

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1SP - Tel: 01702 716288
council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk



Chairman: Cllr Valerie Morgan
Vice Chairman: Cllr Jill Healey
Town Clerk: Helen Symmons

Members are requested to attend a meeting of the
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE of Leigh-on-Sea Town Council
on **Tuesday 18th December 2018** at Leigh Community Centre, 71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea
commencing at **7.30 pm**.

Committee Membership

Cllrs: *Jill Adair, Keith Evans Anita Forde, Jill Healey, Fr.Clive Hillman, Valerie Morgan (Chairman),
Carole Mulrone, Declan Mulrone and Caroline Parker.*

AGENDA

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS AND HOUSEKEEPING ANNOUNCEMENTS
2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS
4. TO APPROVE MINUTES OF THE [16TH OCTOBER 2018](#)
5. PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS ([Appendix 1](#)) Page 5
Two thank you letters have been received for noting
6. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT ([Appendix 2](#)) Page 7

EVENTS

7. LEIGH LIGHTS ([Appendix 3](#)) Page 8

An event debrief with external parties will take place early in 2019. In terms of crowd numbers and charity collection, the event was a great success and the Council had not received any negative criticism until a Facebook group posted a series of comments. Whilst it was disheartening for staff to read of the criticism, the joy on the faces of the children who lined the parade route and those that enjoyed the pre-parade fun and Elsa's Grotto reassured them that the majority of those in attendance thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. Given the number of negative comments, the Town Clerk felt a report should be submitted to Council, which is attached at Appendix 3.

Over £3,000 was raised for various charities, which is a record collection. The event received excellent media attention, featuring a live broadcast by BBC Look East. With the excellent weather for the occasion, plenty of families with younger children were able to enjoy the evening. The whole parade route was full (three deep in most places). Parade entrants had been asked to light themselves up more festively and they certainly rose to the challenge. There was good engagement by many traders on the night, although donations towards the cost of the lights only amounted to £1,550.

It is believed that traders may be more responsive to 'sponsoring' a festive column near their trading premises so investigations are under way into the cost of sponsorship plaques.

8. CAROLS ON STRAND WHARF

The weather could have been better but the event seemed well received. Homemade Bakery, Tesco, Sainsburys and the Co-op kindly donated mince pies. £253.30 was raised for the Chairman's Charity.

ALLOTMENTS

9. COMPLAINT REGARDING BONFIRES MANCHESTER DRIVE ALLOTMENTS ([Appendix 4](#)) Page 12

The Facilities Manager was present at the allotments on Saturday 3rd November and reported that he was not aware of any issues nor did he witness smoke. That said from the address of the complainant, it was felt that this was at the other end of the 17 acre site where the Facilities Manager would not have been.

MDAS were therefore contacted and they reported that they were not aware of any major fires and smoke nuisance on the permitted bonfire weekend. During the three-day period the grounds were patrolled by members of the MDAS committee at different times and nothing was reported as being not within the rules. It was commented that there was a little smoke to start with, but there had been heavy rain the night before the fires were allowed. However, they did not consider the smoke untoward.

One other complaint was received from the opposite end of the 17 acre site. There have been no other complaints received during the year, although the Assistant Proper Officer took a phone call from the same complainant reported via Sir David Amess. She visited immediately but nothing was evident from the allotment site and the complainant did not follow this up with a letter or photographs that they were asked to provide.

10. COUNCIL SERVICES OFFERED TO ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ([Appendix 5](#)) Page 17

Southend Borough Council have circulated the attached flyer informing of a new service that the SBC Grounds maintenance team are offering for works on allotment plots. They ask that if the Council feel that their sites and plot holders might benefit from these then we may distribute the information.

11. ALLOTMENTS DISPUTE WORKING PARTY – **DECISION ITEM**

Following receipt of a formal complaint, the Allotments Dispute Procedure was correctly followed. Members of E&L were advised at the time and agreed to the recommendation that full and final warnings be sent.

The Committee is therefore asked to **RATIFY** this decision formally.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT TRIPS SCHEME

12. ADMINISTRATION REPORT BY MARKETING AND PROFILE OFFICER

The last few trips for the Community Transport Scheme have all gone smoothly. A group was taken with transport to see a show at the Cliffs Pavilion and shopping at Alton Garden Centre during November. In December a Christmas Dinner was held at the Sarah Moore and a Christmas Party at the Community Centre.

So far, the new social club (including the Christmas Party) has been very poorly attended. In the new year I will look to advertise this to all elderly people in the area and we will also look at providing more activities for them to take part in, such as crafts, demonstrations, talks and music.

There is currently an issue with drivers. There are four MiDAS trained drivers on our books, but three are often unavailable and one is looking to retire. Some advertising has been undertaken

asking for drivers and there are two people definitely interested. I will be booking them on to the MiDAS training as soon as possible. I will also be looking into alternatives for transport hire to see if there are other viable options locally.

For 2019, I have looked into a few shows already at Southend Theatres that may be of interest. I am planning to do mainly theatre trips until the weather improves, and then will book some outings for the spring/summer.

