

## LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE SMALL HALL, HIGH STREET, LEIGH ON MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE 2015 AT 8.00PM

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

In the absence of Cllr Stratton-Brown, members agreed that Cllr Swallow would chair the meeting.

#### Open Session

##### Report by County Cllr Pearman:

County Cllr Pearman reported that it was quiet at the County Council whilst the elections were taking place. However, the leaflet on drainage responsibilities has now been published and circulated to Town and Parish Councils. This was requested by clerks at the Highways Seminar, and sets out the law regarding the maintenance of ditches, hedges etc. C.Cllr Pearman advised that he has £25,000 available in his Member's Fund and he has already received applications for funding. The speed indication device on the Hildenborough Road will be funded by money pledged from last year's budget. C.Cllr Pearman is supporting a voluntary organisation working in West Kent that tries to make contact with people with learning disabilities, and he is working with the parishes to see if there are eligible people in their communities who might like to be contacted. Another organisation that will receive funding is Headway Kent, which provides buddy services and support for people with head injuries and their carers. C.Cllr Pearman reported that the Young Persons Travel Card will increase in cost by £50 from £200 to £250 per year from September 2015. KCC pays £350 towards the scheme for each travel card. The 16+ travel card will remain the same at £400 per year. KCC is the only county council that provides this pass for school children. The bus companies can provide a season ticket direct to families, but the cost is far greater. The increase in cost of the Young Persons Travel Card is because KCC has to make £43 million savings this year.

##### Report by District Cllr Peter Lake

D.Cllr Lake reported that he attended his first District Council meeting at SDC, and is standing on the Economic & Community Development Advisory Committee, the Finance Advisory Committee, the Legal & Democratic Advisory Committee and the Licensing Committee. He is not a member of the Development Control Committee, although he will help residents with any planning queries. D.Cllr Lake reported that parishioners have raised the following issues:

1. A resident has complained that more and more aircraft are flying over Leigh and D.Cllr Lake has asked whether C.Cllr Pearman can take this up with Gatcom as Leigh's representative?
2. A resident has complained about the poor broadband connection and would like to contact SDC and KCC in this regard. Cllr Swallow reported that high speed fibre optic broadband is available in Leigh village but some of the outlying areas are not yet connected.
3. A resident has complained that the drains have not been cleared in Crandalls, and has requested that the pond is dredged. He is also concerned that there is a knock-on effect of the Parish Council not allowing car parking around The Green as more cars are now parking in Crandalls. He would like SDC and WKHA to clean up the area and landscape the area around the pond.
4. D.Cllr Lake reported that he discussed the accident in Ensfield Road with SDC. The Clerk advised that she has been told that the matter will go to the Joint Transportation Board meeting. C.Cllr Pearman reported that if the issue is safety critical, KCC will ask for accident records from Kent Police. Cllr Provan said that the cycle path is not safe for families due to the road section. D.Cllr Lake undertook to discuss the safety of the cycle path with Penshurst Place.

5. D.Cllr Lake undertook to take up the matter of people smoking cannabis at Meadow Bank with WKHA and the housing officer at SDC. Kent Police are aware of the matter and have spoken to residents.

C.Cllr Pearman left the meeting at 8.30pm and D.Cllr Lake left the meeting at 8.35pm.

