

LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE SMALL VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, LEIGH ON MONDAY 9TH JANUARY 2022 AT 8.00PM

PRESENT: Cllr J. Kaye (Chairman)(until 9.20pm), Cllr R. Britain, Cllr P. Croft, Cllr A. Holt, Cllr G. Rogers, Cllr S. Smith and Cllr B. Williams

APOLOGIES: Cllr G. Marchant, Cllr S. Satterley

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). County Cllr McArthur and 20 members of the public attended the Open Session only. 2 members of the public attended until 9.40pm.

Open Session

County Cllr McArthur reported that the bus service on route 235 was out for tender with a deadline of Friday 6th January. There was one bid and the new service will run from Monday 16th January until the end of the school summer term. There were members of the public who live in the Leigh parish, but also members of the public who live in the Hildenborough parish, and some parents hoped that the Parish Council could have a greater influence on bus services. Cllr Kaye advised that it is the responsibility of the County Council and not the Parish Council to find a solution. In response to questions raised by members of the public, C.Cllr McArthur said that KCC is waiting for more information from central Government about how bus services will be funded in the future and information will be passed onto the secondary schools in the area. KCC received £35.1m from the Government towards the Bus Service Improvement Plan but this cannot be spent on subsidising existing bus services. KCC does not have an influence on commercial bus routes. KCC will provide bus transport for children attending their nearest school, but this does not include grammar or faith schools. KCC is running the Community Transport Grant Scheme again this year, with a deadline for applications of 12th February. Concern was expressed by members of the public about the environmental impact of more car movements if the bus routes are withdrawn, and that many children will be unable to get to school. Although the train services may be an option for some children, parents felt that a long walk from the train station to the schools with heavy school bags is unsafe and not possible especially in the winter months. One parent showed concern that train travel to school in Tunbridge Wells would create a long day, and another suggested that, in certain circumstances, such journeys could impact children's mental health. Cllr Kaye said that the Parish Council can help facilitate and support any local group who wishes to put an application together for the Community Grant Scheme, but is not able to make the application. He asked members of the public to gather information on the number of children who live in Leigh and who attend the various secondary schools that the 235 bus route services.

Report by County Cllr McArthur

C.Cllr McArthur reported that the grant to Leigh Parish Council towards costs associated with the Coffee Corner project has been approved and also a grant to Leigh Primary School. The Edenbridge Voluntary Transport Scheme has advised that it cannot extend its service to Leigh residents for doctor and hospital appointments.

C.Cllr McArthur and members of the public left the meeting at 8.50pm.

Closed Session

126. Apologies for absence were received Cllr Marchant and Cllr Satterley and their reasons for absence were accepted by the Parish Council.

127. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed
None.

128. The minutes of the Leigh Parish Council Meeting held on 5th December 2022 were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Britain, seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour. Members approved the list of meeting dates for 2023.

129. Planning

i. To consider applications received

- i. 22/03459/WTCA: Village Green, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QL - English Oak crown lift to 5.2m and reduce encroachment 1.5m on property side. Members supported this application.
- ii. 22/03461/WTPO: Land South of Ivy Cottage, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QN - various work to trees. Members had no objection to this application.
- iii. 22/02495/OUT: Land South of Greenview Avenue, Leigh - outline application for the erection of up to 39 dwellings with access and layout and some matters reserved. Amended to show additional ecology information, biodiversity net gain calculations, District Licensing information. Members had no additional comments to make but wished to strongly reiterate their comments previously made.
- iv. 22/03458/ HOUSE: 7 Gibbs Field, Leigh TN11 8SL - alterations to fenestration. Amended to include an additional window to be replaced alongside the others. Members had no comment to make on this application.
- v. 22/03437/LDCPR: Fairview, Burton Avenue, Leigh TN11 9FB - erection of single storey extension and outbuilding. Members had no comment to make on this application.
- vi. 22/03523/HOUSE and 22/03524/LBCALT: West Cottage, High Street, Leigh TN11 8RL - single storey rear extension with rooflight. Planning Committee to consider this application.
- vii. 22/03528/LBCALT: Southdown House, 1 The Square, High Street, Leigh - boiler move / replacement boiler in new location on South West elevation with external vent. Replacement "Like for Like" windows. Members had no comment to make on this application.

