



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7TH JANUARY 2019 AT 7.30PM
IN THE PALMER ROOM, LANGTON GREEN VILLAGE HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Lyle, Mrs Woodliffe, Milner, Ellery, Rowe, Pate and Round

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: Borough Councillor Stanyer was in attendance.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There was one member of the public present.

19/001 TO ENQUIRE IF ANYONE PRESENT INTENDS TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH AND/OR RECORD THE MEETING: No-one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.

19/002 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Price (prior engagement). Apologies had also been received from County Councillor James McInroy and Borough Councillor David Jukes.

19/003 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS: The Assistant Clerk declared an interest in item 19/020a – to consider the recommendation to amend the Assistant Clerk's contract.

19/004 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING: There were none.

19/005 MINUTES: It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on **3rd December 2018** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19/006 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS: Borough Cllr Julian Stanyer said that he had not attended any meetings over the Christmas period, so things were quiet however he had received a lot of correspondence from residents regarding planning - in particular for the Newlands development proposal. Cllr Mrs Podbury advised that the new waste collection contract, which will be starting in the Autumn, will include the collection of textiles, small electrical items and batteries. Her proposal for the reduction in the use of plastics at TWBC, for example abolishing the use of plastic cups, would represent a considerable cost saving. It will go to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and then if recommended, on to Full Council for consideration.

19/007 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION: Mr Alistair Nash from Knowle Close spoke regarding application no. 18/03458/FULL, 3 Knowle Close Langton Green. He advised that the plans for this application had been altered and the new plans were even more detrimental to his property. The Chairman thanked Mr Nash and confirmed that this application is to be discussed at the Planning Committee meeting on Wednesday 9 January 2018.

19/008 FINANCE COMMITTEE: Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following: -

- a) There had been a meeting on 10th December 2018, the minutes of which having been previously circulated. Several decisions had been made including remaining with Landscape Services for gardening maintenance because, despite the recent drastic rise in charges, they remained the best value. The Pavilion electricity contract had been discussed and the Clerk had managed to obtain a cheaper contract. Various grants including £3K towards the updating of the Groombridge play area had been granted.
- b) Budget virements – there were none.
- c) Interim payments since the Finance Committee Meeting: Unity Bank current account: £215.71 transfer to clear; BT PLC £450.56 Broadband and Telephone; £7.79 Mobile; £4,968.00 Drainage tender documents (note – this is to do with the Langton Green drainage project. See 19/011c); £91.08 Waste disposal; £33.00 bank charges; £149.59 Photocopier. Mastercard: £8.50 badge*; £44.45 Tablet cases x 4; £627.92 Samsung tablets x 4.
- d) Payments made under delegated authority – are starred above*.
- e) Revised Terms of Reference – after consideration, the following changes were **AGREED**: Item 10 - that the meeting dates were not pre-set and would be called as and when necessary, but the minimum of six meetings per year remained. Item 11 - that the budget would still be prepared in October for the November Full Council meeting, but not confirmed until the January meeting.
- f) Speldhurst Post Office and Community Shop – the alternative option of a buyer had fallen through and the decision had therefore been made to proceed with the Community venture. A total grant of £15K had previously been recommended by the Finance Committee, £4K of which has been agreed by the Committee for start-up costs. The Community Shop Steering Group would submit a grant application for the remaining £11K which would be brought to Full Council's February meeting.

19/009 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT: Invoices verified by Cllr Mrs Podbury.To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Detail
Initial	DD	109.51	Annual Nappy charge
BT PLC	DD	9.96	Mobile
Langton Life	MT1464	250.00	Advertisement
Paul Cheater	MT1465	140.00	Pavilion cleaner
Speldhurst Village Hall	MT1466	33.81	Meeting Rooms
Knockout Print	MT1467	36.00	Signs
Treework	MT1468	984.00	Trees – Roopers
Tate Fencing Ltd	MT1469	28.40	Materials
CWCS	MT1470	11.99	Web hosting
RIP Cleaning Services	MT1471	172.80	Canine Refuse Collection
TWBC Mayor's Toy Appeal	MT1472	100.00	Grant
Lost Words Kent	MT1473	30.00	Grant
TW & District CAB	MT1474	1,000.00	Grant
C May	MT1475	24.75	Expenses
Kate Harman	MT1476	39.20	Expenses
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	MT1481	1,656.80	Grounds maintenance LGRG
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	MT1482	760.72	Grounds maintenance Groombridge
David Buckett	MT1483	411.90	Internal Audit
KCC (KCS)	DD	106.50	Rock salt
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT1477	66.08	Pension contributions
Kate Harman	MT1478	653.50	Salary
Mr L Cooper	MT1479	630.03	Salary
C May	MT1480	1,843.51	Salary

