the Coronavirus outbreak. Members felt that the risk exposure was minimal and there is a good audit trail in place. With this addition, Cllr Lake proposed that the Risk Assessment be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Rogers and all were in favour. (See item 201: To hear report of the Leigh Parish Council Volunteers Group).

200. Planning

i. To consider applications received

- i. SE/20/00442/HOUSE and SE/20/00443/LBCALT: Orchard House, High Street, Leigh TN11 8RH - internal staircase to loft space, three new dormers, garden shelter adjacent to pool.
- ii. SE/20/00883/FUL: Eastwood Farm, Scabharbour Road, Hildenborough TN11 8PJ - demolition of existing dwelling and associated outbuildings and the erection of a replacement dwelling and garage, with associated works to garden area, vehicle access and planting.

Members agreed that the planning committee would look at these two applications and send their comments to the Clerk.

The Clerk reported that since the last meeting, the Planning Committee has considered the following application:

- iii. SE/20/00187/FUL: Ashour Farm, Penshurst Road, Bidborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0LN - importation of 972 tonnes (780 M3) non-hazardous, unprocessed inert and excavation material comprising the fill of disused slurry lagoons for the construction of hardstanding area for vehicle / plant parking and storage of hay bales. Members had a strong objection to this application, which is retrospective and waste has already been imported to the site. No assessment of the site was made prior to the waste being imported and there has been no control on the imported material. At the very least, the waste transfer notes for every load (a legal requirement) should be examined to find their source. The applicant must be a registered carrier of waste and will therefore be aware that waste can only be tipped at an Environment Agency approved tip or a tip covered by planning permission. The Environment Agency has not been consulted, and therefore the application is an attempt to legalise fly tipping. The environmental protection team response has not treated this application as retrospective therefore it would appear that they have not read the application. Leigh Parish Council sees this as a very important matter and must be investigated immediately and action taken. D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson asked to speak, which was approved by the Chair, and he said that he has discussed the application with the planning officer and, if the planning officer is minded to approve the application, D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson will ask for the application to be considered by the Development Control Committee. Cllr Marchant said that this is a legal matter and Environment Agency will also need to give their approval. D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson said that if the application is refused he will ensure that enforcement officers deal with the matter effectively.

ii. To report SDC planning application decisions

- SE/19/03528/HOUSE: Little Keepers, Charcott – proposed detached double garage. Application approved.
- SE/19/03336/HOUSE and SE/19/03337/LBCALT: Chilling House, High Street, Leigh – alter existing window, additional window, internal alterations. Application approved.
- SE/ 20/00094/LDC EX: Eastwood Farm, Scabharbour Road, Hildenborough - Occupation of the dwelling without complying with condition (iii) of planning permission SW/5/62/401. Application approved.
- SE/19/03017/HOUSE and SE/19/03018/LBCALT: The Woods, Hildenborough Road, Leigh - Removal of the remains of a timber outbuilding and erection of outbuilding. Application refused. Reasons:
 - The proposed outbuilding would be unacceptable through its excessive height and volume resulting in an outbuilding that would be harmful to the openness of the Green Belt and inappropriate by definition.
 - The proposed outbuilding would adversely affect the outlook from a principal window/door at The Woods Cottage.
 - Insufficient information has been submitted to support this application and therefore an assessment of the contribution the existing outbuilding makes to the significance of the listed building and its setting cannot be made. As a result of this, the proposed outbuilding's potential impact on the significance of the listed building and its setting also cannot be made. Furthermore, the proposed building has a greater prominence because of its larger footprint and different roof form which changes the small scale character of the existing outbuilding.

The introduction of a taller roof creates a building that appears top heavy and not proportionate.

- SE/20/00300/FUL: Greenacres, Philpots Lane, Leigh - Demolition of an old shed and replacement with a new building to provide a combination of secure storage and a pool changing room with a shower and toilet. Application approved.