I would like to write to all members in the New Year and ask if they are still able/want to attend the trips. Currently we have 136 members registered, but we generally only have 15 attend the trips, with a mixture of around 30 people being active members. It is time consuming and costly writing to so many who are not interested and I would like to update the records to be more reflective of our active membership.

FARMERS' MARKET

13. ADMINISTRATION REPORT BY ASSISTANT PROPER OFFICER

The Christmas Farmers' Market is now fully booked with 26 stalls attending. Six of those are new food produce stalls and will be attending their first market with the intention of continuing if it works for them. This includes a crepe stall to the front of the building. Three of the stalls are for information only and include the Chairman's Charity – Southend YMCA.

The 2019 dates have been set and leaflets printed ready for distribution at the Christmas market. 2019 dates are:
15th February, 15th March, 12th April, 17th May, 21st June, 19th July, 16th August, 20th September, 18th October, 15th November and 21st December.

OTHER E & L MATTERS

14. LITTER LESS LEIGH

The next confirmed meeting date is Saturday 12th January at 9.45 am opposite the Skate Park.

15. FRIENDS OF LEIGH LIBRARY GARDENS

On the following dates 'Friends of Library Gardens' will meet in the library gardens 10.00- 11.30am:

- Thursday 17th January
- Saturday 26th January
- Saturday 9th February
- Thursday 21st February
- Thursday 21st March
- Saturday 30th March

FINANCIAL

16. ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE BUDGET 2017/18 ([Appendix 6](#)) Page 18

There are still expenditure items pending for Leigh Lights.

CONFIDENTIAL

17. MOTION TO EXCLUDE PUBLIC – The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960

RECOMMENDED that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the public and press be excluded and instructed to withdraw – SO 3(d) other special reason

18. LOSLGA REPRESENTING THE LEIGH SITE – Confidential Appendix 1 – **DECISION ITEM**

The Committee are **RECOMMENDED** to review the information and consider how it wishes to proceed with regards to the Annual Service Agreement arrangement and Permission to Use Agreement.

Helen Symmons

Helen Symmons
Town Clerk
13th December 2018

Any member who is unable to attend the meeting should send their apologies before the meeting.

leighonsease.secretary@rbl.community

Councillor Valerie Morgan
Chairman
Leigh Town Council
Leigh Community Centre
71-73, Elm Road
Leigh on Sea
Essex SS9 1SP

14th November 2018

Dear Valerie,

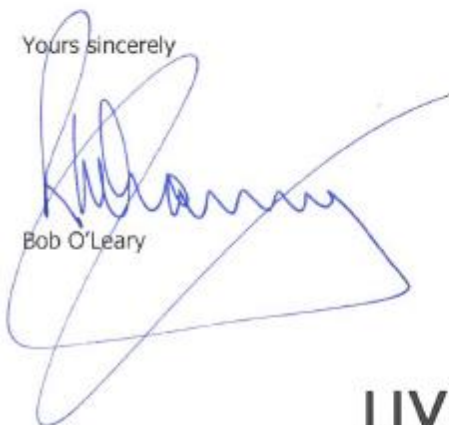
Remembrance Service & Parade 11th November

Just a very short note to thank you and your colleagues at Leigh-on-Sea Town Council that allowed us to use the Leigh Community Centre facilities for the post Parade festivities on Sunday. As you know, my Branch colleagues do appreciate all the assistance and cooperation that we receive from Leigh Town Council.

The potential access problems to the Community Centre, as a result of the building work, never materialised and everything went off very well. The Church service was great, and the "event" seems to get bigger and better each year.

We do have a couple of ideas for Remembrance next year and will discuss these with you in due course. In the meantime, we must be due another litter pick soon and await your advices as to when that might be arranged.

Yours sincerely



Bob O'Leary

LIVE ON
Legion Contact Centre 0808 802 8080
Registered Charity Number: 219279



SIR DAVID AMESS MP
Member of Parliament for Southend West

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cllr Valerie Morgan, Chairman
Leigh-on-Sea Town Council
Leigh Community Centre
71-73 Elm Road
Leigh-on-Sea
SS9 1SP

4th December 2018

Dear Valerie,

The Leigh Lights event was, as always, a tremendous occasion.

It has taken on a life of its own since those early days when Dave of Mandy's Chop Shop was the organiser of the businesses. Please pass on my thanks and congratulations to all those who made it such a memorable and joyful occasion.