EDF Energy	DD	324.00	Monthly electric payment
Total:		£9,423.46	

It was **RESOLVED** to pay the invoices listed above, authorise the electronic payments and sign the cheques drawn on Unity Trust Bank.

19/010 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE: Cllr Mrs Podbury said that a meeting is scheduled for 23rd January 2019 and a full update will be made at the next meeting.

19/011 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):

- Pavilion – Cllr Mrs Lyle said that she was still looking for a Councillor to join the team and help her with co-ordinating the pavilion. She asked Councillors to let her know if they are able to help.
- Formal agreement between SPC and SPC Pavilion Ltd – this matter is still under consideration and she will report back once she has more information.
- Drainage proposal – It has been agreed that SPC will be the lead name on the tender documents and named on the grants. This will enable SPC to have more control and is sound financial management. A planning application for the works had been submitted to TWBC however it had not been verified due to inadequacies in the paperwork. New site plans will need to be drawn up which show the new Pavilion. The fee had been reduced from £2K to £500 as it is a charity however Cllr Mrs Soyke said she would check to see if a fee is applicable as she had been advised they would be exempt.

19/012 PARISH PLAN: there was nothing to report.

19/013 KALC COMMUNITY AWARD SCHEME 2019: Councillors discussed nominations for the 2019 award, and it was **RESOLVED** to nominate a Speldhurst resident.

19/014 MEETING DATES 2019: Details are per attached list. The Chairman asked Councillors to consider if they thought the Autumn Open Meeting was still useful or whether it should be cancelled this year due to previous lack of attendance. It was agreed to wait until nearer the time before a decision is made. Cllr Pate suggested it might be useful to have a meeting at that time of year following budgets and any planning matters which may arise. Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys said that if the Community Shop was going ahead, it might be a useful opportunity to get residents together.

Annual Parish Meeting (April) - The Clerk asked Councillors for ideas on content for the meeting. Cllr Ellery suggested someone to talk about the new recycling contract and it was agreed the Clerk would ask Gary Stevenson from TWBC to speak at the meeting.

19/015 KCC LIBRARY CONSULTATION: The consultation document had been circulated. The Chairman asked Councillors if SPC should be responding on behalf of residents or should it be left to individuals. Councillors agreed that as all the villages in the area have a library service, it was appropriate to respond as a Parish Council. Drafting a response was delegated to Cllr Mrs Lyle and the Assistant Clerk. The deadline is 29th January 2019.

19/016 AVIATION 2050 CONSULTATION: **RESOLVED** that the response to the consultation be delegated to the Air Traffic Committee.

19/017 NEWSLETTER: The Clerk said 250 copies could be printed which would be left at village halls, libraries and shops and sent to those who had requested a hard copy. Various ideas regarding content were made as follows: - Precept which has not been increased this year; Elections; Air traffic; website and Facebook; Speed Watch; date of APM; next village walk and Highways matters

Cllr Pate said that at a recent conference he and Cllr Mrs Lyle had attended, he heard from Bearsted PC who use the newsletter as an opportunity to reach out to parishioners giving information about who the council is, what it does and asking what the community wants the parish council to be doing and spending its money on. This could

be in the form of a questionnaire containing 2 or 3 questions. The Clerk had been sent an example. It was agreed to review the format of the newsletter in the future.

The example of how Goudhurst Parish Council runs their Open Meeting was discussed as a method of provoking feedback from residents. They had consulted residents on capital expenditure projects they wanted the council to spend money on and the impact on the precept. This had proved successful and residents had also made additional voluntary contributions to the project. Cllr Rowe said that it was important to get the most out of the website as it is dynamic and current - the newsletters are just twice a year. The Clerk explained that they were still awaiting an update from Hugo Fox, the website providers. He suggested going live with the website as it stands and then updating it in due course which was agreed.

