

LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

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

PRESENT: Cllr J. Kaye (Chairman), Cllr R. Britain, Cllr P. Croft, Cllr R. Lake, Cllr G. Marchant, Cllr G. Rogers, Cllr S. Satterley, Cllr B. Skipper and Cllr S. Smith
IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and members of the public. County Cllr Lake and District Cllr Osborne-Jackson attended the meeting for the Open Session only.

Cllr Kaye advised that the meeting will be recorded.

Open Session

Report by County Cllr Lake

County Cllr Lake reported that KCC is working very hard on behalf of us all in these difficult times and is working with Public Health England to make sure that what we have achieved so far remains in place. Roger Gough, Leader of KCC, has a campaign moving forward for Kent which will build and restore confidence, look to the future and get the economy back on its feet. Businesses will be able to promote themselves through KCC's social media and website. C.Cllr Lake said that he is still trying to persuade Kent Highways to bring speeds down particularly on the B2027 from Hildenborough to Four Elms. Michael Payne, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, has approved the reduction of speed along this road in the Hildenborough parish, which is in the Tonbridge and Malling Borough, so it should be allowed in parishes in the Sevenoaks District. C.Cllr Lake said that he is planning to stand down as county member in May. He will try hard to reduce speed limits before then. Cllr Kaye said that traffic speeds are currently a problem on Ensfield Road, and C.Cllr Lake said that he has spoken to Michael Payne about yellow lines on this road and was told that the yellow lines would not stop people parking there and it would push the parking problem onto Leigh village. C.Cllr Lake was concerned that there may be Weil's Disease in the river, and maybe some signs should be erected to warn people of this. Cllr Marchant said that Knowle Park is also having problems with people parking on the road, no parking signs were erected and cones placed along the road, which people are now ignoring. Cllr Kaye said that he is sad to hear that C.Cllr Lake is intending to stand down in May, and thanked him for all he's done for Leigh over many years. A member of the public asked C.Cllr Lake whether there is any update on when the suspended 235 commuter bus will be reinstated. C.Cllr Lake said that KCC is working with Go Coach to see if they will accept a smaller amount of funding in order to reinstate the bus, but has not heard any further. He will update the Clerk as soon as he hears further on this issue. C.Cllr Lake left the meeting at 8.18pm.

Report by District Cllr Osborne-Jackson

District Cllr Osborne-Jackson reported that the Community Safety Unit at SDC is making the parking and litter problems at Ensfield Road a priority. Officers from Kent Police and Kent Fire & Rescue are undertaking regular patrols of the area. Penshurst Estate has ordered some new signs which will hopefully discourage people from picnicking on their land. He said that he would encourage double yellow lines and feels that this will help the parking problem. SDC Direct Services will clean the graffiti on the bridge by Leigh Station and if there are any other instances of graffiti please let him know as SDC will investigate. D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson said that he has recently become a Trustee of Friends of Leigh Cricket Pavilion. The next SDC meeting will be held at 5pm on 21st July and will be streamed live on YouTube. A resident said that the parking issue at Ensfield Road is dangerous and yellow lines, even if only on one side of the road, will help as it will allow access. Cattle were in the field but had to be removed for their own safety. D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson said that SDC have placed wildlife cameras at the location so that they can view activity. SDC is also trying to get mention of wild swimming sites in this area taken offline. The site has two litter bins now and the Chief Officer has asked for a deep clean of the site. Cllr Marchant said that this is a ROW and people have a right to walk on the footpath but not stay in the field. Vehicles should not be allowed to park on both sides of the road as it causes an obstruction. The Countryfile magazine is listing the River Medway as a good wild swimming site, and Clerk to contact SDC regarding this publication.

Cllr Kaye said that he thinks the Parish Council should continue to push for yellow lines and D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson agreed, and said that people should report to Kent Police if the road is blocked by parked cars. He said that he will try and get yellow lines on the agenda for the next Joint Transportation Board meeting. D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson left the meeting at 8.40pm.

