Leek Town Council Environment Committee

Tuesday 25th August 2026

5.30pm, Leek Town Council Office, 15 Stockwell Street, Leek, ST13 6DH

MINUTES

1. Welcome:

Chair: Deputy Mayor Cllr Keith Hoptroff	Cllr Derek Hilyer	Cllr Matt Swindlehurst
Cllr Mark Johnson (District/MCA)	Cllr Sue Webster	
	Minutes	Admin Assistant Victoria Johnson

2. Apologies:

Mayor Cllr Lyn Swindlehurst, Cllr Dee Young, Mike Jones (MCA).

3. Declarations of interest:

Cllr Hoptroff (Item 8) worked for Cauldon Cement Works.
Cllr Hoptroff and Mike Jones (Item 9) Severn Trent Carsington to Tittesworth Pipeline.
Cllrs Keith Hoptroff and Mark Johnson are both on the SMDC Planning Committee.

4. Minutes of 26th April approved as a true record.

5. Leek North Naturally:

a) A successful application was made to the Woodlands Trust for 30 trees to populate a copse in memory of past Mayor Barry Birch. Whilst the approximate size of a tennis court is required for the trees, they can be split across 3 areas equal to this size. The location of the planted trees will not impact on the space used for Ball Haye Green Community Football. Speaking to the SMDC Arboriculture Officer about tree planting procedures was recommended. The War Memorials Committee will address planting and maintenance of the trees.

b) John Hall Gardens/Rethink have been allocated use of a waste area on Badnall Street allotment site by the Town Council for a long-term project to maintain the John Hall Gardens community. A significant amount of weed and waste removal has already taken place to create a workable environment.

6. Moorlands Climate Action (MCA) update:

a) Birch Gardens has existing signs containing information on the history of the gardens. A member of MCA is pursuing additional signage regarding its ecological aspects and has spoken with SMDC about funding possibilities. The key for the noticeboard will be sought from the Secretary of the now defunct Friends of Birch Gardens. It was suggested that Friends of Green Spaces could be considered.

b) Ongoing discussions regarding community composting will be monitored and reported on.

c) Following complaints received from a member of the public the maintenance of the Garden of Remembrance and cemetery at St Edwards Church Leek has been referred to AES. MCA are currently looking at conservation possibilities at another church, so it was suggested they are asked to consider possibilities for St Edwards Church alongside this.

7. Moorlands Green Network:
The Committee reviewed the Minutes of the meeting held on 28th July and the Chair of the Committee will attend the next meeting online. Adaptation workshops are being organised which will take place at SMDC and will address heat and flooding.

8. Peak Cluster:
There is no update and none is expected until the next consultation takes place.

9. Severn Trent Carsington to Tittesworth Pipeline:
It is anticipated that this issue will be presented to SMDC Planning Committee soon.

10. Green Spaces Proposals:

a) The Chair of the Committee is editing the available grants spreadsheet to identify the relevant grants.

b) The SMDC pilot sites (Pickwood, Brough Park and Birchall) have 'no mow' spaces. The Committee value management of the towns green spaces in this way and expect the Unitary Authority to respect and continue this approach.

c) Consideration needs to be given to planting trees in the space on Prince Street in front of the recently renovated communal garden. As this area is regularly used to park cars it was suggested that residents' opinions are sought.

d) The Lengthsman will be asked to tidy the area at the bottom of Russell Street.

e) The Sensory Gardens by the Nicholson War Memorial have been fenced off by the Town Council at the request of the local PCSOs and a resident following reports of anti-social behaviour.

f) Once a number of areas where ownership is in dispute or not recognised have been identified, the Chair of the Committee will write to the new Head of Assets at SMDC to request that clarity of ownership and responsibility is secured for all public spaces in the town.

11. Nature in Your Neighbourhood:

Whilst there is capital available for this project, the Clerk will liaise with Cllr Mark Johnson before making a grant application due to the strict requirements put in place by Support Staffordshire.

12. 20's Plenty:

The Committee members are unable to attend the Zoom meeting on Tuesday 8th September.

13. Any Other Business:

a) The SMDC Arboriculture Officers have met with Anthony Hammond (a sculptor) to discuss the possibility of creating a bench or a sculpture from the Copper Beech tree which was cut down in Brough Park. It is hoped that the logs on site will be repurposed.

b) The litter on Ball Haye Green recreation ground has increased significantly. Litter picking options are to be considered.

c) Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Cllr Mark Johnson and SMDC Officers are meeting to discuss ecological improvements for Brough Park pond.

14. Date of next meetings:

Moorlands Green Network Tuesday 29th September 5.30pm via Zoom
Environment Committee Tuesday 27th October 5.30pm Town Council office