

The Minutes of the Meeting of Leeds Parish Council on Tuesday, 11th November 2025
at 7pm in the Leeds and Broomfield Village Hall

Councillor's present: Bernini
 China
 Fort
 Ingram
 Razzell

Also: Sherrie Babington, Parish Clerk, Members of Public, and the Church Warden.

The meeting was chaired by Cllr China.

1. Apologies.

Members who cannot attend a meeting shall tender their apologies to the Parish Clerk prior to the meetings, under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the members present must decide whether the reason(s) for a member's absence shall be accepted.

The following apologies and reasons for absence were approved and accepted.

- Cllr Greeff – Work commitment
- Cllr Springfield – Personal

2. Declaration of Interests.

To receive Declarations of Interest in respect of matters contained in this agenda, in accordance with the provisions of the Localism Act 2011 in respect of members and in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 in respect of officers.

No interests were declared.

To consider any Dispensation requests received by the Parish Clerk and not previously considered.

There were no dispensations to consider.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated to all members.

These were proposed by Cllr Fort as a true record, seconded by Cllr China and agreed by all present. The minutes were then signed and dated by the Chairman of the meeting.

4. Matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

5. Public Comments and Observations.

Three members of the public were in attendance. The following issues were raised:

The Church Warden from St Nicholas Church attended the meeting and advised that a keeper of the church clock has now been appointed and will be responsible for winding and maintaining the clock. She also confirmed that Leeds Castle is due to deliver the village Christmas tree on Wednesday 19 November, which will be decorated by volunteers.

In addition, the Church Warden raised concerns regarding damage to the property wall opposite the church and the temporary traffic lights installed by Kent Highways while the matter is being resolved.

Mr Lawrence addressed the Council regarding ongoing highway and traffic-related concerns within the village. These matters were considered under Agenda Item 7.

6. Highways Matters.

a. General Update:

Since the last meeting the Clerk has reported the following issues to KCC Highways via the online portal and directly to the Highways Steward:

- Leeds Road / Sports Field: Overgrown vegetation encroaching onto the footpath near the park entrance and bus stop.
- Foley Hill / Leeds Road to Langley corridor: Hedges and undergrowth narrowing the footway and obscuring signage.
- George Lane: Overhanging vegetation reducing carriageway width and visibility on bends.
- Top of Lower Street: Footpath heavily obstructed by growth, forcing pedestrians into the road.
- Footpath Leeds to Langley: Overgrowth along the main road section, particularly near bus stops.
- Footpath opposite Leeds Castle: Brambles advancing across the path, soon to make it impassable.
- Children Crossing Signage (Foley Hill): One sign missing, another obscured by vegetation.

The draft 2025 Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) has also been prepared, including:

- 20mph speed limit and 30mph extensions through the village.
- Yellow box markings at park crossings.
- Replacement of the KCC-owned VAS.
- Parish-wide traffic survey for up-to-date data.
- Improved HGV restriction signage.
- Replacement of heritage-style bollards.

b. Other highways

Speeding and Traffic Management

Members noted continued concerns regarding vehicle speeds through the village. It was reported that the cost of new speed signage was approximately £10,000, which was not currently affordable for the Parish Council.

Members discussed alternative deterrent measures, including the potential use of mobile speed cameras, rotated between locations such as the playing field and Abbey Farm.

Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

Members noted ongoing engagement with Kent County Council (KCC) and agreed that the HIP should prioritise projects prior to submission.

Pavement and Kerb Damage

Repeated damage to a raised pavement kerb outside a resident's property opposite Farmers Close was discussed. The damage has been caused by vehicles mounting the pavement, particularly large vehicles diverted through the village. Members discussed the potential installation of bollards as both a protective and traffic-calming measure. The resident was asked to forward Photographic evidence to the Parish Council to support further discussions with KCC.

It was also agreed that bollards opposite farmers Close should be included on the PC HIP.

Retaining Wall Repairs

Members were advised that repairs to a damaged retaining wall were due to commence on 14 November, with temporary traffic lights in place. Concern was raised regarding a missing reflective bollard, which may have contributed to incidents at the site.

7. Clerks Report.

The Clerk's Report was received and noted by Members.

KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2026

The Council needs to submit its nomination to manager@kentalc.gov.uk by Friday 30th January 2026.

Celebration Evening: For 2026, the High Sheriff of Kent has agreed to host an evening of celebration on Wednesday 8th April 2026. This will be held at the Shepherd Neame Brewery, in Faversham. This will be a unique opportunity for nominees to be recognised among fellow nominees and to receive their award directly from the High Sheriff of Kent, KCC Chairman/Mayor of Medway.

8. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman reported on the following matters:

- **Christmas Tree:** Delivery scheduled for 19 November, with decorations to be undertaken by volunteers.
- **Remembrance:** Members noted a well-attended Remembrance service with strong school involvement.
- **Village Notice Board:** Members agreed to refurbish the Village Hall notice board using reclaimed timber, with an approved budget of £120, and to remove the redundant notice board.

The report was received and noted.

9. Parish Council Communication.

Cllr Razzell reported that he was in the process of reviewing the website and this was currently work in progress.

10. Financial Matters:**a. Financial Statement.**

To receive and approve the financial statement and payments – report circulated with meeting papers.

The financial statement was approved proposed by Cllr Fort seconded by Cllr Ingram and agreed by all present.

b. Budget 2026/27

Members noted that preparation of the 2026/27 budget is underway, pending confirmation of final figures from Maidstone Borough Council. Draft budget options will be presented ahead of the January meeting.

11. KCC Councillors Report.

The KCC Councillor was not in attendance.

12. MBC Councillors Report.

MBC Councillor Gill Fort reported on the following:

Members noted information provided regarding Maidstone Borough Council matters, including ongoing discussions relating to local government reorganisation and the Community Governance Review. Leeds Parish is not directly affected at this stage.

13. Devolution and Community Governance Review.

No further matters were raised.

14. Planning Matters.**a. To consider Planning Applications Received.**

25/504504/FULL - The Bramleys Upper Street Leeds Kent ME17 1SL

Installation of 8 solar panels on south facing side of detached garage roof in front garden.

No Objections

b. MBC Decisions and Appeals

The following decisions were noted:

25/503637/TCA

1 Gambia Cottages Upper Street Leeds Kent ME17 1RZ

Conservation Area notification: 1 Corkscrew Willow 11m - cut back by half, 2 Yew 2.4m - Top cut by one third, 3 Dead tree (type unknown) - to be removed completely

No Objections

25/503643/FULL

Caring Cottage Caring Road Leeds Kent ME17 1TH

Erection of a single storey extension to the northeast elevation with roof alterations.

Application Permitted

25/502896/SUB

Land To the West of Penfold Hill Leeds Kent

Submission of details pursuant to condition 7-(surface water drainage) subject to 22/505703/FULL

Application Permitted

25/501060/FULL

Little Foxes Upper Street Leeds Kent ME17 1RU

Change of use of existing redundant barn to 1no. self-build annexe, including alterations to fenestration.

Application Permitted

25/501061/LBC

Little Foxes Upper Street Leeds Kent ME17 1RU

Listed Building Consent for conversion of existing redundant barn to 1no. self-build annexe, including alterations to fenestration.

Application Permitted

c. Other Planning Matters

Members discussed temporary fencing at Abbey Farm, noting that it is required for construction safety and will be removed in accordance with planning conditions.

15. Parish Maintenance.

To receive an update on Parish Maintenance.

a. Parish Maintenance

The Chairman reported that he had received a quotation for the removal of the noticeboard at Farmers Close and for the refurbishment of the noticeboard outside the Village Hall, at a total cost of £120.

Members considered the quotation and agreed to approve the works.

b. Beautiful Leeds Campaign

Cllr Razzell reported that he was progressing this initiative and would report back when more information was available.

Action: Cllr Razzell to progress and report back.

16. Leeds Playground, Playing Field, Tennis Courts & Pavillion.

To receive a report on Leeds Playing Field.

Playing Field and Pavillion

Members discussed long-term management and future use of the playing field and pavilion.

It was agreed that an informal meeting would be held in January 2026 to consider future arrangements.

Height Barrier

Members discussed the ongoing insurance claim relating to the damaged height barrier. The Clerk to continue to pursue resolution with the insurer.

Action: Clerk to progress.

17. Street Lighting.

To receive a report on Parish Street Lighting.

Members discussed the potential installation of Christmas lighting on parish-owned lamp columns, to be considered further as part of future budget planning.

18. Parish Council Events.

The arrangements for Christmas carol singing and a mini-Christmas fair to be held on 13 December were discussed and confirmed by the Events Group.

19. Items for next Agenda.

No matters were reported.

20. Date of next meeting.

The next meeting of Leeds Parish Council will be held on Tuesday 13 January 2026 at 7.00pm in Leeds Village Hall.

There being no further business to discuss the meeting was closed to the press and public at 8.25pm.

Signed: _____
Chairman

Dated: _____