

**LEEK TOWN COUNCIL**  
**General Purposes Committee**  
**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

in the Council Chamber, Moorlands House, SMDC, ST13 6HQ

**MINUTES**

Present:

|                             |                               |                              |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Chair: Cllr. Keith Hoptroff | Vice-Chair: Cllr. Sue Webster | Mayor Cllr. Lyn Swindlehurst |
| Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst     | Cllr. Derek Hilyer            | Cllr. Dee Young              |
| Cllr. Kate Nicholls         | Cllr. Mike Worthington        | Cllr. Steve Ford             |
| Cllr. Bill Cawley           | Cllr. Paul Powner             |                              |
| 4 Members of the Public     |                               | Town Clerk Denise Wheat      |

1. **Welcome by Chairman:** Cllr. Hoptroff opened the meeting.
2. **Apologies:** Cllr. Stephen Wales
3. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests,** other interests and consideration for the granting of dispensations. None declared
4. **Minutes of the General Purposes Meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> May 2026** were approved and signed by the Chair, Cllr. Keith Hoptroff.  
***Proposed Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst – Seconded Cllr. Paul Powner – All in favour***
5. **Matters Arising from the minutes not on the agenda:**
  - a. **Public Toilet Maintenance:** The Clerk received information from the Mayor of Ashbourne that Derbyshire Dales District Council had closed several old public toilet blocks and had replaced these with one new facility in the town. The toilets have a small charge to use the facilities and the council have an external cleaning contract funded by these charges.
  - b. **Assets log:** A quotation for an asset management software to keep a record of public complaints and actions to maintain town council assets and other important assets in the town has been requested.
  - c. **CPRE On the Edge pledge:** the Clerk has signed the pledge on behalf of the Town Council “that every town and city should be surrounded by thriving and protected countryside – for nature, climate and wellbeing.”
  - d. **Cheadle Road cherry trees.** The Highways officer has responded that the County Council will not replace the removed cherry trees following storm damage, but if the Town Council would like to replace the trees it could replant them. The Clerk will get a cost to replace the trees.
6. **Correspondence:** None received.
7. **Finance and Governance:**

