



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

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 6th December 2021
at 7.00pm in the Palmer Room at Langton Green Village Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Pate (Chairman), Barrington-Johnson, Ellery, Langridge, Mrs Lyle, Myles, Rajah (7.20pm), Rowe, Scarbrough, Mrs Soyke and Mrs Woodliffe (7.11pm).

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs K Neve – Clerk, Mr C May – Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) and Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk (left at 7.30pm).

IN ATTENDANCE

County Cllr McInroy and Borough Cllrs Allen, Sankey and Ms Willis (7.27pm) were in attendance.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There was one member of the public in attendance.

21/228 To enquire if anyone intends to record the meeting

No-one present intended to record the meeting.

21/229 To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Curry (work commitments), and Turner (covid-related reasons).

21/230 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

21/231 Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

21/232 Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 1st November 2021

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

21/233 Public Open Session

No members of the public present wished to speak.

The Chairman reported that this was the last meeting that Cllr Myles would be attending before his resignation at the end of December. On behalf of Speldhurst Parish Council he thanked Cllr Myles for all his hard work and contributions during his time on the Parish Council.

21/234 Borough and County Councillors' Reports

The Chairman welcomed Borough Councillor Sankey to his first Speldhurst Parish Council meeting and congratulated him on his recent election success.

County Cllr McInroy reported the following:

- **Household Waste** – He would report back on the outcome as soon as the consultation period had ended.
- **Highways** – He had applied for the footways at Dornden Drive and neighbouring roads to be resurfaced and was hoping for positive news in the New Year.
- **Joint Transportation Board** – He was pleased with the positive outcome of the reduction in speed from 50 to 40mph in Ashurst and Groombridge.

On the Chairman's request, the Clerk would share Speldhurst Parish Council's Highways Improvement Plan with County Cllr McInroy.

Borough Cllr Sankey reported that he had been contacted by local residents on the following:

- **Bees** – What plans were there to care for bees in the local area?
- **Street Lighting** – Requests for street lighting in the Great Footway area and Dornden Drive. Cllr Barrington-Johnson advised that there should be a full canvass of all residents before any new street lighting is introduced as there may well be objections to any such proposal.
- **Traffic Calming in Speldhurst** – Suggestions for traffic calming measures.

The Clerk asked Cllr Sankey to email in with the details and she would respond accordingly.

Borough Cllr Allen reported on the following:

- **Environment Working Group** – He had attended the recent meeting, which he had found productive.
- **Garden Waste** – In response to a request for an update, Cllr Allen advised that there was still a shortage of drivers so he was not able to confirm when the garden waste would resume.

Borough Cllr Mrs Willis reported on the following:

- The by-election had returned an Alliance Councillor – Matthew Sankey.
- On 9th November, she and Cllr Sankey had attended the Gatwick's Big Enough meeting at Penshurst to learn more about the proposed expansion and the detrimental effects on the environment.
- Update on rough sleepers – on 17th November, the annual rough sleeper count found two individuals in the town who had been offered accommodation.
- The temporary accommodation figures at the end of the first quarter 30/06/21 showed a reduction from 98 to 78. 33 families were in temporary accommodation and 45 single individuals.
- There were 777 empty properties in the borough; the council was trying to make contact with landlords.
- The Afghan Resettlement Scheme - One private rental property had been found for the first family. It had been hard to procure properties from the private market. Another press release was needed. The Home Office was providing hotels (bridging hotels) until a more settled home was provided.
- There was a new draft housing, homelessness and rough sleeping strategy for consultation. It was open now until January 14th. The aim of the strategy was to enable access to safe, secure, and affordable housing, preventing homelessness and ending rough sleeping.
- Emails had been received about the painting of white edge lines on Stockland Green Road and Street Lighting in Langton Green - specifically Gibbetts. County Cllr McInroy would be contacting KCC about this.

21/235 Review of Action Points

The updated Action Points Table had been shared with councillors. The newly updated list of action points, incorporating the additional actions from this meeting, are shown at the end of these minutes.

21/236 Committees and Working Groups

The Clerk advised that the Governance Working Group had reviewed whether the committees, which had been assigned as working groups, should continue for another 6 months or revert to committee meetings which would mean meeting in person. Councillors had agreed that due to a spike in covid numbers locally and the Omicron variant, it would be sensible for committees to continue as working groups, with a review at the annual meeting in May. The working groups would continue to make recommendations to Full Council for decision. Councillors agreed that the continuation would be as inclusive as possible for all councillors, in the safest way possible, whilst still maintaining our legal obligation.

RESOLVED – that the continuation of committees being assigned as working groups be approved, with a review at the annual meeting in May. Full Council to continue to meet in person and make decisions based on the recommendations of the working groups. Finance and Planning Committees to continue to meet in person and make decisions.

