

The Minutes of the Meeting of Leeds Parish Council on Tuesday, 11th March 2025
at 7pm in the Leeds and Broomfield Village Hall

*Councillor's present: Bernini
China
Springford*

The meeting was chaired by Cllr China.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

Apologies and reasons for absence were received and accepted from Cllrs Greeff (work), Razzell (personal), Ingram (sickness), Fort (holiday).

2. Declaration of Interests.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

No interests were declared.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

There were no dispensations to consider.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated to all members.

These were proposed by Cllr Bernini as a true record, seconded by Cllr China and agreed by all present. The minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes.

CCTV Policy - Cllr Springford referred to the recent police enquiry and raised the matter of the CCTV Policy and the procedures for accessing footage.

It was noted that the Parish Council's policies were due to be reviewed at the next meeting, and members agreed that the CCTV Policy would be included as part of that review.

5. Public Comments and Observations.

No matters were raised.

6. Highways Matters.

Water leak, Foley Hill: Members noted that the persistent water leak on Foley Hill remained unresolved, despite being reported to Kent County Council and Southern Water on numerous occasions over the past two years.

It was agreed that the Clerk should write to Kent County Council to remind them of their obligation to ensure the highway was safe for road users and to request immediate action to address the problem.

Action: Clerk to write to Kent County Council.

Safe Crossing – Leeds Primary School: Cllr Bernini reported that Kent County Council had reaffirmed their position that they would not consider installing a safe crossing outside the school. Cllr China questioned why other schools are provided with safe crossings, yet this continues to be refused for Leeds.

Emergency Closures of B2163 – Members raised concerns regarding the recent emergency closure of the B2163, which resulted in damage to verges along rural lanes due to diverted traffic. They stated that the diversion routes were unsuitable for the volume and type of traffic, and this also caused issues by restricting access for emergency vehicles.

It was agreed that the Clerk should write to KCC Cllr Gary Cooke to request a face-to-face meeting with highways officers to discuss the diversion routes for both routine and emergency closures.

Action: Clerk to write to Kent County Council.

7. Clerks Report.

The Clerk's Report was received and noted by Members.

Complaint Regarding Bird Scarer in the Village

Members noted correspondence from a resident concerning noise disturbance caused by a bird scarer on nearby farmland.

It was agreed that, at this stage, there was limited action the Parish Council could take, as the exact location of the device had not yet been identified. The Clerk was asked to respond to the resident to explain the council's position.

8. Chairman's Report.

To receive the Chairman's Report.

The Chairman gave his report to the meeting and advised that the community litter pick was scheduled to take place on Saturday 5th April 2025, with volunteers meeting at 10:00am in the playing field car park.

9. Financial Matters:

a. Financial Statement.

To receive and approve the financial statement and payments – report circulated with meeting papers.

The financial statement was approved proposed by Cllr Bernini seconded by Cllr China and agreed by all present.

10. KCC Councillors Report.

Cllr Cooke was not in attendance.

11. MBC Councillors Report.

Cllr Fort gave her apologies to the meeting.

12. Devolution and Community Governance Review.

The Clerk updated members on the latest information received regarding devolution and the Community Governance Review.

Cllr China also reported on the recent KALC meeting he had attended, where the topic of devolution was discussed.

13. Planning Matters.

a. To consider Planning Applications Received.

No applications to consider.

b. MBC Decisions and Appeals

24/504954/LBC

Tower Cottage Upper Street Leeds Kent ME17 1RZ

Listed Building Consent for the installation of a log-burner into the current open fireplace (located in the living room)

Application Permitted.

c. Other Planning Matters

No matters were raised.

14. Parish Maintenance.

To receive an update on Parish Maintenance.

A quotation for the 2025/26 parish maintenance contract was circulated and discussed.

Members noted a 6% increase on the previous year's costs, which was considered reasonable.

The quotation was approved, proposed by Cllr Bernini, seconded by Cllr China, and agreed by all present.

Action: Clerk to confirm the appointment with the contractor.

15. Leeds Playground, Playing Field, Tennis Courts & Pavillion.

To receive a report on Leeds Playing Field.

Football Parking

Members noted the response from the Loose Lions Football Team regarding the concerns previously raised about parking in the parish during football matches, as well as their renewed request to present their future proposals to the Parish Council, including a request for a 10-year lease.

Cllr Bernini acknowledged that while the Parish Council had made a decision some months ago not to progress with the lease request, he was interested to hear the team's updated plans and how these might benefit the wider local community.

Members reiterated that the playing fields are a charitable asset for the village and must remain available for the community's use. However, it was agreed that the Parish Council would invite the football team to a future meeting to give a 15-minute presentation on their proposals.

Action: Clerk to invite the football team to a future meeting.

It was also noted that the Parish Council had received several enquiries from other local football clubs about the availability of the playing field. The Clerk was asked to respond to these enquiries to seek further information.

Playing Field Signage

The Clerk confirmed that she was in the process of seeking quotations for new signage for the play area, and tennis courts.

Memorial Bench Policy

A draft Memorial Bench Policy was circulated to all members for consideration.

The policy was proposed by Cllr China for formal adoption, seconded by Cllr Bernini, and unanimously agreed by all present. The Memorial Bench Policy was approved and formally adopted for use by the Parish Council.

Bollard Repairs

The Chairman reported that the broken bollards at the playing field had now been repaired.

16. Church Car Park.

Potholes

The Chairman presented a quotation for the repair of 10 potholes in the church car park, which were now becoming a hazard to users.

The quotation, totaling £1,859, was discussed and, due to the urgency of the matter, it was agreed that the quotation be accepted, and the work progressed.

Action: Clerk to liaise with the contractor.

Pedestrian Access

The Chairman reported on the need to create a separate pedestrian access point to the car park to improve safety for users.

He presented plans which involved removing a section of hedging from the perimeter of the playing field to install dedicated pedestrian access.

Members agreed that Cllr Springfield would liaise with the Rochester Bridge Trust, as landowners, regarding the proposed removal of the hedge.

Action: Cllr Springfield to progress.

Rough Sleeper

It was further reported that a rough sleeper had been regularly staying in the church and playing field car parks, arriving around 4pm and leaving at 9am, and this had been ongoing for approximately two weeks.

It was agreed that the Clerk should report the matter to Maidstone Borough Council so that any necessary welfare checks could be carried out.

Action: Clerk to report to Maidstone Borough Council.

17. Street Lighting.

To receive a report on Parish Street Lighting.

No issues were reported.

18. Parish Council Events.

Members discussed and agreed arrangements for the upcoming VE Day event in May, which would include a fish and chip supper in the Village Hall followed by a beacon lighting.

It was also agreed that a further community event would be held in the summer on the playing field, featuring a Big Lunch for residents with food trucks, bouncy castles, and community stalls. It was

confirmed that portaloos would be booked for the summer event, and there would be some coordination with Langley Parish regarding the event.

19. Items for next Agenda.

20. Date of next meeting.

8th April 2025.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed to the press and public at 8.40pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: _____