*In accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 section 5 (150)*

  - a) Payments were approved for May 2026 – ***All in favour***

| Voucher No | Date       | Net               | VAT       | Total             | Description                 | Payment Ref     |
|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 31         | 05/05/2026 | £14.00            | £-        | £14.00            | Window Cleaner              | Admin           |
| 32         | 05/05/2026 | £306.40           | £-        | £306.40           | Lengthsman Duties           | Week 5          |
| 33         | 05/05/2026 | £18.02            | £3.61     | £21.63            | Maintenance equipment       | Week 5          |
| 34         | 05/05/2026 | £911.00           | £182.20   | £1,093.20         | Flags & Bunting             | Bunting         |
| 35         | 06/05/2026 | £11.43            | £-        | £11.43            | Stockwell Street Water      | 385087391       |
| 36         | 07/05/2026 | £320.00           | £-        | £320.00           | Entertainer                 | Mayor           |
| 37         | 08/05/2026 | £230.00           | £-        | £230.00           | Civic catering              | Mayor           |
| 38         | 11/05/2026 | £23.50            | £-        | £23.50            | Civic regalia               | Mayor           |
| 39         | 11/05/2026 | £15.00            | £-        | £15.00            | Civic regalia               | Mayor           |
| 40         | 11/05/2026 | £87.49            | £17.50    | £104.99           | Microsoft Annual Fee        | Office 365      |
| 41         | 11/05/2026 | £-                | £-        | £-                | Stationary                  | duplicate entry |
| 42         | 11/05/2026 | £1.92             | £0.38     | £2.30             | Mayors Civic                | Mayor           |
| 43         | 11/05/2026 | £500.00           | £-        | £500.00           | Lengthsman Duties           | Week 6          |
| 44         | 11/05/2026 | £12.46            | £2.49     | £14.95            | Allotment Maintenance       | Week 6          |
| 45         | 12/05/2026 | £12.98            | £2.60     | £15.58            | Office Supplies             | Week 6          |
| 46         | 12/05/2026 | £15.87            | £3.17     | £19.04            | Stationary                  | Week 6          |
| 47         | 15/05/2026 | £340.00           | £-        | £340.00           | Website Maintenance         | Admin           |
| 48         | 18/05/2026 | <del>£84.00</del> | £-        | <del>£84.00</del> | Ticket Refund Event         | Refund received |
| 49         | 18/05/2026 | £150.00           | £-        | £150.00           | Road Closure Application    | Country & West  |
| 50         | 18/05/2026 | £225.00           | £-        | £225.00           | Lengthsman Duties           | Week 7          |
| 51         | 18/05/2026 | £240.00           | £48.00    | £288.00           | Skip Hire                   | Allotments      |
| 52         | 20/05/2026 | £12.90            | £2.58     | £15.48            | Stationary                  | Admin           |
| 53         | 20/05/2026 | £3,312.65         | £662.53   | £3,975.18         | Flags & Bunting             | Seasonal St Dec |
| 54         | 20/05/2026 | £885.00           | £177.00   | £1,062.00         | Banners                     | Seasonal St Dec |
| 55         | 20/05/2026 | £47.56            | £2.38     | £49.94            | Nicholson Clock Electricity | WMC             |
| 57         | 22/05/2026 | £10.50            | £-        | £10.50            | Road Closure Application    | Civic Service   |
| 56/58/59   | 26/05/2026 | £2,371.91         | £-        | £3,873.45         | Staff Salaries              | Month 2         |
| 60         | 26/05/2026 | £1,398.83         | £-        | £1,398.83         | PAYE                        | Month 1         |
| 61         | 28/05/2026 | £817.50           | £-        | £817.50           | Lengthsman Duties           | Week 8          |
| 62         | 28/05/2026 | £340.39           | £-        | £340.39           | Pensions                    | Month 2         |
| 63         | 29/05/2026 | £10.50            | £-        | £10.50            | Bank Charges current        | Admin           |
| 64         | 29/05/2026 | £1.40             | £-        | £1.40             | Bank Charges events         | Admin           |
| TOTAL      | PAYMENTS   | £12,560.21        | £1,104.44 | £15,166.19        | MAY 2026                    |                 |

**8. A report was received from Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst – portfolio holder for Leisure and Tourism:** Brough Park Leisure Centre will be open in August and the Nicholson Institute art gallery, library and school of art rooms refurbishment and restoration is in advanced progress stages.

**9. Item on Notice:** None proposed

**10. Committee reports:**

**a) Allotments (GSA)**

The May meeting was not quorate, but a report of discussions was received.

**b) War Memorials (WMC)**

- i. **Ball Haye Green** – in conjunction with the Environment and Green Spaces Committee it was proposed that a copse of trees be planted at Ball Haye Green in memory of Cllr. Birch, provided free of charge through an application to the Woodland Trust.  
*All in favour*
- ii. **Nicholson War Memorial:** Ideas for an interpretation panel to replace the sensory garden were discussed. This would create a tourist attraction in the line of heritage buildings from the Maud Institute through Leek town centre to the Monument. Anti-social behaviour has been reported in the area. The Council agreed to report this to the Local Police requesting more frequent surveillance and to SMDC Leader asking if CCTV covers that area.
- iii. **Remembrance events.** Cllr. Hilyer had written to the Chairman of the Staffordshire Region of the Royal British Legion Mr. Anthony Frith, to support strengthening Leek RBL branch following the death of the former RBL Chairman, Mick Brough.

**c) Tourism, Events & Community (TEC)**

Planning is underway for the following events:

- **Mayors Civic Parade and Civic Service** – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1.40pm from Silk Street car park up to St Edwards Church for a 2pm Service.
- **Country and Western day**, Sparrow Park on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July from 11am -3pm.
- **Remembrance Day Parades and Ceremonies** – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November
- **Christmas Lights Switch on** – Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November

Sunday bandstand concerts have not been organised in this year due to the Leisure Centre renovation. The Council in considering restarting these events is aware that there is a cost to the Bandstand concerts and so sponsorship will need to be sought and more volunteers to be recruited to the Friends of Brough Park group to set up the chairs, signage, gazebo and to provide cakes to fundraise.

