

LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE SMALL VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, LEIGH ON MONDAY 4TH MARCH 2024 AT 8.00PM

PRESENT: Cllr J. Kaye (Chairman), Cllr A. Backlog, Cllr R. Britain, Cllr A. Holt, Cllr G. Rogers, Cllr S. Smith (until 9.25pm) and Cllr B. Williams

APOLOGIES: Cllr G. Marchant, Cllr S. Satterley and County Cllr M. McArthur

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk). District Cllr M. Silander, PC H. Kemp and 9 members of the public attended the Open Session only.

Open Session

Report by County Cllr McArthur

In the absence of County Cllr McArthur, the Clerk read her report: "I regret I can't attend tonight due to meeting conflicts. I have nothing to add to my last report but I can say a few words about the waste changes imminent at SDC. I appreciate I am not your SDC representative but this matter falls within my cabinet/portfolio at SDC so if your District Councillor doesn't mind I can add the below.

The SDC Budget is now balanced with difficult decisions. CAB and waste decisions feel like they were the most controversial. CAB funding was cut but external grant money has now been found for this year at least. Waste changes: black bags will be discontinued at the end of this month. I believe SDC is the last council to supply these, and they can be purchased from supermarkets. Clear bags will be discontinued from end of August with any left overs being donated to food banks. A bag for life will replace clear sacks, the design not finalised but will have space for address, will be weighted, will have velcro closures and be animal resistant. These will be free for a while with maybe a small charge later to replace, which is still under discussion. There will be different rules for flats or where communal bins are used. Assisted collection will be available for elderly and disabled, see https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20000/rubbish_and_recycling/167/assisted_rubbish_collection.

Education will be undertaken to stop residents piling bags in public spaces, and sacks should be at the curtilage of your property at 7am and not in bins, which can cause collectors injuries. Bins are not viable as SDC have no grab and lift lorries - they cost £280k each to purchase, and in any case this collection method is slower so bin collections would change to every 2 weeks."

Report by District Cllr Silander

District Cllr Silander reported that SDC had to save £1.8m in the 2024/25 Budget and the currently free provision of black and clear sacks will cease. There was to be a huge cut in CAB funding, this is not a statutory requirement but is a grant. Luckily, KCC and the Levelling Up department have approved a £40,000 grant to the CAB for one year only in order to provide time for them to make alternative funding arrangements for next year. SDC has changed strategy and will now be borrowing more in order to invest in property, such as a drive-through in Otford which will be developed. There are also changes to both the core strategy and the scrutiny committee.

PC Harry Kemp

Cllr Kaye welcomed PC Harry Kemp to the meeting. PC Kemp said that he has been in the police force for 5 years and currently works in the Community Safety unit. He covers the following towns and parishes: Edenbridge, Leigh, Chiddingstone, Cowden, Hever and Penshurst. A second police officer is being sought to work alongside PC Kemp. Cllr Britain raised the concerning issue of behaviour at Ensfield Road bridge, where in the summer months people gather to swim in the river. There is the obvious safety concerns about the wild swimming and jumping off the bridge, but also people park and wander along the road and they have picnics in the field off the footpath and leave litter. PC Kemp said that he is aware of this issue and if needed he can lodge a S.34 Anti-social Order to disperse people if there are frequent reports. PC Kemp said that if there is a crime in process with harm to people or property, this should be reported via 999. If there is no immediate danger, crimes should be reported through the website <https://www.kent.police.uk/>.

This can also be used for reporting things you have seen or heard including antisocial behaviour. It is possible whilst reporting online to request the attention of a specific officer. PC Kemp will pick up all reports relating to this area. Cllr Kaye asked whether PC Kemp carries out local patrols, and PC Kemp confirmed that he does. He is based in Sevenoaks but is arranging for a desk in the Eden Centre so that he can be locally based at times. Cllr Rogers reported that a local resident has had her car keyed and other cars have also been keyed recently. The lady was also approached. PC Kemp said that all reports must be logged and he will follow it up. Cllr Rogers also raised the matter of 13 crime reports in Leigh and Chiddingstone Causeway that are logged on the Kent Police website. PC Kemp advised that these are on the whole domestic violence. He reiterated that the more crimes that are logged, the more evidence the police have of crime patterns and also the need for additional police officers. Cllr Kaye thanked PC Kemp for attending the meeting.

PC Kemp left the meeting at 8.25pm.

