LEEK TOWN COUNCIL
General Purposes Committee
Tuesday 20th October 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. Kate Nicholls
Cllr. Stephen Wales	Cllr. Mike Worthington	
5 Members of the Public	Staff: Victoria Johnson	Minutes: Clerk Denise Wheat

1. **Welcome by Chairman:** Cllr. Hoptroff opened the meeting.

2. **Apologies:** All present

3. **Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests,** other interests and consideration for the granting of dispensations.

4. **Minutes of the General Purposes Meeting held 15th September 2026** were approved as a correct record.
   Proposed Cllr. Matt Swindlehurst – Seconded Cllr. Derek Hilyer – All in favour

5. **Matters Arising from the minutes not on the agenda:**
   Action points were checked for completion.

6. **Correspondence:**
7. SMDC are restoring the whole of the front facarde of the 15 Stockwell St Office.
   Proposer Cllr Wortheington – Cllr L Swindlehurst.

8. **Finance and Governance:**

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

   a) Payments were approved for September 2026 *(see overleaf)*

   b) Bank Reconciliation to the 30th September was approved. *(see overleaf)*

   Approved - All in favour

Voucher	Date	Net	VAT	Total	Description	Payment R
119	01/07/2026	£ 1,399.03	£-	£ 1,399.03	PAYE	Month 3
120	02/07/2026	£ 3.53	£ 0.71	£ 4.24	Office Supplies	
121	02/07/2026	£ 90.00	£-	£ 90.00	Leaflet Printing	
122	02/07/2026	£ 9.24	£-	£ 9.24	Stockwell Street Water	
123	06/07/2026	£ 12.38	£-	£ 12.38	Allotment Water	
124	07/07/2026	£ 511.90	£ 102.38	£ 614.28	Ball Haye Green Play Area	
133	07/07/2026	£ 200.00	£-	£ 200.00	Entertainer	8691
155	09/07/2026	£ 500.00	£-	£ 500.00	Community Grant	
125	10/07/2026	£ 20.00	£-	£ 20.00	vouchers	
126	13/07/2026	£ 58.32	£ 11.67	£ 69.99	Anti virus software	
127	13/07/2026	£ 100.00	£-	£ 100.00	Entertainer	
128	13/07/2026	£ 205.00	£-	£ 205.00	Printing	
129	13/07/2026	£ 75.31	£ 15.06	£ 90.37	Paint	
130	13/07/2026	£ 1,097.50	£-	£ 1,097.50	Civic Event	
131	16/07/2026	£ 38.79	£ 1.94	£ 40.73	Nicholson Clock Electricity	
132	20/07/2026	£ 1,352.13	£-	£ 1,352.13	PAYE	Month 3
134	21/07/2026	£ 178.24	£-	£ 178.24	Lengthsman Duties	
135	21/07/2026	£ 10.83	£ 2.17	£ 13.00	Stationary	
136	21/07/2026	£ 80.00	£-	£ 80.00	Website & IT	
137	21/07/2026	£ 250.00	£ 50.00	£ 300.00	Tree Maintenance Services	
138	21/07/2026	£ 113.59	£-	£ 113.59	Mayors Allowance	
139	21/07/2026	£ 50.00	£-	£ 50.00	Training	
140	21/07/2026	£ 531.67	£ 26.58	£ 558.25	Christmas Lights Electricity fee	
141	21/07/2026	£ 19.00	£-	£ 19.00	Window Cleaner	
142	21/07/2026	£ 149.40	£-	£ 149.40	Yellow Book	
143/144	24/07/2026	£ 3,873.45	£-	£ 3,873.45	Staff Salaries	Month 4
145	24/07/2026	£ 340.39	£-	£ 340.39	Pension	Month 4
146	27/07/2026	£ 450.00	£-	£ 450.00	Entertainer	
147	27/07/2026	£ 50.00	£-	£ 50.00	Entertainer	
148	29/07/2026	£ 800.00	£ 160.00	£ 960.00	Stockwell St. lease	
149	29/07/2026	£ 59.79	£ 11.96	£ 71.75	Printer Fee	
150	29/07/2026	£ 200.00	£-	£ 200.00	Plumbing	
151	29/07/2026	£ 300.00	£-	£ 300.00	Radio Presenters	
152	29/07/2026	£ 80.00	£-	£ 80.00	Entertainment	
153	29/07/2026	£ 100.00	£-	£ 100.00	Event Advertising	
154	29/07/2026	£ 175.00	£-	£ 175.00	Lengthsman Duties	
158	31/07/2026	£ 19.25	£-	£ 19.25	Bank Charges	
159	03/08/2026	£ 11.96	£-	£ 11.96	Stockwell Street Water	
160	03/08/2026	£ 26.11	£-	£ 26.11	Allotment Water	
161	05/08/2026	£ 312.50	£-	£ 312.50	Lengthsman Duties	
162	05/08/2026	£ 1,875.00	£ 375.00	£ 2,250.00	Asbestos Removal	
163	06/08/2026	£ 1,385.00	£ 277.00	£ 1,662.00	Asbestos Removal	
164	06/08/2026	£ 40.00	£-	£ 40.00	Tickets to a Civic Event	
165	07/08/2026	£ 22.00	£-	£ 22.00	Lengthsman Duties	
166	07/08/2026	£ 194.80	£-	£ 194.80	Lengthsman Duties	
167	10/08/2026	£ 95.00	£ 19.00	£ 114.00	Asset Maintenance	
168	10/08/2026	£ 300.00	£-	£ 300.00	Lengthsman Duties	
169	11/08/2026	£ 10.00	£-	£ 10.00	Tickets to a Civic Event	
156	13/08/2026	£ 66.67	£ 13.33	£ 80.00	Tickets to a Civic Event	
170	13/08/2026	£ 340.39	£-	£ 340.39	Pension	
171	17/08/2026	£ 18.00	£-	£ 18.00	Website & IT	
172	18/08/2026	£ 250.00	£-	£ 250.00	Lengthsman Duties	
173	18/08/2026	£ 40.06	£ 2.00	£ 42.06	Nicholson Clock Electricity	
174	25/08/2026	£ 25.00	£-	£ 25.00	Lengthsman Duties	
175/176	26/08/2026	£ 3,873.65	£-	£ 3,873.65	Staff Salaries	Month 5
177	26/08/2026	£ 1,399.03	£-	£ 1,399.03	PAYE	Month 4
157	28/08/2026	£ 7.09	£-	£ 7.09	Bank Charges	
178	28/08/2026	£ 16.30	£-	£ 16.30	Bank Charges	
2026		**£23,812.30**	**£1,068.80**	**£24,881.10**		
JULY/AU	**TOTAL**	**NET**	**VAT**	**GROSS**		

