

## LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE SMALL VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, LEIGH ON MONDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 8.00PM

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**PRESENT:** Cllr J. Kaye (Chairman), Cllr R. Britain, Cllr A. Holt, Cllr G. Marchant, Cllr S. Smith and Cllr B. Williams

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr A. Backlog, Cllr G. Rogers and County Cllr M. McArthur

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk), District Cllr M. Silander and 1 member of the public.

#### Open Session

##### Report by District Cllr Silander

District Cllr Silander reported that some planning processes may be delayed as under the new Labour Government, Draft Local Plans may need to be re-assessed with a re-consultation exercise. The Labour Government has pledged to protect the Green Belt as much as possible but some 'Grey Belt' sites could be put forward for development. This would be previously developed land, maybe not classified as a brownfield site, but have some form of development, such as a hardstanding area.

##### Questions from members of the public

1. The member of the public asked for clarification on the determination of the site South of Greenview Avenue, as SDC had said that it would be determined at the end of May. District Cllr Silander said that there is no update at the current time, this could be due to the new planning laws to be introduced under the new Government. Cllr Holt said that, regardless of the fact that this site is Green Belt land, KCC Highways have strongly objected to the application on highway safety grounds.
2. The member of the public asked for an update on the Parish Council's proposed affordable housing scheme. Cllr Kaye advised that the project cannot proceed at the current time as an appropriate site has not been put forward for the scheme.

#### Closed Session

- 65. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Backlog and Cllr Rogers, and their reasons for absence were accepted by the Parish Council. Apologies for absence were also received from County Cllr McArthur.

District Cllr Silander left the meeting at 8.06pm.

- 66. Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**  
None.
- 67. The minutes of the Leigh Parish Council Meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Marchant, seconded by Cllr Williams, and all were in favour.
- 68. To discuss the vacancy on Leigh Parish Council following the resignation of Sean Satterley**  
The Clerk reported that the vacancy has been advertised and if ten or more electors write to SDC requesting an election, the Parish Council is obliged to hold one, otherwise the process of co-option can commence. This will be by means of an informal interview, followed by a formal co-option at the October Parish Council meeting.
- 69. To nominate a new Parish Council representative on the Leigh Village Halls Committee**  
Members agreed to give this consideration and item to be discussed at the October Parish Council meeting.

## 70. Planning

### i. To consider applications received

- i. SE/24/01901/HOUSE and SE/24/01902/LBCALT: Pond Cottage, Egg Pie Lane, Sevenoaks Weald TN14 6NP - new 14 free standing pv panels and installation of new freestanding air source heat pump. Members supported this application.

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

- ii. SE/24/01016/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. Air Source Heat Pump. Landscaping and parking. Amended: reduction in rooflights, removal solar panels, resiting airsource heat pump, guest annex removed and building retained as existing, provision of 4 parking spaces. Members supported the amendment.
- iii. SE/24/01745/WTCA: Orchard Lodge, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QJ - Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) - remove all deadwood and reduce crown by 40%. Leylandii x 1 - fell. Members had no objection to this application but suggested a condition that the felled Leylandii should be replaced with a native broad leaved tree.
- iv. SE/24/01579/MMA and SE/24/01748/MMA: Hall Place, Peshurst Road, Leigh TN11 8HH - new two storey replacement extension. Refurbishment of existing building. New chimney. Internal alterations. Alterations to fenestration. New Patio. Roof lantern. Amended: new drawings. Members had no comment to make on this application.
- v. SE/24/01150/FUL: Hall Place, Peshurst Road, Leigh TN11 8HH - proposed storage building with hardstanding and landscaping. Amended: BNG Habitat plan and calculations provided. Members had no comment to make on this application.
- vi. SE/24/01533/HOUSE and SE/24/01534/LBCALT: 1 Oak Cottages, High Street, Leigh TN11 8RW - erection of garden building. Members had no comment to make on this application.
- vii. SE/24/01835/LDCEX: Land East of Eggpie Cottage, Egg Pie Lane, Sevenoaks Weald TN14 6NP - confirmation of Commencement of Permission 21/01766/FUL. The applicant is asking for a formal legal determination from the Council as to whether a particular use or development is lawful under planning law. Members felt that they are not in a position to judge whether sufficient works have been undertaken to declare that works have commenced. The Parish Council does ask however that the conditions attached to the original permission be reviewed in considering this. No record of the details can be found of how the development will enhance biodiversity, condition 3, or details of both hard and soft landscape works, condition 4, both of which were conditions required before any works reached damp proof course level and the Parish Council believe that these are very relevant to the impact of this development on the neighbourhood.
- viii. SE/24/02000/WTCA: Kennards, Hildenborough Road, Leigh, TN11 8RE - various works to trees. Members will leave the decision to the SDC tree officers, however, the Parish Council would like to request the following condition: if it is considered that T4 (Maple) should be taken down to ground level then an appropriate broad leaved tree be planted to replace it.
- ix. SE/24/02060/WTCA: Church Hill House, Church Hill, Leigh, TN11 8RG - Lime - crown lift to 4.5m. Magnolia - crown lift to 4.5m over road, reduce remainder by up to 2m. Members will leave the decision to the SDC tree officers.
- x. SE/24/01700/LBCALT: The Coach House, Ramhurst Manor, Powder Mill Lane, Leigh TN11 9AS - removal of existing door, window and steps to be replaced with new french doors and new ragstone steps. New cast iron airbrick. Removal of fireplace with alteration to external wall. Internal alterations. Renewal of kitchen including removal of modern feature fireplace, renewal of kitchen floor, replacing modern internal door with purpose made half-glazed door and replacing a modern external door and attached sidelight with a pair of purpose-made French doors together with replacing the steps leading to the proposed French doors. Members will leave the decision to the SDC Conservation Officer.
- xi. SE/24/02091/AGRNOT and SE/24/02128/ADJ: Ashour Farm, Peshurst Road, Bidborough TN3 0LN - replacement agricultural barns following fire damage. This is an adjoining district application. There is an AGRNOT application linked to SDC.

There is also an ADJ application with comments requested by TWBC. Members had no comment to make on this application.

ii. To report SDC planning application decisions:

- SE/24/01247/HOUSE: Rivermede, Penshurst Road, Leigh - roof extension and alteration, chimney removal, first floor extension, fenestration alterations. Application refused. Reason: The proposed extension would result in disproportionate additions to the original house and constitute inappropriate development harmful to the maintenance of the character of the Green Belt and to its openness. No very special circumstances exist to clearly outweigh the harm to the Green Belt. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to the National Planning Policy Framework, policies GB1 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan, LO8 of the Sevenoaks Core Strategy and Sevenoaks Development in the Development in the Green Belt Supplementary Planning Document.
- SE/24/01158/LBCALT: Old Wood Cottage, The Green, Leigh - front elevation of building lower brick work below timber work replacement with matching reclaimed stock. Three coat lime plaster finish. Gutter repairs. Application refused. Reason: The proposals fail to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Insufficient information has been provided to regarding the materials and method statements for the brickwork, pointing, plastering and gutter repairs which could potentially cause harm the Grade II listed building. It is considered that the removal of the brickwork will likely cause the loss of historic fabric which will harm the character and significance of the listed building. No clear and convincing justification for the works has been provided. As such it is considered the works fail to conserve the character and significance of the listed building, contrary to policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan, and the heritage principles of the NPPF, specifically paragraphs 200, 205 and 206.
- SE/24/01017/LBCALT: Ramhurst Barns, Ramhurst Manor, Powder Mill Lane - change of use of barn with alterations, first floor extension to a single 5-bed dwelling house. Air Source Heat Pump. Landscaping and parking. Application approved.
- SE/24/01579/MMA and SE/24/01748/MMA: Hall Place, Penshurst Road, Leigh – Minor Material Amendment to SE/23/02145/HOUSE and SE/23/02146/LBCALT. Applications approved.
- SE/24/01443/FUL: Land West of Oakfield Farm, Powder Mill Lane, Leigh – subdivision of land for the erection of a detached four bedroom dwelling with Solar Panels, together with access, parking and landscaping including a pond. Application approved.
- SE/24/01445/HOUSE: 2 Cherry Tree Cottages, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QP - demolition of existing conservatory. Single storey side extension with roof lantern and two storey rear extension. Alterations to fenestration. Application approved.
- SE/24/01745/WTCA: Orchard Lodge, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QJ - Works to Trees in a Conservation Area: Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) - remove all deadwood and reduce crown by 40%. Leylandii x 1 - fell. No Objection Lodged.
- SE/24/01796/WTCA: The Green, Leigh TN11 8QL - Works to Trees in a Conservation Area Veteran Oak - Crown reduce to previous pruning points and remove all deadwood. No Objection Lodged.
- SE/24/01533/HOUSE: 1 Oak Cottages, High Street, Leigh - erection of garden building. Application approved.
- SE/24/02128/ADJ: Ashour Farm, Penshurst Road, Bidborough - Prior Notification for Agricultural Development - replacement of 2 agricultural barns. No Objection Lodged.
- SE/24/02091/AGRNOT: Ashour Farm, Penshurst Road, Bidborough - Prior Notification for Agricultural Development - replacement of 2 agricultural barns. Decision: Prior Approval Not Required.

iii. To report appeal decision

Appeal Ref: APP/G2245/D/23/3332468: 4 Knotley Hall Cottages, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway, Kent TN11 8JH. The appeal is made by Mr Major under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.

The application reference is 23/01970/HOUSE and the development proposed is extensions and alterations to dwelling and associated works. Appeal Dismissed. Reason: "The proposal represents inappropriate development, which by definition, would be harmful to the Green Belt as described in paragraph 152 of the Framework. I have also found that there would be moderate harm to openness. The other considerations do not clearly outweigh the substantial weight that I give to the harm to the Green Belt, by reason of inappropriateness and harm to openness. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the development do not exist."

## 71. The Green

### i. To discuss quote for the specialist cabling work on the Veteran Oak Tree

Quote received from Max Ferretti at Absolute Arboriculture: To install a new cobra bracing system along with supplying the new 8 tonne material would be £1,540.00 + VAT. This price includes labour at £1,040 + VAT and the cost of the new Cobra system £500.00 + VAT. Cllr Britain proposed that this quote be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr Smith and all were in favour.

Members discussed the latest email received from a resident regarding the bracing. The Clerk reminded members that the Parish Council's Standing Orders state:

#### **"7. Previous Resolutions**

a. A resolution shall not be reversed within six months except either by a special motion, which requires written notice by at least three councillors to be given to the Proper Officer in accordance with standing order 9, or by a motion moved in pursuance of the recommendation of a committee or a sub-committee.

b. When a motion moved pursuant to standing order 7(a) has been disposed of, no similar motion may be moved for a further six months."

Members agreed that this decision cannot be rescinded within 6 months of 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024 when a resolution was passed to proceed with the bracing as per the recommendation made by Absolute Arboriculture. Clerk to advise the resident accordingly.

### ii. To hear update regarding the other works on the Veteran Oak Tree as previously agreed

i. To crown reduce to previous pruning points, remove all deadwood. To block the hole in the base by the installation of a hard wood board. To cover the whole root plate in deep woodchip mulch. The pruning work and the re-mulching was done last Thursday but the work to block the hole at the base of the tree has not been carried out yet.

ii. To inspect all the existing wire cabling clips and where necessary replaced / reinstalled so that the dead end of the wire (cut end) is at the top and the live end at the bottom on the saddle and tightened to the correct torque. The Clerk reported that she has been unable to find a contractor to carry out this work, although RWE has quoted £100 + VAT to carry out a climbing inspection of the existing static bracing. After the inspection has been carried out an assessment can be carried out of what further action is required, if any. RWE state that old bracing under load should never be cut and left in situ. It was agreed to discuss the clips with Absolute Arboriculture when they attend to install the cobra bracing.

### iii. To discuss request for parking on The Green for the Leigh Tennis Club event on 7<sup>th</sup> September

Members approved this request.

### iv. To discuss the Stoolball tournament held on The Green on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September

The Clerk advised that the Stoolball Club have permission to park on The Green for matches, if conditions are dry. She has received some comments from residents regarding the number of cars parking on the grass. It was agreed that whilst the tournament was a successful event, the Stoolball Club should advise the Parish Council of such future events in case there is another event arranged on The Green.

### v. To consider request for Land Registry Titles K444927 & K759711 to be returned to Hall Place Estate

Members agreed that the two titles include public amenity land which is registered Village Green, also they relate to land that is the main access to the church, the Genner Rooms and a public rights of way. It was felt that it would not be viable to hand these back to the Hall Place Estate. Cllr Britain advised that the drive was resurfaced in 1996, funded by the Parish Council, the PCC and by a grant from SDC. Clerk to advise the Hall Place Estate accordingly.