Questions from members of the public

1. Graham Southwell attended the meeting in order to discuss the latest amendment to the outline application for the erection of 39 dwellings on land south of Greenview Avenue. He asked whether there is any deliberate action by SDC to delay the determination of this application. District Cllr Silander said that there is no deliberate intention by SDC to delay this application. He asked whether the Parish Council will engage again with the planning consultant on the current amendment. Cllr Kaye said that this will be considered by members later in the meeting.
2. A resident referred to the latest comments supplied by the applicant which is a response to KCC comments, but the document is dated 25.07.23 and the contents are weak. He asked why this has only now been logged on the system and sent out for consultation.
3. A resident asked about the swept path analysis carried out by the applicant which doesn't appear to be complete because the junction of the High Street with The Green and the junction of Powdermill Lane and The Green are not included.

Cllr Kaye advised that the Parish Council has submitted robust responses to the original application and to each amendment since then. Members will prepare a response to this current amendment. The impact to the infrastructure of the village is a concern. Cllr Silander suggested that the planning officer is invited to carry out a site visit and he also suggested that KCC Highways be asked to consider the swept path analysis as provided by the applicant.

Cllr Silander and members of the public left the meeting at 9.00pm.

Closed Session

- 146. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Marchant and Cllr Satterley and their reasons for absence were accepted by the Parish Council. Apologies for absence were also received from County Cllr McArthur.
- 147. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
Cllr Backlog declared a DPI in item 150(i)(iii) as she is a member of the Greenview Avenue Members Group.
- 148. The minutes of the Leigh Parish Council Meeting held on 5th February 2024** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Holt, seconded by Cllr Backlog, and all were in favour.
- 149. To discuss the format of the Annual Parish Meeting to be held on Monday 29th April 2024**
Members discussed the arrangements for the Annual Parish Meeting.
- 150. Planning**
 - i. To consider applications received
 - i. SE/24/00366/WTCA: Hall Place, Leigh TN11 8HH - removal of Tilia x Europaea. Members had no objection to this application but suggested a condition be imposed for a replacement tree to be planted.

- ii. SE/24/00378/WTCA: Gardeners Cottage, Penshurst Road, Leigh TN11 8HH - Silver Birch - Section fell to ground level. Members had no objection to this application but suggested a condition be imposed for a replacement tree to be planted.
- iii. SE/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: additional information submitted – applicant’s response to KCC Highways comments. Members agreed to contact the highways consultant who prepared a report for the Parish Council to the previous amendment. Clerk to obtain a price for consideration by the Finance Committee. Planning Committee to prepare a response to the consultation. Cllr Backlog to coordinate photographic evidence.
- ii. To report SDC planning application decisions:
 - SE/23/03681/LBCALT: 7 Forge Square, The Green, Leigh - repair and renovation to existing external staircase. Application approved.
 - SE/23/03685/HOUSE: 1 Waterworks Cottages, Kiln Lane, Leigh - single storey side extension with rooflight, first floor rear extension and new single-storey rear extension with rooflights, alterations to parking, landscaping. Application approved.
- iii. To discuss the adoption of a Leigh Planning Protocol
Cllr Williams reported that he and the Clerk attended a KALC event on planning application responses, and it was recommended as good practice for Parish Councils to have an adopted planning protocol in place. Cllr Williams said that he has prepared a draft planning protocol and also a draft protocol for meeting with developers. Clerk to circulate to Planning Committee for comments prior to adoption at the April Parish Council meeting.
- iv. KALC Annual Planning Conference
The Clerk reported that this is on 12th March from 9.30am to 3pm at Jubilee Hall, Pippin Road, East Peckham TN12 5BT. This year’s event will focus on planning and infrastructure.

151. The Green

- i. To discuss the Ancient Oak Tree and to consider whether to commission a specialist report
Cllr Kaye reported that two more emails have been received from the resident on this matter. Members agreed to undertake a full ancient tree survey by Treework Environment Practice. The cost will be in the region of £2,000 + VAT. Proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Britain and all were in favour.
- ii. To consider request to install a driveway over The Green at 2 Cherry Tree Cottage
The Clerk reported that Leigh United Charities have requested approval in principal for a driveway to be installed, crossing The Green, to allow off street parking for this property. Members agreed that they would be unlikely to approve this request.
- iii. To hear update on the planting of a memorial tree on The Green
The Clerk reported that the tree and plaque have been delivered. WeldDone has repaired and painted the tree guard, he will fix the memorial plaque to the top rail of the tree guard. Members agreed the position of the tree and Clerk to arrange the planting.
- iv. To hear update on the provision of a memorial bench on The Green
The Clerk reported that the bench and plaque have been delivered. Members agreed the position of the bench and for there to be concrete slabs under the bench to secure the bench and also in front to prevent it becoming muddy. Clerk to arrange.

Cllr Smith left the meeting at 9.25pm.

- v. To discuss D-Day 80 on 6th June 2024 and Light the Beacon
Cllr Holt reported that the school would like to join in the event and create a learning experience for the school children. Cllr Rogers said that the Leigh Performing Arts and Ladies Choir would like to hold a village singalong at the event. The event would start at 6.30pm and the beacon will be lit at 8.30pm. Clerk to invite food vans and the Fleur de Lis to provide drinks with the necessary licence.
- vi. To discuss the proposal to run junior football sessions on The Green together with grant funding
None.

152. Highways & Rights of Way

i. Rural Swathe cutting contract 2024

The Clerk reported that she is still waiting to hear back from KCC as to the amount of funding they will devolve to the parishes. County Cllr McArthur has asked whether the cluster can take on the visibility cutting as well but the answer is no.

ii. To discuss the Leigh Litter Pick on 23rd March 2024

Volunteers to meet on The Green at 11am. Clerk to provide equipment.

iii. Rights of Way

The Clerk reported that the footpath at the Cattle Arch reopened on 29th February 2024. Cllr Backlog asked whether the hedgerows will be reinstated. Clerk to make enquiries.

153. To discuss Leigh Village Halls Management Committee's proposals for the village halls and application for financial assistance

The Clerk reported that Paula Beresford has said that the architect firm they were working with have pulled out. The Trustees are now working with another firm, Kayner Olette, who will match the quote for the initial architects fees of £2,750 + VAT and will send the invoice to the Parish Council so that it can be paid in this financial year.

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

The Clerk reported that the next date is Friday 15th March, from 10.30am to 12.00pm. The Clerk reported that KCC has asked for receipts and copy invoices for spend relating to the members fund grant of £2,000. Members approved the purchase of a disability ramp £57.50 and a new heater £171.69 for the scout hut. Members also approved a contribution towards the scout hut's heating bill to be incorporated in the hall hire costs up to the end of 2025, this being a total contribution for hall hire and electricity of £40 per session.

155. Aviation

- i. Gatwick Airport Ltd:** "We are pleased to resume our "Discover London Gatwick" programme welcoming community representatives to the airport to learn more about London Gatwick and our business priorities, culminating in an airfield tour. Dates: 6th March, 14th March and 4th April 2024 all 9.30am to 2pm.
- ii. Gatwick Airport:** "Rolling out the Reduced Night Noise trial. As part of London Gatwick's noise management initiatives, we started the Reduced Night Noise trial on 11 January. The trial is being conducted between the hours of 01:30-05:00, and only applies to aircraft arriving on to the main runway. This trial aims to lower the noise impact on the ground of arriving aircraft by keeping them flying higher for longer on their approach into London Gatwick, through the use of precision-based navigation technology. We are also hoping to trial a refreshed Departures Noise Limits scheme later this year, ahead of submission of the new scheme proposal to the DfT for approval."
- iii. Email from GACC: DCO Update:** "The Examination in Public commences with the Preliminary meetings on the 27th February. This is where we challenge any technical concerns we have about the procedure to be followed in the hearings rather than discussion about the application itself. We're challenging the lack of a Specific Hearing on Climate Change/Carbon Emissions, Air Quality, Flooding & Water Environment among others. The hearing itself becomes more active from the 28th February through to 6th March with presentations on a number of subjects. As the hearings develop the process will lead to more detailed examination sessions in the future programme up to the end of August. GACC's team and its fellow community groups and members have been working on challenging this unnecessary and highly damaging project. We'll be appearing at the hearings from the 28th February to the end of August. Our associates at the New Economics Foundation will demonstrate that economic and employment benefits have been shown to be grossly over estimated whilst noise mitigation proposals are virtually worthless. The Aviation Environment Federation will be challenging the Climate change/carbon emissions and Sustainable Aviation Fuel claims. We will run a regular Zoom session where we'll update on the previous week's hearings. The first session is planned for Monday 4th March followed by further sessions on 11th and 18th March at 8:00pm. To book a place, see <https://buytickets.at/gatwickareaconservationcampaigngacc/1171321>

- iv. CAA: "Following the publication of the revised CAP 1616 airspace change process, the UK Civil Aviation Authority has today published the revised requirements and guidance for temporary and trial airspace change proposals, CAP 1616g. The requirements and guidance for temporary and trial airspace change proposals have not materially changed but are now all contained within one document with minimal reference required to other CAP 1616 documents. This has made the information more user-friendly, with improved access, clarity, and ability to navigate. As a result, it will now be simpler for change sponsors and stakeholders to better understand what they need to do in the process. CAP 1616g can be found on the UK Civil Aviation Authority website and will come into force on 18 March 2024. Any temporary or trial airspace change proposals commenced on or after that date will be assessed against the requirements of the process described in CAP 1616g."

