

LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE SMALL HALL, HIGH STREET, LEIGH ON MONDAY 7TH DECEMBER 2015 AT 8.00PM

PRESENT: Cllr. C. Stratton-Brown (Chairman), Cllr P. Croft, Cllr A. Johnston, Cllr J. Kaye, Cllr G. Marchant, Cllr S. Smith and Cllr R. Swallow
APOLOGIES: Cllr B. Doherty, Cllr L. Provan, District Cllr Lake and County Cllr Pearman
IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and member of the public (Open Session only)

Open Session

Mr Nick Cook attended the meeting in order to hear members' comment on his planning application at Pauls Farm Barn.

Report by District Cllr Lake

In the absence of D.Cllr Lake, the Clerk read his report: "I am sorry that I cannot attend tonight's meeting and I send my apologies to members of the Parish Council. Your Chairman, your Clerk and I had our first, and as it turns out, very timely meeting with Kevin Tomsett of Sevenoaks District Council. He is responsible for Flood Protection at SDC and he has asked us to help him to put a community flood plan in place. This will identify areas at risk of flooding, it will list all those people in the community involved in flood defence, and it will tell us exactly what to do and how to obtain the materials to keep flooding under control. At our meeting we made Kevin well aware of the continuing flooding problems along Coppings Road. We all agreed that this road was a Kent County Council responsibility with a need to put more adequate drainage in place and to repair the warning signage as a matter of urgency. The landowners have done their best to clear ditches and gullies but they cannot be expected to unblock drains along the road. A national clean-up is to take place to coincide with the Queen's 90th birthday. "Clean for the Queen" weekend, on March 4-6, is part of a national litter strategy. I really do hope that we can play our part in keeping Leigh clutter-free and that our road signs are cleaned and repaired by the appropriate authority at the same time. I take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year.'

Closed Session

- 108. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Doherty and Cllr Provan and members accepted their reasons for absence. Apologies for absence were also received from District Cllr Lake and County Cllr Pearman.
- 109. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
None.
- 110. The minutes of the Leigh Parish Council meeting held on 2nd November 2015** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Johnston, seconded by Cllr Swallow and all were in favour.
- 111. Planning**
- i. To consider applications received
 - i. SE/15/03603/HOUSE: Pauls Farm Barn, Ensfield Road, Leigh TN11 8RX - demolition of existing plain brick garden walls to the rear of the property and rebuilding with kentish ragstone, demolition of mixed stone walls to the south of the property and rebuilding with kentish ragstone, installation of a timber gate to the drive set 29 metres from the public highway. This is a retrospective application. Members supported the application.
The Clerk reported that, during the month, the Planning Committee considered the following application:

- ii. SE/15/02514/HOUSE: Fyldon, Penshurst Road, Leigh TN11 8HN - erection of an external 'lean-to' to front. External alterations to include installation of tile pegs to North, East and West elevations. Members supported this application for a porch at this dwelling and felt that this addition would not be detrimental to the property or the immediate area. However, concern was raised as to the condition imposed on a previous application that "No extension or external alteration shall be carried out to the building hereby approved, despite the provisions of any development order, to prevent inappropriate development in the Green Belt as supported by Policy H14A of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan". Whilst members supported this application, they were mindful of the impact on the Green Belt, so agreed to support the decision made by the Planning Officer.
- ii. To hear update regarding Manor Buildings, Powder Mill Lane, Leigh
The Clerk reported that Nicola Clinch, the Enforcement Officer at SDC, has emailed as follows: "After I had written to the owners advising that car sales should cease, the owner's agent confirmed that the business is an internet company with the land being for the storage of vehicles with no "open display" of vehicles for sale. Transactions do not take place on site. When I visited one afternoon the premises were locked up and there was no signage indicating that cars were for sale. My view is that the current use is for storage. In the event that the planning application for car storage is approved, I anticipate that a condition will be imposed prohibiting any sale of vehicles from the site." Cllr Kaye undertook to investigate this matter further.
- iii. Notification of planning decisions
 - SE/15/02920/HOUSE: 1 Hollow Trees Close, Leigh: erection of a single storey side extension. Application refused due to potential impact to an oak tree with a TPO.
 - SE/15/02982/HOUSE: Headmasters House, Knotley Hall, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway: replacement of shed roof to a pitched roof with ridge lower than the garage, at 4m above ground level fitted with tiles identical to the garage. Application approved.
 - SE/15/03088/FUL: St Andrews Cottage, Scabharbour Road, Hildenborough - proposed replacement detached dwelling with revised access arrangements. Application refused. The Planning Officer's report states: "I consider that the proposed development would not harm neighbouring amenity but would harm the character and appearance of the area, being inappropriate development in the Green Belt and being of a poor design quality. Consequently the proposal is not in accordance with the development plan and therefore the Officer's recommendation is to refuse."
- iv. The Clerk reported that she has received an email from Mark Turner, Development Manager, SDC, regarding councillor planning training: "I am sure we can arrange some form of training for your Councillors. I've run a couple of sessions for other Parish Councils and have found that many of the things we were discussing were similar. I appreciate the difficulties with space when all the PCs attend together but wondered whether you could identify a neighbouring parish that might like to attend with you? To make things as convenient as possible I'd suggest running a session here at Argyle Road. Let me know what your thoughts are. It's probably the wrong side of Christmas to get something arranged now but I'm sure we can do something early in the New Year." Members agreed arrange a date towards the end of January.

112. Highways & Environment

- i. to discuss drainage and flood related issues
The Clerk reported that she, Cllr Stratton-Brown and D.Cllr Lake met with Kevin Tomsett, who is Head of Parking and Surveying Services at SDC. Kevin has asked that the Parish Council consider setting up a Community Flood Plan which would list flooding hotspots, Leigh's critical infrastructure, vulnerable people and contact details for 24hr communication. It is important that this information is kept up to date. If the Met Office issue a severe weather warning with a chance of flooding, the Severe Weather Advisory Group at SDC would contact the Community Flood Plan coordinator and deputy coordinator. He has suggested that the Parish Council discusses a draft plan, using a template he has supplied, and then meet him again at SDC offices towards the end of January. If the Parish Council has a Community Flood Plan, SDC will let the parish have a supply of sandbags which can be distributed to vulnerable people in an emergency.

Twelve sandbags per property are allowed, and residents are asked to dispose of them themselves afterwards. Sandbags can be sold to residents for £2.65 each in advance, which could be advertised locally. Cllr Stratton-Brown said that the Community Flood Plan would include details of properties that may have a chance of flooding, albeit a small chance. This information will allow SDC to prioritise their callout time. The Clerk added that this should be run by a team of volunteers with the Parish Council, and Clerk to mention in the parish magazine.