**d) Environment and Green Spaces Committee**

- i. Changes were approved to the terms of reference to include Green Spaces (formerly in the remit of the Green Spaces and Allotments committee).
- ii. Ball Haye Green: a replacement zip wire is on order for the recreation ground. Alliance Environmental are fitting this.
- iii. The Peak Cluster consultation is ongoing; they have a comprehensive website for information.
- iv. John Hall Gardens:
  - Re-think ended their tenancy on 26<sup>th</sup> June because they have changed their business plan of what they want to achieve.
  - Officers are working on a feasibility plan to keep the gardens open.
  - Expressions of interest have been received from 3 community groups
  - A public tender process will now commence.
  - 8 community groups have used the space recently.
  - There is a viable café on the site, plus accessible toilet facilities.
  - Birchall Pavillion is to have a refurbishment and this space will be available to community groups.

**e) Finance:**

- i. A change to the Terms of Reference was approved, to membership of all Town Councillors.
- ii. No meeting was held in May as the Clerk was liaising with the Internal Auditor and preparing the Annual Governance and Accountability Review for the External Auditor.

Notice is hereby given that the statement of accounts for Leek Town Council for the year ended 31 March 2026 will be published on the Council's website on the 30 June 2026 and will be available for public inspection in accordance with Sections 26 and 27 of the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 from 1<sup>st</sup> July to the 11<sup>th</sup> August 2026.

**11. Sub-committee/ working group reports:**

**a) Devolution/ Local Government Re-organisation**

Cllr Lyn Swindlehurst reported as Community Champion for Staffs Moorlands North, the North cluster has contributed positive responses to the Mutual Ventures consultation. There have been Community group consultations with Place based narratives and Business consultations. Each Town or Parish has different needs and characteristics.

There is also a public consultation which is online which anyone can complete.

Mutual Ventures will then produce a Locality Plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands.

Cllr. Hilyer has sent out a paper to Town Councillors asking what Leek means to them. The Councillors need to plan for what Leek Town Council would like to be responsible for after Local Government Reorganisation. Assets at risk need noting even though the Council may not own them.

Cllr. Lyn Swindlehurst responded that at a District level there are some large legacy projects which need to be completed.

- b) Neighbourhood Plan (NP):** The Clerk reported that there will be a meeting at 1pm on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June at the Town Council office to review the consultation statements.

**12. Ward Reports:**

**a) Leekbrook:**

**Cllr. Nicholls** reported that a meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> June with RMG Management Group has progressed to a public listening event scheduled for 11<sup>th</sup> July. County Cllr. Sonny Edwards has been invited, actions are happening to contribute to the agenda with Wain Homes and the RGM Management group. Residents Management Group is not part of the community it is a national organisation. Union flags have been put up through the village.

**b) Birchall:**

**Cllr. Worthington** reported that residents are concerned about the old Britannia Building Society building and what it might be used for in the future. Cllr. Cawley commented that the offices have a covenant on the building for office use. The building is currently used for dog training exercises by the Police.

**c) Leek North:**

**Cllr. Ford** reported that he has sent emails to various authorities about the following:

- Potholes and road surface problems at the area in front of the monument: reported to Amey
- Road surface problems in front of the shops on Queens Drive, Haregate: reported to Your Housing (this road is not County Council responsibility).
- A letter has been sent to Cllr. Charlotte Kelly about a pilot project to allow parking on some verges on Haregate Road and Windsor Drive.
- Ball Haye Green road in front of shop by Prince Street. The blocked drain has been reported to County Highways.  
Other issues which are being pursued are:
- Reducing the speed limit entering into Leek on the Buxton Road.
- Multi storey car park idea for the land behind the District Council buildings.
- Pilot scheme to allow free parking for 3 hours in the town to encourage town centre shopping: Angela Dixon (Highways officer, Ladderedge) has information on a scheme which is working in a different District.
- Haregate road pavements are cracking because people are driving over the pavements to park.
- Peak Cluster – farmers and community members have concerns.