### **Closed Session**

- 25. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Stratton-Brown and Cllr Croft and members accepted their reasons for absence.
- 26. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**  
None.
- 27. The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting of Leigh Parish Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2015** were not approved and item carried forward to the July Parish Council meeting. Members briefly discussed an email received from Mr John Henderson and Clerk to seek advice from KALC regarding a procedural matter. At the last Parish Council meeting, Cllr Stratton-Brown asked that a private discussion regarding the school was not minuted. Members agreed not to approve the May Parish Council minutes until this issue has been resolved.
- 28. Planning**
- i. To consider applications received  
SE/15/01377/HOUSE and SE/15/01378/LBCALT: Southdown House, High Street, Leigh TN11 8RJ - replacement of window frame on a Grade II listed house. Cllr Smith undertook to look at the application and members agreed that if the window frame is as existing they would support the application.
  - ii. To hear update regarding a S.125 notice on land at Lower Green, Leigh  
The Clerk reported that she asked SDC to issue a S.125 notice on land at the Former Print Works, Lower Green, Leigh in an effort to tidy the site and remove the abandoned vehicles. A response has been received to say that Nicola Clinch in Enforcement will be handling this request.
  - iii. Old Powder Mills development  
The Clerk reported that she has written to the residents at Ramhurst to see if they have any objections or comments on the proposed road name of Ramhurst Gardens on the new Powder Mills development, and both Mrs Neeves and Mrs Clay have responded to say that they are not in favour of this proposal as delivery drivers already have trouble locating them. Members agreed to object to the proposed road name of Ramhurst Gardens.
  - iv. Notification of planning decisions
    - SE/15/01012/LBCALT: The Coach House, Ramhurst Manor, Powder Mill Lane - removal of section of garden wall and existing utility room and erection of single storey side extension. Application approved.
    - SE/14/03475/LBCALT: 1 Fleur De Lys Cottages, High Street, Leigh - demolition of porch to rear and installation of back door. Windows replacement. Internal alterations. Application approved.
    - SE/15/00916/HOUSE: Orchard Cottage, Home Farm, Hildenborough Road erection of a garden room extension and a new porch. Application refused. Planning Officer's report: "I consider for the reasons detailed above that the proposed development would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the area and would preserve neighbouring amenity but as it would result in an increase in floorspace of over 50% 50% of the original it would be inappropriate development, harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. Consequently the proposal is not in accordance with the development plan and therefore the officer's recommendation is to refuse planning permission."
    - SE/15/01002/HOUSE: The Old Stables, Moorden Lane, Chiddingstone Causeway - alterations to existing ground floor openings. Application approved.

- SE/15/00308/HOUSE: 1 Hunter Seal, Leigh – retrospective application for the erection of a lean-to conservatory to rear. Application approved.

## 29. Highways & Environment

- i. to discuss drainage and flood related issues
  - i. Lealands Avenue: Cllr Swallow reported that he is still waiting for further work by KCC.
  - ii. Coppings Road: The Clerk reported that the flooding issues are now rectified.
  - iii. Blackhoath Cottages, Cinder Hill Lane: The Clerk reported that John Vigor at KCC is working closely with the resident to rectify the issues.
  - iv. Penshurst Road: The Clerk reported that the issue has now been rectified.
- ii. to hear update regarding the request for a permissive path at Paul's Hill Cottage  
None.
- iii. to hear update regarding the request for a new SID on B2027 Hildenborough Road  
The Clerk reported that she is still waiting for a response from Richard Heaps who said that he is discussing the matter with KCC's Intelligent Transport Systems team, who deal with the installation of all such signs, to see if this location meets the various technical specifications.
- iv. to hear update regarding maintenance of boundary between Old Burial Ground & Well Close  
The Clerk reported that Cllr Croft has now cleared the vegetation.
- v. to consider request for trees to be cut back on the path from Well Close to Kiln Lane  
The Clerk reported that Cllr Stratton-Brown is going to have a look at these trees and Clerk to write to the owner of the trees.
- vi. to discuss the maintenance of the pond at Crandalls  
The Clerk reported that Cllr Croft has advised that the pond area is very overgrown and needs clearing and the pond itself requires attention. Clerk to contact SDC.
- vii. to hear update regarding safety measures on Ensfield Road  
The Clerk reported that Steven Noad from KCC Highways has finally responded to say that he would look into the matter but felt that funding may be an issue.
- viii. to consider applications for tree works  
None.

## 30. The Green

- i. to hear update regarding the grant to improve the surface of The Green  
Cllr Swallow reported that he has meetings this week in preparation for work to The Green. The grant funding forms have been signed and returned and a solicitor has been appointed. The Land Registry document will need to be amended slightly to ensure (i) that no building on The Green will be allowed and (ii) that sport will be allowed on The Green. There is already a covenant on The Green that says it is available for sport for village use. Cllr Doherty thanked Cllr Swallow for the huge amount of work he has done in securing the grant of £65,000.
- ii. to approve the installation of the main drain on The Green  
Cllr Swallow reported that it is necessary to run a main drain to prevent flooding of The Green, and water will flow into an existing drain. This will cost £24,000 and Cllr Swallow said that, although this cost will be included in the overall grant funding, it may be necessary for the Parish Council to fund this work initially, but will be reimbursed by the grant. Cllr Swallow reported that both Bourne Amenity and Landscape Services have recommended a surveyor who will look at the area this week. It is hoped that this drain will be laid in the school summer holidays so the Parish Council needs to proceed fairly quickly. Cllr Doherty proposed that the Parish Council approve this expenditure. This was seconded by Cllr Kaye and all were in favour.
- iii. to approve cost of fertilising The Green: £200 + VAT  
Members approved the expenditure.
- iv. to hear update regarding the Fun Fair on The Green  
Cllr Swallow reported that the Fun Fair will arrive on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June and will leave on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> June.

