



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

**MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13th October 2020 at 7.30PM
CONDUCTED ONLINE VIA ZOOM ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Rowe (Chair), Mrs Soyke, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Lyle, Mrs Woodliffe, Turner and Langridge

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk and Mrs C Barrett – Admin Assistant

1. **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.
2. **To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** There were none.
3. **Disclosure of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests:** As members of Langton Green Village Society (LGVS), Cllrs Barrington-Johnson and Langridge declared an interest in agenda items 9a) and 9b), concerning requests from LGVS to plant trees and bulbs in Langton Green.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
5. **Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on **Wednesday 30th June 2020** be approved as a correct record and signed by the **Chairman**.
6. **Public Open Session:** No members of the public were present.
7. **Matters Arising and Actions from the Previous Minutes:**
The Assistant Clerk said that all actions from the previous minutes had been completed and had incorporated any outstanding matters into the agenda.
8. **Financial Review:**
The finance sheets had been circulated and the Assistant Clerk was asked to query a payment with the Clerk and confirm back to the committee.
9. **Parish Council Land:**
Weedkiller: The use of weedkiller containing Glyphosate was reviewed. Advice had been sought from TWBC. It was also noted by the committee that SPC had paid for the Groundsman to attend a course on the use of pesticides and he was therefore certified in the handling and use of weedkiller. It was **RESOLVED** that SPC would continue to use Glyphosate-based weedkiller for the foreseeable

Commented [A@SPC1]: Kate, would you add something about the amendment Alan made here? I haven't but wasn't sure.

future where no effective alternative was available. SPC would keep this under review by continuing to liaise with TWBC and KCC for latest recommendations on good practice and alternative options. It was anticipated that the Groundsman would use weedkiller in the LGRG carpark and footpaths in the parish but not on the LGRG itself.

a) **Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)**

i) Langton Green Village Hall:

- The Assistant Clerk advised that the new pillars would be installed at the front of the village hall and by the carpark entrance pillars during the second half of October.
- Cllr Lyle reported that a flowerbed had been created on SPC land opposite the Langton Green Village Green, presumably by residents. It was agreed that this was unacceptable and could set a precedent for other residents to make more extreme changes to council-owned land. It was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk would write to residents requesting that they reinstate the area to its original state.
- Cllr Soyke said that the grass verge further down Speldhurst Road was neglected and needed cutting. The Assistant Clerk would find out what the current arrangements were for maintaining this area and Cllrs Barrington-Johnson and Langridge would investigate further the suitability for planting bulbs.

ii) Pavilion:

- Cllr Lyle reported that cleaning bills had been high but that this was to be expected due to Covid-19 requirements.
- Legionnaires testing - The Assistant Clerk said the Groundsman was qualified to carry out Legionnaires testing on the water system however members were unsure how the system had been left in March and whether it had been serviced. The Assistant Clerk was to investigate and report back.

iii) Sports Clubs: There was nothing to report.

iv) Play Areas:

- The Assistant Clerk reported that she had booked the next annual inspection for June 2021. In the meantime, the Groundsman was undertaking weekly inspections, carrying out minor repairs and reporting more serious issues.

v) Recreation Ground:

- It was **RESOLVED** that LGVS could plant 300 Woodland Trust trees around LGRG, planting to take place in November 2020. LGVS would involve the community in a planting ceremony in 2021. Cllr Langridge explained that the trees, including hazel and hawthorn varieties, would fill existing gaps in hedgerows. Cllr Barrington-Johnson added that they would increase water take-up and act as an extra flooding mitigant. Cllr Turner asked if LGVS would take advice on how to ensure flooding mitigation. Cllr Langridge explained there would be an independent survey before planting began. Cllr Langridge asked the Committee to consider more locations, as the plan was to plant 1200 trees over three years.

vi) Carpark:

- After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** that the Committee would put investigation into an electric charging point on hold. Cllr Lyle said there had been no anecdotal evidence to prove demand. Cllr Barrington-Johnson added that the carpark was often over-subscribed and creating space for a charging point would increase congestion. It was recommended that the Clerk add the subject to the next Highways meeting agenda.

b) **The Green at Langton Green:** It was agreed that LGVS could plant bulbs on the Green.

c) **The Green at Groombridge:**

- Cllr Rowe reported back on proposals from contractors to prevent further erosion of the Green. It was **RESOLVED** that no action be taken until the new development at Burrswood was completed because of the risk of damage from lorries etc. In the meantime, photos would be taken of the Green in its current state as evidence so that the developers can be asked to make good any damage caused by their vehicles during the development phase. The Committee could use the quotations as evidence when applying for S106 contributions from the developer towards general improvements around The Green.

d) **The Pocket Parks at Speldhurst:**

It was agreed that residents could erect a 'No Through Road' sign, providing SPC approved the proof.

e) **The Boundary at Langton Green:**

It was **RESOLVED** to carry out the following maintenance work at a total cost of £1,140, which would be recommended to the Finance Committee: Fell the Scarlet Oak opposite no. 81 and grind out the stump; carry out a general tidy up of trees and shrubs in the vicinity and to cut back the shrubs near to the pond. Cllr Mrs Lyle suggested replanting the area using trees from the Woodland Trust initiative and it was agreed Cllr Langridge would liaise with the LGVS and residents.

10. **Trees:**

Cllr Langridge reported on his visit to 75 The Boundary following a request from the resident for tree works to be carried out on the adjacent SPC land. On his recommendation, it was **RESOLVED** to fell the Alder tree and cut back the shrubs to prevent damage to the resident's fence. The Assistant Clerk was to investigate whether planning permission would be required.

11. **Public Rights of Way:**

It was **RESOLVED** that this matter be put on the next Full Council agenda in order to obtain a volunteer councillor to take over the role previously carried out by Rupert Milner of liaison with KCC and organisation of the volunteers and groundsman. It was not considered a matter for the Amenities Committee.

12. **Items for Information:**

- The Assistant Clerk reported that a quote for remedial works on a diseased Cherry Tree in the Pocket Park in Speldhurst had not been received in time to be included on the agenda however councillors considered the work essential and agreed the £276 would be paid by the Chairman or Clerk under delegated authority.
- The Assistant Clerk reported that a builder had churned up the grass on SPC land in Lampington Row, Langton Green. The Contractor had agreed to reseed and make good the area. The Assistant Clerk was asked to liaise with the Clerk to ensure the plot was included on SPC's asset register.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 9.27pm.

Chairman