

**Local Government Act 1972**



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

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting**

**Held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 7.30pm in the Committee Room, Speldhurst Village Hall**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Councillors Curry (Chair), Dooley, Ellery, Lyle, Rowe and Scarbrough.

**OFFICERS PRESENT**

K Neve, Clerk and C Barrett, Assistant Clerk (minutes).

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Apologies had been received from County Cllr McInroy and Borough Cllr Sankey.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were 4 members of the public present.

**23/120 Covid Compliance**

Those in attendance were free to decide whether to wear a mask according to their own wishes. Cllr Curry said that since this should be a given, he no longer felt it was a necessary to keep an item on Covid compliance on the monthly Full Council agenda. It was **RESOLVED** to remove the item from future Full Council agendas.

**23/121 To enquire if anyone intends to record the meeting**

The meeting was recorded by the Clerk for accuracy of the minutes. The recording would be deleted once the meeting minutes are signed off at the next Full Council meeting.

**23/122 To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence.**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Norton (holiday), Councillor Tarricone (illness) and Cllr Turner (Covid-related).

**23/123 Disclosure of Interests**

Cllrs Ellery and Rowe declared an interest in agenda item 16 as shareholders in the Speldhurst Community Shop Ltd.

**23/124 Declarations of Lobbying**

Cllrs Curry and Lyle had been lobbied extensively on the Langton Green Pavilion.

**23/125 Minutes of the Annual Statutory Full Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes, previously forwarded to members were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**23/ 126 Co-option of new Councillors**

Three members of the public, Mr Hugh Cleaver, Mrs Rebecca Leach and Mr Ian Muress left the room while Cllr Curry made a recommendation on behalf of the Co-option Working Group that they be co-opted as councillors. It was then **RESOLVED** to co-opt Mr Hugh Cleaver, Mrs Rebecca Leach and Mr Ian Muress on to the Council, and after signing the declaration of acceptance of office, they took their places at the meeting. Cllr Curry welcomed Cllrs Cleaver, Leach and Muress to the Council and said he looked forward to working with them.

**23/127 Public Open Session**

No member of the public wished to speak.

**23/128 Borough and County Councillor's Reports**

There were none.

**23/129 Chair's Report**

Cllr Curry thanked councillors for their support at the Annual Parish Meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> May. He reminded them to send any feedback about the meeting to the Clerk.

Cllr Curry would be attending the forthcoming Parish Chairs meeting, organised by Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC), a meeting of the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) and the Local Government Association's Annual Councillors' Conference. He would report back on these events at the next Full Council meeting.

Cllr Curry added that he was also due to attend a Dynamic Councillor Training event. Cllr Lyle recommended this event to the new councillors.

**23/130 Clerk's Report**

- **Vacancies** – There was a further vacancy to fill in order to bring the number of councillors back up to 13. Now that the two-month grace period for co-option following the election had now expired, a formal notice inviting applications for co-option would be advertised on the website, noticeboards, parish magazines and social media. The Clerk asked Councillors to let her know of any interested potential candidates.
- **Boundary Review** – The Local Government Boundary Commission had published their final recommendations for future electoral arrangements in Tunbridge Wells. They had proposed that the boundaries of all wards should change, and Speldhurst Parish would now be joined with Rusthall Parish instead of Bidborough. This would come into effect at the next cycle of local elections.

**23/131 General Matters** – Actionable tasks which do not fall to a committee.**Ongoing**

	Summary	Owner	Created	Status
<b>89/22</b>	Confirm appointment of Pavilion Building Manager.	Pav Man Cttee	04/11/22	<b>Closed</b>
<b>9/23</b>	Trial weed control April-Sept without use of glyphosate.	Env WG	09/01/23	In progress
<b>27/23</b>	Set up Cllr Ellery as a bank signatory.	RFO	03/04/23	In progress
<b>32/23</b>	Dissolve SPC Pavilion Ltd.	Cllr Lyle	03/04/23	In progress
<b>33/23</b>	Update and publish Spring Newsletter.	Asst Clerk (CB)	03/04/23	In progress
<b>38/23</b>	EV Charging WG to meet to discuss EV charging contract.	Cllrs Turner, Curry, Lyle, Barrington-Johnson	03/04/23	In progress
<b>43/23</b>	Pay LGVS a grant of £1,000 towards the TW Fringe Festival explaining that it does not set a precedent.	Clerk/RFO	09/05/23	In progress
<b>45/23</b>	Commence process for PWLB in liaison with KALC.	Clerk/RFO/Chair	09/05/23	In progress