Questions from members of the public

1. A resident said that the Leigh in Bloom team were excited about beautifying The Green to the south of Porcupine House and, mainly due to the generosity of the Parish Council, 3000 wild narcissi bulbs were planted and the Parish Council agreed not to mow this area until the plants had died off. The area of grass was mown before the plants had finished. He would like to have a broader discussion with the Parish Council as to how best to balance the public areas including The Green. The Leigh in Bloom team is trying to make the village more beautiful and are applying to enter the Village in Bloom competition. Cllr Kaye said that the Parish Council recognises how much the Leigh in Bloom team is doing and members are keen to support this good initiative. He said that part of the history is that there was a misunderstanding about the daffodils as the Parish Council gave their approval for the bulbs to be planted on the western edge and along the top edge directly in front of Porcupine House. The bulbs were in actual fact planted all over The Green in front of Porcupine House, which was clearly a misunderstanding. The Parish Council did say that they would not mow this area before the beginning of June and members are sorry that the area was mown earlier than that this year. There are practical considerations to be taken into account regarding the maintenance of this area. The Parish Council decided to mow regularly so that grass cuttings are short and can be left as it is not possible for them to be removed. Cllr Marchant said that there was a problem a few years ago when The Green and other areas were not regularly maintained and it became a real problem because the cuttings cannot be disposed of. The Parish Council agreed at that time to mow regularly which will remove this problem and keep the area tidy. The resident said that he agrees that this is important on the main part of The Green, but felt that there are enough volunteers in the parish who will be willing to help clear away the grass cuttings. Cllr Kaye said that he would be happy to work with the Leigh in Bloom team to discuss how certain areas could be maintained differently and to bring a proposal or some ideas to the Parish Council at a future date. Cllr Britain said that whatever is agreed must be logged in order to prevent confusion in the future and to avoid misinterpretation.
2. A resident said that pedestrian access from the village along Ensfield Road is dangerous and has the Parish Council considered if anything could be done? Cllr Kaye said that the Parish Council has discussed this at length in the past and unfortunately there is nothing that can be done – the road is too narrow to install a pavement, the cost of which would also be prohibitive. Cllr Marchant said that the Parish Council investigated the possibility of a permissive path but unfortunately no solutions could be found. Clerk to report concerns about pedestrian safety to C.Cllr Lake.

Closed Session

29. Apologies for absence

None.

30. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed

Cllr Croft declared a DPI in item 33 as he maintains this area on behalf of the Parish Council and Cllr Kaye declared a NPI in item 35 as he lives close to a site that was considered for affordable housing.

31. The minutes of the Leigh Parish Council Meeting held on 1st June 2020 were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Britain, seconded by Cllr Marchant, and all were in favour. Cllr Britain asked whether the Clerk had investigated whether the requirement under the Finance Regulations for gaining three quotes for payments between £8,000 and £50,000 is per invoice or job, or per annum. The Clerk said that it is per job rather than per budget heading, so even if the same contractor is asked to quote on several different projects, there is no need to get three quotes if the quote is under £8,000.

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

Cllr Rogers reported that the volunteer effort is winding up as restrictions are relaxed and residents' families are able to help.

There are still some people who need help and the volunteers are continuing to help these people. The volunteers have carried out 2000 errands over the lockdown period, which includes 1000 bread deliveries. The Parish Council has written to Hovis to thank them for their amazing generosity and kindness in donating loaves for the residents of Leigh. So many residents were delighted and thankful to receive a loaf each week and to see a friendly face. There was an article in the parish magazine this month about the tremendous support offered to the parish from the village shop, in particular with their help in delivering medication. Please continue to support the shop as it was a lifeline for many residents during the lockdown. Volunteers have been written to to see if they are willing for their details to be retained, and it is hoped that a tools/skills/equipment exchange can be set up in the parish and a resident has agreed to organise and co-ordinate this. Cllr Kaye said that a huge tribute is due to the village shop as it has been remarkable and so helpful for residents during the past few months in particular.