- ii. to hear update regarding the request for a permissive path at Pauls Hill Cottage
Cllr Stratton-Brown reported that he discussed this with the resident of Pauls Hill Barn, who has a concern about security but wished to discuss the matter with neighbours. Cllr Stratton-Brown undertook to try and meet with all residents either before or just after Christmas.
- iii. to hear update regarding traffic calming measures on Hildenborough Road
The Clerk reported that Andy Padgham at KCC has emailed to say that his design brief for the proposed gateway improvements at the start of the 30mph speed limit in Hildenborough Road has been sent to KCC's design team for design and costing.
- iv. to hear update regarding the maintenance of the pond at Crandalls
The Clerk reported that she has asked Leigh Keating to chase David Boorman again. Clerk to chase.
- v. to hear update and consider possible cost implications regarding the trees on The Green Lane
The Clerk reported that she and Cllr Stratton-Brown attended a meeting on 25th November with residents of Greenview Avenue, The Green Lane, and Leigh Keating from SDC. D.Cllr Lake also attended the meeting. The strip of land appears to have no title and, in order to move this matter forward, Leigh Keating suggested that SDC's tree officers request an inspection of the trees along the boundary of Greenview Avenue and The Green Lane and a report on whether any immediate work is necessary would be provided, together with a quote for the work, and also what work might be required in the future. Leigh suggested that the cost of this work could possibly be split three ways, between SDC, the Parish Council and the resident whose garden backs onto the relevant area. She said that she would need to obtain approval for this funding and undertook to report back to the Parish Council in due course. Cllr Stratton-Brown said that he was reluctant to suggest that the Parish Council contributes towards this work as it could set a precedent. To be discussed further when information has been received from SDC.
- vi. To consider request for traffic calming measures in the High Street, Leigh
The Clerk reported that Allan Gibbons has suggested that the Parish Council ask Steven Noad, from KCC Highways, for a traffic survey. The Clerk further reported that at the Highways Seminar held during the month, C.Cllr Pearman said that KCC will support any request made by Town and Parish Councils for a reduction in speed limit in villages to 20mph. Since mentioning in the Parish Magazine, a few residents have been in contact to say that they would support a reduction in speed limit, but not other traffic calming measures as they would not support the introduction of street lights in the village. Members agreed that the Clerk should write to Highways with a list of problem highway areas such as:
 - Request a reduction of speed limit to 20mph in the High Street
 - Concern regarding the speed of vehicles along the stretch from Donkeyfield to Ensfield Road
 - Request that the 30mph limit at Pauls Hill is moved
 - Request that the small stretch of kerbing at the top of Pauls Hill is removed
 - Request double yellow lines at the junction of Church Hill and the High Street – opposite the hairdressers
 - Request double yellow lines both sides of the junction of Greenview Avenue and The Green
 - Request reduction in speed limit at The CompassesCllr Johnston said that the parked cars in the High Street does create natural traffic calming and was not in favour of the installation of double yellow lines in this location.
- vii. To consider quote for an independent traffic survey
Members agreed to postpone this matter until item 112(vi) has been explored.
- viii. to hear update regarding safety measures on Ensfield Road
The Clerk reported that Steven Noad has said that the request for slow markings on the road has been added to the list for funding.

- Allan Gibbons has advised that he will replace the barrier after 1st April in the new financial year.
- ix. to discuss speed of vehicles at The Compasses
The Clerk reported that she has received an email from a resident of The Compasses to request speed reduction and other safety measures at The Compasses. The Clerk responded to say that this area is not built up enough to satisfy criteria for a reduction in speed limit and there have not, thankfully, been any serious accidents or fatalities here. C.Cllr Pearman agreed with the Clerk's comments. However, members agreed to add this to the list for KCC (see item 112(vi) above).
- x. to consider applications for tree works
None.

113. The Green

- i. To hear update regarding quotes for work required to the Veteran Oak
Item to be postponed until the January Parish Council meeting when hopefully all the quotes will have been received.
- ii. To consider how to reduce the number of vehicles parking on The Green
Members discussed the following options:
- Do nothing
 - Ask clubs and other regular users of The Green not to park on the grass
 - Erect no parking signs
 - Erect posts around the perimeter of The Green
 - Apply for Byelaws to be submitted to the Secretary of State to prevent all parking.
- Members agreed that the clubs and other regular users of The Green should be asked not to park on the grass. Also that temporary signs should be made asking people not to park on The Green due to the programme of improvement works to be undertaken in the new year. Cllr Swallow was concerned that if cars are not allowed to park on The Green in the summer it will cause congestion on the lane around The Green.
- iii. The Clerk reported that she has received an email from Gillian Harland, resident of Greenview Avenue: "I was wondering whether it might be possible to have a short length of double yellow lines painted on the road round the Green on either side of the entrance to Greenview Avenue. On driving out of the Avenue it is often impossible to see traffic coming round the Green because people park right on the corner on both sides therefore blocking the view - it could cause a potential accident. On another matter, do you think at some time "The Green" sign by the School could be painted or replaced - it has obviously been there for years and is very rusty." Members agreed to add this to the list for KCC (see item 112(vi) above). Clerk to ask KCC to repair or replace the sign.
- iv. To consider whether it is appropriate to apply for grant funding towards improvements
The Clerk reported that there has been email correspondence during the month regarding opportunities for grant funding. Cllr Swallow said that he is in the process of arranging a meeting between the Football Club and the Cricket Club to discuss this further.
- v. Cllr Swallow reported that remittance advice has been received to say that the £1,500 paid last month will be reimbursed by Sport for England as part of the grant for improvement works.
- vi. The Clerk reported that the quote for grounds maintenance of The Green for 2016 has been received and matter to be discussed at the January Parish Council meeting.

