



Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held

on Monday 4th October 2021 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room at Speldhurst Village Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Pate (Chairman), Barrington-Johnson, Curry, Ellery, Langridge, Rajah, Rowe, Scarbrough and Mrs Soyke

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs K Neve – Clerk, Mrs C Barrett – Assistant Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE

Borough Cllr Ms Willis was in attendance. Apologies had been received from County Cllr McInroy and Borough Cllr Allen.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were three members of the public present.

- Before the meeting opened, the Chairman gave condolences on the passing of Borough Cllr Julian Stanyer in September. He expressed gratitude for Cllr Stanyer's many contributions to public life in the borough. A minute's silence was held.
- The Chairman then presented a KALC Community award to Mr Edward Pinnell who was responsible for spearheading the establishment of the Speldhurst Community Shop and Post Office. Mr Pinnell and his fellow shop volunteer, Mrs Jo Eames then left the meeting.

21/189 To enquire if anyone intends to record the meeting

No-one present intended to record the meeting.

- Cllrs discussed the Clerk's suggestion of recording future meetings, using the Microsoft Teams transcript tool to assist with minute-taking. The Clerk said this would also be useful for Councillors who were unable to attend. It was agreed, in principle, that recording meetings for these purposes was a good idea. Cllrs recommended that recordings were not made public, stored securely and deleted after a specified date. The Clerk would produce a policy on recording meetings.

21/190 To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Mrs Lyle for health reasons, Myles due to work commitments, Turner for Covid-related reasons and Mrs Woodliffe due to work commitments.

21/191 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

21/192 Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

21/193 Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 6th September 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes, previously forwarded to Members were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21/194 Borough and County Councillors' Reports

- Borough Cllr Ms Willis reported that she had been asked about the ongoing suspension of garden waste collections. She hoped to know more about when collections would re-start after the next full borough council meeting. Cllr Barrington-Johnson said residents were frustrated by the impracticalities of disposing of their own garden waste throughout the summer months. There was also concern about how they would be recompensated. Cllr Ellery said that adding on a period of free collection in the quieter winter months was insufficient. Fly tipping had been an issue too. Cllr Ms Willis agreed to raise these points.
Cllr Ms Willis had been consulted by the Planning Officer assigned to planning application 21/02794/FULL – 34 Dornden Drive, over concerns about the proposed development. Cllr Allen would call in the application.
Cllr Ms Willis noted several public consultations currently in progress, and the forthcoming Love Where We Live awards, which included nominees from Langton Green.

21/195 Public Open Session

No members of the public present wished to speak.

21/196 Appointment of Committees

Cllr Langridge had spoken to representatives from all four villages about setting up a Speldhurst Parish History Society. There was work to be done but the volunteers looked forward to the challenge. Cllrs supported the establishment of the society and the Chairman said he would help when possible.

21/197 Finance Committee

- a) There had been no meeting of the Finance Committee meeting since the last Full Council meeting.
- b) Budget virements: there were none.
- c) Interim payments made since the last meeting: Unity: C/A: BT Broadband £148.76; Unity Card £89.32 and Unity bank charges £32.40. Mastercard: two Land Registry enquiries £12.00* and petrol £50.25*. The Clerk would ask the Finance Officer to confirm what the Unity bank charges referred to.
- d) Decisions made under delegated authority are starred above.
- e) Speedwatch – to consider the purchase of an additional Speedwatch machine
After some discussion it was **RESOLVED** to defer a decision until the budget had been allocated for 2022. With fewer Speedwatch sessions in the winter months, it was felt there would be less need for Cllrs to transport the Speedwatch monitors between villages. The Clerk would ask the Finance Officer if Cllrs could claim back on fuel used. Cllr Mrs Soyke said new residents had moved to Ashurst and asked the Assistant Clerk to put a further appeal for Speedwatch volunteers in the Ashurst Broadsheet.
- f) To consider authorisation of payment for the repair of the stone wall on Peshurst Road
RESOLVED to approve payment of up to £1750 for this work, subject to the approval of quotes by the amenities committee.
- g) Tree survey – To consider instructing Living Forest to go ahead with year four work
RESOLVED to approve £1050 payment for final remedial work to trees on parish council owned land, scheduled as part of a four-year plan.

21/198 Accounts for Payment

RESOLVED that the invoices as listed, be paid. The Clerk would ask the Finance Officer to clarify what the Electricity owing amount of £814.07 referred to.