33. To discuss the maintenance of The Green, in particular the area to the north-west of the B2027

See Open Session above. It was agreed that Cllr Kaye and Cllr Croft will liaise with members of the Leigh in Bloom team to consider proposals for the maintenance of certain areas of the parish for discussion by the Parish Council at a future meeting.

34. Planning

i. To consider applications received

- i. SE/20/00187/FUL: Ashour Farm, Penshurst Road, Bidborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0LN - importation of 972 tonnes (780m³) 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. Previous comments: Strong objection. This application is retrospective and the 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. Members wished to make an additional comment to say that this operation should be penalised for carrying out the importation of material to this site without the proper prior approvals in place. Clerk to raise with D.Cllr Osborne-Jackson.
- ii. SE/20/01629/HOUSE and SE/20/01630/LBCALT: Ramhurst Manor, Powdermill Lane, Leigh TN11 9AS - removal of dilapidated balcony, replacement of two external doors and window in altered openings with finishes made good to match existing. Members supported this application.
- iii. SE/20/01663/HOUSE: Old School House, Powdermill Lane, Leigh TN11 8QE - erection of a single storey summerhouse. It was agreed that the Planning Committee would have a look at these plans and comments circulated by email.
- iv. SE/20/01605/LBCALT: Old Lodge, High Street, Leigh TN11 8RP - reinstatement of section of boundary wall demolished by vehicle accident. Members supported this application.

ii. To report SDC planning application decisions

- SE/20/00783/LDCPR: Oakfield Farm, Powder Mill Lane, Leigh TN11 8PZ - demolition of existing garage, workshop and planters and erection of two single storey outbuildings. Application approved.
- 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. Application approved.
- SE/20/00915/LDCLBC: Ramhurst Manor, Powder Mill Lane, Leigh TN11 9AS- Listed Building repair works to the main chimney stack. Application approved.

- Leigh Service Station, Lower Green, Leigh TN11 8RU – the following applications for detail have been approved:
 - SE/20/01012/DETAIL: Details pursuant to Condition 5 (open space management).
 - SE/20/01013/DETAIL: Details pursuant to Condition 6 (ecological enhancement)
 - SE/20/01015/DETAIL: Details pursuant to Condition 13 (covered cycle parking)
 - SE/20/01016/DETAIL: Details pursuant to Condition 14 (footway and construction)
 - SE/20/01017/DETAIL: Details pursuant to Condition 17 (electric vehicle charging)
 - SE/20/01018/DETAIL: Details pursuant to Condition 18 (noise assessment)
 - SE/20/01019/DETAIL: Details pursuant to Condition 19 (materials)
 - SE/20/01179/NMA: Chessenden, Greenview Avenue, Leigh TN11 8QT - non material amendment to SE/19/03128/HOUSE – application approved with no conditions.
 - SE/20/01126/FUL: Meadow Bungalow, Powder Mill Lane, Leigh - proposed erection of a stable block (comprising 3 stables, hay store and tack room) above concrete hardstanding, and 2 manure stores for private equestrian use and proposed change of use land to equestrian use. Application withdrawn.
 - SE/ 20/01112/FUL: Manderville, Egg Pie Lane, Weald - demolition of the existing buildings on site and erection of a new dwelling, together with new access and car parking/turning area. Application refused. Reason: the proposed development would represent inappropriate development in the Green belt by virtue of its siting, bulk and mass and would result in harm to the openness of the Green Belt and conflict with the purposes of it. Also, the proposal fails to demonstrate if it would conserve the biodiversity of the area and would not result in a net loss of biodiversity and habitats of protected species
 - SE/ 20/00442/HOUSE and SE/20/00443/LBCALT: Orchard House, High Street, Leigh - internal staircase to loft space, one new dormer and rooflights, garden shelter adjacent to pool. Application approved.
- iii. The Clerk reported that the follow appeal has been determined:
 Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/W/20/3245499: Hollow Trees, Hollow Trees Drive, Leigh TN11 8QA – Appeal dismissed. The appeal against a refusal to grant planning permission under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 of SE/19/02733, dated 23 September 2019. The application was for the demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling without complying with conditions 4 and 5 attached to planning permission of SE/05/2308/FUL, dated 4 November 2005. The conditions in dispute are No 4 which states that: ‘No extension or external alterations shall be carried out to the dwelling hereby approved, despite the provisions of any Development Order’, and No 5 which states that: ‘No building or enclosure other than those shown on the approved plans, shall be erected within the curtilage of the dwelling hereby approved, despite the provisions of any Development Order’. The reasons given for the conditions are: ‘To prevent inappropriate development in the Green Belt as supported by Policy GB2 of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan’. The Inspector states: “I conclude that conditions 4 and 5 are reasonable and necessary as set out in Paragraph 55 of the Framework as a further increase in the built form, whether to extend or alter the host dwelling or for a building or enclosure within the ‘curtilage’ of ‘Hollow Trees’, that is already 49.2% larger than the ‘original’ dwelling is likely to erode the openness and permanence of the Green Belt. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to Policies GB1, GB3 and GB4 of the Sevenoaks District Allocations and Development Management Plan Development Plan Document 2015 which say, amongst other things, that proposals should not, by virtue of design and volume, materially harm the openness of the Green Belt through excessive scale, bulk or visual intrusion, and Paragraph 145 (c) of the Framework which says that the extension or alteration of a building should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. Conditions 4 and 5 should be retained in their current form as they are necessary and relevant to planning and the permission granted. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.”
- iv. To hear update regarding SDC’s Draft Local Plan
 The Clerk reported that SDC has been granted permission to bring a judicial review against the Planning Inspector’s decision to reject the draft Local Plan. The High Court issued a notification on Tuesday 2nd June granting permission for the review.