21/237 Finance Committee – Report by Cllr Ellery

- a) There had been no meeting of the Finance Committee since the last Full Council meeting. The next meeting would be held on 5th January 2022.
- b) Budget virements: there were none.
- c) Interim payments made since the last meeting: Unity: £84.00 Pavilion Cleaning; £702.00 Pavilion CCTV 92nd part payment); £2,113.03 Annual CCTV maintenance contract; £268.26 Cloudy IT monthly subscription; £24.72 BT mobile; £2,597.84 UKDO PWLB repayment and £394.04 additional pensions payment.
Mastercard: £7.90* Office expenses; £162.00 Queen's Green Canopy Plaques; £70.34* Speedwatch camera and £13.00 SPC Pav Ltd annual confirmation statement
- d) Decisions made under delegated authority are starred above.
- e) Mayor's Toy Appeal: **RESOLVED** – that a donation of £100 be made to the Mayor's Toy Appeal.
- f) Precept 2022/23: Cllr Ellery proposed that this item be deferred as it would be discussed at the Finance Committee meeting in January which would then make a recommendation to the January Full Council meeting. Submission to TWBC was required by 14th January.

21/238 Accounts for Payment

RESOLVED that the invoices as listed, be paid.

Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Detail
Langton Green Charitable Trust	MT2124	21.25	Meeting Rooms
Sevenoaks District Council	MT2125	360.00	Pavilion Licence 2 years
Viking Direct	MT2126	157.39	Pavilion – toilet paper
Archer Signs & Panels Ltd	MT2127	60.42	Sign
Cloudy IT	MT2128	268.26	Monthly Payment
Speldhurst Village Hall	MT2129	27.08	Meeting Rooms
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	MT2130	1,925.88	Groombridge Maintenance
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	MT2131	175.08	LG Maintenance
David Bucket	MT2132	436.90	Internal Audit
Kidman's Ltd	MT2133	25.02	Maintenance

M R Lawrence	MT2134	935.00	Mowing and strimming
Tivoli	MT2135	120.00	Monthly refuse collection
Tivoli	MT2136	840.00	Canine refuse Apr-Oct
Knockout Print	MT2137	42.00	Sign
Sac-O-Mat UK Ltd	MT2138	490.03	Canine waste bags
EDF Energy	DD	362.00	Pavilion monthly electric
Employees	MT2139	4,399.43	Staff Salaries
NEST Pension Scheme	MT2140	394.04	Pension contributions
Castle Water	DD	5.00	Pavilion – water
Veolia	DD	197.44	Waste disposal
HMRC	MT2141	2,740.12	Quarterly Tax & NI
KCS Professional Services	DD	121.69	Photocopier

Total: **£14,104.03**

21/239 Planning Committee

Cllr Rajah reported that a Planning Committee meeting had taken place on 15th November and referred to the minutes which had been circulated prior to the meeting. He advised that around half of the applications had been tree preservation orders.

21/240 Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)

- a) **Report from the Pavilion Management Working Group:** Cllr Mrs Lyle reported that a meeting of the Langton Green Community Sports Association (LGCSA) Trustees had taken place on 1st December, and she had submitted a report prior to the meeting covering the following items:
- **50th Anniversary:** Next year would be LGCSA's 50th anniversary and celebration events were under discussion.
 - **LGCSA Administration and Succession:** Discussion had taken place into succession planning and the idea of paid assistance to run the LGCSA.
 - **Pavilion Update:** Cllr Mrs Lyle had provided an update prior to the meeting covering financial overview, occupancy, 2022, housekeeping requests, installation of CCTV camera, cleaning and outside lights, which had been accepted by the LGCSA. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the renewal of the café contract, and it was agreed that Cllr Mrs Lyle would circulate the draft contract to councillors in advance of the January Full Council meeting when a decision would be made. The Chairman thanked Cllr Mrs Lyle for all her hard work.
 - **Cricket:** Matches would commence in May, but the cricket club rep did not think they would use the Pavilion for catering although would require the use of the showers and changing rooms. They would give SPC 2 months' notice so that the appropriate checks could be carried out. The ramp was not fit for purpose and LGCSA would take this up with Agrifactors.
 - **Signs at the Swales:** The height of the signs had been raised as a potential trip hazard. SPC considered the risk to be low given the siting of the signs.
- b) **Traffic management and installation of grid matting to alleviate parking:** Cllr Mrs Woodliffe suggested that this might not be as great an issue as previously as football was now spread over both Saturday and Sunday. Councillors were requested to visit the site at the weekends to monitor the situation and report back with their findings.
- c) **Improvements to the pathway from Lampington Row to the LGRG:** to enable children and parents accessing the school to socially distance: This item was deferred.