156. Charcott

None.

157. Aged Persons Dwellings

The Clerk reported that the resident at No.1 The Bungalows has requested permission for his partner to move in. Members did not approve this request because the Parish Council have a selection process for applicants seeking to live in the APD and it is unlikely that if the resident's application had been for him as part of a couple with dogs, it would not have been successful. The resident has also asked for the creation of a hardstanding with a sloping roof by the outside electricity switch to house his motorized wheelchair and keep it dry, and also some steps down to the shed. Members agreed that this should be provided by the Parish Council and Clerk to obtain a quote.

158. The Old Burial Ground

In the absence of Cllr Satterley, the Clerk reported that he has obtained a quote for a recycled plastic lectern in black at £432 + delivery £48 + printing costs of around £100 all plus VAT. The grant received is £500. Members approved the quote and Clerk to order.

159. 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 3: Report from Kent Police: PC Kemp is continuing to engage and have a visible presence in the community, engaging with key stakeholders and members of the public.
- The investigation into youths using catapults to fire at wildlife and cause damage in Edenbridge continues. Interviews have been conducted, with Acceptable Behaviour Agreement contracts have been issued to individuals who are believed to be involved.
 - The Edenbridge PACT meeting was attended by PS Savil of the CSU for Kent Police, with members from Sevenoaks District Council, Edenbridge Town Council, Edenbridge Councillors and members of the public to discuss and address ASB and issues within Edenbridge.
 - PC Kemp was able to attend Hever Primary school this month and engage with pupils in connection with their education around emergency services. It was a great opportunity to answer any question and talk to them about what it is like to be a Police Officer but most importantly to them show them the Police car. They were particularly fond of the blue lights and sirens.
 - PC Kemp was able to meet with members from Cowden. A great opportunity for community members to get to know the face of PC Kemp. Discussions were had surrounding the best way to report incidents and the ability to report suspicious behaviour as well as crimes on the "Tell us about" function on Kent Police.
 - Neighbourhood Beat Officers, PC Kemp, PC Wilson and PC Costin conducted a Speed Enforcement on Penshurst Road, Leigh on Friday 19th January 2024. Several drivers were spoken to in relation to their driving and in addition Traffic Offence Reports were issued for speeding. One male was caught driving 40mph in a 30mph zone and another was driving 47mph in a 30mph zone.
- ii. Item 8: KALC: The government is offering a free portrait of His Majesty The King to all town, parish and community councils in the UK. Town, parish and community councils can apply for one free framed portrait per council and also access frequently asked questions document for questions about the portrait and the scheme using this link. Members wished to accept the offer and order the portrait.

- iii. Item 12: SDC re their recent decision to end the delivery and supply of black sacks and moving to bags for life for recycling. “Black Sacks: we will continue to deliver black sacks to residents up until 1 April 2024. However distribution of black sacks will stop after this date. We are asking residents to put their waste out in the black or grey household waste sacks typically available from most supermarkets and hardware stores. Residents should not put out waste in carrier bags. You can order black sacks from us until 1 April to sell to local residents. Clear Sacks: these will still be delivered to residents until they receive a bag for life for their recycling around September 2024. These can also still be purchased from us.”
- iv. Item 13: SDC News Release: Sevenoaks District Council is taking action to help the environment while protecting its waste collection service. Like many authorities, the Council is keen to reduce its carbon footprint as well as tackling rising costs. Since the pandemic, the volume of household waste and recycling collected has increased significantly with more people working from home and greater reliance on home deliveries. This has meant the cost of providing the service has rocketed in the past four years with more staff and vehicles needed and increased visits to the waste transfer station. Residents value weekly waste collections and the Council is determined to continue to offer this service for as long as it can. That is why the Council has taken the decision that, from 1 April, it will no longer supply residents with black waste sacks. During the autumn, the Council will also provide every household with a 'sack for life' for their recycling. These will replace clear recycling sacks and will cut down on single use plastics. The Council will continue to supply residents with black sacks until 31 March and clear sacks until everyone has their recycling sack for life. Removing free waste sacks has been shown to increase recycling rates as residents make the best use of their recycling facilities. Once fully implemented, the changes will also save 30,000 miles of driving every year to deliver sacks, further cutting carbon emissions. From 1 April, residents are being asked to put their household rubbish in sacks made for waste. These could be the black or grey sacks available from most supermarkets and hardware stores.
Cllr Margot McArthur, Sevenoaks District Council's Cabinet Member for Cleaner & Greener, says: “As far as we are aware, we are just one of a handful of councils to still provide weekly waste collections and the last in the country to supply residents with waste sacks. We hope that residents will support these changes to deliver both cost reductions as well as helping the environment. We are confident that the changes will deliver environmental benefits by encouraging residents to make the best use of our recycling facilities, decreasing our use of disposable plastics and reducing travel - cutting the District's carbon footprint.”