- v. to approve cost of laying new kerbing outside Elizabeth Cottage  
The Clerk reported that she has asked KCC to repair the verge and lay countryside kerbing, but they have refused as the land belongs to the Parish Council. The Clerk also asked whether C.Cllr Pearman would contribute towards the work from his Members' Fund, but he felt that he has spent a large proportion of the funding on Leigh with the SID and drainage issues, and could not help in this instance. Cllr Marchant gave an estimate of £4,500 + VAT for this work in April. Members were sympathetic to the problem but agreed that, at the current time, the Parish Council does not have funding available to provide new kerbing on The Green due to committed expenditure this year. Clerk to advise the residents accordingly.
- vi. to consider recommendation for a consultant's report on the Veteran Oak  
The Clerk reported that she forwarded Bartlett Consulting's email and quote to Kent Men of the Trees for their advice, and received a response to say that they could not comment on a consultant's quote. The Clerk has asked Bartletts if this is their best price, and has also contacted Hever Castle who have recommended a firm of arboricultural consultants, Longmoor Valley based in Orpington. They have agreed to look at the tree and then give a price for acting on a consultancy basis.

### **31. Aviation**

#### to hear report of the High Weald Councils Aviation Action Group

The Clerk reported that the next meeting will be held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> June. This will be an AGM with election of the Chair and Vice-Chairs. The consultation closed on Friday for the Airports Commission's consultation on Air Quality. HWCAAG submitted a draft response subject to discussion at the meeting tomorrow. Members agreed that the impact of aviation in Leigh is getting worse.

### **32. Village Halls update**

None.

### **33. Aged Persons Dwellings: to hear update and approve costs for improvements**

- i. The Clerk reported that the plumber installed a new half float valve into the cold water storage cistern in No.1 The Bungalows and, in No.2 The Bungalows he replaced the toilet pan connector, replaced the bottom seal and the diaphragm washer. Cost for both jobs £130 + VAT. The Clerk reported that Angie Hollands has said that the plumber has cracked the toilet seat, but he categorically denied this. Members agreed to purchase a white plastic toilet seat.
- ii. The Clerk arranged for an electrician to attend No.2 The Bungalows. The boards were up to date and he said that there were no problems encountered. The certificates for the work were dated February 2011 and are valid for five years. The electrician said to contact him again in February 2016 and he can carry out an inspection then. He advised Angie Hollands that the light bulbs blow because of voltage and suggested they try LED lightbulbs.
- iii. The Clerk reported that she, Cllr Stratton-Brown and Cllr Johnston visited Mrs Fagg on 14<sup>th</sup> May to look at the windows and the door. Cllr Marchant to contact contractor who installed the door to see if it is possible to install a new lock.
- iv. Gutters – Cllr Johnston undertook to arrange to get the gutters cleared and mend any leaks.
- v. Path – Cllr Johnston thought that the path could be sanded to remove the trip hazard, and the crack filled in.

### **34. To discuss the verge cutting contract for 2015**

The Clerk reported that the first cut was undertaken over the last two weeks.

### **35. To hear update regarding SDC 'Switch & Save' event with Chiddingstone Parish Council**

The Clerk reported that the event will be held in Chiddingstone Causeway Village Hall on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June from 4pm to 8pm. Residents are invited to take their current utility bill and SDC will try and find a cheaper provider and save money.

**36. To consider purchase of additional Defibrillator through KALC**

The Clerk reported that KALC has negotiated a special price for Town and Parish Councils in their membership. Cost: £695 + VAT for defibrillator, plus £450 + VAT for cabinet. (Total: £1,374 inc. VAT). All orders for Defibrillators, accessories and consumables must be at the KALC office by 15<sup>th</sup> June. Members did not think it was necessary to purchase another machine at this time.