- d) **Update on the drainage project** and consider way forward on the standing water in the swales: Cllr Barrington-Johnson had been monitoring the swales and would continue throughout the winter.

21/241 Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk reported that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on 28th March 2022 at Langton Green Village Hall the Police Crime Commissioner had confirmed that he would attend as guest speaker. The Clerk agreed to set up a meeting of the previously formed working group consisting of Cllrs Barrington-Johnson, Langridge, Mrs Lyle and Pate, to further discuss the details of the meeting.

21/242 KALC Community Awards Scheme 2022

It was **RESOLVED** to participate in the KALC Community Award Scheme 2022 and councillors were asked to consider a nomination to be agreed at the January meeting.

21/243 Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that he would be carrying out the Clerk's and RFO's appraisals this month and he would be attending the KALC Chairmen's meeting on 7th December.

21/244 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** – Cllr Mrs Lyle reported that a meeting had taken place 30th November.
- **SPC Van: RESOLVED** – that Clerk be given delegated authority to give permission to drive the SPC van if required.
 - **Staff Contracts: RESOLVED** – that new contracts be drawn up by the Clerk for consideration at the January Full Council meeting, following consultation with those staff members.
 - **Payroll Provider: RESOLVED** – that M:Power be contracted to act as SPC's payroll provider.
 - **Policies: RESOLVED** – that the following policies be approved with no changes: Grant Awarding Guidelines, Co-option Policy, CCTV Policy and Media Policy.
 - **Electric Vehicle Charging Point Agreement: RESOLVED** – that a working group of councillors be set up comprising of Cllrs Barrington-Johnson, Mrs Lyle and Turner, to make an initial review of the KCC draft Electric Vehicle Charging Point Agreement and report back to Full Council.
- b) **Highways Working Group** – No meeting had taken place since the last Full Council meeting. The next meeting would be arranged for January 2022.
- c) **Amenities Working Group** – Cllr Rowe reported that a meeting had taken place 29th November.
- **Playground Equipment** – Following the annual playground inspection in the summer, concerns had been raised on the condition of the zip wire and the senior multi-play equipment. Although not urgent, it was recommended that these items be serviced. Quotations were being sought and it was recommended that permission be sought to spend up to £4,000 for the repairs. The RFO confirmed that the cost of repairs was included in the budget. **RESOLVED** – that the Amenities Working Group be given permission to instruct the cheapest out of the three quoting (once all quotes had been received) to carry out the playground equipment repair works up to a maximum spend of £4,000 plus VAT.
 - **Groombridge Green** – Two quotations had been obtained for the installation of vertical sleepers on the Green at Groombridge and a third was imminent. **RESOLVED** – that the Amenities Working Group be given permission to instruct the cheapest out of the three contractors quoting (once all quotes had been received) to carry out the works to The Green at Groombridge, up to a maximum spend of £2,000 plus VAT.

- d) **Air Traffic Working Group** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson reported that had submitted the response on behalf of the Air Traffic Working Group (ATWG) objecting to the consultation on the conversion of the second Gatwick runway to regular use. He had also sent a copy to Greg Clark MP who had confirmed that he was also strongly opposed to the proposal and had now joined the Gatwick Co-ordination Group. Cllr Barrington-Johnson added that he was due to participate in a virtual meeting regarding the Gatwick Expansion relating to Air Space and he would report back in January.
- e) **Footpaths** – Cllr Langridge reported that minor works continued to be carried out and a good level of comments had been received. A meeting with KCC was awaited when it was hoped for further feedback on the issues already reported on the portal.
- f) **Environment Working Group** – A meeting had taken place on 1st December. The Chairman wished to place on record his thanks for all the work Cllr Turner was doing, despite not being able to attend meetings in person.
- g) **Defibrillator Working Group** – Cllr Myles reported that a meeting had taken place on 24th November and the WG had recommended the purchase of a new defibrillator to be placed outside The Crown at Groombridge. **RESOLVED** – that the purchase and installation of a defibrillator, including external casing, for Groombridge, be approved at a maximum cost of £2,000 and that delegated authority be given to the Defibrillator Working Group to go ahead with the equipment purchase, installation and training. Cllrs Barrington-Johnson and Langridge were looking into a location in Langton Green. Cllr Mrs Woodliffe reported that the LGCSA had offered to donate a defibrillator with the proviso that SPC take on the maintenance. She agreed to seek further details.
- h) **KALC** – There was nothing to report.

21/245 Diary Dates

13th December – Planning Committee Meeting – 7.30pm – LGVH

5th January – Finance Committee Meeting – 7.30pm – LGVH, Gallery Room

10th January – Full Council Meeting – 7.30pm – LGVH

28th March – Annual Parish Meeting – 7.30pm – LGVH

21/246 Items for Information:

- Cllrs Langridge and Barrington-Johnson were thanked for tidying up and planting the flower bed in front of the office.
- Cllr Scarborough made councillors aware that he had reported to the Police an incident of an individual shouting and swearing around the Farnham Lane area. The PCSO had been made aware and would be investigating. Councillors were asked to be vigilant and take any video footage if they witness anything and send to the Police.