## 72. Highways & Rights of Way

- i. To hear update regarding the resurfacing works on The Hildenborough Road  
The Clerk reported that County Cllr McArthur has now reported that the whole road will be resurfaced in this financial year.
- ii. To discuss uneven surface on footpath between Kiln Lane and Well Close  
The Clerk reported that she has contacted the lawyers for the landowners of the triangle of land adjacent to the footpath but has yet to receive a response.
- iii. New access from Hall Place onto Penshurst Road  
The Clerk reported that she raised this with the landowner, who said that he will look into what permissions are required.
- iv. SpeedWatch  
The Clerk reported that she has mentioned in the parish magazine that the Parish Council may start a SpeedWatch group and volunteers are sought. Clerk to advertise on social media.
- v. Parking on double yellow lines in the High Street  
Cllr Britain reported that people are regularly parking on both sides of the junction of Lower Green, on yellow lines, and this is making visibility very poor, particularly at night. Clerk to contact the Fleur de Lis and also advise SDC and the Police.
- vi. Road Closures
  - Temporary Road Closure - Penshurst Road, Leigh on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024 for 1 day between 09.30 and 15.00 between B2027 Penshurst Road and Cinder Hill Lane. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while Openreach pole replacements are undertaken.
  - Temporary Road Closure – Ensfield Road, Leigh on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September for 1 day between 09.30 and 15.30.
  - Urgent Road Closure - Penshurst Road, Leigh on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 for up to 2 days between 20:00 and 05:00 each day. The road will be closed at the junctions of Lower Green Road and Tonbridge Road. This is to enable carriageway patching to be carried out by KCC.
  - Tonbridge Half Marathon 2024, various road closures on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2024. Closures are planned between the hours of 08:30 and 12:30, with the roads re-opened as soon as it is safe to do so. There will be rolling road closures in place around the route as the race progresses. Pedestrian access will be maintained during the works. The closure is required for the safety of the public and event personnel while the Tonbridge Half Marathon 2024 is held by Run Through Events.

The member of the public left the meeting at 9.10pm.

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

Cllr Kaye reported that the Village Halls Management Committee is holding two open events in the Large Village Hall on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September 18.00-21.00, and Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> September 10.00-16.00. Help is requested for the Saturday. Members to advise the Clerk of their availability.

## 74. To discuss the cluster Emergency & Resilience Plan for the area

The Clerk reported that the draft plan is being prepared and the next meeting will be in mid-September.

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

The next dates are Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September, 11<sup>th</sup> October, 15<sup>th</sup> November, 13<sup>th</sup> December. 10.30am to 12.00pm. The Clerk suggested that a coffee morning could be provided for the school and pre-school parents and carers at the start of the new term, maybe on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September from 8.30am. Cllr Holt undertook to speak to the school.

## 76. Aged Persons Dwellings

- i. To discuss tenancy renewal for No. 1 The Bungalows  
The Clerk reported that the tenant's lease is due to expire on 05 October 2024. Members agreed the new rental which would include a 2.5% increase, less than the current RPI.

There will be a 2 month break clause for both sides. Helen Breeze's fee for preparing the new lease is £100 + VAT and includes extending the deposit protection for a further term. Members approved.

ii. Repair to gutter on No.2 The Bungalows

Cllr Marchant reported that he has repaired the gutter to the tenant's satisfaction.

**77. The Old Burial Ground**

To discuss installation of information board and bench

Cllr Holt reported that the information for the board is nearly finalised. Cllr Marchant reported that he and a resident will move the seat into the Old Burial Ground.

**78. 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: Email from David Furneaux re: Leigh Football Club: "After careful consideration, we've decided not to enter a team into the Sevenoaks District League for the upcoming season. Let me explain. We lack sufficient player support, as most of last year's players have moved on. While this might be beneficial since they didn't align well with our club's values and goals, it has left us short-handed. Additionally, we haven't arranged enough friendly fixtures before the season, complicating our preparation. My priorities have shifted recently, making it challenging for me to fully commit to the secretary role this season. Given these factors, it's not fair to pass the responsibility to any external candidate as manager. This decision does not signify the end of the club. There's a possibility that a new manager could lead us into the 2025/26 season. However, given our current situation, we lack the necessary infrastructure to enter the league this upcoming season."

Second email from David Furneaux "I have formed a vets team and we are going to have some casual games throughout the season. Our first game is vs Chiddingstone Vets on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October, likely on The Green in Leigh with a 3pm kick off. If that goes well I will look for a few more fixtures for us."

ii. Item 4: KCC: an updated Environment Agency publication about riparian ownership called "Your Watercourse: rights and roles". See <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/owning-a-watercourse>

You normally own a stretch of watercourse that runs on or under your land or is on the boundary of your land, up to its centre. The deeds for your property or land will tell you if this is not the case. A watercourse can be any stream of water flowing in a defined channel or through an underground pipe or culvert (an underground structure that water can flow through). It can be narrow or wide, natural or artificial. It includes channels that are dry for long periods of time or may not flow every year. A dry channel only filled during temporary flooding is not a watercourse.

A watercourse can be a river, brook, beck, ditch, stream, leat, goyle, rhyne or culvert.

You have responsibilities for the stretch of watercourse you own. You must let water flow naturally. You may have to remove blockages, fallen trees or overhanging branches from your watercourse, or cut back trees and shrubs on the bank, if they obstruct or affect a public right of navigation – ask your navigation authority for advice, or reduce the flow or cause flooding to other landowners' property – you may have to pay damages if they do. You should leave all other trees, branches and shrubs - they can help prevent flooding by varying the shape and flow of the channel, and reduce erosion, and keep any trash screen, weir, mill gate or other structure clear. Do not go inside a culvert. You could get trapped or poisoned by gases.

