

LEIGH AND BRANSFORD PARISH COUNCIL
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Minutes Leigh and Bransford Parish Council held at 7.00pm on Tuesday 24th March 2026 at Leigh & Bransford Memorial Hall

Present: Councillors: D Fereday, N Christie, L Bayston, J Sharp, N Cresswell, J Brazier.

Cllr C McSweeney, WCC Clerk: Anna Briggs members of the public: 5

89/25 Apologies received and accepted for absence from Councillors. P Ralph, P Whatley and S Rouse

- 90/25 a) Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and any Other Disclosable Interests in items on the agenda (Personal and Prejudicial). None.
 b) Register of Interests. Councillors are reminded of the need to submit their Register of Interests. None.
 c) To consider any written requests from Councillors to Grant a Dispensation (S33 of the Localism Act 2011) relating to items on the agenda. None.

91/25 Public Participation. Residents are invited to address the council on any local matters and Agenda items.

(Meeting Closed)

Resident 1 asked what update there is concerning the land at the Lion Court site which is earmarked for recreational use. He said discussions took place in July of last year but it's all gone very quiet. After a brief discussion the Chair confirmed that it's moving forward and that the next step will be planning permission. As soon as he hears anything further, an update will be given. Resident 2 asked whether the parish council were aware of the additional houses which have been proposed on Phase 2 of the Cotswold Oak site. The Chair confirmed we heard about it the day before and will be considered at Item 8 - Planning.

Between them Residents 3 and 4 listed three items of concern to them:

1. The amount of noise, traffic and dust coming from the waste site on the A4103 between Leigh Sinton and Bransford which they find unacceptable, especially as Worcester Concrete now works from there. They asked whether the parish council could help. A long conversation took place around which companies work from there, whether planning applications are correct. Cllr Sharp said it was a Regulatory issue and not a planning one.
ACTION: PC to contact Regulatory Department
2. Dog fouling near the golf course and play area seems prevalent. Resident 3 has been in touch with the dog warden and they will hopefully send some new signs. It was noted that maybe the farmer of the field by the play area would be willing to have a bin on his land.
3. The shop doesn't seem to be stocking much, apart from vapes. A conversation took place where it was pointed out that they sell many other things as well as vapes. The Chair confirmed that planning permission has been lodged for an extension to the shop, an extension to the post office hours plus extra parking which can only be a good thing. This will be discussed at a future meeting. Resident 2 said there is only one bin on Cotswold Oak. She will write to the Management and let us know the outcome.

The Chair asked Cllr McSweeney whether he's able to look at the issue concerning the waste site as discussed earlier. He said it wasn't a County Council issue. ... maybe District (unauthorised planning?)/street cleaning or Regulatory. He suggested that it be reported.

(Meeting reopened). Four residents leave meeting.

92/25 Reports of District and County Councillors.

Cllr McSweeney gave a comprehensive update from around the county; council tax increase and with that a fairly depressing report on the future of WCC. Closer to home: Kiln Lane – it's unlikely that Highways will become involved as it's a private parking issue. Pavement parking near Somers Terrace – Cllr McSweeney has a site visit this Thursday and will report back. Cllr Christie confirmed that since a letter drop was done last year, the parking by Somers Terrace, although still an issue with people being forced to walk on the carriage way, is a little better. Cllr McSweeney to speak to our Local Constabulary. **ACTION:** Cllr Christie to compile a similar letter to residents in Kiln Lane, clerk to distribute. (Cllr Sharp confirmed that new legislations are to be introduced later in the year concerning parking on pavements). Cllr McSweeney asked whether the PC would be in favour of him applying for a new VAS being fitted at the Herefordshire end of the village (to be funded from his budget). All in agreement. The Chair spoke of Haywood Drive and the concerns around safety. Cllr McSweeney to look at potential of improving safety in the area... could S106 money be used? **ACTION:** Cllr McSweeney to report back after his meeting on Thursday.

The Chair summarised reports from both Cllrs Whatley and Rouse: Full reports can be found at end of Minutes. Cllr Sharp informed the PC of the new Food Waste Collection, commencing in October. Bins will be distributed between now and then; it will be a weekly collection.

93/25 Updates on:

- a) Parking Issue, Kiln Lane – discussed as above.
- b) Pathway, Haywood Drive – discussed as above.

94/25 To consider applications for co-option. We still have 3 vacancies for Leigh Ward. **ACTION:** Clerk to send out another promotion.

95/25 To consider and approve the minutes of Parish Council Meeting 27th January 2026. After two small amendments which were noted, The Minutes were approved unanimously and signed.

(Cllr McSweeney leaves meeting)

96/25 Planning

- a) To consider and approve the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 24th February. Having been circulated the minutes were approved and signed.
- b) Updates on ongoing planning matters. None.
- c) Planning applications for consideration.