19/018 MEETING WITH TWBC PLANNING DEPARTMENT: It was agreed that due to its confidentiality, this item would be moved to the end of the agenda once all the members of public had left the meeting.

19/019 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: There was nothing to report.

19/020 COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a) **Governance** – Cllr Milner said that a meeting of the Governance Committee had been held that morning, but it was too early to produce minutes. The two main points that required the attention of Full Council were:
- Amendment to the Assistant Clerk's contract: The Assistant Clerk left the meeting for this item. Cllr Milner explained that the Finance Committee had awarded Mrs Harman a pay increase from £10.30ph to £12.15ph following a satisfactory appraisal. This is to be back-dated to coincide with the anniversary of her joining date (14th November) but no cost of living increase will be applied in April. The committee considered this represented fair value in today's market, but it deviates from her current contract and will mean leaving the NALC Spinal Column Point (SCP) system for future pay decisions. This requires Full Council approval. He went on to say that it will be more flexible for all concerned. The Clerk will remain on the present SCP system, but this may change at a future date. **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk's contract be amended as recommended.
 - Administrative Assistant: The Governance Committee recommended an advertisement for an Administrative Assistant to Full Council. **RESOLVED** that the position be advertised from 8th January with an end date of 25th January (14 working days) on notice boards; Facebook; schools and local chat rooms like Next Door. Initial interviews will be carried out by the Clerk and Assistant Clerk with a final decision made by the Governance Committee members.
- b) **Planning** – In the absence of Cllr Mrs Price, there was nothing to report.
- c) **Amenities** – Cllr Mrs Podbury had nothing to report.
- d) **Air Traffic** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that there had been a meeting of the Air Traffic Committee solely to finalise the response to the Gatwick consultation which has been submitted.
- e) **Environment Working Group (EWG)** – In the absence of Cllr Mrs Price there was nothing to report.
- f) **Footpaths** – Cllr Milner had carried out some maintenance work and was hoping to revitalise the volunteer groups.
- g) **KALC** – there was nothing to report
- h) **Website Working Group (WWG)** – discussed under item 19/017.

19/021 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 3RD DECEMBER 2018 – Cllr Ellery asked if anything had been done regarding the consultation on the Biodiversity offsetting scheme. It was agreed he would formulate a response on behalf of SPC for discussion at the next Planning meeting and that Cllr Mrs Price would be asked to work with him. The consultation is 'Net Gain', issued by DEFRA and has a deadline of 10th February 2019. The response would be on the agenda for February's Full Council meeting.

Cllr Rowe asked if any further information had been received about the location of the new 20mph signage in Langton Green. The Clerk had gone back to Highways saying that Councillors had queried the location of the signs. They replied that Amey, the consultant who had carried out the installation, was satisfied with the locations in terms of effectiveness. Cllr Pate said that Highways would have followed location guidelines when placing the

signs. It was agreed to wait until the signs were working to gauge their effectiveness. Cllr Mrs Woodliffe asked the Clerk if he could obtain a copy of the justification for location document.

19/022 CLERK'S REPORT: There was nothing to report.

19/023 DIARY DATES:

Wednesday 9th January Planning Committee Meeting

Friday 11th Meeting with Withyham PC re footpath Groombridge Place JP, RM and Clerk attending

Monday 21st JTB Meeting; TWBC

Wednesday 23rd Highways Meeting

All meetings are in the office and start at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated

19/024 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- Cllr Barrington- Johnson noted that the 40mph on Speldhurst Road had now been implemented, replacing the National Speed Limit.
- There had been vandalism to a car parked in the Langton Green carpark overnight. Unfortunately, it was too far away from the camera to catch anything specific on CCTV.
- The Clerk advised of another incident which had happened in the Langton Green car park when one car had reversed into another car. The driver had been identified using CCTV footage and reported to the insurance company.
- Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported that part of Groombridge Hill was subsiding.
- Cllr Mrs Lyle advised that Mike Bender's funeral would be held on Friday 11th January at Rusthall and that she would be attending. She said that he had been a great help in the parish generally and particularly with regards to the pavilion. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Mrs Lyle could organise a wreath on behalf of SPC.

The public meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman