

## LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE LEIGH ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE SMALL VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, LEIGH ON TUESDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2025 AT 8.00PM

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

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr A. Backlog, Cllr G. Marchant, Cllr G. Rogers, Cllr G. Southwell and District Cllr M. Silander

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and 3 members of the public.

#### Closed Session:

**1. a. Election of Chairman for year 2025/26**

Cllr Smith proposed that Cllr Kaye be elected as Chairman for the year 2025/26. This was seconded by Cllr Holt and there were no other nominations. Members unanimously voted to accept the proposal. Cllr Kaye said that he was willing to stand and was duly elected.

**b. To receive Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

Cllr Kaye signed the Chairman's Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was counter-signed by the Clerk.

**2. Election of Vice-Chairman for year 2025/26**

Cllr Britain proposed that Cllr Smith be elected as Vice-Chairman for the year 2025/26. This was seconded by Cllr Williams. There were no other nominations. Members unanimously voted to accept the proposal. Cllr Smith said that she is willing to stand and was duly elected.

#### **The Closed Session was suspended for the Open Session**

#### Open Session

##### Questions from members of the public

A resident asked the following questions:

1. Will the beacon will be lit for VE Day? Cllr Kaye responded to say that it will not be lit on this occasion.
2. Will the bench will be reinstated on The Green? Cllr Kaye said that the bench will not be reinstated, it has been relocated to the Old Burial Ground. The area that has been damaged will be repaired and grasscrete laid so that the vehicle can be parked without damaging The Green.
3. Will the Parish Council be considering the current application at Edgehill in Greenview Avenue? Cllr Williams replied that, yes, this will be discussed under Planning.

#### Closed Session

- 3. Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Backlog, Cllr Marchant, Cllr Rogers and Cllr Southwell, and their reasons for absence were accepted by the Parish Council. Apologies for absence were also received from District Cllr Silander.

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

**5. Appointment of Committees and representatives to other bodies**

Members approved the following:

Finance Committee:

Cllr Kaye (Chair), Cllr Britain, Cllr Williams

Planning Committee:

Cllr Williams (Chair), Cllr Marchant, Cllr Smith,  
Cllr Rogers, Cllr Holt, Cllr Backlog

Affordable Housing Committee:	Cllr Kaye, (Chair), Cllr Smith, Cllr Britain, Cllr Holt,
Emergency & Resilience Planning:	Cllr Williams
Leigh Village Halls Management Committee:	Cllr Backlog
Leigh Village Halls Redevelopment Group:	Cllr Kaye, Cllr Rogers, Cllr Smith
Leigh Countryside Access Wardens:	Cllr Kaye, Joe Staffurth, Rachel Valentine
Leigh SpeedWatch Group:	Cllr Williams, Cllr Rogers, Vicky Patient, Joe Staffurth, Alison Tyler and the Clerk
Tree Warden:	Cllr Smith
Pond Warden:	Cllr Britain
CPRE:	Cllr Smith
KALC Sevenoaks branch:	All members

**6. To confirm that the Parish Council remains eligible to use the General Power of Competence**

The Clerk reminded members that the General Power of Competence gives authorities the power to take the reasonable action they need 'for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area'. Under the provision a local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally have full legal capacity to do. To remain eligible, the Parish Council has to confirm that:

- (a) the number of members of the council that have been declared to be elected, whether at ordinary elections or at a by-election, is equal to or greater than two-thirds of the total number of members of the council;
- (b) the Clerk is qualified in the Certificate in Local Council Administration;
- (c) the Clerk has completed the relevant training.

There are some restrictions: to abide by statutory duties such as considering the likely effect of crime and disorder and conserving biodiversity, and to abide by legislation, such as employment law, health & safety, equality and data protection.

Members agreed that the Parish Council remains eligible to use the General Power of Competence.

**7. The minutes of the Leigh Parish Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Britain, seconded by Cllr Williams, and all were in favour.

**8. To discuss the new domain name for Leigh Parish Council and the SSL add-on**

The Clerk reported that the new domain name is leighkentparish.gov.uk. This will be set up as soon as possible, with new email addresses. The existing emails will be migrated to the new system.