MHDC Reference	Location	Proposal	Recommendation
M/26/00301/FUL	Caro Burberry Sculpture Studio, Bransford, Worcester, WR6 5JN	Proposed change of use from Class E(g) (light industrial) to Mixed Use Class E and F1 including replacement of existing	Cllr Christie proposed, Cllr Hawkins seconded. All in favour.

		timber doors with new double doors, alterations to the west elevation to provide new WC/Storage area, new storage unit to replace existing shed.	
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	Cllr Christie objected, Cllr Sharp seconded. All in favour of objection. See comments below: *
M/26/00220/HP	Cherry Tree Cottage, 3 Suffield, Bransford, Worcester, WR6 5JE	Extension of dropped kerb.	Cllr Sharp proposed, Cllr Christie seconded. All in favour.

*

Whilst this submission is presented as a revision to the previously approved scheme, Leigh and Bransford Parish Council consider that the changes constitute **a material alteration** to the original proposal, rather than a minor amendment or a revised description. The approval by the PC of this application in December related specifically to the earlier scheme of 15 houses, not 28 and should not be carried forward to support your most recent proposal.

The Parish Council also has significant concerns regarding car parking provision and road capacity. The revised plans do not appear to adequately address the likely increase in vehicle numbers and the plans do not show how you can drive to some of the houses. The PC also agree with the concerns of residents that the new plan represents overdevelopment of the site and a decrease in space between the two phases.

d) To note planning decisions received

M/25/01752/HP - Grove House, Bransford: Alterations to front elevation: **Approved**. Noted.

M/25/01983/HP - Grove Cottage, Suckley Road, Leigh: Removal of existing flat roof extension, replacement Oak Framed extension. **Approved**. Noted.

M/25/01083/PIP (Appeal Ref: 6002697) - Land adjacent to 36 Suckley Road, Leigh. **Appeal Dismissed**. Noted.

Planning Ref: M/26/00128/TDC5 Associated Ref: M/23/00878/TDC5: Cedar House Stocks Lane. Technical details consent: **Approved**. Noted.

(A brief conversation took place around .gov.uk emails; **ACTION:** Clerk to resend setup instructions for .gov.uk email accounts to relevant parish councillors.

97/25 Finance

a) To approve schedule of accounts payable. Payments noted and approved.

Schedule of Accounts for Parish Council Meeting 24th March 2026

		£
A Briggs	Clerk's Pay (January)	1,336.42
R Wilks	Lengthsman Work	360.00
L Griffiths	Gardener – Jubilee Gardens (Feb)	49.50

J Monk	Accessibility Report	100.00
CALC	CiLCA Training (Clerk)	468.00
A Briggs	Clerk's pay (February)	1,050.47
NEST	Clerk's pension	68.79
Play Safe Ltd	RoSPA annual inspection	118.80
WelMedical	Defib and cabinet	1,318.89
R Wilks	Lengthsman work	528.00

Balance as at: 23rd March 2026

Community Current Account: £4,868.06

Business Premium Savings Account: £113,756.53

To note the verification of 2nd and 3rd quarter bank reconciliation by councillor auditor. Noted and approved.

- 98/25 To note, approve and minute the updated Financial Regulations, Standing Orders, Asset and Risk Registers and IT Policy. **ACTION:** Cllr Bayston to cross check asset/risk registers with our insurance, all FIVE polices were noted, approved and minuted. **ACTION:** Clerk to post on website.
- 99/25 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
a) Scout Hut – The Big Build
b) WC and kitchenette in Leigh Church. Nothing to report.
No update, the next one will be at May's meeting.
- 100/25 Defibrillator Update. The Clerk confirmed the new defib and cabinet had been delivered to Bank Farm and will be fitted very soon. The owner of Bank Farm wanted to thank the parish council for organising this. We will hopefully hear sometime in April if we've been successful in our bid for another defibrillator (to be placed a The Fold).
- 101/25 To consider RoSPA Report. Cllr Christie reported that no major areas were highlighted in the report. However, the wooden elements on the play equipment do have a finite period and some equipment are showing signs of deterioration. **ACTION:** As a short term measure Cllr Christie to treat wooden elements.
- 102/25 Report on Worcestershire County Council Budget Engagement Meeting. SC gave a comprehensive report back on the meeting he attended. All Councillors were sent a copy of the presentation ahead of the meeting.
- 103/25 Reports from Working Groups and Representatives:
- New-build developments.** Discussed above.
 - Memorial Hall Committee.** Cllr Bayston updated the PC with regard to areas the hall committee are looking to update : wifi, loop/blue tooth for hard of hearing, projector/speakers, Hall flooring, Bi fold doors. It was noted that Jon will not be present at our APM; Dale will be giving the report.
 - Play areas.** As above (RoSPA Report), with Cllr Christie confirming he carries out a monthly inspection.
 - Open Spaces.** Cllr Sharp confirmed the edging has now been replaced and that our gardener is doing a fantastic job, with many positive comments coming her way!

