

**LEIGH AND BRANSFORD PARISH COUNCIL
PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 23rd June 2026, 7.00pm at Leigh and Bransford Memorial Hall.

Present: Cllrs Fereday (Chair), Christie (Vice-Chair), Sharp, Hawkins, Cresswell, Brazier, Chandler, Ralph.

1. Apologies. Apologies from Cllrs Bayston and McSweeney.
2. Register of interests. None.
3. Public participation (12 residents present)

(Meeting closed)

Potters Reach Phase 2

Extensive correspondence has taken place with MHDC regarding Potters Reach Phase 2. A resident has submitted three objections, alongside two enforcement notices, yet no responses have been received. There is concern that MHDC has failed to acknowledge these objections. The matter may well be referred to the Northern Area Planning Committee, and it was noted that district councillors Cllrs McSweeney and Rouse should be pursuing answers.

There remains confusion over the application status. Lee Walton initially advised this was a variation but has since indicated it is a new application.

Malvern Rise Management Co Ltd (MRMCL) raised concerns regarding the footpath and confirmed they have never been approached by Cotswold Oak. A breach of condition has been noted against Cala Homes, and any proposed access or opening would require agreement from all 51 residents, supported by a legal framework.

The Chair provided background from previous meetings, noting that the issue is well documented and that significant efforts by residents have been largely ignored by MHDC. He outlined the planning process and likelihood of committee review.

Lioncourt Community Land. MRMCL led a discussion on the Lioncourt community land. Concerns were raised that MHDC is progressing plans without the promised community consultation. In particular, the allocation of land to football pitches appears disproportionate to local demand, with residents favouring a broader mix of recreational uses. There is also no clear plan for long-term funding or maintenance.

The Chair outlined the financial background, confirming approximately £1.1m is available (£410k S106 and £700k additional funds). However, a key concern remains that residents were not consulted, despite previous survey results showing low demand for football provision.

MRMCL and others highlighted gaps in provision for children (particularly ages 8–9) and wider wellbeing needs. Additional concerns included noise and light pollution as well as traffic issues (narrow roads such as Malvern Rise are already prone to congestion). One resident had been in constant contact with Jennie Watkins (MHDC) and was promised that her consultation would take place; this has not happened. (please see Appendix 1: email chain below).

Cllr Christie again raised concerns about ongoing maintenance costs, estimated to be £40k per year and questions remain over who will take responsibility for long-term management, particularly in light of potential unitary authority changes.

Cllr Chandler noted that MHDC must base decisions on a robust business case, including both short- and long-term financial implications. There is concern that responsibility and liabilities may become unclear under future governance changes, risking the site becoming underused or repurposed.

Another resident expressed some support for elements of the plans, including the two MUGAs and gym equipment, but raised concerns about accessibility and whether facilities would be restricted to certain groups. He also noted the absence of confirmed FA funding, despite the site being built to FA specifications, and questioned the lack of clarity around governance, suggesting a management committee may be required. Another member of the public said that he had been in discussion with Cllr Rouse who said that a committee had been organised consisting of 2 members of the public, 2 Badgers and 2 members from the school. The Chair pointed out that no members of the parish council were included.

It was widely agreed that consultation has been inadequate, with engagement limited to nearby residents rather than the wider community. There is a strong perception that the proposals favour specific groups (e.g. clubs or schools) rather than the broader population.

Additional concerns were raised regarding residential boundaries, potential new footpaths, lighting, and the proximity of pitches to homes. The possibility of future floodlighting was also noted.

ACTION: Residents are encouraged to submit formal objections.

(Meeting opened).

4. Matters arising from previous planning minutes. None.

5. Applications to be considered. The Chair moved M/26/00885/FUL to be discussed first.

Reference	Location	Proposal	Outcome
M/26/00885/FUL	Land At (Os 7833 5108) Leigh Sinton	Proposed community centre, car parking and public space including 3 grass football pitches, hard surfaced multi-use games area, outdoor gym and attenuation pond, with access from existing estate road serving the adjacent housing development.	The Parish Council considered the application and agreed it is not in a position to approve or refuse at this stage due to insufficient detail. RESOLVED: Cllr Sharp proposed that the Council defer its decision pending further information. Seconded by Cllr Christie; carried unanimously. (See comments below).*
M/26/00733/HP	Fieldwood House Suckley Road Leigh Worcester WR6 5LE	Proposed outbuilding, single storey extension to host dwelling and alterations to fenestration.	Approve: Proposed by Cllr Christie, seconded by Cllr Sharp. All in favour. Approved.