**9. Planning**

**i. To consider applications received**

- i. SE/25/00756/HOUSE: Edgehill, Greenview Avenue, Leigh TN11 8QS - demolition of existing conservatory and removal of existing roof. Part ground floor side extension, new porch, rear extension, new second floor and loft conversion with sky lights. Alterations to fenestration. Replacement of existing garage and shed at rear of property. New vehicular access. In principle, members had no objection to the proposed development, but raised some concerns and asked that more information is supplied on the following:
  - 1. The scale of the development in the context of its location and size of curtilage. In particular, members are concerned about the roof line and that it should be no higher than neighbouring properties on Greenview Avenue.
  - 2. It is unclear what the impact the development will have on neighbouring properties in relation to light and overlooking.
  - 3. There is no indication of drainage arrangements to prevent surface water flow onto the roads from the extended drop curb and parking area for two cars, which is in addition to the garage space on Lealands Avenue.
- ii. SE/25/00926/HOUSE and SE/25/00927/LBCALT: Old Brickmakers, 92 Lower Green, Leigh TN11 8RU - demolition of modern half of garden outbuilding (old cobbler's shop) with flat roof and roof light, and erection of new matching extension to create a double piled roof formation. New extension to existing rear lean-to utility/WC comprising a cranked extension with pitched roof. New extension in matching facing brick.

Existing adjacent lean-to enclosed porch with replacement window, existing rear door to be infilled. New rear single storey bedroom extension with pitched clay tiled roof to form third pile to existing roof formation. White painted feather edged cladding to match existing. New replacement bathroom window at 1st floor with painted timber finish. Members had no objection to this application.

- iii. SE/25/01180/FUL: Leigh Post Office, High Street, Leigh TN11 8RL - move the access door to middle of the shop front. Members supported the proposal to move the access door to the middle of the shop front, however members noted the inclusion in the application of lit fascia signage. Clerk to request more information on the lighting proposals including the hours that the sign will be lit, as the shop is within the Leigh Conservation Area and members want to ensure that the proposals are in keeping with the village.
- iv. SE/25/00998/WTCA: Ivy Cottage, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QN - 3 x hawthorn trees to remove and grind resulting stumps. Members had no objection to this application.
- v. SE/25/01077/LDCPR: 1 Wyndham Close, Leigh TN11 8RD - loft conversion including dormer window, and rooflights. Members had no objection to this application.
- vi. SE/25/01184/WTCA: Leigh County Primary School, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QP - T1 - Yew - Crown lift to 3.25m and reduce by 1.25m. This is the Parish Council's application. Members supported this application.
- vii. SE/25/00897/LDCPR: 4 Knotley Hall Cottages, Tonbridge Road, Chiddingstone Causeway TN11 8JH - erection of two storey rear extension and detached outbuilding. Cllr Williams undertook to draft a response for approval by the Planning Committee.

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

- viii. SE/25/00789/HOUSE: Primrose House, Charcott TN11 8LJ - formation of a flat roofed dormer on the rear elevation and rooflight. Members had no objection to this application.

ii. To report SDC planning application decisions:

- SE/25/00416/WTCA: Old Chimneys, The Green, Leigh TN11 8QL - Works to Trees in a Conservation Area: 2 Limes left hand side of front entrance, re-pollard, to manage the size of the trees in their location. No Objection Lodged
- SE/25/00552/HOUSE: Rivermede, Penshurst Road, Leigh - first floor side extension, roof extension and removal of chimney. Alterations to fenestration. Application approved.
- SE/25/00509/HOUSE: 17 Burton Avenue, Leigh - proposal of a single storey rear extension with associated internal reconfigurations. Application approved.
- SE/25/00961/NMA: Spilebank, Moorden Lane, Chiddingstone Causeway TN11 8JE - Non-Material Amendment to SE/24/00659/HOUSE. Decision: the amendment is Non-Material with No Conditions

iii. To hear update regarding the meeting with planning policy officers

The Clerk reported that the meeting has been arranged for Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> June at 9.30am in SDC offices. Cllr Williams and the Clerk will attend, and Cllr Smith said she will try to attend too.

iv. Boundary of the Kent Downs National Landscapes

The Clerk reported that Chiddingstone Parish Council has made an approach to the Kent Downs National Landscape regarding the potential change in boundary of the National Landscape to include the area in the north of the Chiddingstone parish. Chiddingstone Parish Council has asked whether Leigh Parish Council wish to be involved in this approach too and see if the boundary can be changed in Leigh parish as well. The Kent Downs National Landscape is to the north, and the High Weald National Landscape is to the south. The middle section is known as the Low Weald. The Government has shown interest in creating more National Landscape areas and also extending boundaries, which has been done elsewhere in the country. Cllr Holt undertook to research this further, and Cllr Smith undertook to discuss the idea with CPRE.