Payee Name	Reference	Amount £	Detail
EDF Energy	DD	814.07	Electricity owing
LGVH	MT2092	50.00	Six monthly rental office
Viking Direct	MT2093	118.72	Stationery
Viking Direct	MT2094	17.99	Stationery
M R Lawrence	MT2095	380.00	Grounds maintenance
JLM Pest Control	MT2096	150.00	Quarterly invoice Pest Control
Cloudy IT	MT2097	268.26	IT Services - monthly
Cloudy IT	MT2098	134.14	IT Services - half month Sept
HMRC	MT2090	4,476.91	Tax & NI July- Sept
EDF Energy	DD	362.00	Pavilion - Monthly electricity
Employees	MT2099	4,739.30	Salaries
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT2100	394.04	Pension contributions
Castle Water	DD	5.00	Pavilion - water
Veolia	DD	212.68	Waste collection

Total: £12,123.11

21/199 Planning Committee

Cllr Barrington-Johnson reported that a Planning Committee meeting had taken place on 13th September and referred to the minutes which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Cllr Barrington-Johnson updated councillors on:

- Jockey Farm, Rusthall – after the Committee had agreed not to object to the development of recreational facilities at Jockey Farm as part of the local plan, Cllr Barrington-Johnson heard from Rusthall parish council that they had decided to go ahead with their objection. Furthermore, Rusthall parish council had suggested land at Tunbridge Wells golf club as an alternative site for recreational development. This site was not located in Speldhurst parish and Cllr Barrington-Johnson felt it wrong, in principle, to propose sites for development outside your parish as part of the local plan. After some discussion, it was agreed by Councillors that the parish council would not recommend alternative sites that were in another parish.

21/200 Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)

It was agreed to defer this discussion until Cllr Mrs Lyle was able to attend.

21/201 EV Charge Points

Councillors discussed Cllr Turner's report, which recommended applying to Kent County Council to fund two electric vehicle charge-points at Langton Green Village Hall carpark for a four-year trial. It was **RESOLVED** by a majority that Cllr Turner should go ahead with the application, but that his original suggestion of a £2000 match-funding contribution be reduced to £1000. The Assistant Clerk advised Councillors that even if the parish council's application was successful, they could still say no to the chargers at a later stage if the trial was no longer felt to be viable.

21/202 Remembrance Sunday

It was not known whether full Remembrance Day services would be held, but the importance of laying wreaths was agreed. The Assistant Clerk would order a wreath for each village, plus one for Langton Green Village Society (LGVS) who would reimburse the parish council. The following Councillors would lay wreaths:

Cllr Pate – Speldhurst

Cllrs Barrington-Johnson and Langridge – Langton Green

Cllr Mrs Soyke – Ashurst

Cllr Myles- Groombridge

It was agreed not to purchase the Tommy Statue on sale through the British Legion for any of the villages this year.

21/203 Newsletter

The Chairman and Cllr Ellery would work together on a piece about the precept. Other suggestions for the Assistant Clerk to include were:

- Parish awards presented in 2021 including the KALC community and Jubilee awards
- Speedwatch
- Parish council-maintained amenities
- How to report footpath and Highways issues
- 2022 APM save the date

It was agreed that the newsletter would be published in the New Year. The Clerk would include a draft Newsletter in the January full council agenda for Councillors' approval.

21/204 Chairman's Report

The Chairman and Clerk had attended assembly at Langton Green Primary School (LGPS), presenting a year six pupil with the Jubilee Award for Olympic Spirit. The recipient of the award had raised money for the British Heart Foundation in memory of his Grandad. It had been a positive visit and a good opportunity to catch up with staff at LGPS.

Having been in contact with the parish PCSO, the Chairman reported that the PCSO was committed to supporting Speedwatch sessions. The Chairman had encouraged the PCSO to visit the parish council office and attend full council meetings whenever possible.

21/205 Working Group and other reports to include any Meetings held since the last Full Council Meeting, the Draft Minutes having been previously forwarded to all Members.

- a) **Governance Working Group** – there was nothing to report.
- b) **Highways Working Group** – A meeting of the Highways Working Group had taken place on 8th September and draft minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting.
 - TRO Groombridge and Ashurst – **RESOLVED** that the Chairman would speak on behalf of the parish council at the JTB on 18th October.
 - A21 Safety Package, Parish Council consultations – The Chairman reported that he had joined a call on 21st September and given feedback on the subject.
- c) **Amenities Working Group** – A meeting of the Amenities Working Group had taken place on 27th September and draft minutes had been circulated prior to the meeting.
 - The Amenities Working Group Terms of Reference had been amended and it was **RESOLVED** to approve these. The Assistant Clerk would update the website.

- Cllr Rowe reported that a request to donate a bench had been declined due to the cost of maintenance in the future.
 - A request from a Langton Green resident for a wheel-chair accessible all-weather track on Langton Green recreation ground had initiated a discussion about undertaking an accessibility audit on core parish council buildings, taking in all types of disability. The Chairman asked The Clerk to investigate what was needed to carry out the audit. The Clerk would update the resident on the parish council's plans.
- d) Air Traffic Working Group – A meeting of the Air Traffic Working Group was scheduled for 13th October.
- Cllr Barrington-Johnson had attended a Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign (GACC) meeting on the emergency runway that Gatwick Airport were proposing to convert into a full runway. Cllr Barrington-Johnson recommended that the parish council participate in the public consultation on this. It was RESOLVED to delegate the formulation of a response to the Air Traffic Working Group. This would be discussed at the forthcoming working group meeting.
- e) Footpaths – Cllr Langridge reported that there had been several reports of footpath faults since Councillors had put up footpath signs explaining how to report. The Assistant Clerk confirmed that KCC's progress in dealing with the issues was slow. Cllr Langridge suggested a catch-up with the PROW Officer and the Assistant Clerk agreed to follow up on this.
- f) **Environment Working Group** – there was nothing to report.
- g) **KALC** – the report was deferred until Cllr Myles was able to attend.

21/206 Diary Dates

11th October – Planning Committee Meeting

13th October – Air Traffic Working Group Meeting

18th October – Finance Committee Meeting

25th October – Defibrillator Working Group Meeting

1st November – Full Council Meeting

21/207 Items for Information:

- Full Council Dates for 2022 including a date for the Annual Parish Meeting between 1st March and 1st June – a decision was deferred, and the Clerk would include this item on the November full council agenda.
- The Clerk drew Cllrs' attention to the Gambling Act 2022/2025 draft statement of licensing principles. This would be posted on the website, should residents wish to comment.
- Cllrs agreed that it was not necessary to have every email forwarded regarding TWBC business. The Chairman recommended that the Clerk use her discretion when forwarding emails.
- Cllr Langridge reported several car thefts in Langton Green. There was no longer a Neighbourhood Watch representative for the village, and he asked the parish council to raise awareness across media channels.
- Cllr Barrington-Johnson had received a letter from a developer asking if he would sell part of his land for development. It was agreed that Councillors would look out for an increase in this type of letter and make the council aware of any developers actively seeking business in the area.
- Cllr Mrs Soyke would contact the Chairman with information that would assist him in his presentation to the JTB regarding the TRO in Groombridge and Ashurst.

There being no further items the meeting closed at 21.38.

Chairman

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
1/21	Produce a policy on recording meetings.	Clerk	4/10	TBA
2/21	Confirm what Unity bank charges and Electricity owing amount refer to.	Finance Officer	4/10	TBA
3/21	Ask Finance Officer if Cllrs can claim back on fuel used	Clerk/Finance Officer	4/10	TBA
4/21	Put an appeal for Speedwatch volunteers in the Ashurst Broadsheet	Assistant Clerk (CB)	4/10	TBA
5/21	Apply for electric vehicle charge-point funding from KCC for a 4-year trial	Cllr Turner	4/10	TBA
6/21	Order 5 Remembrance Day wreaths	Assistant Clerk (CB)	4/10	TBA
7/21	Find out details of Remembrance Day services	Clerk	4/10	TBA
8/21	Lay Remembrance Day wreaths in each village	Chairman Cllrs Barrington-Johnson and Langridge Cllr Soyke Cllr Myles	4/10	TBA
9/21	Draft a piece about the precept for new year's newsletter in time for January full council meeting	Chairman & Cllr Ellery	4/10	TBA
10/21	Draft new year's newsletter for January full council meeting	Assistant Clerk (CB)	4/10	TBA
11/21	Add new year's newsletter to Jan full council agenda	Clerk	4/10	TBA
12/21	Update agreed Amenities ToR and add to website	Assistant Clerks	4/10	TBA
13/21	Scope out what is needed to undertake an accessibility audit	Clerk	4/10	TBA

14/21	Update Langton Green resident about all-weather track request and council's plans for accessibility audit	Clerk	4/10	TBA
15/21	Initiate a catch up with PROW Officer about footpath issues	Assistant Clerk (CB)	4/10	TBA
16/21	Include date for 2022 APM on November full council agenda	Clerk	4/10	TBA
17/21	Raise awareness of LG car thefts and need for Neighbourhood Watch rep across media channels.	Assistant Clerk (CB)	4/10	TBA
18/21	Contact the Chairman with information to assist him in his presentation to the JTB	Cllr Mrs Soyke	4/10	TBA