ii. To report SDC planning application decisions:

- 22/02858/HOUSE: White Cottage, Tonbridge Road, Leigh - outdoor tennis court for domestic use. Application approved.
- 22/02716/LDCPR: Fairview, Burton Avenue, Leigh - Lawful Development Certificate for proposed erection of an outbuilding. Application refused because the proposal does not comply with Schedule 2, Part 1, Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) due to the proposed use not being considered incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house.
- 22/02828/WTCA: Orchard Lodge, The Green, Leigh - works to trees in a Conservation Area – remove Ash tree. No Objection Lodged.
- 22/02841/WTCA: South Lodge, 46 Well Close, Leigh - works to trees in a Conservation Area – large Ash tree, crown reduce to the vicinity of previous reduction points. No Objection Lodged
- 22/03100/ELEC: Pole Transformer East of West Lodge, Hall Place, Penshurst Road, Leigh - overhead lines This scheme includes the removal of five spans of High Voltage overhead line including poles 243954, 243953, 249191 and stay wire. Pole 249192 will be replaced with a stout terminal pole with two stay wires. No Objection Lodged.
- 22/02971/HOUSE: Miranda Cottage, 8 Home Farm Close, Leigh - proposed EV Charging Point installed in the rear of parking space. Application approved.
- 22/03034/HOUSE: 7 Hunter Seal, Leigh - garage extension and conversion to habitable space. Internal and fenestration alterations. Application approved.

iii. To consider undertaking a review of the Leigh Village Design Statement

Cllr Kaye reported that in the Sevenoaks district, there are some village design statements that are classified as supplementary planning documents, and older village design statements including Leigh's are classified as informal planning guidance.

Cllr Kaye and Cllr Williams left the meeting at 9.20pm. Members agreed that Cllr Smith should chair the meeting in Cllr Kaye's absence.

Members agreed that the Clerk should ask SDC to enquire whether the current village design statement is adequate, what would be required to allow the village design statement to be classified as a supplementary planning document, and whether a new appendix could be added to the current village design statement to provide an update on new developments in the parish.

130. The Green

i. To discuss car parking on The Green

The Clerk reported that the signs have been ordered for The Green, twelve 150mm square aluminum signs, black with white writing. Cllr Croft undertook to fix these to the posts around The Green.

Cllr Williams re-joined the meeting at 9.30pm.

ii. Condition of The Green

The Clerk reported that Dave Furneaux of Leigh Football Club has emailed to say that The Green is so muddy that the club cannot play home games on the pitch and are having to book pitches elsewhere. Members agreed that the conditions have been very wet.

iii. Fun Fair

The Clerk reported that she has received an email from Shayler's Fun Fair asking to come to Leigh from 12th to 19th June, opening on 16th, 17th and 18th June. Members agreed to add this request to the agenda for the February Parish Council meeting.

131. Highways & Rights of Way

- i. The Clerk reported that she has notified KCC Highways about the pothole near Bid Bridge and multiple potholes in Charcott. She has also reported the broken salt bin in Meadow Bank.
- ii. Cllr Britain reported that there has been no flooding at the Ensfield Road bridge, despite heavy rain.
- iii. Cllr Williams reported that tyres had been dumped on Powdermill Lane, which he reported to SDC and they were quickly removed.
- iv. Clerk to report potholes to SDC on The Green Lane.

132. To discuss the withdrawal of bus services

See Open Session above.

133. To hear report of the Coffee Corner project held in the Leigh Scout Hut

The Clerk reported that the last event held on 16th December was fairly well attended. The grant application to C.Cllr McArthur's members fund of £2,000 was approved and remittance advice sent, although grant not yet received. Next dates are Friday 13th January, Friday 10th February and Friday 17th March, all 10.30am to 12.30pm in the Scout Hut.

