

LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE SMALL VILLAGE HALL, HIGH STREET, LEIGH ON MONDAY 6TH JULY 2026 AT 8.00PM

PRESENT: Cllr J. Kaye (Chairman), Cllr A. Backlog, Cllr A. Holt, Cllr Marchant, Cllr S. Smith and Cllr R. Swallow
APOLOGIES: Cllr R. Britain, Cllr G. Rogers, Cllr B. Williams, County Cllr R. Mayall and District Cllr M. Silander
IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs L. Kleinschmidt (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

Open Session

Report by County Cllr Mayall

In the absence of County Cllr Mayall, the Clerk read his report:

- Kent County Council is setting up a water resilience group for Kent and Medway to oversee the resilience of the water supply across the County. It will examine the supply, infrastructure, cleanliness and future investment in things such as water storage across the County. It will have the ability to summon officials from water companies and the environment agency.
- A decision has been made to raise the price of Kent Travel Saver for school travel. The Travel Saver is a bus pass that can save parents and pupils up to 50% on the cost of travel to and from school. For most children's journeys, this pass will save around 50% of the cost of an annual season ticket from a bus operator. Outside London this remains one of the most generous schemes in the country despite significant cost to KCC. Without this subsidy, the cost would exceed £1000 per child. The price increase for low-income families will amount to £35 or 18p per day.
- Ringway, which has taken over the contract for maintaining Kent roads, has purchased some new gritting vehicles for the winter, which should be an improvement.
- On 10th July KCC will be hosting a conference on fly tipping with a number of county wide organisations including district and borough councils, the Environment Agency and farmers. Hopefully some good policies and actions will come out of this.
- KCC is asking for people's views for what they want to see in the 2027/2028 budget, see www.kent.gov.uk.

Questions from members of the public

1. A resident said that the timetable for the 235 bus service is now displayed at the bus stop and is no longer a school service only.
2. The resident also asked who the cars belong to on the A21 by the flyover, but members could not answer this question.

Closed Session

32. **Apologies for absence** were received from Cllr Britain, Cllr Rogers and Cllr Williams and their reasons for absence were accepted by the Parish Council. Apologies for absence were also received from County Cllr Mayall and District Cllr Silander.
33. **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest / Non-Pecuniary Interest on matters to be discussed**
A declaration of NPI was noted.
34. **The minutes of the Leigh Parish Council Meeting held on 1st June 2026** were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr Swallow, seconded by Cllr Marchant, and all were in favour.

- 35. To nominate Parish Council representative to the Leigh Village Halls Management Committee**
Members agreed that a councillor will attend each committee meeting. Clerk to obtain a list of the dates for the remainder of the year.

36. Planning

- i. To consider applications received
- i. SE/26/01246/HOUSE: Fair Acre, Powder Mill Lane, Leigh TN11 8PZ - demolition of existing garage and rear lean-to and 4 outbuildings and removal of one chimney. Single storey rear and side extension. Rooflight and alterations to fenestration. New gate and fence. Members supported this application.
 - ii. SE/26/00775/FUL: Leigh Post Office, High Street, Leigh TN11 8RL - proposed staff welfare area in the rear for the retail unit. Conversion of part ground floor Use Class E unit into a studio flat and the existing first and loft floor residential unit into 2 flats with dormer window, with associated bin, cycle storage and amenity space. Rooflights and alterations to fenestration including garage. It was agreed that the Planning Committee will consider the application and draft a response.
- The Clerk reported that since the last meeting, the Planning Committee has considered the following application:
- iii. SE/26/00956/LDCPR: Primrose House, Charcott, Leigh TN11 8LJ - single storey rear extension. Members had no objection to make on this application.
- ii. To report SDC planning application decisions:
- SE/20/00187/FUL: Ashour Farm, Penshurst Road, Bidborough - importation of 972 tonnes (780m³) of non-hazardous, unprocessed inert and excavation material comprising the fill of disused slurry lagoons for the construction of hardstanding area for vehicle / plant parking and storage of hay bales. Application approved.
 - SE/26/00672/LDCPR: Brook Cottage, Leigh Road, Hildenborough - Lawful Development Certificate Proposed for the erection of two detached, single storey roundhouses. Application refused. Reason: the proposal does not meet scope of Class E as the proposed location for the roundhouses falls outside the curtilage of the dwellinghouse.
 - SE/ 26/01539/W5DAY: 1 Oak Cottages, High Street, Leigh – 5-day notification for emergency works - removal of dead oak tree. Decision: No Objection Lodged.
- iii. To discuss SDC's Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 public consultation
The Clerk reported that the SDC Draft Local Plan Regulation 19 public consultation will run from 23rd July until the 17th September, and it was discussed by SDC at their Development & Infrastructure Advisory Committee on 30th June and will go before the Cabinet on 7th July. No sites are included in Leigh.