## 10. The Green

i. To discuss the quote for adding a hardstanding by the recycling bins at Crandalls

The Clerk reported that she has now received a quote from Hodge Landscapes for the hardstanding area. Clerk to seek a second quote.

- ii. To discuss provision of grasscrete on The Green  
The Clerk reported that the quote from Hodge Landscapes has been received. Clerk to seek a second quote.
- iii. To consider request for Land Registry Titles K444927 & K759711 to be returned to Hall Place  
Members discussed this in some detail and agreed that the reasons previously given for not returning these titles to Hall Place still stand and the Parish Council would not agree to sell these areas of land. It was agreed that the access to the church and PROW is important and should be protected in perpetuity.
- iv. To note Stoolball Tournament on The Green on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July  
Noted.
- v. To discuss the management of The Green  
Cllr Kaye said that the Parish Council agreed a while ago that Ian Bishop would act as groundsman on The Green in a voluntary capacity, and would work with the Parish Council in agreeing what work is required and in organising the grounds maintenance. Members agreed that it is important that this role is recognised in the community and that Ian has the Parish Council's support in this role.
- vi. To discuss request by Leigh Village Horticultural Society to use The Green on 6<sup>th</sup> September  
The Clerk reported that a request has been made for a marquee to be erected on The Green for the Summer Show on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September. It will be erected on Wednesday or Thursday and removed on Monday or Tuesday. The Horticultural Society also asked for permission for a few cars to be parked on The Green. Members agreed.
- vii. To discuss resident's request for information  
Members discussed the request made by a resident on 15<sup>th</sup> April for copies of the last 7 years of risk assessments together with the names of the companies which carried out the analyses, and a copy of the last 7 years of tree surveys together with the names of the companies which carried out the surveys. Members agreed to provide copies of the last 7 years of tree surveys, but did not agree to provide copies of the last 7 years of risk assessments as they contain personal information. The current summary sheet can be provided, as this does not contain any personal information, but not the previous ones as these will now be out of date. The resident has already received the 2024 risk assessment summary. It was also agreed that the Clerk would post the latest tree survey plus the map on the website, and each year upload the latest tree survey. Members agreed that the Parish Council will not engage further with this resident on any tree matter or risk assessment matter as these requests appear to be connected to the previous discussions regarding the Veteran Oak Tree, on which the Parish Council has already resolved to cease engagement with this resident.

## **11. Highways & Rights of Way**

- i. To hear update regarding the Leigh Community SpeedWatch Scheme and to agree contribution to Chiddingstone Parish Council to part-own equipment  
Cllr Williams reported that the volunteers have been out twice since the last meeting, monitoring speeds on Powdermill Lane and Hildenborough Road. The Clerk advised, as discussed last month, that the cost of the dual message display equipment package is £2,550 + VAT with an order lead time 6-8 months. At the last meeting, members agreed to pay a contribution to Chiddingstone Parish Council to part-own their equipment. This is acceptable to Chiddingstone Parish Council. Their equipment cost £1,985 + VAT. To joint own the equipment, a contribution of £992.50 would be required. Members agreed, proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Britain.
- ii. To hear update regarding the work to trees and footpath between Kiln Lane and Well Close  
The Clerk reported that the conifers have been felled and the path will be laid in June by Hodge Landscapes.
- iii. To hear update regarding the rural swathe cutting contract  
The Clerk reported that Chiddingstone Parish Council, as the lead council, has had to adopt a health & safety policy and submit various other documentation to KCC. The first cut is due now and the Clerk is in touch with the contractor.

iv. Overgrown vegetation on Ensfield Road

Cllr Britain reported that the bank between the railway station and the Environment Agency's access road is overgrown and needs to be cut back to allow pedestrian access to the station. There are some broken manhole covers on the verge that need to be replaced as they create a safety hazard for pedestrians.

v. Kent Highways

- Temporary Road Closure - B2027 Penshurst Road & Penshurst Lane, Leigh - 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 for 23 days. The closures are required for the safety of the public and workforce while gas mains connections are undertaken by SGN. See <https://one.network/?tm=142933229>
- Urgent Road Closure - Coppings Road, Leigh - 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025 for up to 3 days between Camp Hill and Philpots Lane. This is to enable carriageway patching to be carried out by KCC.