With all good wishes,

Sir David Amess MP

Telephone 020 7219 3452 Fax 020 7219 2245 Email amessd@parliament.uk

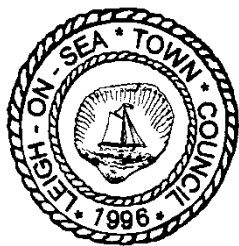
Constituency Office 01702 472 391

Surgeries: The First and Third Fridays in each month
Iveagh Hall, 67 Leigh Road, Leigh-on-Sea SS9 1JW 9:00 – 12:00
No need to book – meetings on a first come, first served basis

TOWN CLERK'S REPORT - COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE DECISIONS FOLLOW UP RECORDS 2018/19

Committee	Minute No. and Subject	Action Required	RO	Completion status	Completion Date	Outcome	Forward Action Required
E&L 20-02-18	68. E&L PDG	RESOLVED Joint RSPB event		Imminent	14-10-18	Complete with debrief	NFA
		RESOLVED Leigh Lights	EPO	Planning commenced	30-11-18	Debrief on Agenda	NFA
		RESOLVED Carols on Strand Wharf	EPO	Planning commenced	08-12-18	Debrief on Agenda	NFA
E&L 19-06	17. Merchant Navy Day	RESOLVED to fly red ensign and host flag ceremony		Event held	03-09-18	Complete with debrief	NFA
E&L 21-08	32. Community Transport	RESOLVED to hold monthly social club		Implemented	10-10-18	Hopefully will grow	NFA
E&L 16-10	58. E&L Draft budget	RESOLVED with recommendation to P&R		Completed	16-10-18	On P&R agenda November	NFA
E&L 16-10	59. Ratification Leigh Lights infrastructure	RESOLVED to ratify	TC	TC to check with SBC payment of costs	30-11-18	SBC have covered costs of removed infrastructure	NFA

[Agenda](#)



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REPORT 2707/HS&EF

LEIGH LIGHTS 2018

This report was written following numerous criticisms of the event on a Facebook discussion page for Leigh residents over the weekend 8th/9th December. Additionally, with several new Councillors now on the Council and the Town Clerk being the longest serving member of staff, it was felt a report responding to some of the points but also highlighting the history of the event, challenges faced over the years, considerations undertaken and the workings of the event might prove a useful open and transparent document when communicating with residents.

HISTORY

The event was originally organised and run by the Leigh Traders but upon advising the newly formed Leigh Town Council that they could no longer undertake this, the Council made the decision to run the event themselves in 2002. There was a formal switch on at 4 p.m., fairground rides and a procession. This structure continued with stalls in the area as well. Roads were closed from 3.30 p.m. and the parade started from Marine Parade. In 2003, there were 12 entries in the parade, with roads closed from 4 pm (parking restrictions from 3.30 pm). Security amounted to 28 people in 2004, again with 12 parade entries. The switch on took place at 5 p.m. This format continued for many years. Councillors took the lead on the event with stall holder pitches being marked out on the day. Donations from Leigh Traders from 2003 – 2006 was above £3,000 each year.

Parade entries got up to 16 in 2006. In 2007, trader donations had decreased to £2,300. The Council cancelled the lights event in 2008 to allocate the budget to 2009 to improve the lights. Again 16 entries took part in the parade with various stalls (mainly charity ones) dotted around the roads along with food concession stands. Street entertainment was provided by the Salvation Army band in the 'triangle' and one choir, although Punch and Judy was laid on. Donations from traders were over £6,000.

In 2010 there seems to have been issues with larger than average crowds for the switch on which caused some distress. The Council and the Police stated that they would be investigating alternative arrangements with regards to the position of the stage, crowd control and the commercial stalls at the event. There were 19 parade entries, charity stalls but also fairground type game stalls. Donations from traders was only £2,200 although this rose again in 2010 and 2011 back up to £3,000. Parade entries had dropped to 15 and stalls predominantly featured concession stands and fairground type game stalls. The only musical entertainment was the Salvation Army Brass Band.

In 2012 event security had increased to 30, still with a formal switch on of the lights but this had caused issues with crowd numbers and at the debrief following the event, the police instructed the Council that the formal switch on was becoming a safety issue with too large a crowd in a significant 'pinch point' area.

EVENT SINCE 2013

Helen Symmons joined the Council in February 2013 as the part time receptionist in the Community Centre which the Council had taken on. She was given the task to assist the Events Officer in trying to boost the parade numbers and that year there were 31 entries in the parade with approximately 400 people taking part. Additionally there was a programme of musical entertainment around the Town and 25 stall holders. In early November it was established that there was a problem with the column testing

with regard to the concrete columns. As such it was not safe to have fittings and 25 columns were affected. Wrap around lighting was introduced on these columns. Additionally police staffing numbers were decreased due to internal pressures and security numbers had to increase. The lights were switched on as the parade passed each section. This was a manual job and difficult to undertake due to crowds. With the rolling road closure from Marine Parade, commuter traffic was delayed coming up Belton Way and complaints received from residents and taxi firms. Feedback from traders was that external stalls were taking away their trade and the road closures having an effect on their afternoon trade. The police were still concerned with the 'pinch point' effect at St Clements Church. Other feedback from residents was that the fairground type games stalls were expensive with costly glow in the dark novelties. Leigh Road Traders wanted Christmas lighting extended to cover Leigh Road.

In 2014, Helen Symmons was now the Event Officer and following the feedback to the 2013 event Council implemented the following:

Reversal of the parade from Kings Road to Broadway West
Later road closures from 5 p.m. (this meant stall set up was difficult)
Extension of lighting programme along Leigh Road
All the lights were on as visitors arrived.