**Cllr. Lyn Swindlehurst** reported that the pavements have been resurfaced but the cracks then reappeared. The community are policing the anti-social behaviour of Dog fouling. Signs have been put up with fluorescent watching eyes which have been really effective. A working group has formed. A stencil can be used to mark the pavement to highlight and deter dog fouling.

Haregate have entered the Best Kept Village Community competition. Posters from Little Stars and Beresford Memorial First School have been gathered and displayed around the Community highlighting what is important to young people.

**d) Leek South:**

**Cllr Keith Hoptroff** reported on dips in the road by the monument. The Highways officer has arranged a temporary tarmac solution to the problem. The quality of the road surface will have to be inspected by the conservation officer as the Monument is a designated conservation area.

**Cllr Matt Swindlehurst**

- Emphasised the importance for Ward Councillors to report to County Highways any issues concerning the County Council. Residents also need to be encouraged to report any matters. The Clerk was asked to keep a log of any report numbers to monitor progress of correspondence between authorities.

**e) Leek East: No report**

**f) Leek West:**

**Cllr. Cawley**

- **Big Mill fire:** A report has been circulated about the fire on 27<sup>th</sup> March at the Big Mill site. Reports are being gathered of cars being damaged by falling ash. The Fire and

Rescue authority will be submitting a report which has not been published yet. It is a brown field site. Plans for development may now emerge.

- **Veterans Covenant:** Staffordshire Moorlands have won a silver award. Tri Star Veterans, an outline organisation based in Newcastle but covering the Moorlands (funded by the County Council). An event is being held at Blythe Bridge library on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> July. Werrington Library could be a venue for a future event.

**Cllr. Webster**

- **Action West End:** Meetings are held at Leek Bowling Club, Beggars Lane. Plans are progressing for the event.

**13. To receive items for information:** No additional items were raised.

**14. Exclusion of the Public:**

The Chairman moved: “That in accordance with section 19 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business next to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the Meeting”.

**20.55 *Members of the public left the meeting***

***Cllr. Mike Worthington apologised and left the meeting***

**15. Confidential Items:**

**a) 15 Stockwell Street lease and service charge:**

No further correspondence has been received.

**b) Bank House:**

- Commercial lease completion is imminent. Both parties have signed and the document has been delivered to the Council’s solicitor.
- Bank House maintenance: The Clerk has struggled to get a commercial plumber to quote for the work as the job is half done by a previous plumber. The Council accepted the quotation from the plumber who knows the Bank House water system, to replace all the ground floor radiators to bring the heating of the main room back into use as in the Heads of Terms of the lease negotiation.

***Proposed Cllr. Hoptroff – Seconded Cllr. Hilyer – All in favour***

**c) Allotment Boundary:** Asbestos sheet removal in the boundary of the allotment on Beggars Lane has been booked. The Clerk to inform the neighboring landowners when the job has been completed.

**d) War Memorial:** No further correspondence has been received.

***Meeting ended 21.06***

| <b>Action</b>                                                | <b>Description</b>                                                           | <b>Person Responsible</b>              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Prepare an application for Woodland Trust.                   | To apply for tree saplings                                                   | Clerk/ Volunteers to plant in November |
| Report issues to the Police<br>Write a letter to SMDC Leader | Anti-social behaviour in the area of the Sensory Garden/ access to CCTV      | Chair of War Memorials Cllr. Hilyer    |
| Log highway faults                                           | To report on the Report It app and to follow progress of the correspondence. | Town Clerk/Admin                       |
| Commercial Lease                                             | To monitor progress through to completion                                    | Town Clerk                             |
| Book plumber                                                 | To replace damaged radiators at Bank House on the Ground floor.              | Town Clerk                             |
| Arrange removal of asbestos sheet                            | To inform neighbours and solicitor when complete                             | Town Clerk                             |
|                                                              |                                                                              |                                        |