134. To hear update on request for the Hildenborough Medical Group to return their surgery to Leigh

The Clerk reported that representatives of the Parish Council have been invited to a meeting with a few of the GP Partners to discuss the future of the Leigh Surgery on Monday 30th January at 2.30pm. Cllr Rogers, Cllr Britain and the Clerk will attend and report back to the Parish Council.

135. Aviation

The Clerk drew members' attention to the GACC Newsletter included on the correspondence list.

Two members of the public left the meeting at 9.40pm.

136. Affordable Housing

None.

137. Aged Persons Dwellings

i. To approve delegation to Finance Committee for decisions on the refurbishment project and costs on No.1 The Bungalows

Members agreed, proposed by Cllr Holt, seconded by Cllr Croft, and all were in favour.

ii. Landlords British Gas Safety Inspection

The Clerk reported that No.1 The Bungalows will have its British Gas Safety Inspection on Thursday 12th January.

138. The Old Burial Ground

Cllr Holt reported that the next working party date is Saturday 21st January at 10.00am, weather dependent.

139. To discuss the Bulk Refuse Freighter Service 2023

The Clerk reported that the freighter is booked on 28th January, 4th March, 1st July and 9th September, visiting Crandalls between 13.30 and 14.15. Clerk to add SDC's collection service of Christmas trees onto the Parish Council's social media platforms.

140. To discuss nominations for the KALC Community Award Scheme 2023

Members discussed and agreed the recipient of the 2023 Community Award.

141. To discuss the Coronation of King Charles III to be held on 6th May 2023

Members agreed to hold an event on The Green on Saturday 6th May, to light the beacon and to the RBL Club running a bar.

142. To discuss correspondence received

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

- i. Item 2: ACRK regarding the closure of Action with Communities in Rural Kent. ACRE, the national organisation, is still in place and can be contacted with urgent queries relating to village halls, affordable housing etc. ACRK is exploring possible options for the continuation of the services it currently provides and hope that it will be able to resume under another organisation in the future.
- ii. Item 3: Kent Police:
 - A21 Tonbridge by-pass, Leigh - between 19:00 on Thursday 8th December and 07:00 on Friday 9th December, somebody stole fuel from a lorry parked in a layby. Crime Report No. 46/235567/22
 - The Square, Leigh - between 18:00 on Wednesday 21st December and 11:20 on Thursday 22nd December, somebody tried to steal the number plates from a Kia Sorento. Crime Report No. 46/244123/22
- iii. Item 5: SDC press release: Free, three ways for residents to dispose of their Christmas trees.
Option 1 – Residents who hold a Garden Waste collection permit can simply place their un-decorated tree in their green bin and the Council will pick it up on the usual collection days throughout January. The Council can collect trees with a trunk of up to 90mm (3.5") in diameter.
Option 2 – From 28 December to 20 January, residents can take their tree to one of the 27 collection points across the District. Residents can view the locations and times of this free service at www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/christmastree or by calling the Council on 01732 227000. Again, the Council can take trees with a trunk of up to 90mm (3.5") in diameter.
Option 3 – Residents can take their tree to one of Kent County Council's Household Waste Recycling Sites. KCC will take larger trees. See www.kent.gov.uk/recycling.
- iv. Item 6: Stagecoach bus users in the South East are set to benefit from three months of bus fares of no more than £2 for a single journey as part of the Department for Transport's new fares initiative. All Stagecoach local bus services across Kent and East Sussex will offer a maximum fare of £2 for any single journey between 1st January and 31st March 2023. See www.stagecoachbus.com/promos-and-offers/national/2-pound-fare.
- v. Item 9: Email from Tom Tugendhat MP regarding the planning application on land south of Greenview Avenue.
- vi. Item 10: KALC courses:
January
 - 12th The Dynamic Councillor (6:30-9:30pm Online)
 - 17th Becoming a Local Councillor (7-8pm Online)
 - 19th Allotments Law & Management (10am-1:30pm Lenham Community Centre)

- 19th An Introduction to Planning (6-9pm Online)
- 25th Implementing effective community engagement and building sustainable conversations (2-4pm Online)
- 26th The clerk in action (1:30-4:30pm online)
- 31st How Councils can more effectively engage with young people (6-8pm online).