There were 26 parade entries with over 500 people in the parade and stalls were limited to charity stalls, with Leigh Round Table selling glow sticks at a reasonable price. To try and include those traders in Elm Road, Broadway West and Rectory Grove, a 'triangle of trees' idea was introduced but only 8 traders joined in. With the later road closures in place, setting up external stalls had become an issue and so the decision was taken for 2015 to have stalls mainly in Elm Road with a part closure in place at 4 pm to allow set up.

Entries to the parade in 2015 were still in excess of 20 with around 500 people taking part. The Council introduced pre-parade fun activities at the Community Centre for children.

Whilst the Council have the full support of the police, it is essential that the event is able to run without this should they be called to an emergency elsewhere in Southend. Therefore, security numbers were increasing and by 2016 the Council had a team of 45. Parade entries still remained over 20 with more than 400 in the parade. Stalls were limited to Elm Road in the main with a couple of concession stands in non-emergency areas, being mindful of emergency route access. 2016 was the year the Bell Hotel collapsed and caused major road chaos with incorrect signage diverting drivers in to our road closure area. The level of abuse that staff and security had to endure that evening by residents for the 30 minute rolling road closure was most significant with drivers actually driving at us.

In 2017, a new Events Officer was in place as Helen Symmons had become the Town Clerk. The new Events Officer introduced new promotion and an event programme. Parade entries were similar to 2016 but more entertainment was introduced where possible, including a walking tree festival but unfortunately only 6 traders/business took part. Stall numbers in Elm Road were very good. Trader donations were the best they had been for many years rising above £2,000. Parade voting was introduced on the website to allow real-time voting and increase crowd participation.

2018

Planning for Leigh Lights commences in May with the dedicated Events Officer submitting the Event Management Plan (EMP) to Southend Borough Council for scrutiny prior to attending a Safety Advisory Group meeting where the Event Officer has to present the event and answer questions and queries by a panel of around 17 Southend Borough Council officers. The EMP contains details of risk assessments, emergency procedures and road closures. As part of the event application, insurance details and risk assessments also need to be gathered from participants and charitable collection details obtained.

This year like last, social media was used to invite entries to the parade, stalls and entertainment. We are limited with regards to hosting musical entertainment if they require power as we rely on shops offering to host. Three locations volunteered to supply power this year so we were able to host 8 choirs/groups. We also asked for event volunteers via social media call-outs and advertising in the LTC Newsletter sent to all households, three people were forthcoming.

Parade entries had been asked to ensure they were well lit this year. The twenty entries made a great effort with around 500 people involved in the parade, raising an outstanding £3,251.21 for 15 different charities.

Additional street entertainment was also introduced to entertain waiting crowds before the parade. This included 3 stilt walkers, a Grinch mascot and a giant bubble entertainer. Snow machines were also installed at various locations. As well as the usual pre-parade fun at the Community Centre, a two day Elsa's grotto was also available.

Traders annually are sent letters inviting them to take part and make a donation to the cost of the lights display should they wish. Unfortunately donations have dropped again this year to £1,530.

CHRISTMAS LIGHTING

The Christmas Lights can only be installed on lighting columns, although the Council have paid for lights in the Leigh Road Baptist church tree. The lighting programme since 2015 has included London Road at Thames Drive and stretches from the start of Rectory Grove, along Broadway West, Elm Road to the Community Centre, Broadway and Leigh Road to Fernleigh Drive – around 1.5 miles of lights on over 88 columns.

It costs £200 per column for the lighting infrastructure and c. £400 per display. The Council were most grateful for the donation of lights along Leigh Road by Southend BID as they were upgrading their lighting displays.

Lighting was extended along Leigh Road in 2014 and put in place in London Road in 2015.

Coloured lighting has been phased in over the past two years following resident complaints to the white only lighting, including new instalments in Rectory Grove, Broadway West and London Road this year.

FUNDING

Southend BID pay for the lighting in Southend Town Centre. The BID is financed by a considerable fee that traders and businesses pay as members of BID.

Christmas lights in Leigh and the event are paid for by Leigh Town Council, which is funded by the precept that residents pay. Leigh Town Council do not receive any business rates. Donations from traders are voluntary and help towards the cost of the light displays.

OTHER IDEAS

In 2014 the idea of a Christmas market was investigated. The only area possible to be able to do this is Leigh Library Gardens. The cost, restrictions with regard to power and access, making good of the area after etc make this not viable. It would be impossible to hold this within the highways area due to bus routes, road closure costs etc.

The cost of a land train over the Leigh Lights weekend was also investigated but was unachievable.

POINTS FROM THE FACEBOOK COMMENTS

'Christmas Market in Old Leigh' – this is an idea already considered and researched in the past few years, either for Leigh Library Gardens or the Old Town. Sadly the logistics, infrastructure, organisation and management when we are a staff of only 4 FTE, lack of volunteers, cost to residents via precept, issues with weather (especially in the Old Town), upsetting of traders in main shopping areas, parking issues etc. have meant that the recommendation to Council has been unviable.