Bank Reconciliation at 28/08/2026		
Cash in Hand	**01/04/2026**	**42,160.41**
ADD		
Receipts	01/04/2026 - 28/08/2026	171,473.78
		213,634.19
SUBTRACT		
Payments	01/04/2026 – 28/08/2026	95,969.69
A Cash in Hand (per Cash Book)	**28/08/2026**	**117,664.50**
Cash in hand per Bank Statements		
Petty Cash	28/08/2026	0.00
Current Account	28/08/2026	0.00
Business Reserve Account (Current 2)	28/08/2026	113,124.14
Leek Events (Mayors Charity Account)	28/08/2026	4,494.36
		117,618.50
B		
Less unpresented payments		0.00
Plus unpresented receipts	(Allotment fee)	46.00
Adjusted Bank Balance		**117,664.50**

A = B Checks out OK

9. **Committee reports:**
   a. **Allotments**:

   b. **War Memorials (WMC)**

Sensory Gardens – suitable for a bid for a grant. Remove a site of anti social behaviour
Tourist attraction to the town
Improvement to the War Memorial. – hope to complete by April
Remembrance Day – the signals regiment – admiral soar, Judy at Ball Haye Green
Working meetings coming up
Cllr Worthington reported Leek brook 9am on 8th Nov, 10am at St Edwards Church in Cheddleton

   c. **Tourism, Events and Community (TEC):**

Cllr Matt Swindlehurst – looking at Bugets for tourism and culture at District level.
Cllr Webster reported a Club Day static service at Sparrow Park is being planned. The working committee for Club Day is planned for a Saturday in July in 2027. Cllr Worthingtons birthday is at the Christmas Ligths switch on

   a. **Environment and Green Spaces Committee**:
      Leek North Naturally project. An exciting development to increase the tree cover at Ball Haye Green. To be planted around the outside of the park
      Next Tuesday at 5:30pm - next Environment Committee
   b. **Finance Committee:**

      i. **Budget 2027-2028:** Committees have been asked to prepare their request for projects to be included in the draft Budget. The council needs to consider to what extent it should follow the guidance of the auditor to make sure there are adequate general reserves (in the range of 25% - 100% of the Precept).
      ii. **The Committees are submitting**

Bank House: Repairs
HR – Policies which the Clerk Mentioned earlier.
Neighbourhood Plan

Twinning – Finalising plans for visitors who are visiting. 14 guests are visiting Leek over the remembrance. Outside 13th March, 26th Twinning Christmas Meal at the Lazy Trout.