160. Finance:

- i. To consider application for grant from Leigh Tennis Club towards coaching Leigh school children
Cllr Williams proposed that a grant of £350 is given to Leigh Tennis Club, this was seconded by Cllr Holt and all were in favour.
- ii. To consider membership renewal to GACC: £10
Members approved the subscription renewal.
- iii. To discuss Earmarked Reserves
Members discussed Earmarked Reserves and approved the transfer from the General Fund into the APD Reserve of £5,000 and also a transfer from the General Fund into the Preservation of Green Reserve of £5,000. Proposed by Cllr Britain, seconded by Cllr Backlog and all were in favour.
- iv. Bank Reconciliation
Cllr Kaye signed the bank reconciliation and corresponding bank statements as a true record.
- v. District-wide Precept tables
The Clerk circulated copies for comparison with other parishes.
- vi. To approve list of payments
Cllr Rogers proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Holt and all were in favour.

161. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

- i. Cllr Holt asked whether there were any plans for the Vicarage to be lived in. Cllr Rogers suggested that the Parish Council ask the Arch Deacon. Clerk to make enquiries.

- ii. Cllr Holt reported that there is a lot of garden waste at the rear of The Fleur de Lis which should be tidied. Clerk to make enquiries.
- iii. Cllr Backlog reported that there is a bar area to the rear of The Fleur de Lis and was concerned that there would be a noise impact. Clerk to make enquiries.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Monday 8th April 2024 in the Small Village Hall at 8.00pm
 The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on Monday 29th April 2024 in the Small Village Hall at 8.00pm.

The meeting closed at 10.20pm.

**LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
 LIST OF PAYMENTS
 March 2024**

Date	Payment		Detail of payment	Amount	
	Number	Payee		Inc. VAT	VAT
14.02.23	714	Cyan (Jati Ltd)	Purchase memorial bench Alan Johnston	£395.00	£65.83
14.02.23	715	Selene Signs Ltd	2 Ancient Oak tree signs	£128.00	£21.33
04.03.24	716	Clerk	Salary	£1,208.03	
04.03.24	717	HMRC	PAYE	£510.57	
04.03.24	718	Clerk	Mileage, petty cash	£137.62	
04.03.24	719	KCC	Pension contribution	£687.07	
04.03.24	720	Leigh Scouts	Hall hire	£20.00	
04.03.24	721	Hever Landscapes Ltd	Cutting new and existing conifer hedges	£648.00	£108.00
04.03.24	722	Vision ICT Ltd	One email account	£21.60	£3.60
04.03.24	723	Luke Saunders	Treatment of all parish benches	£695.00	
04.03.24	724	Weld Done	Repair and repainting tree guard	£198.00	£33.00
04.03.24	725	SDC	Bulk refuse freighter 17.02.24	£135.24	£22.54
04.03.24	726	Burslem Memorials Ltd	Clean War Memorial column	£1,620.00	£270.00
04.03.24	727	Chiddingstone PC	Half costs broadband, printer hire & charges	£421.83	
04.03.24	728	Imperative Training Ltd	Defibrillator batteries x2, Pads x1	£782.40	£130.40
04.03.24	729	National Heater Shops	Heater for Scout Hut, coffee corner	£206.03	£34.34
04.03.24	730	The Ramp People	Disability ramp for Scout Hut, coffee corner	£69.00	£11.50
04.03.24	731	GACC	Subscription	£10.00	
04.03.24	674	Mazars LLP	External Audit fee	£378.00	£63.00
04.03.24	732	Leigh Tennis Club	Grant towards school pupils coaching	£350.00	
04.03.24	733	Earth Anchors Ltd	Old Burial Ground lectern	£576.00	£96.00
04.03.24	734	SDC	Election expenses May 2024	£201.51	
				<u>£9,398.90</u>	<u>£859.54</u>

Signed

Date