'Rayleigh far superior' – Rayleigh is in the position of only needing to light up a confined shopping area and the townscape means they are not just restricted to lamp columns. Leigh Town Council will be

actively seeking trader sponsorship for the displays next year which means we may be able to install additional lighting or implement other lighting ideas to supplement the existing displays

'Youth' – this year it was notable that due to the excellent weather, more attended with young families. This diluted the teenage youth problem that has been inherent for many years with children attending unsupervised by parents. It can be incredibly intimidating for others when children gather in a gang. It is the very reason why the Police have their youth services team attend the evening and a dispersal order put in place giving the Police more powers with regard to antisocial behaviour.

The Council has recognised that there is not sufficient provision for our youth in the Town and have held two Youth Forum events (promoted via schools and on social media) to encourage attendance and interaction with ideas and suggestions. The next Youth Forum on 24th January 2019.

'More stalls' – the Council would love to provide this but are limited in set up time. Later road closures were implemented to try to avoid disrupting Leigh traders as much as possible. We would not wish to take away their trade as well.

'Pop-up Market' – the Council held a Christmas Craft Fayre in the Community Centre the following day. Unfortunately it would just not be possible to have this on the night of the Lights.

'Christmas costumes and Christmas gifts' – the Council have to rely on the traders to assist with the atmosphere on the night, although some of our Councillors were dressed up, as were our 5 new additional street entertainers.

'Choirs' – were stationed at Oasis Café, Liquid Flair and Elm Road. Due to the parade we have to schedule these as best we can. Henrys Burgers did offer power too but unfortunately being close to the Fairground a choir would not be heard as well at this point. We advertised extensively on social media that we were seeking choirs for the event but there is a limit to how many we can take. Traders also arrange their own entertainment and if they advise us, it is advertised in the event programme.

'Parade' – in the Town Clerk's opinion, this has certainly not 'got worse' every year. It has gone from 12 entries when it first started to over 20, now mostly on brightly lit floats.

'Fairground' – this has been in the car park behind the Grand certainly since 2013. The Council thanks CS Parking who have donated this space every year, although when the development of the land takes place unfortunately the Council will have to review this feature.

'Lights count down switch on' – the Council have a responsibility to adhere to Police advice. If there was a wide open space to be able to cope with crowd numbers for this then it would have continued.

'Date of the event' – it has always been the last Friday in November, this is followed two weeks later by Carols on Strand Wharf

'Cost of mulled wine' – this is out of the Council's control. Shops which have no licence to sell alcohol can only give mulled wine out. Plenty do, so it would be worth seeking them out. We do try and publish details of what the traders are doing in the programme if they let us know (our letter to them about the event mentions that we will promote them if they provide us with their details).

'Same as every year' – it is appreciated that this is in part a valid comment although some changes have taken place over the years and new features tried. Over the recent years, staff at Council's request have researched other events e.g. Christmas Market, but at the present time found them not to be either financially or management/infrastructure wise workable. That said the Council at all times are open to suggestions and improvements along with assistance to help research those ideas and help instigate them. This can be done by volunteering or with elections for Council next May, becoming a Councillor.

[Agenda](#)

Sent: 04 November 2018 14:37
To: CllrCourtenay
Cc: amesd@parliament.uk
Subject: Allotment bonfires

Dear James

I am writing to you with regard to the matter of the nuisance of bonfires, and in particular the smoke from them, at Manchester Drive allotments.

My garden borders with the boundary of the Manchester drive allotments, and whilst I am aware that the use of bonfires by allotment keepers is restricted to certain days of the year, or with written permission, as a neighbouring resident, it appears that perhaps one or two individuals may be setting bonfires outside these dates, but certainly it would seem that many allotments users seize the opportunity to burn things with great vigour as this past weekend there has been a constant stream of bonfire smoke from dawn til dusk, on both Saturday and Sunday.

Even with my doors and windows closed, my house still stinks of the smoke and on Saturday both myself and my were struck down with headaches as a result.

My next door neighbour had hung some washing out on her line and I suspect she would have had to re-wash every single item as a result of smoke contamination.

The problem is that whilst there may be restrictions placed on the use of bonfires, it is not communicated to us neighbouring residents which days have been set aside in the year for allotment users to set bonfires.

As far as us neighbouring residents are concerned, it seems that whenever the weather is agreeable, and we wish to enjoy the tranquillity of our peaceful gardens, our enjoyment is spoiled because of some individuals uncontrollable desire to set fire to things.

I have endured this menace for the past 8 years, however, the problem certainly seems to be getting worse, as the bonfires seem to be growing in size and when they last for two whole days it really is beyond a joke and so I respectfully ask that the council consider imposing a permanent ban on the setting of bonfires on allotments, otherwise I am giving serious consideration to gathering a petition of signatures from all properties that share a boundary with these allotments, which I am confident will gain a good deal of support as many of the neighbours I have spoken with about the issue all share a similar view.

Kind regards

Helen Symmons

From: Helen Symmons
Sent: 05 November 2018 16:27
To: 'Paul Jenkinson'
Cc: Scott Dolling
Subject: RE: Allotment bonfires
Attachments: Report 2583 - Bonfires at LTC Allotment Sites.docx

Dear Paul,

Thank you for forwarding the email to me. I do keep a log of any bonfire issues at the allotment sites as our tenants are aware that if they cause an issue outside the two permitted bonfire weekends then they are in breach of their allotment tenancy. Additionally they should be considering the conditions as well with regard to bonfires. Therefore I can only apologise for the inconsideration of some of our plot holders.

Leigh Town Council has been managing the Manchester Drive site since 2003 and have permitted bonfire weekends since 2008. The three weekends permitted were reduced to two in February 2016 following an extensive report that I wrote as the Acting Town Clerk which was published with the Environment & Leisure Committee Agenda 16th February 2016 (attached for your reference). At the meeting the Committee resolved that:

1. Bonfires on allotment sites are only permitted with the prior written consent of the Council or on approved bonfire dates set by Council and are subject to the following conditions:
 - a) Bonfires are allowed only for the burning of materials from the Allotment Gardens i.e. diseased plants and dried out organic matter that will burn without smoke or hazardous residue.
 - b) All fires must be attended at all times and not cause a nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring properties.
 - c) All fires must be fully extinguished before leaving the site.
 - d) The Tenant shall not bring or allow to be brought onto the Allotment Site any materials for the purpose of burning such as waste.
 - e) All fires must be put out at dusk.
 - f) Smoke from a bonfire, which could be a nuisance to neighbours by interfering with the use and enjoyment of their garden or property, or could affect the comfort or quality of life of the public could result in action under the Environment Protection Act of 1990. Tenants who light a fire within 50ft (15.24m) of the centre of a highway may be guilty of an offence under the Highways Act 1980. The council reserves the right to prohibit bonfires on a specific plot and/or group of plots
2. For 2016/17 the dates bonfires (if absolutely necessary) have consent are:
16th/17th April (an alternative date may be approved if weather does not permit)
4 th – 7 th November (weather permitting)

These points were all incorporated in the Allotment Tenancy Agreement and since then there has only been two weekends allocated. One in April and then one in November to coincide with bonfire night (as it is assumed that other bonfires will be happening at that time of year).

The dates of the bonfires weekends are always approved by the E&L Committee and therefore published in our minutes which by law must be on the Council's website.

Any complaints concerning bonfires are treated very seriously. Occasionally we have the odd plot holder who does not put a lid on their brazier. My Facilities Manager attends the site regularly and certainly this year there has not been any complaints. I believe we had two last year but they were both associated with braziers and very quickly a call was made and the plot holder instructed to put a lid on their brazier – so immediately the smoke vanished.

I take the point about us not advising residents in the surrounding area with regards to bonfire dates but we do not have the resources to deliver letters individually. Obviously our minutes are in the public domain but I shall also arrange for the dates to be published on our website on the allotment pages. The Council gave approval in February this year to a bonfire by one of the allotment societies as they had cleared several overgrown plots.

Obviously under GDPR I do not have the complainant's details, hence I have copied in Cllr Courtenay and Sir David so they can pass on the reply if they so wish. I will report the matter at the next E&L Committee meeting for the Committee to consider as clearly this weekend the conditions were not adhered to.

Kind Regards

Helen Simmons

Town Clerk

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

14TH NOVEMBER 2018, A LETTER WAS THEN RECEIVED FROM SIR DAVID AMESS WRITING ON BEHALF OF HIS CONSTITUENT WHO HAD WRITTEN TO HIM REGARDING BONFIRES AT A LOCAL ALLOTMENT. THE CONSITUENT WAS NOT WHOLLY SATISFIED WITH THE RESPONSE 5TH NOVEMBER. A COPY OF THE CORRESPONDENCE SIR DAVID RECEIVED IS BELOW. SIR DAVID STATED HE WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL IF I WOULD LOOK INTO THIS MATTER AND LET HIM HAVE MY COMMENTS IN A FORM THAT HE COULD FORWARD TO HIS CONSTITUENT.

Many thanks for your reply.

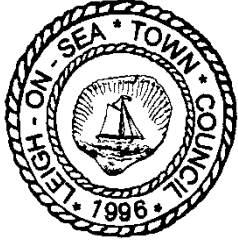
Unfortunately, the response I have had falls somewhat short of addressing my concerns. All it seems to do is provide a timeline of changes to rules concerning the use of bonfires over the past ten years. I have responded to Mr Courtenay that perhaps I should raise a petition against the use of bonfires as it is clear that there are a number of allotment tenants who seem unable to comply with the rules. For example, the document clearly sets out that fires should be set in a 'burning barrel' or incinerator and yet I have never seen any of these used. It also states that fires should be set no earlier than 3 hours before dusk, and yet there are fires burning as early as 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning.

It also clearly states that fires should not create a nuisance to neighbouring residents and should not prevent those residents from enjoying their gardens, however, it is impossible to enjoy ones garden when these fires are burning.

I understand that this weekend just gone was one of those occasions that fires were permitted, however, I question why it has to be that fires are permitted on BOTH days – that's a whole weekend that I am unable to venture out into my garden and a whole weekend that my house stinks of smoke. I noted also this morning that there were two plots that had fires lit. My house still reeks from the smoke.

The situation is unacceptable.

Regards



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1SP - Tel: 01702 716288
council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk



Chairman: Cllr Valerie Morgan
Vice Chairman: Cllr Jill Healey
Town Clerk: Helen Symmons

Sir David Amess MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

14th November 2018

Dear Sir David,

Thank you for your letter and copy correspondence from XXXX.

The document XXXX refers to is my report to the Environment & Leisure Committee which gave them site rules and regulations on bonfires at other allotment sites. This was to aid the Committee in considering rules that should apply for the Leigh Town Council allotment sites, as none had previously been applied. The two examples he gives were not actually resolved by Council.

The rules applied by Leigh Town Council in February 2016, which were stated in my email 5th November and are on the tenancy agreement that each plot holders signs (a copy of which is on our website) are as follows:

1. Bonfires on allotment sites are only permitted with the prior written consent of the Council or on approved bonfire dates set by Council and are subject to the following conditions:
 - Bonfires are allowed only for the burning of materials from the Allotment Gardens i.e. diseased plants and dried out organic matter that will burn without smoke or hazardous residue.
 - All fires must be attended at all times and not cause a nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring properties.
 - All fires must be fully extinguished before leaving the site.
 - The Tenant shall not bring or allow to be brought onto the Allotment Site any materials for the purpose of burning such as waste.
 - All fires must be put out at dusk.
 - Smoke from a bonfire, which could be a nuisance to neighbours by interfering with the use and enjoyment of their garden or property, or could affect the comfort or quality of life of the public could result in action under the Environment Protection Act of 1990. Tenants who light a fire within 50ft (15.24m) of the centre of a highway may be guilty of an offence under the Highways Act 1980. The council reserves the right to prohibit bonfires on a specific plot and/or group of plots

Following XXX original letter I investigated the matter with my Facilities Manager as he was at the allotment site on Saturday 3rd November for much of the day, but he did not witness excess smoke or in fact any bonfires. That said it is a 17 acre site and I believe he was completely at the other end of it. Therefore, would XXXX be able to provide an indication of where exactly on the site the fires were burning. XXXX address, points me to a section of the site but without a specific location, all I can do make enquiries with the allotment association who oversee that section as they may be able to provide me with further information regarding specific plot holders.

Checking my correspondence regarding bonfires at the allotments, I received a complaint in April 2017 and the last one in November 2017. On both occasions, photographs had very kindly been taken so we could address the matter direct with the plot holder as we were able to establish the culprit. These events happened completely on the other side of the allotment site to XXXX.

As I mentioned in my email 5th November, I will be reporting the complaint fully at the next Environment & Leisure Committee which is 16th December. As Town Clerk I am not permitted to change the rules of allotment tenancy, only Council may do this. If XXXX is able to provide any evidence of where fires burn on any occasion, I would be able to advise those tenants that they are in breach of their tenancy agreement and that their tenancy could be terminated.

May I apologise for the inconsiderate behaviour of a few plot holders in causing a nuisance.

Kind Regards

Helen Symmons
Town Clerk

[Agenda](#)

Subject: Allotment Services
Attachments: New Service for allotment holders from SBD Parks teams.
Council services offered to Allotment holders.docx

Helen, I have been circulating the attached flyer to our allotment holders. It is for a new Service that our Grounds Maintenance team are offering for works on allotment plots. If you feel your sites and plot holders might benefit from these please feel free to distribute the information, Kind Regards Jacques

Jacques Gain-Green Space Development Officer – Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Council services offered to Allotment holders.

1. Rotavate a 5 rod plot £50.00 (Plus VAT)

2. Rotavate a 10 rod plot £80.00 (Plus VAT)

3. Spray 5 rod plot for weeds £35.00(Plus VAT)

4. Spray 10 rod plot for weeds £45.00 (Plus VAT)

5. Remove unwanted compost / green waste
£50.00 per van minimum (depending on
weight) OR price up on request. (Plus VAT)

6. Remove non green waste £90.00 per van
load minimum (depending on weight) OR
price up on request. (Plus VAT)

If you would like to use these services
contact: jacquesgain@southend.gov.uk

[Agenda](#)

ALLOTMENTS DETAILED BUDGET					2018/19					
INCOME	Budget 2018/19	Income Received	Balance	% Received	EXPENDITURE	Earmarked Reserves	Budget 2018/19	Expenditure	Balance	% Spent
					2017/18 Accrual			-£ 1,004.57		
Manchester Drive Rent	£ 7,700.00	£ 7,665.00	£ 35.00	99.55%	Maintenance Costs	£ 2,620.19	£ 2,500.00	£ 922.48	£ 4,197.71	18.02%
Leigh Site Rent	£ 3,200.00	£ 2,980.10	£ 219.90	93.13%						
Marshall Close Rent	£ 470.00	£ 484.50	-£ 14.50	103.09%	Waste Clearance/Tree Work	£ 5,600.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 4,883.00	£ 1,717.00	
					ASA Leigh Site		£ 1,600.00	£ 883.64	£ 716.36	55.23%
Manchester Drive Water	£ 1,200.00	£ 1,427.00	-£ 227.00	118.92%	ASA Manchester Drive		£ 3,000.00	£ 2,250.00	£ 750.00	75.00%
Leigh Water	£ 450.00	£ 510.00	-£ 60.00	113.33%	ASA Marshall Close		£ 500.00	£ 375.00	£ 125.00	75.00%
Marshall Close Water	£ 65.00	£ 83.50	-£ 18.50	128.46%	Capital Expenditure	£ 656.73	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,243.45	£ 413.28	75.05%
					Affiliations		£ 65.00	£ 55.00	£ 10.00	84.62%
Keys		£ 50.00	-£ 50.00		Water Rates		£ 2,800.00	£ 2,903.11	-£ 103.11	103.68%
Tenancy Deposits		£ 640.00	-£ 640.00		Keys & Refunds			£ 50.00	-£ 50.00	
Other Income		£ -	£ -		Tenancy Deposits			£ 440.00	-£ 440.00	
					MDAS Commission		£ 875.00	£ 943.80	-£ 68.80	107.86%
					Staff Costs		£ 8,517.00	£ 5,840.26	£ 2,676.74	68.57%
TOTAL INCOME	£ 13,085.00	£ 13,840.10	-£ 755.10	105.77%	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 8,876.92	£ 21,857.00	£ 19,785.17	£ 9,944.18	64.38%

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT DETAILED BUDGET											2018/19
INCOME	Budget 2018/19	Income Received	Balance	% Received	EXPENDITURE	Earmarked Reserves	Budget 2018/19	Expenditure	Balance	% Spent	
Ticket Sales	£ 2,500.00	£ 1,914.29	£ 585.71	76.57%	Ticket Purchases		£ 2,000.00	£ 889.94	£ 1,110.06	44.50%	
					Travel Costs		£ 750.00	£ 466.50	£ 283.50	62.20%	
					Driver Costs		£ 300.00	£ -	£ 300.00	0.00%	
					Refreshments		£ 700.00	£ 399.95	£ 300.05	57.14%	
					CTA Membership		£ 270.00	£ -	£ 270.00	0.00%	
					Miscellaneous		£ 50.00	£ 43.90	£ 6.10	87.80%	
					Staffing Costs		£ 2,796.00	£ 1,438.14	£ 1,357.86	51.44%	
					Environment and Leisure Committee 16 th October 2018 – Appendix 3						
TOTAL INCOME	£ 2,500.00	£ 1,914.29	£ 585.71	76.57%	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ -	£ 6,866.00	£ 3,238.43	£ 3,627.57	47.17%	

FARMERS' MARKET DETAILED BUDGET											2018/19
INCOME	Budget 2018/19	Income Received	Balance	% Received	EXPENDITURE	Budget 2018/19	Expenditure	Balance	% Spent		
Stall Hire	£ 2,500.00	£ 1,723.00	£ 777.00	68.92%	Hall Hire	£ 900.00	£ 544.00	£ 356.00	60.44%		
					Leaflets/Publicity	£ 200.00	£ -	£ 200.00	0.00%		
					Banners	£ 200.00	£ -	£ 200.00	0.00%		
					Miscellaneous	£ 50.00	£ 33.57	£ 16.43	67.14%		
					Staff Costs	£ 3,717.00	£ 3,219.64	£ 497.36	86.62%		
TOTAL INCOME	£ 2,500.00	£ 1,723.00	£ 777.00	68.92%	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 5,067.00	£ 3,797.21	£ 1,269.79	74.94%		

LEIGH LIGHTS DETAILED BUDGET											2018/19
INCOME	Budget 2018/19	Income Received	Balance	% Received	EXPENDITURE	Earmarked Reserves	Budget 2018/19	Expenditure	Balance	% Spent	
					Leigh Lights Reserve	£ 10,159.00			£ 10,159.00		
Traders Contribution	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,470.02	£ 529.98	73.50%	Column Testing 1/3		£ 1,300.00	£ 1,750.00	-£ 450.00	134.62%	
Other Income	£ 750.00	£ 638.31	£ 111.69	85.11%	Instalation Removal & Storage		£ 9,150.00	£ 7,162.50	£ 1,987.50	78.28%	
Sponsorship		£ 250.00	-£ 250.00		Electricity		£ 420.00	£ -	£ 420.00	0.00%	
					Repairs & Renewals		£ 1,000.00	£ -	£ 1,000.00	0.00%	
					Security		£ 6,200.00	£ 4,861.86	£ 1,338.14	78.42%	
					Entertainment/Outside Assistance		£ 2,700.00	£ 1,018.20	£ 1,681.80	37.71%	
					Road Closures & Licences		£ 5,200.00	£ 478.00	£ 4,722.00	9.19%	
					First Aid, Cleansing & Banners		£ 1,000.00	£ 594.99	£ 405.01	59.50%	
					Capital Renewals		£ 10,000.00	£ 6,644.00	£ 3,356.00	66.44%	
					Miscellaneous			£ 29.65			
TOTAL INCOME	£ 2,750.00	£ 2,358.33	£ 391.67	85.76%	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 10,159.00	£ 36,970.00	£ 22,539.20	£ 24,619.45	60.97%	
					budget increased August 2018 from underspent events						

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