- **Neighbourhood Plan** – Planning Consultant fees for Regulation 14 work and preparation for Regulation 15 submission £4,380 net (Total £5,256). It was noted that only £3000 was in the budget so the extra will need to come from the strategic reserve. A full financial report was requested from the Responsible Financial Officer of the cost of the Leek Neighbourhood Plan to date for the next finance meeting. ***Approved***

c. **Human Resources:** The Clerk is working on some additional policy documents to be approved at the next meeting.

10. Sub Committee/ working group reports:

a. **Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation**: already covered in Town Council meeting.

b. **Leek Neighbourhood Plan:** Cllr. Wales thanked all those who have been involved in the Neighbourhood Plan steering group which was a started by the community and supported by a variety of Councillors from Leek in 2018. The Chair allowed Mrs Lesley Roberts (Chair of NP Committee) to speak. Mrs Roberts thanked the Council for their patience and explained that the group had started with 30 members but finished with only 5 committee members.
The Regulation 14 consultation statement is now completed with over 500 comments. Thanks were minuted to SMDC planning officer Ruth Woodisse and her team for their constructive comments and to Martyn Piggott of SMDC for helping to source the maps. The changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) have been added to the policies.
The plan is to get to Referendum 16 for the May election to save election costs by sharing paperwork and postage with the District and Parish poll.
Cllr. Worthington asked for thanks to be minuted to the Neighbourhood Plan steering group in full appreciation for the work that has been done on the project.

c. **Twinning:** Cllr. Webster reported that no meeting was held in August. No meeting last month. 16th _ 18th April 2027 a trip to Este planned for the Festival of Flowers and to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the towns being twinned. A coffee morning has been held at Trinity to raise funds for the 25th Anniversary celebration being planned in Leek (dates to be confirmed). Cllr. Hoptroff commented that he was a Town Councillor when the agreement was signed on 27th April 2002.

11. Ward Reports:

a. **Leekbrook: Cllr. Nicholls** reported thatthere is now an active community group.

b. **Birchall:** No report

c. **Leek North: Cllr. Steve Ford:**

i. Queens Drive – road degraded – seeked the owners – Your Housing have now repaired it to a standard

ii. Zipadee Nursery – have repaired their fence

iii. Abbotts Road – seek help to get a disability on the road
iv. Domestic abuse – housing case – forwarded onto the Police and is being dealt with by safeguarding services
v. Mount Road – calm traffic for walkers on The Mount
vi. Knivden Hall is up for sale. A business plan has been submitted to convertthe building into a Veterans wellness centre
vii. One way system to reduce traffic speed through the town. Trying to organise a consultation

Cllr Matt Swindlehurst – 10 of these are County Council issues
Cllr Wales and Cllr Atkins have worked hard on the councils road systems.
Cllr Edwards and Cllr Egginton have been absent. Appalling things about Cllr. Kelly on Social Members. The Town Council cant make them attend, but good councillors should want to work across the authorities.

Write to the Cllr Edwards and Cllr Egginton should be presenting at meetings
Write formally to both strongly to request their attendance at Town Council meetings.

Cllr Ford disappointed that Cllr Edwards and Egginton. Cllr Worthington wholeheartedly agreed that a strong letter should be sent.
Question to Cllr. Worthington - open tender a friend is going throught e
Cllr Ford mentioned that there is a consortium who is interested. Cllr L Swindlehurst – interested in asking the RBL to be involved.
Cllr Wales agreed as he has researched RBL establishemnts

Leek South – Anti Social Behaviour – Spencer Avenue – trees have been removed which has made visibility better for residents
A Branch down inbetween Wardle Crescent and The Cemetery and thus branch has been cleared.

Leek Neighbourhood Matter ansd Neighbourhood Watch – big meeting 60 members of the public. There is ameeting on Thursday at 7pm in the Churnet Room.
Ne w Dog fouling policy to be discussed.

Cllr Matt Swin – on track to reopen Birchall Pavillion – the room will be available to rent managed by MyActive.
Pleased that the Dog Fouling Policy for the Birchall Park. Dogs shouldn't be exercised on marked out Playing field
Clr Wales – question – did he investigate the access to Birchall
Further down there is a monument – there could be another access/ exit there.