114. To consider using an alternative provider of the Bulk Refuse Freighter in 2016

The Clerk reported that Penshurst Parish Council wish to try another provider for the first visit in 2016. Members agreed to a trial session.

115. To adopt the 2016 KALC Community Awards Scheme

Cllr Smith proposed that Leigh Parish Council adopt the 2016 KALC Community Award Scheme. This was seconded by Cllr Stratton-Brown and all were in favour.

116. To discuss the Parish Caretaker Scheme

The Clerk advised that a pilot scheme was run in Wittisham, and was found to be successful. Wittisham Parish Council formed a cluster with neighbouring parishes and employed a full-time person as caretaker.

Funding was available from both county and district councils for devolved functions including:

- Carrying out safety inspections
- Clearing long grass
- Cleaning signs
- Cutting back vegetation to improve visibility
- Repairing signs
- Erecting new signs
- General highway repairs (not on highway)
- Clearing fly tipping
- Hedgecutting

The Clerk advised that the Wittisham cluster purchased a van, a trailer, various pieces of equipment and relevant insurances. They carried out risk assessments. There were queries about workplace pension responsibilities, whether funding was guaranteed, and the type of functions that KCC would expect parish caretakers to undertake. Also concern about double-taxation. KCC is going to provide a list of suitable tasks for further consideration. Members were interested in principle and Clerk to contact neighbouring Parish Councils to see if they are interested in discussing this further.

117. To consider affordable housing provision in the parish

Cllr Swallow said that he thinks that the Parish Council should consider possibly having another affordable housing scheme in the parish. The development at Gibbs Field is so successful and house prices in the parish are so high it precludes local people from being able to buy locally. Members agreed that the Clerk should contact the Rural Housing Trust in the first instance to discuss the possibility of a new scheme in the parish, and to mention in the parish magazine that initial discussions are being held.

118. Aviation: to hear report of the High Weald Councils Aviation Action Group

The Clerk reported that the campaign is progressing well. The review into westerly arrives is being undertaken by Bo Redeborn and his report is expected within the next couple of weeks. HWCAAG and GON are feeding into this review. At the last meeting of HWCAAG held on Tuesday 1st December, two senior officers at the CAA attended to give a presentation on Performance Based Navigation and what its capabilities are. Local Town and Parish Councils were well represented at this meeting. The Government's decision on additional runway capacity in the South-East was due to be made within the next couple of weeks, but the Government has now announced that the decision has been delayed for six months until after the London Mayoral election in May. Cllr Stratton-Brown reported that KCC is in discussion with the district and borough councils in the area in order to gather information on environmental effects of aviation on health.

119. Village Halls update

Cllr Johnston reported that the village hall insurances are in place for the next twelve months. The Clerk advised that the defibrillator on the Large Village Hall does not have its green light working, but Bill Coulstock has inspected it and says that it is fully operational. Clerk to discuss with the Ambulance Service.

120. Aged Persons Dwellings: to discuss and approve quote for repair to gutters and paths

The Clerk reported that Brisk Builders will carry out the work in early January. The work involves an overhaul the gutters and downpipes on the two bungalows, to break out and fill where necessary with concrete the cracks in the two bungalow paths. Angie Hollands has written to say that she has spoken to the CAB about the water charges for No.2 The Bungalows, which she believes should be included in the rent. The Clerk has written back to say that the property has been zero rated for water and therefore the Parish Council has had nothing to pay, also that members of the Parish Council believe that the tenancy agreement is quite clear that water and sewage charges are in addition to the rental charges.