M/25/01875/FUL	Land At (Os 7794 5048) Lower Interfields Malvern	Erection of 28 dwellings (Including 6 x local discount market dwellings) and associated works in lieu of 12 x self/custom build units approved under application M/21/01287/OUT.	Three main changes from original plan: different types of houses (new developer), a slightly different road layout with better access for car parking. Comment only on revised details: The changes have dealt with some of our concerns which we lodged last time. All changes listed here are reasonable. All in agreement.
M/26/00927/CU	The Low Barn Dingle Road Leigh Worcester WR6 5JX	Change of use of agricultural land to a site for five glamping pods and creation of associated access and facilities (Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) to planning permission M/24/00280/CU)	Approve: Proposed by Cllr Christie, seconded by Cllr Ralph. All in favour. Approved.

*Leigh and Bransford Parish Council acknowledged improvements to the previous plans seen, including reduced scale, flood mitigation, improved layout, boundary fencing, and potential shared use with the school.

However, concerns remain regarding:

- Very limited community consultation
- Long-term management, maintenance, funding, and liability
- Restriction on hours of use
- Potential noise and light pollution (including use of floodlights), particularly impacting adjoining properties
- Whether residents bordering the site were fully informed, including specific elements such as the installation of nets and a pathway encroachment onto a resident's garden.
- The proposed community room, which may be hired out in evenings and at weekends, with potential to generate significant noise—especially during summer months.
- Data presented appeared to treat gym attendance times as comparable to football match attendance times, despite the two activities exhibiting different attendance patterns and peak usage periods.

Conclusion:

The Council neither supports nor objects to the application at this stage and requests further detail, particularly in relation to long-term management and financial sustainability. Clarification is also sought to address the limited level of community consultation, as well as the concerns listed above.

6. Planning decisions received.

M/26/00553/HP - 9 Lynn Close, Leigh Sinton. Two storey side extension. **Approved.** Noted.

7. Closure of A4103 (Leigh Sinton) update. The Chair gave a brief update which included detail of an email from Cllr McSweeney requesting extended working hours and additional signage. (He has yet to hear back from Lioncourt on his proposal). Cllr Christie wanted it minuted his thanks to Cllr McSweeney for his tireless work during the last couple of weeks. It needs to be noted that approx. 10,000 vehicles come through this route on any given day; it will cause major disruption and potential safety issues. He and other parish councillors requested further detail to circulate to the parish; as yet they have heard nothing. Signing is inadequate on the 44 diversions – it seems to be treated like a normal road closure and it's not. Cllr Christie would like to press all the agencies for an identified responsible officer who will be named and someone anyone can go to for information. We should press for further 'no through road traffic' signage which is way above what we have (more police signs). Cllr Christie then read out his proposal which detailed that the Parish Council should write to all the organisations involved and responsible for the closure, highlighting the Council's concerns and emphasising action which should be taken to minimise disruption, the PC unanimously endorsed this action. Cllr Sharp mentioned another road (night) closure by the Bank House for resurfacing. When he looked at it, it seemed that the diversion route diverts traffic to the closed road near British Camp/Ledbury. Highways are working out a new diversion.
8. Section 62A Town and Country Planning Act 1990 – Designation Notice: To consider and discuss the implications for the Parish Council. The Chair briefed the PC as to the new process: A developer for more than 10 houses has a choice of either still going through MHDC planning, or it can be taken to the Secretary of State. We, the parish council will still be able to consider the application and still be able to lodge our comments etc (not through the present portal but via email).
9. Woodland Management Plan Consultation – Aileshurst Coppice: To note the report and the Parish Council's submitted response. After a brief conversation all agreed that the proposed coppicing workplan is acceptable. **ACTION:** Clerk to notify AP Forestry with conclusion.
10. Re-sign of Section 1 AGAR Governance Form. Section 10 was ticked; the chair and clerk signed off and minuted under (ref: 2306/10)
11. Councillors reports and items for future consideration. None.
12. Next Meeting: Parish Council Meeting: Tuesday 28th July 2026

Meeting closed at: 8.58 PM

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 1 - Lioncourt Community Land – Email trail below:

From JW to MJ

Thank you for your further email and for setting out your perspective so clearly.

