

## LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE SMALL VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, LEIGH ON MONDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> JUNE 2024 AT 8.00PM

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- PRESENT:** Cllr R. Britain, Cllr G. Rogers, Cllr G. Marchant, Cllr S. Satterley, Cllr S. Smith and Cllr B. Williams
- APOLOGIES:** Cllr J. Kaye (Chairman), Cllr A. Backlog, Cllr A. Holt, County Cllr M. McArthur and District Cllr M. Silander
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and one member of the public.

In the absence of Cllr Kaye, members agreed that Cllr Smith would chair the meeting.

#### Open Session

##### Report by County Cllr McArthur

In the absence of County Cllr McArthur, the Clerk reported that the B2027 Hildenborough Road will receive a full resurfacing in 2024/25 from the junction of Rings Hill to the junction of Powdermill Lane.

##### Report by District Cllr Silander

None.

##### Questions from members of the public

A resident attended the meeting in order to ask the following:

1. The field adjacent to Oakfield Farm on Powdermill Lane has now achieved planning approval for development, how has this been allowed? The Clerk reported that the application was refused by SDC and went to appeal whereupon the planning inspector found that, although Green Belt land, the proposal would constitute limited infilling and therefore meets exemption criteria set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. KCC contractors came out to fill a pothole but ignored other potholes close by, why is that? The Clerk reported that the contractors are only able to repair the potholes on their worksheet and it may be that the other potholes had not been reported. Cllr Britain said that it is essential that potholes are promptly reported as they will then be repaired. KCC will pay compensation if someone damages their vehicle on a pothole that had previously been reported to them.

#### Closed Session

24. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Kaye, Cllr Backlog and Cllr Holt, and their reasons for absence were accepted by the Parish Council. Apologies for absence were also received from District Cllr Silander and County Cllr McArthur.
25. **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**  
None.
26. **The minutes of the Leigh Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Britain, seconded by Cllr Marchant, and all were in favour.
27. **To review the following policies:**  
Members reviewed and approved the following policies:
  - i. Leigh Code of Conduct
  - ii. Social Media Policy
  - iii. Press & Media Policy
  - iv. Procedure for Handling Complaints
  - v. Procedure for Handling Anonymous Correspondence

- vi. Pre-Planning Advice Policy superseded by Planning Protocol and Protocol on Meeting with Developers
- vii. Mourning Protocol
- viii. GDPR:
  - i. Document Retention & Disposal Policy
  - ii. Email Data Privacy Notice
  - iii. Information & Data Protection Policy
  - iv. Inventory of Personal Data Captured, Stored and Processed
  - v. List of Documents for Retention or Disposal
  - vi. Management Transferable Data Policy
  - vii. Members & Employee Privacy & BYOD Acceptable Use Policy

## 28. Planning

- i. To consider applications received
  - i. SE/24/01160/LBCALT: Hall Place, Penshurst Road, Leigh TN11 8HH - extension to the south-west of the existing garage consisting of two garages, a store and a covered area. Members had no comment to make on this application.
  - ii. SE/24/01247/HOUSE: Rivermede, Penshurst Road, Leigh TN11 8HL - roof extension and alteration. Chimney removal. First floor extension. Fenestration alterations. Members had no comment to make on this application.
  - iii. SE/24/00816/LDCPR: 8 Garden Cottages, Leigh TN11 8QB - insertion of a 1.2 x 1.2 metre window in the rear elevation of the ground floor. Members had no comment to make on this application.
  - iv. SE/24/01158/LBCALT: Old Wood Cottage, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QL - front elevation of building - lower brick work below timber work replacement with matching reclaimed stock. Three coat lime plaster finish. Gutter repairs. Cllr Smith declared a NPI in this application as she is a neighbour. Members had no comment to make on this application.

The Clerk reported that since the last Parish Council meeting, the Planning Committee considered the following applications:

- v. SE/24/0016/FUL and SE/24/01017/LBCALT: Ramhurst Barns, Ramhurst Manor, Powder Mill Lane, Leigh TN11 9AS - change of use of barn with alterations, first floor extension to a single 5-bed dwelling house with 1-bed guest annex. Solar Panels. Air Source Heat Pump. Landscaping. Members submitted the following comment: Leigh Parish Council supports this application which is sympathetic and in keeping with surrounding properties. We note the comments raised by neighbours and the Conservation Officer.
- ii. To report SDC planning application decisions:
  - SE/24/00411/HOUSE: 1 Hunter Seal, Leigh - garage conversion into living space with garage door changed to a window. Application approved.
  - 24/00570/LDCPR: Primrose House, Charcott - Lawful Development Certificate Proposed for rear extension, first floor extension, roof alterations, alterations to existing soil and vent pipe. Application refused.
  - SE/24/00512/HOUSE: Hall Place, Penshurst Road, Leigh - proposed garage extension. Application approved.
- iii. Society Local Council Clerks Planning Summit  
The Clerk reported that there is a day-long online event on 10<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Williams and the Clerk attending.