You must not pollute the water. Do not throw waste water, chemicals or anything else which could cause pollution on the banks or in the water. You must apply to use herbicides within one metre from the top of the bank of the watercourse. Find out how to prevent rainwater carrying topsoil into the watercourse and polluting it in the Think Soils publication. You should remove litter from the banks, remove animal carcasses and not put garden waste, including grass cuttings, on the banks or into the water. You must not disturb certain species or their habitats, including the watercourse bed and banks, birds and their nests or the spawning or eggs of salmon, trout or other fish. You must prevent invasive species such as Japanese knotweed from spreading into the wild or onto neighbours' land.

- iii. Item 5: Sharon Gray, Community Rail Development Officer, Uckfield & East Grinstead lines and Tonbridge, Redhill & Reigate lines. “2025 is the 200th anniversary of the birth of the modern railway. Railway 200 is an opportunity to celebrate the past, present and future of the railway and the communities it serves. SCRPs are looking to design 200 temporary ‘Blue Plaques’. We have 10 CRP lines, working with 5 train operating companies, 20 plaques on each line would reach the target. They will take the form of window stickers or posters which will be on display throughout 2025. We hope, with your help, to identify buildings and locations with interesting railway related stories. If you have any suggestions to help the Uckfield & East Grinstead or the Tonbridge, Redhill & Reigate section or if you’d like to be involved in the project, please let me know. More information about the national initiative can be found at About Railway 200 – Railway 200”
- iv. Item 8: KALC Training:
  - Annual Finance Conference: 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024, 9.30am-3.15pm, in person at the Bat and Ball Community Centre in Sevenoaks. Speakers include the Local Government Association, KCC and the Department for Levelling Up and Communities.
  - Introduction to Planning for Local Councils: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024, 6pm-9pm, online. Join Alison Eardley for this 3 hour online introduction to the planning process.
  - Rights of Way Paths: 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 9am-1pm, online. Join us for this exciting new course during which you will learn about protecting PROW and the role of Local Councils.
  - The Nuts and Bolts of Parish Councils – For councillors: 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024, 6pm-8pm, online. Our foundation course for new and not so new councillors.
  - Chair’s Conference: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2025, 10am-3.00pm, in person at Appledore Village Hall, Appledore, Ashford TN26 2AE.

#### **79. Finance:**

- i. To sign a quarterly bank reconciliation  
Cllr Kaye signed the bank reconciliation and bank statements as a correct record.
- ii. To discuss the 2023/24 External Audit  
The Clerk reported that the External Audit report has not yet been received. To be discussed at the next Parish Council meeting.
- iii. To approve renewal to the AEF: £36  
Members approved this subscription renewal.
- iv. To approve list of payments  
Cllr Marchant proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and all were in favour.

#### **80. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda**

- i. Cllr Smith reported that she will be attending the Patients Participation Group meeting on Friday and will suggest that the request for information for inclusion in the parish magazine is dropped as the surgery has had trouble preparing a succinct piece.
- ii. Cllr Holt reported that the pond in Well Close needs some attention and she will discuss this with the Well Close Residents Association. Cllr Britain, as Pond Warden, undertook to assist.
- iii. Cllr Britain reported that the brambles on the section of path between Crandalls and Well Close are at eye level and need cutting back. Cllr Holt undertook to speak to the neighbours.

**The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024 in the Small Village Hall at 8.00pm**

The meeting closed at 9.45pm.

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

Payment			Detail of payment	Amount	
Date	Number	Payee		Inc. VAT	VAT
02.09.24	790	Clerk	Salary	£1,221.03	
02.09.24	791	HMRC	PAYE	£497.57	
02.09.24	792	Clerk	Mileage & reimbursement costs	£141.00	
02.09.24	793	KCC	Pension contribution	£687.07	
02.09.24	794	Knockout Print	Play event advertising boards	£60.00	£10.00
02.09.24	795	Hever Landscapes Ltd	Maintenance of The Green & areas May	£624.00	£104.00
02.09.24	796	Hever Landscapes Ltd	Maintenance of The Green & areas June inc first cut of The Green by Porcupine House, Old Burial Ground and planting Colin's tree twice	£1,122.00	£187.00
02.09.24	797	AEF	Subscription renewal	£36.00	
				<b><u>£4,388.67</u></b>	<b><u>£301.00</u></b>

Signed .....

Date .....