There being no further items the meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Chairman

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
1/21	Produce a policy on recording meetings.	Clerk Incorporate into existing policy. Policies being considered by Governance.	4/10	Carry Over
9/21	Draft a piece about the precept for new year's newsletter in time for January full council meeting.	Chairman & Cllr Ellery Deadline for items to CB – 5 Jan (wording to be discussed at Finance Cttee).	4/10	Carry Over
10/21	Draft new year's newsletter for January full council meeting.	Assistant Clerk (CB) Will draft 1st week in January in time for 10 Jan Full Council.	4/10	Carry Over
13/21	Scope out what is needed to undertake an accessibility audit.	Clerk This relates to the Pavilion and LGRG only. New quote for path requested.	4/10	Carry Over
15/21	Initiate a catch up with PROW Officer about footpath issues.	Assistant Clerk (CB) Waiting to hear back from PROW Officer (emailed 5 Nov).	4/10	Carry Over
17/21	Raise awareness of LG car thefts and need for Neighbourhood Watch rep across media channels.	Assistant Clerk (CB) Ed still waiting for info from NW. Shared other useful crime prevention info supplied by PCSO.	4/10	Carry Over
20/21	Review grant awarding criteria.	Finance Committee Governance considering first.	1/11	Carry Over
22/21	Monitor water levels in swales on LGRG, particularly after heavy rainfall.	Cllr Barrington-Johnson Visited site with Clerk; will continue to regularly monitor through winter.	1/11	Ongoing
30/21	Fire Hydrant Initiative – obtain exact numbers and locations of hydrants within the individual villages in parish.	Clerk Awaiting response from Kent Fire & Rescue. Contacted KALC 24 Nov who said they would follow up.	1/11	Carry Over
31/21	Fire Hydrant Initiative – Investigate logistics of combining hydrant checks with the footpaths volunteers.	Cllr Langridge Waiting to hear response from Kent Fire & Rescue.	1/11	Carry Over
34/21	The Queen's Green Canopy – agree exact location of tree on LGRG.	Cllrs Langridge and Barrington-Johnson In progress.	1/11	Carry Over
35/21	The Queen's Green Canopy – agree exact location of tree in Pocket Park, Speldhurst.	Cllr Pate (with Alan Ford)	1/11	Carry Over
38/21	The Queen's Green Canopy - Update Cllrs on progress via email.	Clerk Waiting for delivery date confirmation. Plaques have now been delivered.	1/11	Carry Over
39/21	Share SPC's HIP with Cty Cllr McInroy.	Clerk	6/12	Complete

40/21	Respond to Borough Cllr Sankey on the 3 issues (bees, street lighting and traffic calming in Speldhurst).	Clerk	6/12	Complete
41/21	Make a donation of £100 to the Mayor's Toy Appeal.	RFO	6/12	
42/21	Circulate proposed contract for the renewal of the café occupational licence to Cllrs.	Cllr Mrs Lyle (via pClerk)	6/12	
43/21	Cllrs to visit the Langton Green Village Car Park on Saturdays and Sundays to monitor the traffic and parking.	All Cllrs	6/12	
44/21	Set up a meeting of the working group looking into the Annual Parish Meeting 2022.	Clerk / Asst Clerk (Cllrs Barrington-Johnson, Langridge, Mrs Lyle and Pate)	6/12	
45/21	Cllrs to submit nominations for KALC Community Awards Scheme 2002 for Jan FC.	Cllrs (via Clerk)	6/12	
46/21	Clarify the number of nominations that can be made.	Clerk KALC confirmed that only one nomination or a group can be accepted. (1 certificate issued).	6/12	Complete
47/21	Prepare staff contracts for the January FC Meeting.	Clerk (In progress)	6/12	
48/21	Engage services of M:Power to act as SPC's payroll provider from 1 st April 2022.	RFO	6/12	
49/21	Amend Finance Committee Terms of Reference to cross reference the Grant Awarding Guidelines.	Clerk	6/12	
50/21	Update the following Policies on the website: Grant Awarding Guidelines Co-Option Policy CCTV Policy Media Policy	Clerk	6/12	
51/21	Review the Electric Vehicle Charging Point Agreement and report back to Full Council.	Cllrs Barrington-Johnson, Mrs Lyle and Turner	6/12	
52/21	Arrange Highways Working Group for January.	Chairman and Clerk	6/12	
53/21	Seek further details of the Defibrillator to be donated.	Cllr Mrs Woodliffe	6/12	