



# Leigh-on-Sea Town Council



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Vice-Chairman: Cllr Valerie Morgan

Town Clerk: Helen Symmons

## Minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Town Electors Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018, 7.00 pm at Leigh Community Centre, Elm Road

### Present:

**Chairman:** Cllr Valerie Morgan, Vice-Chairman of Leigh Town Council

**Other Town Cllrs:** Mark Bromfield, John Duprey, Anita Forde, Jill Healey, Fr. Clive Hillman, Carole Mulroney, Declan Mulroney and Vivien Rosier.

**Guests:** Sir David Amess MP, Southend Borough Councillor Bernard Arscott and Cllr Peter Davey (EALC). Press - Leigh Times

**Officers:** Helen Symmons (Town Clerk), Abbie Cotterell (Assistant Proper Officer) and Francesca Smith (Marketing and Profile Administrator)

### 61 members of the public.

Those attending who were Leigh Town Council electors numbered 54

### *The meeting opened at 7.00pm*

#### 1. **OPENING OF MEETING**

The Chairman opened the meeting, welcomed everybody and thanked the attending Borough Councillor and MP. Leigh Town Council members were asked to stand and introduce themselves from within the audience.

#### 2. **APOLOGIES**

Councillors: Patrick Fox, Richard Herbert, Ron Owen & Caroline Parker.

The Mayor, Councillor Fay Evans, Leader of Southend Borough Council, Councillor John Lamb, CEO of Southend Borough Council Alison Griffin. Southend District Commander Chief Inspector Neil Pudney. Past Cllrs: Peter Dolby & Pat Holden. Peter Monk and the Editor of Leigh Times.

#### 3. **MINUTES OF THE 21<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL TOWN MEETING** were signed by the Chairman following an amendment to indicate the apologies of Cllr Mark Bromfield for the meeting.

#### 4. **REPORT OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN – Cllr Valerie Morgan**

Good evening and welcome to you all. Thank you for coming and I hope you have had a chance to look at some of the community stands. We are at the end of another busy year and I hope you consider it to have been successful. As you will see from the various committee reports it has been a busy year for us and I hope many of you have had the opportunity to participate in some of our events. I won't bore you by listing them again.

Our magazine, Leigh Town Council News, has just been distributed in its 7th edition and if you haven't received a copy they are available this evening. It was set up and initially edited by Past Councillor Jane Ward to inform you the residents about what we, your council, are up to and other activities in the town and has since gone from strength to strength, the current edition being edited by Councillor Vivien Rosier and I think you will agree it is excellent.

Signed/Initialled

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Last weekend saw the first meeting of Friends of Library Gardens organised by SBC. I took part and we revitalised the Sensory Garden. I think everyone in Leigh is fond of these gardens and it would be great to see more residents joining in to make them beautiful. The next meeting is next Saturday morning, 28<sup>th</sup> April so if you fancy a bit of gardening in good company just turn up at 10am. Unfortunately it does clash with the next Litter Less Leigh gathering, hopefully things can be better planned in the future. There are many other volunteer groups within the town and if we hear of them we will try to promote them through our website and social media. It's great that there is so much enthusiasm for improving our town when public funds are so stretched.

Last year we reported that we had started work on a Neighbourhood Plan, this is currently on hold as the Borough are developing their Local Plan and anything we do has to link in to that.

We are now at the end of one council year but look forward to the next and we your councillors with the assistance of our wonderful staff hope to provide you with entertaining events and to continue to work to improve our wonderful town. Next year, 2019, is an election year for Leigh Town Council, so any of you wishing to become more involved in the town might like to put yourselves forward.

The year has of course been tinged with sadness, last summer our previous Town Clerk passed away after a long illness. Then Joy Watson, who ably ran the First Aid Post on Leigh Beach with the St John Cadets for many years, the cadets will be continuing her work. Last month we lost our longest serving Councillor, Donald Fraser, but he will be remembered with the naming of this hall in his memory.

Councillor Valerie Morgan invited Donald Fraser's son to join her in unveiling the commemorative plaque renaming the Lower Hall the Donald Fraser Hall.

## 5. **OBSERVATIONS**

The Chairman moved this item forward from Agenda item 9 as Sir David Amess had to leave for another engagement.

**Sir David Amess** congratulated the Councillors, staff and volunteers for all the work they undertake in Leigh-on-Sea.

He recognised the passing of the previous Town Clerk and Joy Watson and paid enormous tribute to Donald Fraser.

## 6. **PRESENTATION OF LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD**

The Town Clerk introduced Cllr Peter Davey, the Chairman of EALC. Cllr Davey spoke about the work of the National Association of Local Councils and provided an overview of some of the areas he is involved in as an Executive and the types of work where Councils and Councillors are represented.

He was delighted to be awarding Leigh Town Council with the Quality Council award which he presented to the Vice-Chairman and Town Clerk.

## 7. **COMMUNITY GUEST SPEAKERS**

Councillor Carole Mulroney introduced Clive Webster of Two Tree Island Group (TWIG).

A presentation was given on the history of Two Tree Island and the main concerns which included anti-social behaviour and dog fouling.

A group of 23 volunteers are committed to improving the Island experience and have so far arranged several litter picks and awareness days on the Island.

## 8. **GOOD FOR LEIGH AWARDS** - Presentations were made to:

**Leigh British Legion**

The British Legion work tirelessly all year round to promote and raise funds for the poppy appeal, and to clean up the town with regular litter picks. In November 2017 they worked closely with Blade Education to bring poppies to life for children across the Borough.

#### **Oasis Coffee House**

For the last few years Oasis Coffee House have been running a suspended meal scheme, where patrons can buy an extra meal or hot drink for those living in food poverty. They also issue vouchers to Southchurch Foodbank and to 57 West, a local church that gives around 50-80 meals to homeless and vulnerably housed people every week. They also work closely with The Storehouse Food Bank and HARP. To date they have raised over £27,000.

#### **Nicholas Mounsey**

Last year Nicholas was witness to a motorbike incident, he remained calm and called the emergency services for the injured party, put them in the recovery position and stayed with them until the ambulance arrived. Nicholas is a shining example of a good citizen and is still only in secondary school.

#### **Leigh-on-Sea's Uniformed Volunteers**

The Council wanted to present a Good for Leigh Award to everyone who volunteers for uniformed groups that meet in Leigh-on-Sea, to thank them for all of their hard work in providing activities for young people throughout the Town. This includes all the leaders and helpers from Girl Guiding Groups (Rainbows, Brownies and Guides) and Scout Groups (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Sea Scouts).

### **9. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

The meeting received the report. No questions were raised.

### **10. RESOLUTIONS OF WHICH WRITTEN NOTICE HAD BEEN RECEIVED**

There were none

### **11. OPEN FORUM**

The Editor of Leigh Times had sent written communication prior to the meeting, which he would have made had he been able to attend.

"It has been a great privilege for us to have provided comprehensive coverage of the progress made by Leigh Town Council ever since it was first mooted by Mike King and a working party set up to make the official application for a Council to be formed. In fact, the Southend Council Town Clerk at the time, Douglas Moulson said to me afterwards that one of the reasons the application was successful was because the working party had virtually their own 'house newspaper' in the Leigh Times to promote it.

Since then we have provided continued coverage of the Council's progress and generally, agreed with most things it has done. Of course, any newspaper reporting its local Council there will always be issues where there is disagreement. That is to be expected, but we have always tried to be as fair as possible. I make no apologies for continually pointing out to our readers that members of your Council are among the very few across the Country who do not receive any allowance. I believe this is important because residents should appreciate that Councillors are doing this purely because they want to improve Leigh and they give up a lot of time to attending meetings and supporting the many events the Council now organise. We believe, too, that one of your great achievements was taking over the Leigh Community Centre and developing it as a real community asset for Leigh.

Our one concern, which I have expressed to some is that residents' money should not be used for the Council to compete with local companies for business. I refer to the possibility of the Council selling advertising to include in their publicity material in competition to ourselves and other local newspapers as recently happened. I accept this may sound selfish, but nothing will be gained if this developed with the Council offering cut-price rates. I don't think other local media would be too pleased either. Otherwise, Leigh times is happy to be here to promote the work of the Council, explain its decisions to our readers, and publish any feedback we receive. This will enable both of us to enjoy a healthy relationship."

Signed/Initialled

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The Town Clerk informed the meeting that Mr Guy had expressed his concern at the time, which was in relation to the Leigh Lights programme. The Town Clerk had responded to him then saying:

“Our little programme was another way for some traders to donate towards the Lights and at the same time provide a programme to hand out on the night. It was one of the key elements that fed back from 2016 that visitors were unaware on the actual night what they could expect. It is not a ‘money making’ initiative but just one to cover the cost of producing a programme and therefore not spending a penny of Council tax money.”

The Town Clerk further added at the meeting that of the people that had little adverts in the Leigh Lights programme, only 2 were Leigh businesses. The rest related to those involved in the parade or event in some way. She also clarified that the Council do not sell space anywhere in the Leigh Town Council magazine or the website and that the Town guide was not connected to Council work.

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| 11.1 | <b>Member of the Electorate</b><br>Questioned why a minute silence hadn't been held in memory of Donald Fraser                                   | From <b>Cllr Valerie Morgan</b><br>Noted. (A minute silence was held at the first Council meeting and the flag had been lowered to half-mast on the day we were notified).  |
| 11.2 | <b>Member of the Electorate</b><br>Requested an update on the neighbourhood plan as per the 21 <sup>st</sup> Annual Town Electors minutes.       | From <b>Cllr Valerie Morgan &amp; The Town Clerk</b><br>SBC are currently putting together their local plan. This will need to be completed before we can consider a Neighbourhood plan, as the policies cannot conflict.<br><br>Cllr Bernard Arscott added that SBC will be carrying out a full consultation towards the end of this year/start of next. |
| 11.3 | <b>Member of the Electorate</b><br>Asked if there was any requirement for Councillors to attend a certain number of meetings a year.             | From <b>The Town Clerk</b><br>No. Councillors do however have to attend at least 1 meeting every 6 months to avoid automatic disqualification as a Councillor.  |
| 11.4 | <b>Member of the Electorate</b><br>Stated that the speed some people drive in Hadleigh Road is very dangerous and an accident waiting to happen. | From <b>Cllr Carole Mulroney</b><br>This has previously been reported to SBC officers, but she will report again on Monday morning.<br><br>It was also suggested local residents attend one of the local community police meetings and raise their concerns here. Details of these meetings will be posted on the Town Council website and Social Media.  |

## 12. CONCLUSION

The Vice-Chairman closed the meeting and thanked all for attending the meeting.

***Meeting closed at 8.01pm***