## 29. The Green

- i. To discuss the specialist inspection carried out on the Ancient Oak Tree  
Inspection carried out by Treework Environment Practice on 4<sup>th</sup> April. The Clerk reported that the Tree Report was received today. There are the following recommendations:
  - i. To carry out a crown reduction back to previously pruned points. This should be done in the short term and also regularly in future. This is considered sufficient to increase the Basic Safety Factor to acceptable levels irrespective of the bracing system.
  - ii. The older static bracing system should remain in situ.
  - iii. The more recent Cobra dynamic bracing system should be subject to a further specialist review.

- iv. There should be annual monitoring of the tree.
- v. Woodchip mulch should be reapplied to a depth of 100mm.
- vi. A board or other appropriate material should be installed at the base of the tree to prevent entry via the cavity at ground level.

The Clerk reported that Treework Environment Practice will provide a quote for a specialist report on the bracing system. Members agreed to proceed with this specialist report. Clerk to meet The Original Tree Surgeons on site to look at the crown reduction works required and to seek a quote for this and remulching. Members agreed that the report can now be sent to the interested resident for information purposes.

- ii. To discuss and approve timing of the grass cutting on The Green near Porcupine House  
The Clerk reported that the agreement was that the grass will not be cut before 1<sup>st</sup> June at a date to be agreed with Leigh in Bloom. Jane Steare has asked whether the Parish Council could undertake a poll on whether residents would like the grass to be left to grow for the summer. Members agreed that it is not possible to leave the grass to grow as it would be too hard to cut and would look unattractive if left to grow for too long. Members agreed to cut the grass as soon as possible.
- iii. To discuss request for wedding guests to park on The Green by The Old Vicarage on 29<sup>th</sup> June  
Members approved this request providing that the ground is dry and any damage to The Green is repaired.
- iv. To discuss D-Day 80 event on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and Light the Beacon  
The Clerk reported that the Fleur de Lis has agreed to sell drinks for the event, and has applied for a Temporary Events Notice. The Thai food van and ice cream van have both confirmed attendance and the Fleur de Lis will also run a barbeque. Leigh Cubs/Beavers will walk with their flag to the beacon area where David Bennie's battery operated microphone will be positioned. Brian Ball will read the exhortation and then the Cubs/Beavers will read the International Tribute.  
The timetable is as follows:  
**18.00: Gather on The Green**  
**19.00: The Exhortation followed by The International Tribute**  
**19.45: A medley of songs from the 1940s**, led by Leigh Ladies Choir and Leigh Performing Arts. Leigh Primary School will be marking the anniversary throughout the day and at a special Grandparents' event in the afternoon. The PTA will run a raffle on The Green during the evening.  
**20.30: The Lighting of the Beacon**  
Two large signs have been erected and bunting put up along the school fence. Cllr Marchant and Cllr Satterley will fill the beacon on Thursday morning and will place cones on Powdermill Lane to prevent parking close to the beacon. Clerk to erect a temporary fence around the beacon area.
- v. To consider request for Land Registry Titles K444927 & K759711 to be returned to Hall Place Estate  
The Clerk reported that Land Registry information has been handed to Cllr Britain and item to be considered next month.

### 30. Highways & Rights of Way

- Temporary Road Closure - Ensfield Road in Leigh on 3<sup>rd</sup> June for 1 day from the junction at the Tudor Trail to just before Ensfield Bridge. Pedestrian access will be maintained during the works. The closure is required while tree cutting works are undertaken by UK Power Networks.
- VolkerStevin: there will be the delivery of a new gate on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, and VolkerStevin will write to those likely to be affected. They are asking those who park their cars on the corner of Powdermill Lane not to do so on that day. The vehicle will be extremely large and they want to avoid any issues when turning the vehicle in and out of the road.
- Emergency Road Closure - Peshurst Road, Peshurst on 2<sup>nd</sup> June for up to 5 days outside property Park Holt. This is to enable water pipe repairs to be carried out by South East Water.

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

The Clerk reported that Cllr Kaye, Cllr Smith and she attended a working party meeting on Friday, and the Trustees are planning to attend the Parish Council meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> July in order to give a small presentation and answer questions, including details of funding. Cllr Smith added that the Trustees are preparing a plan for the project and how opinion can be canvassed.

The member of the public left the meeting at 8.45pm.

**32. To discuss the cluster Emergency & Resilience Plan for the area**

Cllr Williams reported that the second meeting of the cluster to discuss the Emergency & Resilience Plan was held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May. The scope of the project was agreed and a list of potential emergencies and resilience issues is being drawn up. It is hoped that the initial draft Plan will be ready by October. The parishes included in the cluster are Leigh, Chiddingstone, Penshurst and Hever currently. It has been agreed that if an emergency is called in any one of these parishes, all parishes will assist.

**33. To hear report from the Hildenborough Medical Group's Patient Participation Group meeting**

Cllr Smith reported that the Parish Council has responded regarding the delivery of prescriptions to Leigh Post Office, but a response has not yet been received. Cllr Britain reported that the service is reduced and can now take up to a week, depending upon the day. More clarity on the service being provided is required, and information dissemination improved for users. Cllr Smith undertook to respond.

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

The Clerk reported that the next dates are Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June, Friday 12<sup>th</sup> July, Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August and Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September, all 10.30am to 12.00pm.

**35. Aviation**

i. GON: "Gatwick expansion: As a reminder Gatwick wants to expand from 46.6 million passenger and 283,000 flights in 2019 to over 80 million passengers and 386,000 flights per annum. If approved it would be as big as Heathrow was (in passenger terms) before the pandemic. Growth on that scale would have huge climate change, noise, air quality, local transport and other effects. The Gatwick expansion planning inquiry opened on 27 February 2024. The inspectors have six months to complete the inquiry, then three months to submit their recommendations to the Secretary of State. It therefore looks likely that the decision will be made by the next government sometime in the first half of 2025, although that can be delayed. There have so far been two open floor hearings and five issue specific hearings covering noise, local transport, the need for the development and socio economic issues. GON has been at most of those hearings. Where we haven't been able to attend we've made sure our views are covered by other groups, particularly the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC). GACC has been working closely with climate experts the Aviation Environment Federation and commissioned the New Economics Foundation to write a report challenging Gatwick's economic and employment forecasts. Encouragingly all the Councils around Gatwick are also working together to oppose expansion and have engaged legal and technical advisors to help make their case. GON has submitted a detailed Written Representation which focused on climate and noise issues but also commented on need for the development, its lack of compliance with government policy, economic and employment factors and local transport consequences. We'll continue to oppose Gatwick's proposals as the inquiry progresses. At this stage of the process our view is that it's more important to make sure that the key issues are raised by Councils or community groups, so they are considered by the Inspectors, than to have lots of individual responses. We were hugely grateful though to all of you who submitted individual Relevant Representations last year. Close to 6,000 representations were submitted, with well over 80% opposing expansion.

Airspace modernisation: In a separate process Gatwick is redesigning its arrival and departure flight paths. It submitted a shortlist of options to the Civil Aviation Authority in September last year and they were approved in October. Together with other community groups we wrote to the CAA in September asking it not to approve the shortlist and asking for a meeting to discuss our joint concerns. Our request was rejected although we have subsequently met the CAA's CEO, jointly with other groups, to discuss the key issues. The options proposed by Gatwick all concentrate aircraft noise to a greater or lesser degree compared to the current position. Eight of the twelve shortlisted arrival options (which affect west Kent much more than departures) are single tracks. If one of those was approved all arriving aircraft would follow that route with great accuracy except at busy times when air traffic controllers would intervene to vector some aircraft onto alternative routes. Life under a single track route would be profoundly different to now.

“There could be an aircraft overhead about every 90 seconds all day every day at busy times (these routes were described as "noise sewers" by a previous CAA CEO). There would be significant health, mental health and property value impacts, but there would be no compensation because the government hasn't put in place a compensation scheme. Of course other people would experience fewer aircraft, which must also be taken into account. We are very concerned about Gatwick's shortlisted options and the CAA's evaluation process and will continue to press for changes to both. There will eventually be a consultation on the preferred option(s) but that is unlikely to be until 2025 and it may in any event be too late to make major changes by then.”

- ii. The Rt Hon Tom Tugendhat, MP: “Direct rail services from Tonbridge, Leigh, Penshurst and Edenbridge stations to Gatwick would have a huge benefit to our community. It would allow us to travel quickly, reliably and sustainably and reinstate the direct rail link between Kent and Gatwick which was lost back in 2008. For many years I have been working to bring these services back. I am pleased that this work has led to Network Rail investigating the possibility further. Unsurprisingly, their work has shown that a service is ‘credible and appropriate’, in a detailed report. I now need your support to help deliver these services. As a community, demonstrating we would use a direct rail service between Tonbridge and Gatwick, calling at Leigh, Penshurst and Edenbridge stations, will help make this case. That’s why I have set up a page on my website asking for your comments. I have also included on my website the report from Network Rail backing this campaign. Introducing a direct rail link won’t only help those who use Gatwick Airport for flights, but it will boost the Tonbridge-Redhill line and open up new opportunities to reach Surrey and Sussex more easily. We all know that the country lanes between the A21 and M23 are unsuitable for lots of traffic, forcing many to use the M25 instead. If you support this aim, I would like to hear from you.”
- iii. GACC: Annual General Meeting on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2024 at 7pm at Stanhill Court Hotel RH6 0EP
- iv. GACC Update: “Airspace Modernisation: The difficulties relating to engagement on Gatwick’s airspace modernization proposals are still ongoing. We remain very concerned about the narrowing of flight paths, the intensification of noise that would bring about, the lack of any compensation and the increase in capacity arising from modernization. Despite what appeared to be a sound meeting with the CAA in February the resultant letter from their Chief Executive, Rob Bishton, gave us no comfort on any of these points and subsequent follow up continues to be disappointing. We continue to work on this and to seek to involve MPs and will report back once we have further news.  
Noise Management Board: Gatwick’s Noise Management Board is not currently operational as the airport develops proposals for a third term of the board. This is proving to be an unnecessarily slow process and it is unclear whether Gatwick is listening to the views we and other stakeholders have expressed on, for example, the composition and leadership of the board and its objectives. Some of the initiatives the previous board was pursuing, such as on the fair and equitable dispersal of flight paths, seem to have ground to a halt.  
Night Flight Consultation: The Department of Transport has commenced its consultation on Night Flights at the designated airports which include Gatwick, which has the highest number of approved flights of any of the three designated airports.  
Gatwick Operations: Flight and passenger numbers continue to rise and as at April this year Gatwick declared it was operating at 91% of 2019 levels. Night flights have particularly increased – arrivals being about 75% up month on month. Night period departures although within the maximum numbers permitted, are now higher than in 2019 and particularly so in regard to the 0500-0559 period. Gatwick also announced in March a pre-tax profit at its year end of £314.8m in the year to the end of December. Gatwick reportedly says it expects to pay out its first shareholder dividends in five years but has not said when.”
- v. AEF: Government’s night flight restrictions consultation: “AEF’s Airspace and Noise Community Forum has responded to the DfT’s consultation on its proposed three-year night flights regime at the three designated airports (Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted) between October 2025 and October 2028. The proposals, we feel, are just a recipe for inaction. The Government’s proposals to roll over the existing quota counts at all three London airports means that most communities will have seen little reduction to harmful aircraft noise exposure at night for many years. In addition, we sharply criticise the Government’s failure to propose any meaningful changes to the night-flight dispensation regime, a regime that – as we point out – can be exploited by airports.

“Meanwhile, the Government’s failure to take forward its proposals to extend the operational ban on QC4 aircraft to the full night period and to introduce a scheduling ban on QC2 aircraft cannot be justified. The Government’s proposed night noise abatement objective does not, we say, define or clarify in a meaningful way the obligations it imposes on the aviation industry or expected outcomes. The objective is: “To limit, and where possible reduce, the adverse effects of aviation noise at night on health and quality of life while supporting sustainable growth and recognising the importance to the UK of commercial passenger and freight services.” As you will see, the proposed objective includes an unsubstantiated claim for the benefits of passenger flights at night. This inclusion has been made despite the Government’s failure to deliver its commitment to conduct “thorough research to properly inform and develop a new evidence-based night noise regime” in time for this latest review of the night noise. In the absence of Government research, we cite evidence-based critiques of the Government’s assumptions around the economic benefits of night flights and the aviation sector in general that strongly suggest the aviation sector is a drain on the UK economy.”

### **36. Aged Persons Dwellings**

- i. The Clerk reported that Hodge Landscapes have created the hardstanding and the cover for the resident’s motorised wheelchair and steps down to the shed. The handrails will be fitted in the next couple of days.
- ii. The Clerk reported that she has asked for a quote for painting the eaves and possibly the windows at the front of both bungalows.
- iii. Cllr Marchant said that he will repair the guttering at No.2 The Bungalows.

### **37. The Old Burial Ground**

The lectern information board is ready and the information will be printed in due course. Members asked for the area to be strimmed.

### **38. 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 4: High Weald AONB Unit: “We are pleased to announce that the new High Weald AONB Management Plan 2024-29 has been approved by the High Weald AONB Joint Advisory Committee, for adoption by the 15 Local Authorities. See: <https://highweald.org/aonb-management-plan/>. AONB Management Plans are statutory documents, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. They are policy documents for the whole of the protected landscape, formulated to coordinate ambition, policy, investment and action to achieve the legal purpose of ‘conserving and enhancing natural beauty’, and are the principal vehicle for ensuring that the statutory purposes of the protected landscape are met. This Plan is the first edition of a new 20-year strategy, with a five-year implementation plan, and includes:
  - the Statement of Significance, which defines what makes the High Weald special and identifies the qualities that justify its designation as a nationally important landscape,
  - character statements, including a list of key characteristics, describing the components of natural beauty that policy and actions should aim to conserve and enhance, and
  - a set of management policies (‘Objectives’) for the conservation and enhancement of the AONB together with proposed ‘Actions’ which indicate the ambitions of partners for themselves and for other organisations, and which guide resources and effort to where they are most needed.
  - A set of programmes, principles for action and investment strategy for a range of cross cutting themes which address current and future major challenges of biodiversity, climate change, fairer access to nature, and development pressure.”
- ii. Item 9: SDC Newsletters:
  - Cllr Roddy Hogarth was elected as Sevenoaks District Council’s new Leader at the Annual Council meeting on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2024. Cllr Hogarth, who represents Seal and Weald, was first elected to the Council in May 2011.
  - SDC has published the outcome of an audit carried out by the joint Dartford and Sevenoaks Audit Partnership following the collapse of the independent leisure operator Sencio, which at the time ran the Sevenoaks and Edenbridge leisure centres, as well as Lullingstone Park Golf Club.

Leader of SDC, Cllr Roddy Hogarth, says: "The report highlights the Council ultimately did everything it could within the contractual agreements to manage Sencio's poor performance. This included giving a final warning that the Council could declare Sencio insolvent and replace it with an alternative provider." The report gives two 'medium priority' recommendations on lessons to be learnt, which includes maintaining a risk register relating to the leisure centre contract, and more regular reporting to Council. These learnings have been incorporated into the management of Everyone Active, the new leisure operator. Everyone Active now report to Councillors twice per year on its financial and operational performance, and a risk register is used to monitor the contractual requirements.

- iii. Cllr Rogers raised a query by a resident regarding the new refuse and recycling collection arrangements. Currently some residents in Powdermill Lane put their refuse bags out early on the collection day but birds pull the bags apart and some residents then do not clear up the resulting mess. The resident has asked if it possible to have some wheelie bins. Cllr Britain said that SDC will not take bags out of any bins. It was agreed that the Clerk will mention in the parish magazine that there is a problem and ask people to clear up if this happens to their refuse bags. Cllr Marchant was concerned about the time it will take the refuse collection teams to do their rounds if the recycling bag-for-life has to be returned to each property as this will slow the process up considerably. Clerk to ask District Cllr Silander and County Cllr McArthur how SDC see the new process working, as the current system works well. There is no criticism of the refuse collection teams who do an excellent job.

**39. Finance:**

- i. To sign a quarterly bank reconciliation  
Cllr Smith signed the bank reconciliation and corresponding bank statements.
- ii. To approve membership renewal to Society of Local Council Clerks: £149  
Cllr Satterley proposed that this membership be renewed. This was seconded by Cllr Marchant and all were in favour.
- iii. To approve list of payments  
Cllr Rogers proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and all were in favour.

**40. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda**

None.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 in the Small Village Hall at 8.00pm  
The meeting closed at 9.15pm.

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

Date	Payment Number	Payee	Detail of payment	Amount Inc. VAT	VAT
03.06.24	764	Clerk	Salary	£1,233.83	
03.06.24	765	HMRC	PAYE	£497.57	
03.06.24	766	Clerk	Mileage, petty cash inc Fastnets domain renewal	£127.04	£2.40
03.06.24	767	KCC	Pension contribution	£687.07	
03.06.24	768	SLCC	Membership renewal	£149.00	
03.06.24	769	SLCC	Planning Event (Cllr Williams, Clerk)	£117.00	£19.50
03.06.24	770	Knockout Print	D-Day boards	£60.00	£10.00
				<b>£2,871.51</b>	<b>£31.90</b>

Signed .....

Date .....