121. To report on correspondence received

The Clerk reported that lists of correspondence received have been circulated, and drew members' attention to the following:

- i. Item 3: Email from James Cox, SDC re: the Control of Horses Act 2015 that aims to prevent fly grazing.
- ii. Items 5 and 20: Clive Pearman – County Council report October 2015. C.Cllr Pearman has said that there is no report for November but hopes to provide an update by the end of the year.
- iii. Items 7 and 23: Kent Police:
 - Powder Mill Lane, Leigh: between 3:45pm on Wednesday 4th November and 4:00pm on Thursday 5th November, electricity cable was stolen from a building site. The cable was ripped out of a sub-station causing a small fire.
 - Coppings Road, Leigh: between 7:00pm on Thursday 5th November and 8:00am on Friday 6th November, a Toyota van was stolen from a lay-by in the road and later recovered by police.
 - Station Hill, Leigh: between 7:30pm on Monday 30th November and 7:00am on Tuesday 1st December, person/s have broken into a vehicle while it was parked outside the owner's property and stolen items within.
- iv. Item 8: Email from Helen French, SDC Senior Planning Officer: "SDC is preparing a new Local Plan to cover the period up to 2035. The Local Plan is a policy document that is used to guide where and when development will happen. It will allocate land for open space, housing, employment and other types of development. We would like to invite you to a Local Plan Place-making Workshop at Edenbridge Town Council on Tuesday 26th January at 7.30pm. We are keen to know what you like about your area and how you wish to see it develop over the next 20 years. The workshop will include discussions about: Local Services and Facilities; Open Spaces and the Natural Environment; Regeneration opportunities; Employment, Leisure and Tourism opportunities; Housing land including affordable housing and housing for older persons. Your input is important to the preparation of the plan and where possible we will incorporate local aspirations into the final Local Plan." Cllr Stratton-Brown undertook to attend, and Clerk to discuss with Cllr Doherty and Cllr Smith.
- v. Item 10: Email from Jan Parfett: "I am the Treasurer of Leigh Cricket Club and Ian Bishop has just handed me a cheque from Leigh Parish Council for £500, at your next meeting would you please pass on our sincere thanks and gratitude for their generous donation."
- vi. Item 12: Email from Neil Gorham: "I have had a chat with our Tree Officer regarding this site and his advice is that there is no breach of condition as the works carried out are considered pruning, not removal. I have spoken to the school, who are going to plant some saplings as a gesture of goodwill. In view of this, the matter will be filed."
- vii. Item 15: Email from Laura Morris: "I am the new Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) for the rural villages around Edenbridge. These include Leigh, Four Elms, Penshurst, Fordcombe, Chiddingstone, Chiddingstone Causeway, Hever & Cowden. I have been a PCSO for just over 2 years. I started in Edenbridge, then went to cover the very busy Swanley for just over a year. I am now back in the Edenbridge area and am very lucky to be covering the parishes. I am going to be getting some training in speed guns this week so if you have any key speeding areas let me know and I will do checks every so often. Email: laura.morris@kent.pnn.police.uk"
- viii. Item 16: SDC: All local authorities are required to submit an annual figure to central government to indicate the number of people sleeping rough in their area on a typical night. They can arrive at this figure by means of an estimate or a count. Sevenoaks District Council is only required to provide an estimate of rough sleeping because we have in place regular intelligence gathering on rough sleepers through outreach teams and also because patterns of rough sleeping have been consistently low in our District for several years. I am contacting you to ask for your help in completing our estimate. The Council needs to ask partner agencies and other organisations to collect information about rough sleepers on an agreed night and to share this with us. The definition of a rough sleeper for the purposes of this estimate is set out below:
 - People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments).

- People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or “bashes”).
- ix. Item 17: Application for grant from Tunbridge Wells & District Samaritans. To be discussed at the January Parish Council meeting.
 - x. Item 25: KCC News Release: Plans to expand a trial that successfully tackled inappropriate overnight lorry parking will be discussed by councillors, Kent Police, port authorities and haulage industry representatives. Scores of communities across the county suffer regular disruption and disturbance from HGV drivers – generally foreign truckers – parking in residential areas or industrial parks. Without any proper facilities these areas are frequently blighted by litter and waste. Ashford Borough Council has carried out a trial crack-down, clamping HGV’s for which parking fines had not been paid. The scheme has been deployed in three industrial estates to enforce existing parking restrictions. The results of the pilot will be presented as a joint report from Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council to a meeting aimed at addressing this issue and Operation Stack, being held on Friday.
 - xi. Item 26: Letter from Rob Swallow, as Chairman of Leigh Tennis Club: “As you are aware Leigh Tennis Club continues to support Leigh village school with both the use of the courts to play netball and tennis. We also to provide the children with tennis coaching on Wednesday afternoon and evenings in addition to the three junior club sessions on a Saturday morning. This has continued to be successful in encouraging as many children as possible to join in these activities and to provide opportunities for those who excel, to progress through development squads into the County set up. We are proud that our small village is achieving comparable success to the much bigger clubs around the county. The club absorbs the cost of providing children’s equipment such as rackets and de-compressed balls and to having the courts marked out for junior tennis and netball. The cost of providing the coaching to the village school is around £1500 a year and whilst our membership is happy to support this activity we would greatly appreciate any contribution which you might be able to make towards the continuation of this activity. I thank you for the previous support that the Parish Council has provided and look forward to hearing from you.” Members agreed to discuss at the January Parish Council meeting.
 - xii. Item 27: KALC: request for nominations for the New Year 2017 Honours. The Government deadline for names to be considered for the New Year 2017 Honours list is 4th February 2016.
 - xiii. Item 29: Email from Linda Terry to say that two of the three lights under the railway arch in Leigh have been out of use for several weeks, making it dark and dangerous walking through at night when leaving the train. Clerk to contact Network Rail.
 - xiv. Item 30: The Kent Men of The Trees – judge’s report of 2015 competition.
 - xv. Cllr Swallow reported that he is working with the Leigh Village Produce Association and Leigh Cricket Club in trying to reach agreement regarding a clash of dates for use of The Green.

122. Finance:

The Clerk reported that the Finance Committee met on 30th November and had a preliminary discussion about the accounts for the current year and next year’s budget.

- i. 2015/16 Accounts:
 - i. Actual and Year End Forecast
 - ii. Earmarked Reserves
- ii. 2016/17 Accounts:
 - i. Draft Budget and Precept requirements
 - ii. Draft Earmarked Reserves Budget

Members briefly discussed the above, but agreed to have a full discussion and approve the budget and precept for 2016/17 at the January Parish Council meeting when details regarding the tax base for next year have been received.

To approve payment of cheques

Cllr Marchant proposed that the list of cheques be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Swallow and all were in favour.

123. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

- i. Cllr Marchant reported that he has heard from a parishioner that Enforcement may need to visit Brookside Barn again. Clerk to report.

- ii. Cllr Smith reported that the cattle in the field where the footpath crosses towards Penshurst Place are aggressive. Clerk to discuss with Kent ROW officer.
- iii. Members agreed to discuss the APD rental for 2016/17 at the next Parish Council meeting
- iv. Members agreed to consider increasing the Clerk's hours at the next Parish Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 9.45 pm.

Signed

Date

**LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
LIST OF CHEQUES
7th December 2015**

Date	Cheque Payee	Detail of payment	Amount	
			Inc. VAT	VAT
07.12.15	1650 Clerk	Salary	£578.60	
07.12.15	1651 HM Revenue & Customs	PAYE	£161.50	
07.12.15	1652 Clerk	Mileage and working from home allowance	£102.50	
07.12.15	1653 Kent County Council	Pension Contribution	£215.42	
07.12.15	1654 Chiddingstone Parish Council	Leigh contribution towards swathe contract	£797.15	
07.12.15	1655 Chiddingstone Parish Council	Leigh contribution towards play event costs	£77.34	
07.12.15	1656 Commercial Services Trading Ltd	2 nd half yearly grounds maintenance charge	£794.30	£132.38
07.12.15	1657 Robin Croft	Mowing	£60.00	
			<u>£2,786.81</u>	<u>£132.38</u>

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