February

- 7th How to recruit and retain a diverse pool of councillors (2-4pm Online)
- 21st Social Media for Councils: getting started, creating an effective social media strategy and getting the fundamentals right (10am-12pm Online)
- 21st Becoming a Local Councillor (7-8pm Online)
- 23rd Achieving the CiLCA (9:30am - 3pm Lenham Community Centre)

March

- 2nd Implementing effective community engagement and building sustainable conversations (6-8 pm Online)
- 9th Equality, diversity and inclusion training for Local Councils (2-4pm Online)
- 21st Becoming a Local Councillor (7-8pm Online)
- 23rd The Dynamic Councillor (6:30-9:30pm Online)
- 23rd Achieving the CiLCA (9:30am - 3pm Ditton Community Centre)
- 30th The Planning Conference (time tbc Lenham Community Centre).

- vii. Item 11: Email from Monica Stonham, Stakeholder & Engagement Specialist, The Environment Agency regarding the Leigh Expansion and Hildenborough Embankment Scheme: "work on the Leigh Expansion and Hildenborough Embankment Scheme will start in March 2023. We would like to come and talk to you during your February Parish Council meeting, to explain the works and what the local community can expect during the first year of construction at Leigh Flood Storage Reservoir along with answering any questions that you may have." Members agreed.

143. Finance:

- To discuss valuation and approve changes to contributions to the Kent Pension Fund
The Clerk reported that the Kent Pension Fund has carried out a valuation of the pension fund and the employer contributions will increase from 31.1% to 34.9% from 1st April 2023 until 31st March 2026. Members approved this increase.
- To discuss the 2022/23 Actual vs Budget and Earmarked Reserves, and the 2023/24 Budget
The Clerk reported that a Finance Committee meeting was held on 4th January and the income versus expenditure and budget for 2022/23 was looked at in detail and is on track. The Finance Committee also considered the draft budget for 2023/24 and agreed to recommend to the Parish Council that the budget be accepted. Cllr Holt approved the budget, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and all were in favour.
- To set the level of the 2023/24 Precept
The Clerk reported that Leigh's tax base has reduced so if the Parish Council wished to keep the level of council tax the same the precept would need to be reduced to £49,805. The 2022-23 precept is £50,500. To retain same level of precept in 2023-24, there would be an increase of 1.396%. The Finance Committee's recommendation is an increase of 3.404% to £51,500. Cllr Croft proposed that this recommendation be accepted, seconded by Cllr Smith and by show of hands all members were in approval.
- To approve list of payments
Cllr Holt proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and all were in favour.

144. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

None.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Monday 6th February 2023 in the Small Village Hall at 8.00pm

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.

Signed

Date

**LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
LIST OF PAYMENTS
January 2023**

Date	Payment Number	Payee	Detail of payment	Amount Inc. VAT	VAT
09.01.23	556	Clerk	Salary	£1,134.76	
09.01.23	557	HMRC	PAYE	£480.48	
09.01.23	558	Clerk	Mileage, petty cash & office costs	£181.93	£4.80
09.01.23	559	KCC	Pension contribution	£587.61	
09.01.23	560	Joe Kaye	Chairman's expenses incurred 05.12.22	£54.30	
09.01.23	561	Helen Breeze Property Management LLP	Renewal of tenancy No.2 The Bungalows	£120.00	£20.00
09.01.23	562	Leigh Scouts	Hire of Scout Hut 13.01.23	£20.00	
09.01.23	563	Vision ICT Ltd	Hosting email address parishcouncil@leigh kent.org.uk from March 2023 to Feb 2024	£21.60	£3.60
09.01.23	564	SDC	Dog bin emptying Oct to Dec 2022	£563.16	£93.86
09.01.23	565	Signomatic	Order of 12 No Parking signs for The Green	£351.31	£58.55
				<u>£3,515.15</u>	<u>£180.81</u>