201. To hear report of the Leigh Parish Council Volunteers Group

Cllr Kaye reported that the group of volunteers has been doing an incredible job of supporting the parish and thanked Cllr Rogers and the other co-ordinators and volunteers for all their hard work. Cllr Rogers said that there are now 70 volunteers offering their help, so far two leaflets have been distributed to as many households in the parish as possible and they are also posted on the Parish Council website and Facebook page. Volunteers wear gloves when delivering items and stay at least 2m away from everyone. The parish has been very lucky in that they have been provided with free bread, fruit and potatoes. This may not be on a regular basis and the volunteers have not promised to provide these items weekly. The volunteers are shopping for vulnerable people and those self-isolating, and the parish has been split into zones for efficiency purposes. If a request cannot be satisfied locally, the volunteers are pointing residents to the help being offered by SDC and KCC. A clear audit trail is being maintained with a record of requests and action. All personal details are kept confidential and Cllr Rogers said that she is ensuring that GDPR are being followed. A recent issue has come to light in that elderly residents are not able to collect their pensions in person from the post office. As this is cash, it has created a problem and the volunteers are in discussion with the post office on what can be done safely in order to protect the pensioner and the volunteers. Cllr Osborne-Jackson asked to speak which was approved by the Chair. He said that he will ask Pav Ramewal, the Chief Executive at SDC, whether this has been experienced elsewhere in the district and whether there is anything that SDC can do to help.

202. Finance:

To approve list of payments

Cllr Lake proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Marchant and all were in favour. Cllr Kaye and Cllr Britain to authorise the online payments.

203. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

- i. The Clerk reported that the artist who is re-painting the village sign has asked whether the Parish Council is happy for her to use her own style for the design and whether the Parish Council wants the reference to 1951 still included. Cllr Rogers said that 1951 is a reference to the Festival of Britain. Members agreed that, whilst this was a good gesture when the sign was originally painted, they did not think that it was necessary to reproduce it now. It was agreed to ask the artist to include two fleur de lis instead.
- ii. Cllr Kaye reported that some of the newly planted daffodils were cut along with the grass on the slope near Porcupine House. Members agreed that next year the whole bank should be left until June before being cut, apart from a 3m strip alongside the road, which can be cut earlier.
- iii. Cllr Rogers asked that the Terms of Reference for the refurbishment of the cricket pavilion be discussed at the next Parish Council plus the request for a new bank account to be opened. Members agreed.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed

Date

**LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
LIST OF PAYMENTS
April 2020**

Date	Payment		Detail of payment	Amount	
	Number	Payee		Inc. VAT	VAT
06.04.20	229	Swift Locksmiths Ltd	Repair to lock of No.2 The Bungalows	£354.00	£59.00
06.04.20	230	Clerk	Salary	£839.80	
06.04.20	231	HMRC	PAYE	£331.46	
06.04.20	232	Clerk	Mileage, petty cash & work fm home allow	£66.50	
06.04.20	233	KCC	Pension contribution	£336.74	
06.04.20	234	SDC	Bulk Refuse Freighter 07.03.20	£98.40	£16.40
06.04.20	235	Vision ICT Ltd	Provision 9 hosted email accounts	£194.40	£32.40
06.04.20	236	Vision ICT Ltd	Provision 1 new hosted email parishcouncil@	£21.60	£3.60
06.04.20	237	ACRK	Subscription renewal (last year: £75)	£80.00	
06.04.20	238	CPRE	Subscription renewal (same as last year)	£36.00	
06.04.20	239	KALC	Subscription renewal (last year: £721.37)	£873.17	£145.53
06.04.20	240	Leigh Village Halls	Hall Hire 2020	£140.00	
06.04.20	241	Communicorp	Local Councils Update (last year: £100)	£100.00	
06.04.20	242	Nicola Butler	Reimbursement VE Day costs (from grant £1500)	£73.78	
06.04.20	243	Vision ICT Ltd	Data backup June 20 to May 2021 (cost to Leigh £60)	£144.00	£24.00
06.04.20	244	Original Tree Surgeons	Lime tree work in Old Burial Ground	£216.00	£36.00
				<u>£3,905.85</u>	<u>£316.93</u>