I recognise that your experience of the process to date differs from the explanation I have provided. I would, however, like to reiterate that the Council's approach at this stage is focused on exploring need and feasibility at a strategic level, rather than progressing a fixed or predetermined scheme. Early technical and impact-based work is a normal and necessary part of understanding what may or may not be appropriate on a site, and does not in itself mean that final options have been selected or that future engagement will be tokenistic.

In relation to consultation, it would not be appropriate for me, as Portfolio Holder, to comment on or adjudicate individual ward level discussions or the way in which specific representations have been handled. Ward councillors have a distinct role in representing local views and engaging on detailed, site specific matters, and they remain the appropriate route for raising concerns of that nature.

You are right that, as Portfolio Holder, I am partly accountable for ensuring that the Council has appropriate governance, assurance, and decision-making processes in place, and that public resources are used responsibly. On that basis, I am satisfied that officers are following established processes, that work is being undertaken in line with policy and professional standards, and that no final decisions will be taken without further consideration and engagement at the appropriate stage.

It is also important to recognise that the Council must consider a range of evidence and perspectives when planning for future community infrastructure. While individual views are an important part of that picture, they cannot be treated as determinative of overall community sentiment outside of a structured consultation process.

I note your intention to continue to promote your views through other routes, which you are, of course, entitled to do. For my part, I do not propose to add further comment beyond clarifying my role and responsibilities as set out above. Any future opportunities to influence outcomes will be through the formal consultation and decision-making processes as proposals develop.

Thank you again for taking the time to engage on this matter.

Kind regards

From MJ to JW

I appreciate you taking time to respond.

Unfortunately, my experience of the process so far, does not match your explanation.

You will no doubt be aware that the local community consultation that has taken place to date, has been ignored by ward councillors.

You will also probably see that considering options in a project of this nature should be the first thing you do. Otherwise, how do you know what to impact assess ie., can the land accommodate what you are proposing? If you are already proceeding with an impact assessment, as has been set out in some of the limited communications, in reality the options have already been chosen. Any follow on 'consultation' will only therefore be for box ticking purposes.

I won't repeat all the points I have made before, other than that the local community had hoped this land would add positively to the community. At the moment, the majority see the likely outcome as having a negative impact.

As Portfolio Holder, I understand it would not be appropriate for you to comment on, or influence the detail of any individual community proposal while work is still ongoing, but presumably you are accountable for the way it is being managed and the end outcome? If that is the case, surely you have a duty to ensure what is being done is appropriate? Especially when you consider the amount of public money that will possibly be spent, or wasted, depending on your point of view.

I would therefore ask that you do exactly that and validate that the way this is being managed is appropriate, as you are the one ultimately endorsing it. In the meantime, I will continue to promote the views of the local community via other routes.

Yours sincerely

Thank you for your patience, and my apologies for not coming back to you as I had intended. I have, however, spoken with Mark Hammond regarding his response to you dated 8 December, which was intended to help provide further context and address the questions you raised.

I appreciate the care and thought that has gone into your correspondence, and it is entirely appropriate for residents to engage early and constructively on matters that may affect their local area.

It may be helpful if I briefly clarify the Council's role and approach at this stage of the process. As Mark outlined, any emerging proposals will be subject to community consultation and feedback before anything is finalised. Elected ward councillors will also play an important role in representing local views and helping to shape and challenge proposals as they develop.

At this point, no final decisions have been taken in relation to the detailed layout, scale, or mix of facilities. The Council's focus is on planning strategically for future community infrastructure needs and ensuring that options are explored in a balanced and proportionate way, informed by evidence, policy, and engagement. In my role as Portfolio Holder, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on or influence the detail of any individual community proposal while this work is still ongoing.

While individual representations are an important part of the overall picture, the Council places significant emphasis on structured community consultation to ensure that a full range of perspectives is understood, including those of residents who may hold different views. This process is key to shaping informed and balanced recommendations.

I would therefore encourage you to continue discussions with your ward councillors, who are best placed to engage on site-specific matters and ensure local concerns are fed into the process appropriately.

As proposals continue to evolve, there will be further opportunities for all residents to engage through formal consultation, at which point feedback will be considered alongside technical assessments, policy requirements, and wider community needs. This is how plans are refined and a balanced outcome is achieved.

I hope this provides helpful clarity on the Council's position and the next stages in the process. I do not propose to add further comment, but I thank you for your engagement.

Yours sincerely

DRAFT