Leek East – Cllr Dee Young complaint for the parking of push bikes in the Market Place. We would like to get that information onto our website.

Leek West Cllr Webster – After the Fun Day and the Circus. It was a magnigicent site to see but she wondered why the location had been chosen. The Circus was a big success. There were a few issues – the Brough Park Leisure Centre when the application cam in. Concerns were received from residents that they were not informed properly. Residents do need to be informed. The district council should meet the same standards as the Town Council.

Cllr Cawley – St Preacher has been quiet since the Pride event. No incidents
Cllr Matt Swindlehurst mentioned joint working – Andy Mans Club – has moved to Haregate from Leek Town Football club – remaining Councillor initiative fund £150.

Councillor initiative fund. Each district councilllor gets £500 to spend with their community.

Coffee and Cake fundraiser at the Quaker meeting house.
Veternas drop in centre at Werrington on 6th November – excellent Tri Services and Cllr Ken Griffiths – co working to run at Werrington Methodist Chruch Hall – The High Sherrirf is opening the event with the Chair of Werrington

Leek Neighbourhhod Mattersmeeting is 6.30pm

The Challinot Fountain is now working.

Reports on Social Media
Coop planters. Cllr Webster - walls falling down and a tree has come down. It is weedy and overgrown. Cllr Wales – a map has the different assets mapped. The area outside the Coop. For the benefit it should be this council to intervien.
For the residents to have to put up with it.

An estimate of the work to put it right. The budget – will need consideration if the Town council takes it over. The asset needs fixing. With an agreement put in place for the Town Council to maintain it. A new asset list from SMDC. 1974 when the assets were passed over has this asset fallen through the net. The area was looked after from Grow Moorlands. These pieces of land there are areas in Leek West The Larches and Barracks Lane. The childrens playing area should have been managed by the owners and the residents – the owners went bankrupt.

Which ever council is responsible neglect them and then volunteers take over. The town would benefit from a good clean up. The secret garden – a volunteer established that garden. No one seems to own it. Cllr Webster – allotment Committee visited the garden. The benches are not in a good state.
Some people are not respecting the site.

Leek South Spencer Avenue – antisocial behaviour – neighbourhood watch

Items for information

The lease on Bank House had been signed. – Now completed.

Confidential Minutes 15th September - all in favour.

a) Would like confirmation in writing from Cllr Ralphs – Cllr Worthington will ask
The reason was that he Council did not meet. It should be in the minutes
Clearly need to stop them imposing the costs. We have paid all the due invoices.
Research the minutes.

Agreements with other people should also be documented.

Invoice was never issues from SMDC in

From the next invoice she will pay the full rent. The new tenant has the whole building and understand her responsibility We need to know what is going on in the building. Full rent is being paid. If the tenant lets us know when she has got rooms available she can share to the council and we will promote.

Allotment Boundary – Cllr Hilyer – the agreement has come through. A lease has been drafted – we have to grant them to access outr land
We have to sully our insurance
They have to sublmit their workes specification

This is a full and final settlement
We must be scrupulous so they can get on the land. Recommend we move straight ahead and get the situation settled.

All in agreement

Two long standing issues

Meeting ended 20.25

viii.

ix. Anti-social behaviour is being tackled through Leek Neighbourhood Matters who now have 1500 members actively sending reports to Staffordshire Police and on social media.

d. **Leek South:**

Cllr. Hoptroff reported:

i. A parking ticket had been appealed on behalf of a resident where a double yellow line had been covered up by road repair tarmac and a fine had been issued, but visually there was no double yellow line.

ii. some antisocial drug behaviours have been reported. All Saints' Church Hall has been broken into, and some items have been stolen.

Cllr. M. Swindlehurst reported:

iii. Birchall Playing Fields: some areas are being left unmown to increase biodiversity. Birchall Pavillion is being refurbished to be completed before November, including a Café. There will be more use made of Birchall Playing Fields including Leek women's football, cricket, and as a social space for bookings for community groups to use for meetings and activities. The building will be managed by MyActive Leek and will have a simple booking system.
Cllr. Wales stated that the entrance is quite narrow causing restriction when exiting and entering the car park. Could Highways review the provision of yellow lines with MyActive.

e. **Leek East:** No councillors present.

f. **Leek West**:

Cllr. Webster reported:

i. Action West End event was a very successful occasion and the community turned out to support the event.
ii. The old post office is being renovated.
iii. There will be an unveiling of a blue plaque on 28th September, 2pm at 1 Westwood Terrace for Major Fred Davenport, Leek's most highly decorated soldier from 1st World War. He died at the battle of Passchendaele.