**37. To consider KALC's Local Warden Support Officer Scheme**

The Clerk reported that KALC is working with KCC and Kent Police on a Pilot Local Warden Support Officer Scheme. This follows on from the KCC consultation last year on Community Wardens where, following over 100 responses from Parish and Town Councils, KCC announced that it would keep its existing 70 Community Wardens. The existing Community Wardens will be realigned to provide greater coverage and a more equal balance across Kent. The Pilot Local Warden Support Officer (LWSO) Scheme is a voluntary role and is not intended to replace Community Wardens. LWSOs are expected to be the "ears and eyes" of their communities, be conduits for information and support and engage with the local community providing general advice to members of that local community, signposting them to the appropriate agencies and liaising with local community groups, partners (e.g. police, Fire Service, Neighbourhood Watch etc.) and with the local KCC Community Warden. KALC is looking for up to 12 Pilots across Kent. There is no cost to those Parish/ Town Councils who take part in the Pilot Scheme, as funding is being sought for the Pilots. If the Pilot Scheme is successful and the Scheme is rolled out in the next financial year, it is estimated that a Parish/Town Council who takes part in the Scheme would make a financial contribution of around £400 for the uniform and towards training costs." Members did not wish to pursue this at the current time.

**38. To consider facilitating a Parish Litter-Pick**

The Clerk reported that she put a note in the Parish Magazine. Members agreed to publicise and organise the event on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July.

**39. To hear update regarding the Summer Family Fun Play Event on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August**

The Clerk reported that the event will be held on The Green on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> August. Due to the programmed improvement works, the Clerk will ensure that the event will be set up on the opposite side of The Green from the school. Refreshments should be provided, last year David Bennie arranged this in aid of his Ghana project or, if not, Cllr Johnston undertook to ask the ice cream van.

**40. 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 2: Reports from Kent Police:

- Powder Mill Lane, Leigh: between 10:30pm on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> May and 8:30am on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May, a Makita DAB radio and power lead was stolen from a building site.
- High Street, Leigh: between 6:00am on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May and 11:20am on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May, person/s have broken into a house and stolen various items.
- Powder Mills, Leigh - between 12:01am on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May and 2:06pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> May, the kitchen of residential property was vandalised.
- Powder Mills, Leigh - between 12:01am on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April and 2:13pm on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> May, an empty isolated property has been broken into and damage caused to the interior.
- Hildenborough Road, Leigh - between 5:30pm on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> May and 6:00am on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May, person/s have broken into a shed and stolen garden equipment.

Members were concerned about the apparent rise in crime in the area and Clerk to contact the PCSO.

- ii. Item 4: The Boundary Commission: Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Kent County Council. The full report can be seen at [www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk](http://www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk) KCC currently has 84 councillors, and the proposal is that there should be 81 councillors in future.

The Commission believes that a council size of 81 members will ensure the council can discharge its roles and responsibilities effectively. The draft recommendations propose that Kent's 81 councillors should represent 65 single-member divisions and eight two-member divisions across the county. Deadline for comments: 6th July. Clerk's Note: The difference for our area is that the Sevenoaks Rural member – currently C.Cllr Pearman – would also cover Westerham.

- iii. Item 5: KCC press release: Modernisation of Kent's libraries moves ahead: KCC is moving ahead with plans to transform and modernise the Libraries, Registration and Archives service, following a 12-week public consultation on a proposal to transfer the service to a charitable trust. KCC believes that the trust model is the best way to preserve and update the service, which is much valued by the public. However, although KCC has decided to progress the preparations for the trust proposal, the implementation will wait for new primary legislation to enable the transfer of the registration service alongside libraries and archives. In the meantime the council will transform the in-house service. The consultation, which ran from 12 January to 8 April, produced 2,143 responses – 1,969 from individuals, 30 from public sector partners including parish councils, and 59 from voluntary and community groups.
- iv. Item 6: KALC: East Facing slips onto M25 at junction 5. The cost of the study by the KALC working group will be around £30,000. They are currently £6,500 short of the trigger level to take the study forward. Members did not wish to make a contribution.
- v. Item 8: Email from Robert Greenhalgh, Secretary, Tonbridge Half Marathon Committee: "The purpose of this email is to introduce myself and advise a change in the expected date of the Half Marathon. I recently took over as secretary of the Tonbridge Half Marathon Committee. Due to a clash of dates with the Hever Triathlon we have moved the date of the Half Marathon from the last Sunday in September to the first Sunday in October. The date of the 2015 Half Marathon will now be 4th October. We appreciate the support given by the people of Leigh and especially for the support given to the runners. We hope to forward full details of the event toward the end of July."
- vi. Item 9: SDC news release: The new Chairman of Sevenoaks District Council, Cllr Philip McGarvey, who represents Farningham, Horton Kirby & South Darenth, took over from outgoing Chairman, Cllr Jill Davison, after being elected at the Annual Council meeting.
- vii. Item 13: KCC - details of a KCC older people engagement event at Otford Library on 11th June. Feedback and comments collected from these events, one per district, will assist KCC to better understand the needs of older people to inform the future direction of social care.
- viii. Item 18: Email from John Henderson regarding expansion of Leigh Primary School; hard copies circulated to all members. Members agreed that the Clerk should seek advice from KALC on procedure as to whether it is possible to hold a private discussion, unminuted, during the closed Parish Council session as the Chairman, at the last meeting, requested that a short discussion was not minuted. The Clerk advised that she has asked Mr Henderson whether members of the Parish Council could meet him and members of the school's Governing Body. The Clerk has assured Mr Henderson that the Parish Council is most supportive of the school and it was not intentional that the Governing Body had been left out of any discussions held. Cllr Swallow said that he was most disappointed that a councillor should disclose information which those present were specifically asked not to disclose, and if that person had a problem with what was said at a meeting, he had hoped that that person would challenge it at the time. Cllr Swallow recommended that he, Cllr Doherty and the Clerk discuss the matter with Cllr Stratton-Brown upon his return. Cllr Doherty said that she wanted it to be reiterated that the Parish Council is supportive of the school and sympathetic to parents, but it is not within the Parish Council's remit to get involved in school issues without the agreement of, or request of, the Governing Body. Cllr Swallow said that the Parish Council pushed SDC to reduce the number of new dwellings at Powder Mills due to the impact on the school and other infrastructure in the village. Cllr Doherty advised that the Governing Body does not yet have a proposal from KCC to consider.