The Honourable Mr Justice Swift concluded all grounds for SDC's claim are arguable and permission for judicial review was granted, clearing the first hurdle of the process. On 2nd March 2020, the Planning Inspector wrote the final report on the examination of the Sevenoaks District Local Plan. It concluded the Plan was not legally compliant in respect of the Duty to Co-operate. However, the Council strongly rejected this conclusion, which only surfaced after the first round of the Local Plan hearings in October, seven months after the Council had submitted the Plan and supporting evidence to the Inspector. Within the Local Plan submission, there were more than 800 pages of evidence setting out how the Council had worked with its neighbours during the production of the Plan. The neighbouring councils and other organisations involved in the development of the Plan supported the Council's evidence and approach on this matter. In April, the Council began Judicial Review proceedings to overturn the Inspector's decision. The High Court decision followed the news that the three MPs who represent the Sevenoaks District wrote to Robert Jenrick MP, the Secretary of State for Local Government, on Monday 1st June. Laura Trott MP, Tom Tugendhat MP and Gareth Johnson MP urged the Minister to use his powers to reconsider the Planning Inspectorate's reasons for rejecting the draft Local Plan.

35. Affordable Housing: to discuss a second Call for Sites

The Clerk reported that SDC has suggested that the Parish Council undertakes another and final Call for Sites. Alison Thompson at ERHA has suggested that the Parish Council writes to all landowners previously contacted and any others that the Parish council has become aware of. SDC has suggested that any landowners who'd submitted sites to the Call for Sites in the Local Plan should also be contacted. The Parish Council could advertise the Call for Sites on the website, parish magazine and noticeboards. Members were concerned about sending out a Call for Sites at the current time as it is still not possible to meet and discuss potential sites. The outcome of the new SDC Local Plan is still uncertain and other sites may be available to the Parish Council for a scheme of affordable housing when the Plan is determined. It was agreed to postpone this discussion until the autumn.

36. To discuss the Environment Agency's application to Defra to amend the Leigh Flood Storage Area

Cllr Kaye reported that he has read the application document, the object of the application is to increase the depth of the Leigh Flood Storage Area from 28.05m to 28.6m which will allow the storage of 24% more water. Previously 1200 households were protected from flooding, with the new FSA 1430 households would be protected. Cllr Britain asked whether the Environment Agency mention the potential use of the pumping station to pump water from the area around the railway bridge? Clerk to ask the Environment Agency for an update on this issue, and to request that they act as a coordinator between the different agencies involved.

37. To hear update regarding the refurbishment of Leigh Cricket Pavilion

Cllr Rogers reported that a useful meeting was held last week with the new Trustees of the soon-to-be-formed new charity. People have come forward to discuss fund raising and project management and useful pointers have been given by Kent County Cricket Club and Kent Sports Council. The new website and social media pages will be live soon.

38. To discuss the use of the bridge and river on Ensfield Road and the resulting safety, parking and litter issue

See Open Session above. Members agreed to pursue the implementation of double yellow lines, preferably on both sides of the road but if only on one side of the road it would help. Members considered the ROW and it was agreed that Cllr Kaye, Cllr Marchant, Cllr Rogers, Cllr Smith and the Clerk would discuss this further and make a recommendation to the Parish Council.

39. To discuss the opening of the play area and picnic area at Old Powdermills 1811

Cllr Skipper reported that the picnic area opened to the public two or three days ago, the area has been treated with topsoil and re-seeded. The play area remains closed at present due to Covid-19 restrictions. Clerk to ask when Burton Avenue will be adopted by KCC as this should have been done 18 months ago.

40. Charcott:

i. To discuss the oak tree on Charcott Green

Cllr Lake reported that cables currently go through the oak tree and some residents are finding their internet connection is impacted. Cllr Marchant said that the oak tree is a very fine tree and must be protected. Members agreed to request that a TPO is placed on this tree to protect it in future. Clerk to add this tree to the annual tree inspection.

ii. To hear update regarding the installation of oak posts around Charcott Green

Cllr Marchant reported that the kerbing works will commence this week and the posts will be installed thereafter.

41. Aviation

The Clerk reported that NATS is trying to rearrange flight routes, which is being resisted by most airports, and GACC is seeking public scrutiny of these proposals which will include the proposed expansion at Gatwick Airport and the number of additional air traffic movements per hour.

42. To discuss and approve the draft website accessibility statement

Members discussed the draft statement and made some suggestions. Cllr Satterley proposed that the website accessibility statement be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Croft and all were in favour. The statement needs to be posted online during September. The Clerk reported that the website has limitations and Vision ICT has recommended that the Parish Council upgrade the site, and the Clerk has asked for a quote. Item to be considered at a future Parish Council meeting.

43. Finance: to approve list of payments

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

44. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

i. The Clerk reported that she applied to SDC for a hand sanitiser station and some sanitiser for the village shop. This was delivered last week and the shop is delighted and very thankful. SDC only have 12 stations for the whole of the district so it's good news that one was secured for Leigh.

ii. Cllr Rogers said that Leigh Performing Arts have been preparing a series of monologues which will be shown at 8pm on 31st July via Zoom. It will be available to everyone to watch free of charge. It is called Hear No Evil, See No Evil.

The meeting closed at 10.10pm

Signed

Date

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

Date	Payment Number	Payee	Detail of payment	Amount Inc. VAT	VAT
06.07.20	259	Clerk	Salary	£839.60	
06.07.20	260	HMRC	PAYE	£331.66	
06.07.20	261	Clerk	Mileage/pettycash/work from home	£182.10	
06.07.20	262	KCC	Pension contribution	£445.83	
06.07.20	263	SDC	Dog bin emptying Apr-Jun 20	£563.16	£93.86
06.07.20	264	Peter Croft	Mowing	£207.00	
06.07.20	265	Friends of Leigh Pavilion	Grant	£3,000.00	
			Total	<u>£5,569.35</u>	<u>£93.86</u>