vi. To hear update regarding speed limit on Camp Hill, Charcott

The Clerk reported that Chiddingstone Parish Council has been working with KCC to reduce the speed on Camp Hill from 60mph to 30mph. This has been verbally agreed but is subject to a Traffic Regulation Order and consultation, hopefully coming into effect in September 2025. Chiddingstone Parish Council has requested that the start of the 30mph zone includes both access roads to Charcott and ends at the junction with B2027 in Chiddingstone Causeway. The cost should be covered by KCC because there was a speed limit reduction from 40mph to 30mph in Chiddingstone Causeway and Camp Hill would be a 60mph road leading directly to a 30mph road. There are pedestrians that walk down from Charcott with no pavement. Members were in support of the speed reduction on Camp Hill. It was agreed to discuss other speed reduction measures at the June Parish Council meeting.

**12. To discuss Leigh Village Halls Management Committee's proposals for the village halls**

The Clerk reported that the committee is meeting tonight.

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

The Clerk reported that the Coffee Corner held on 11<sup>th</sup> April was successful. The next dates are: 9<sup>th</sup> May, 13<sup>th</sup> June and 11<sup>th</sup> July. 10.30 to 12.00.

**14. Aged Persons Dwellings - to discuss potential work to No.2 The Bungalows**

i. Ceiling work

The Clerk reported that, at the last meeting, the Parish Council approved LCS Painting & Decorating's quote to repair the ceiling at £850.

ii. Crack above window

The Clerk reported that a quote has been received from LCS Painting & Decorating to repair the crack above the window. This is to apply resin to both walls in order to prevent future cracking, to fill any imperfections, and paint. Price: £295. Members approved the quote.

iii. Insulation

The Clerk reported that she's contacted SDC regarding grant funding, and under the Warms Home grant scheme the Parish Council could be eligible for 100% of the cost of insulation on the first property and 50% on the second property. There would be a survey to see what is required. Members agreed that the Clerk should complete and return the forms and arrange a survey of both properties.

**15. The Old Burial Ground**

Members approved the wording and cost of the artwork for the new information board.

**16. Summer Family Fun Day**

The Clerk reported that this is booked for Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August from 10.00 to 13.00 on The Green. Members approved the cost of the entertainer, three hours at £275.00.

**17. 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: SDC has supported local charity and voluntary groups by allocating £99,579 to help them continue their valuable work across the District. The grants will support organisations that provide services to Sevenoaks District residents, particularly those in greatest need.
- ii. Item 5: Kent Police: Powder Mills - on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April at around 12:39, somebody stole a recently delivered parcel from a doorstep. Crime Report No. 46/65419/25.
- iii. Item 7: KALC: invitation to an Extraordinary General Meeting of KALC on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025 at 1.30pm for registration and refreshments, with 2:00pm start, at Aylesford Community Centre, 25 Forstal Road, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 7AU. The purpose of this EGM is to discuss the important and evolving issue of Local Government Reorganisation and its potential implications for town and parish councils across Kent.
- iv. Item 10: Kent Police: April report, includes the following: "Multiple young teenagers were reported for anti-social behaviour causing distress to a resident in Leigh. After a quick investigation they were identified and attended Sevenoaks police station with their parents. Each made a full admission and apology for their actions and were issued with a community resolution."
- v. Item 11: KALC: Annual Conferences:
  - 20th June: Annual Planning Conference at Silverhands Estate
  - 12th September: Annual Finance Conference at The Bat & Ball Centre
  - 23rd October: Annual Standards Conference at Kings Hill Community Centre
  - 13th November: Annual Clerks Conference at Lengham Community Centre
  - 2nd December: Climate Change Conference at West Faversham Community Centre
- vi. Cllr Britain raised a query regarding the emails from the Southeast Communities Rail Partnership CIC, and whether some information could be posted on the website.
- vii. Cllr Holt raised a concern regarding tannoy announcements from the railway station. Clerk to raise.

3 members of the public left the meeting at 9.50pm.