- ix. Item 19: Kent Police is asking local residents to take part in the biggest ever survey into rural crime and anti-social Behaviour (ASB) to find out how they can better serve rural communities. The National Rural Crime Network (NRCN) has launched the survey to give people who work or live in rural areas the chance to share their views on policing in their community, and the impact crime and ASB has on them and their neighbours. The results will help shape the future of crime prevention and rural policing. The rural crime survey is open until Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June.

#### 41. Finance:

- i. to approve payment of cheques  
Cllr Kaye proposed that the list of cheques be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Provan and all were in favour.
- ii. to approve membership renewal to SLCC: £93.50  
Cllr Doherty proposed that the membership be renewed. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and all were in favour.
- iii. to approve 2014/15 Year End Accounts  
The Clerk reported that the Finance Committee met on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> May, and Cllr Stratton-Brown was elected as Chairman of the Committee. Members considered and agreed to recommend to the Parish Council that the 2014/15 Year End Accounts be approved. The Internal Audit has been carried out by Mr Roger Sykes and he found no issues of concern with the Parish Council's accounting systems or procedures. Cllr Doherty proposed that the accounts be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Provan and all were in favour.
- iv. Audit for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015  
a. To approve Statement of Accounts: Cllr Doherty proposed that the Statement of Accounts be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Swallow and all were in favour.  
b. To consider and agree Annual Governance Statement: Members considered and agreed the Annual Governance Statement.  
Both the Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement were signed by Cllr Swallow and the Clerk.

#### 42. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

Cllr Kaye reported that he is pursuing the reinstatement of the footbridge over the A21. KCC has advised that the design of the new bridge has been completed and it is hoped that the bridge will be installed in January 2016, weather permitting.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm.

Signed .....

Date .....

#### LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL LIST OF CHEQUES 1<sup>st</sup> June 2015

| Date     | Cheque Payee               | Detail of payment                 | Amount<br>Inc. VAT | VAT            |
|----------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 01.06.15 | 1595 Clerk                 | Salary                            | £578.60            |                |
| 01.06.15 | 1596 HMRC                  | PAYE                              | £161.50            |                |
| 01.06.15 | 1597 Clerk                 | Mileage & office expenses         | £69.20             |                |
| 01.06.15 | 1598 KCC                   | Pension contribution              | £215.42            |                |
| 01.06.15 | 1599 SLCC                  | Subscription                      | £93.50             |                |
| 01.06.15 | 1600 D.J. Shrubbs          | Plumbing work at APD              | £156.00            | £26.00         |
| 01.06.15 | 1601 Bartlett Tree Experts | Tree work to poplar and hornbeams | £432.00            | £72.00         |
| 01.06.15 | 1602 Amenity Weed Care     | Fertilising The Green             | £240.00            | £40.00         |
| 01.06.15 | 1603 Peter Croft Garden    | Mowing                            | £215.00            |                |
|          |                            |                                   | <b>£2,161.22</b>   | <b>£138.00</b> |