Cllr. Cawley (not present) submitted a written report: ***(appendix 1 attached)***

12. **Items for Information:**

Cllr. Wales reminded the Council about transparency with so many items in a Confidential section on the agenda.
The Chair responded that the items contain contract negotiations and legal matters.
The Clerk clarified that if a decision is made under confidential by the council it will be published in the minutes.

13. **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 are to be excluded from the Meeting".

Members of the public left the meeting at 20.24

14. **Confidential Items:**

a. **15 Stockwell Street:** A new SMDC assets officer has been appointed.
The Clerk was asked to arrange a meeting to discuss the lease and service charges with two council members.

b. **Bank House:**
Little Peaks OT a new Occupational therapy centre for children has opened on the ground floor**.** This could have been discussed in the open meeting. Bank House to be on the main agenda for a report at the October meeting.
Clerk to write to the main tenant to seek clarification on agreements before the 13th October Finance Committee meeting.

c. **Allotment Boundary:**
The legal process is coming to a conclusion and work by the neighbour should be able to commence soon.

d. **Staff Salaries**
Staff pay increase of 3.3% as recommended by NALC was approved. (The increase is backdated to 1/4/2026).

Meeting ended at 21.00

General Purposes Meeting Actions: 15/09/2026

Action	Description	Person Responsible

Paint and Polish	15 Stockwell St. front door	Clerk/ SMDC Assets
Apply to Moorlands Partnership Board	Dry Stone Wall repair on Brow Hill	Allotment Committee/ Staff
Search for a grant	Sensory Garden area NWM	War Memorial Committee/ Staff
Consider projects for 2027	Budget Setting	All Committees/ Councillors
Service Level Agreement for Summer Flowers and litter/ bin control at Ball Haye Green	Accept and complete documents	Clerk
Mayoral Fundraising distribution to recipients	Make the presentations and create press reports	Mayor/ Admin/ Responsible Financial Officer
Complete Neighbourhood Plan documentation	Prepare to circulate to Council	Clerk
Order Christmas Trees	Tuesday 3rd November delivery	Clerk/ Lengthsman
Eon	Query invoice for Northcliffe	Responsible Financial Officer
Policies	Complete drafts	HR Committee/ Clerk
Arrange meeting	SMDC assets officers	Clerk and 2 councillors
Letter	Bank House tenant	Clerk

Appendix 1. Leek West September Report – Cllr. Bill Cawley

Family Fun Day 5th September

Excellent and well attended event on the Rec. Brilliantly organised by Belinda Hargreaves who at one point was tearful at its success. District and Town Councillors were present and helped on the day as well as contributing to funding the event. It was busy with a few organisations helping like the Police. Batman also appeared on the prowl for any jokers. I had a go in goal although Fattier Foulkes than Peter – the Cat- Bonetti (a Chelsea goalkeeper reference there)

39 Steps ward walk

Carried out a ward walk in August around the Westwood part of the ward seeing 18 out of 39 residents. A few cases as well positive comments on my Active centre

Community Orchards

Watered the community orchard by the Prince of Wales pub off Wallbridge Drive during the drought, I was helped by Kevin and Sabrine from the pub.The trees at Adams Grove seem to be doing ok as

Year of Reading – Winnie the Pooh 22nd August

A successful morning at the RSPB reserve at Combe Valley. I organised from 9th January hoping that we had good weather, it turned out that it was a fine day. The readers, including Leek Mayor Lyn Swindlehurst told me that it was a very enjoyable experience. The Warden at the reserve told me that 90 or so children plus parents/ grandparents took part. A genuinely nice venue and thanks to Matt and Keith for their help and others.

Heritage weekend. 12th- 13th September

As a voluntary steward at Brindley Mill, I took part over the weekend. It was successful and the scores on the doors were Saturday 44 adults 6 children and on Sunday 55 adults and 9 kids plus one rat. The visitor came from places like Buxton, New Mills, Macclesfield, Stoke, Nantwich, Tean, Congleton, etc. All were very complimentary.

Major Fred Davenport DSO, MC

I will be present at blue plaque unveiling to mark the life of Leek's most highly decorated serviceman at Westwood Terrace on Monday 28th September who was killed in action in 1917 . Appreciation to Neil Collingwood who did this work of recognition.

Hedgehog project

I am meeting with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to describe progress on the school projects that we have been working on in Leek West.