- e) **Lengthsman Scheme.** Cllr Sharp said a complaint had been made concerning flooding at Chapel Lane. The general consensus is that ditches are no longer cleared, which causes major problems. He contacted WCC to report it and was told it wasn't them, it was South Worcestershire Waters. **ACTION:** Cllr Sharp to contact them.
- f) **Public Footpaths.** Nothing to report. (The motor home has been moved).
- g) **Highways and Road Safety.** The Chair reported that flooding along Dingle Road has left big potholes in the road. He has reported the matter.
- h) **CALC.** Cllr Bayston confirmed there's a meeting next week and she'll report back accordingly.

104/25 Progress reports on items from previous meetings not otherwise listed on the agenda. **Atlas Mobile Mast:** Another site has been potentially earmarked, but it's right on the border of the parish so it's questionable whether it would help the Suckley Road end of the village.

105/25 Other reports and items for future consideration. Cllr Hawkins spoke again of tyre cleaning by the waste site. They used to do it, but not so much now. It comes back to Regulatory.

106/25 Next Meetings: Annual Parish Meeting: 14th April, Planning Committee Meeting: 28th April, Annual Parish Council Meeting: 26th May 2026. All noted.

All meetings 7pm at Leigh & Bransford Memorial Hall

Meeting closed at:

Chair..... Date

(MHDC Reports submitted – below).

Peter

In terms of MHDC news, there is little I can add to the emails already circulated to you. The position on council tax is now well known. SWDPr will be voted upon by MHDC on the same evening as your meeting, in what will be purely a rubber-stamping event. The final version of SWDPr differs from previous documents principally in removing the Throckmorton (Pershore) site. That, of course, means there is more pressure to deliver housing and industrial sites on the remaining selected sites, which include Rushwick. The Inspectors' final comments make much of the aspiration to sustainable development, while failing to identify how 800+ houses at Newland and 1000+ at Rushwick can be sustainable with minimal public transport.

Sarah

This evening, District Councillors will vote on the adoption of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR). This has been a lengthy process dating back to 2019, and the Inspector has found the plan to be sound. In principle, its adoption will provide a five-year land supply, helping to protect against speculative development.

However, forthcoming changes to the National Planning Policy Framework

(NPPF) are likely to significantly weaken councils' ability to refuse applications deemed "sustainable." In addition, higher housing targets proposed by the Labour government may mean that, once adopted, the SWDPR will almost immediately need to be reviewed.

You may have noted a recent application in Leigh that was refused because the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was up to date and included an agreed site allocation. This highlights the importance of reviewing and updating our own NDP, and considering whether it remains a valuable tool for guiding local, plan-led development. With Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and the planned removal of MHDC in 2028, planning decisions will become more remote from local communities. Nationally, NDPs are being promoted as a way to retain local influence, although the removal of allocated sites does weaken their effectiveness. Once adopted, SWDPR policies will take precedence over those in NDPs where there is overlap, as it will be the most recent plan.

Last week, the Executive Committee approved a further round of community and economic development grants. Unlike previous rounds focused on infrastructure, this funding supports delivery. This includes £250,000 for mental health initiatives, alongside other funding streams for economic growth. Further publicity is expected soon. Community Action has secured longer-term funding, and Citizens Advice has also received support in recent months. Funding for the "Building Brighter Futures" programme will continue—this initiative helps economically inactive residents return to work and is delivered via Citizens Advice. Full details can be found in last Tuesday's Executive Committee report, and I would encourage anyone who knows of a local organisation that may benefit to review it.

Locally, the Memorial Hall has been successful in securing a Legacy Grant and their project is now underway. Legacy MOTO has submitted its planning application, which I expect will be considered in due course.

MHDC has decided not to increase Council Tax this year and instead plans to utilise its reserves ahead of LGR. While this approach benefits smaller groups in the short term, it does leave the council in a more vulnerable financial position should LGR be delayed or policy direction change.

Otherwise, council activity remains relatively quiet.

At a national level, the upper limit for the Disability Facilities Grant has increased from £35,000 to £53,000, enabling more residents to access essential home adaptations. At the same time, the introduction of the NHS 10-year plan, alongside changes to Integrated Care Boards and neighbourhood structures, means that the delivery landscape for health and wellbeing services is evolving rapidly—coinciding with LGR. I have been actively highlighting the importance of recognising rural needs, particularly how residents define "neighbourhood" compared to NHS structures.

24TH March 2026

Finally, I have allocated my remaining ward funding to support EDDY, a group that provides twice-weekly wild swimming sessions for individuals with autism, ADHD, and other forms of neurodiversity at Escape to the Lakes. Having visited, it was clear how valuable this initiative is in offering a safe, calm environment where participants can enjoy nature and wellbeing activities.

Looking ahead, we will have £5,000 in ward funding available next year. If you have any suggestions for local initiatives that could benefit, please do get in touch.

DRAFT