## 18. Finance:

- i. To approve 2024/25 Year End Accounts  
Members discussed and approved the Year End Accounts, proposed by Cllr Kaye, seconded by Cllr Britain, and all in favour.
- ii. To review the effectiveness of the Parish Council's Internal Control Procedures  
Members reviewed the Internal Audit Procedures and agreed that they remain effective. Proposed by Cllr Britain, seconded by Cllr Williams, and all were in favour.
- iii. Audit for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025: to consider and agree Annual Governance Statement  
The Clerk read the statements as set out on the Annual Governance Statement and members responded as appropriate. Members approved the responses to the Statement, proposed by Cllr Kaye, seconded by Cllr Williams, and all were in favour.
- iv. Audit for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025: to consider and approve Accounting Statements 2024/25  
Cllr Kaye proposed that the Statement of Accounts be approved, this was seconded by Cllr Holt, and all were in favour.
- v. To discuss the Internal Audit report 2025  
The Clerk reported that the Internal Audit was carried out by Mulberry & Co on 28th April and the report has been received and circulated. The report states "Our sample testing did not uncover any errors or misstatements that require reporting to the external auditor at this time, nor did we identify any significant weaknesses in the internal controls such that public money would be put at risk. It is clear the council takes governance, policies and procedures seriously and I am pleased to report that overall, the systems and procedures you have in place are fit for purpose and whilst my report may contain recommendations to change these are not indicative of any significant failings, but rather are pointers to improving upon an already well-ordered system.  
"It is therefore our opinion that the systems and internal procedures at Leigh Parish Council are well established and followed." The recommendations are as follows:
  - i. I recommend that the acceptance of office form contains an additional part with a formal acceptance to receive information by electronic means in the form:  
"As per Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972, I consent to the receipt of all council meeting papers by electronic methods. I understand I may withdraw this consent at any time"

- ii. I recommend publishing agendas, minutes and meeting dates for all committees as well as writing and publishing their terms of reference.
- iii. I recommend highlighting that minutes are draft until they have been approved at the next meeting. The Clerk advised that this is actually specified already on the website.
- iv. Public notice of rights of electors: I remind council that this notice must be published in order to sign section 4 of the annual governance statement as yes.

Members discussed the internal audit report and the recommendations made. Members agreed to accept the recommendations and make the necessary changes.

vi. To approve insurance policy renewal from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2025

This year's premium: £2,267.69 inc. Insurance Premium Tax. Last year's premium: £1,981.88. Cllr Kaye proposed that this premium is accepted and the policy renewed. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and all were in favour.

vii. To approve membership renewal for Kent Association of Local Councils: £827.00

Cllr Kaye proposed that this membership be renewed. This was seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour.

viii. To discuss grant application for contribution towards refurbishment of Charcott phonebox

Cllr Holt reported that two quotes have been received for the refurbishment of the phonebox, and the paint has already been supplied. Some local fundraising has already taken place but a contribution from the Parish Council would be much appreciated. Members agreed to contribute £250, proposed by Cllr Smith, seconded by Cllr Williams and all were in favour.

ix. 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.

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

- i. Speed reduction measures in the parish
- ii. Patient Participation Group update.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 in the Small Village Hall at 8.00pm  
The meeting closed at 10.09pm.

### LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL LIST OF PAYMENTS May 2025

Date	Payment		Detail of payment	Amount	
	Number	Payee		Inc. VAT	VAT
06.05.25	868	Clerk	Salary	£1,260.97	
06.05.25	869	HMRC	PAYE	£584.73	
06.05.25	870	Clerk	Mileage & costs inc Community Award flowers	£167.89	
06.05.25	871	KCC	Pension contribution	£711.22	
06.05.25	872	RWE Rural Services Ltd	Tree felling at the end of Kiln Lane	£1,080.00	£180.00
06.05.25	873	Estate & Field	Mowing The Green 10.04.25	£126.00	£21.00
06.05.25	874	SDC	Bulk Refuse Freighter 05.04.25	£152.77	£25.46
06.05.25	875	Hever Landscapes Ltd	Repair The Green (Ocado damage) net cost £0	£462.00	£77.00
06.05.25	876	KALC	Membership renewal	£992.40	£165.40
06.05.25	877	KALC	Event Mastering Planning Applications (BW/LK)	£120.00	£20.00
06.05.25	878	Vision ICT Ltd	Data Backup Service (net cost £60)	£144.00	£24.00
06.05.25	879	Zurich Municipal	Insurance policy renewal	£2,267.69	
06.05.25	880	Mulberry & Co	Internal Audit fee	£252.36	£42.06
06.05.25	881	Chiddingstone Parish Council	Half share cost of speedwatch equipment	£992.50	
				<b>£9,314.53</b>	<b>£554.92</b>

Signed .....

Date .....