37. The Green and parish maintenance areas

- i. To discuss ongoing maintenance of The Green
Cllr Swallow reported that there are funding streams available for improvement works to sports areas and recreational spaces. Members asked Ian Bishop to draw up a specification of works in an area-by-area format so that parts of The Green can be improved with temporary fencing erected if necessary.
- ii. To discuss the complaint against the Parish Council made by Leigh School and to approve actions in line with Leigh Parish Council's Procedure for Handling Complaints
Cllr Kaye reported that, in line with the Parish Council's procedure for handling complaints, the school has been asked on several occasions to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss the Headteacher's concerns, but this has been refused. It was agreed that Cllr Kaye would draw up a detailed response and again request a meeting, and the joint chairs of the Governing Body to be invited to the meeting as well.
- iii. To discuss Leigh School's request to use The Green for the Year 6 leavers' event
The Clerk reported that the school PTA has requested use of The Green on 17th July, between 3pm and 7pm. Members approved this request.

- iv. To discuss Leigh Scout's request to use The Green for their annual summer barbeque
The Clerk reported that the Scouts have requested use of The Green on 13th July, between 4pm and 8pm. Members approved this request.

1 member of the public left the meeting at 8.25pm.

38. Highways & Rights of Way

- i. To hear update on speed reduction measures in the parish
No update.
- ii. Leigh Community SpeedWatch
The Clerk reported that the volunteers have been out a couple of times in the last month, and at the last session only one person was driving over the speed limit.
- iii. To hear update regarding the tankers accessing the Pumping Station on Ensfield Road
The Clerk reported that Southern Water has advised that there is a collapse on the rising main between Ensfield Road and Vale Road in Tonbridge. This means that tankers are having to remove sewage from this side of the collapse. Asbestos was found in the Vale Road section and this is being removed. The works should all now be completed.
- iv. To hear update regarding the request to change the designated doctor's parking space to a designated disabled space
The Clerk reported that she contacted SDC and asked for the space to be changed to a disabled designated space. The response was that a disabled person has to be the one who requests a disabled space. John Hollands said that this was not his understanding and he has gone back to SDC querying the process.
- v. Kent Highways
High Street, Leigh: resurfacing works 29th July to 3rd August, 8pm to 5am.

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

The Clerk reported that the Coffee Corner held on 19th June was a bit quieter because a few people were away. The next dates are Friday 17th July and 21st August, which will be on The Green.

40. Aviation

The Clerk reported that the latest GACC newsletter has been received and this states that their Judicial Review Claim challenging Gatwick Airport Expansion has been refused. Peter Barclay of GACC says "Because of the far reaching and significant detrimental impacts of the expansion, which effectively grants Gatwick a second runway and a 60% plus increase of throughput at the airport, we will be looking to appeal this decision. The Development Consent Order (DCO) made by the Secretary of State for Transport on 21st September 2025 was challenged by GACC on 5 grounds:

- failing to understand and apply the government's own aviation policy, which specifically rejected a second runway at Gatwick,
- failing to act in accordance with the purpose of the statutory scheme envisaged by the Planning Act 2008 and Climate Change Act 2008 by applying an out-of-date national policy statement,
- failing to comply with the Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations and to take adequate account of Greenhouse Gas Emissions;
- failing to lawfully assess the need for and economic benefits of the development, in circumstances where GACC and the New Economics Foundation (NEF) had shown Gatwick's economic case to subject to considerable doubt; and
- misinterpreting noise policies and reaching irrational conclusions on noise.

GACC has asked for a grant towards the next legal stage, this will be discussed under Finance.

41. Aged Persons Dwellings

The Clerk reported that the EICR inspections have been carried out on both properties and the electrician also replaced the bathroom light fitting in no.1 The Bungalows. Cllr Marchant reported that he will do some repair work to the guttering of No.2 in the autumn.

42. 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: Response from VolkerStevin to the Parish Council's email about works to the embankment. "As the works are being carried out under permitted development and no road closures are needed, we haven't been required to consult KCC Highways. We understand that residents are likely to be concerned about traffic movements so we have put a traffic management plan in place to consider and manage the risks and impacts to the community. We expect that we'll need around 10 large truck movements over the course of a few days. The trucks will be about the size of a normal bin lorry so we will carry out some works to the track to enable it to accommodate these vehicles. There will be other works traffic but these vehicles will be much smaller. We plan on having a Traffic Marshall available for material movements. They'll be primarily stationed at the grass verge area to the Lane and we currently expect them to be in place from week commencing 15th June. They'll be there full time for the first week. They'll then be posted there as needed for the remainder of the works. We have been in discussion with the school and we are planning to limit any deliveries to outside school drop off times. We'll continue to stay in close contact with the school and work with them to plan our works around their activities as needed. We appreciate this route is not ideal but access to the embankment in this location is extremely limited and these works are essential to expand the flood storage area and reduce risk to homes downstream. We are deliberately not making any significant long-term improvements to the track as we are aware of the residents' concerns regarding the development and don't want to open up access more than is currently the case. As a result, we will return the track to its current condition once the works are complete in July."
- ii. Item 4: SDC News Releases: (1) New milestone for new Sevenoaks Leisure Centre and town centre regeneration. SDC's Cabinet has agreed to appoint Wates as its preferred contractor to take forward ambitious plans to regenerate the Land East of Sevenoaks High Street and deliver a brand-new leisure centre for the town. Working with Wates, SDC wants to—enhance the Buckhurst Lane and Suffolk Way areas, helping to make the town an even more vibrant and welcoming place to live, work and spend time. At the heart of the project will be a brand new, energy-efficient, modern leisure centre providing high quality facilities to safeguard and enhance the town's leisure offer for decades to come. The project also includes a new cultural hub and market hall at 96 High Street, improved public transport links, new public green spaces, including a new green corridor to Knole Park, and new energy-efficient homes. The value of the overall project is estimated to be around £138 million, and it is expected to be self-financing with income from the new homes paying for the leisure centre and the other public improvements. Subject to planning consent, construction could begin in 2028. (2) SDC has agreed to one of the biggest investments in Edenbridge Leisure Centre since it opened, securing its future and enhancing facilities for years to come. At its meeting on 11th June 2026, the SDC's Cabinet agreed to a major 'renew and replenish' investment programme that could see around £2.2 million invested in the centre up to 2027. The funding will be used to improve key facilities, upgrading essential plant and ensuring the long-term operation of the site. The work builds on improvements already delivered over the past year, including a refurbished gym, new fitness equipment, cycle studio and café area. The Council will continue to seek external funding, including Community Infrastructure Levy contributions from developers, to support further improvements such as investment in the all-weather pitch.
- iii. Item 6: Email from Superstars regarding the cancelling of this year's event. Members look forward to the event returning next year.

1 member of the public left the meeting at 9.24pm.

43. Finance:

- i. To hear report of the Leigh Finance Committee meeting held on 4th June 2026
The minutes of the Finance Committee meeting were circulated and approved.

- ii. To discuss application for grant by Leigh Primary School
Members agreed with the Finance Committee's recommendation of contributing one laptop at a cost of £585.
- iii. To discuss application for grant by Leigh Cricket Club
Members agreed with the Finance Committee's recommendation of contributing £1,000 towards these works because the toilets will be used by the community at public events.
- iv. To discuss application for grant by Leigh Scout Group
Members agreed with the Finance Committee's recommendation of contributing £500 towards costs associated with the water leak at the Scout Hut.
- v. To discuss application for grant by GACC
Members agreed to give a grant of £600.00.

All the grant requests above were approved, proposed by Cllr Marchant, seconded by Cllr Backlog, and all were in favour.

- vi. Pledged Grant to Kent ACRE
The Clerk reported that not enough pledges were made to support Kent ACRE and therefore the Parish Council's grant of £300 will be returned.
- vii. To approve list of payments
Cllr Swallow proposed that the list of payments be approved. This was seconded by Cllr Backlog and all were in favour.

44. To discuss the Summer Family Fun Day on 21st August and approve cost of entertainer

Members approved the cost of the entertainer.

45. Items for reporting or inclusion in future agenda

- i. Cllr Marchant reported that there was a break-in at a commercial premises in the parish last week.
- ii. Cllr Holt reported that The Greyhound won the Tonbridge Business Awards Food & Drink category. Members congratulated the business on their success.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be on Monday 7th September 2026 in the Small Village Hall at 8.00pm

The meeting closed at 9.39pm.

**LEIGH PARISH COUNCIL
LIST OF PAYMENTS
July 2026**

Payment			Amount		
Date	Number	Payee	Detail of payment	Inc. VAT	VAT
06.07.26	1024	Clerk	Salary	£1,339.04	
06.07.26	1025	HMRC	PAYE	£618.32	
06.07.26	1026	Clerk	Mileage & reimbursement costs	£83.78	
06.07.26	1027	KCC	Pension contribution	£450.99	
06.07.26	1028	Batcheller Monkhouse	Contribution towards fencing at permissive path	£315.00	
06.07.26	1029	Susannahs People	Entertainer for Play Event	£325.00	
06.07.26	1030	Hever Landscapes	Grass cutting	£384.00	£64.00
06.07.26	1031	Dave Cole	EICR inspections	£586.15	£97.69
				<u>£4,102.28</u>	<u>£161.69</u>

Signed

Date