**New – Items arising since last Full Council Meeting**

	Summary	Owner	Created	Status
<b>51/23</b>	Remove covid compliance item from future agendas.	Clerk	05/06/23	

52/23	Advertise for Co-option and arrange interviews with prospective candidates.	Clerk	05/06/23
53/23	Update Website with new committee membership.	Clerk	05/06/23
54/23	Request Speldhurst Village Fete to submit a formal grant application plus invoice for the actual cost of insurance.	Clerk	05/06/23
55/23	Include item on Finance Agenda re: transfer of funds from Clerk Unity Bank Trust to Hampshire Trust in line with FSCS.		05/06/23
56/23	Submit comments on planning applications to TWBC.	Asst Clerk (KH)	05/06/23
57/23	Submit annual accounts for SPC Pavilion Ltd and include item on AGM at next FC to dissolve the company.	Clerk/RFO	05/06/23
58/23	Accept quotation for Dynorod for drainage repairs at LGRG.	Clerk	05/06/23
59/23	Accept quotation for Capel Groundcare to replace springs in spring snail at LGRG.	Asst Clerk (KH)	05/06/23
60/23	Update Winter Weather Policy on website.	Clerk	05/06/23

### 23/132 Appointment of committees – to confirm committee membership.

The current list of committees had been circulated and councillors had indicated that they were happy to remain on their current committees. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the following:

- Cllrs Scarbrough and Turner would join the Governance Committee, subject to approval from Cllr Scarbrough's workplace for him to do so.
- Cllr Cleaver would join the Environment Working Group and the Finance and Planning Committees.
- Cllr Leach would join the Environment Working Group and the Amenities and Planning Committees.
- Cllr Muress would join the Air Traffic, Highways and Planning Committees. He said he would also be willing to join Footpaths.
- The Defibrillator, Local Plan and Pavilion Management Working Groups were not currently needed. They would be dissolved and removed from the list of Committees and Working groups.

### 23/133 Finance Committee – Report by Cllr Ellery

- There had not been a meeting since the last Full Council meeting. The next meeting was scheduled for 26<sup>th</sup> June.
- There had been no budget virements.
- Interim payments made since the last meeting:  
**Unity Acct:** £125.87 Mastercard Top Up; £264.59 Veolia for Waste Collection; £476.35 NEST pension scheme; £29.65 BT Mobile; £1721.00 EDF Energy Monthly Energy; -£2222.00 Reversal for EDF Monthly Energy.  
**Mastercard:** £9 card charges; £159\* TV Licensing for TV Licence for Pavilion; £269.99\* Computers in Leeds for Projector for APM; £19.99\* Screwfix Direct Ltd for Radiator Valve for Office; £13.83\* Hardy Labels for gifts for retiring councillors; £53.98\* The Solar Centre for gift for retiring councillor; £28.80\* Trade Point for Sand for Pavilion Drain Covers.
- Decisions made under delegated authority are starred above.
- To consider the grant application for £600 to the Speldhurst Village Fete to cover insurance. This application was originally for the Speldhurst Pram Race which did not take place. The organisers were now requesting that their original application be applied to the Speldhurst Village Fete. All other details remained the same. It was noted that although the purpose of the grant – to pay for insurance – remained the same, it was for a different amount and applied to a different event. It was therefore agreed that an application form should be completed and a receipt supplied before the grant could be approved. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the grant, subject to these conditions being met.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) had asked for approval to transfer funds. It was agreed that this item should be discussed at the next Finance Committee meeting.

### 23/134 Accounts for Payment

It was **RESOLVED** that the invoices as listed below and checked by Cllr Tarricone, be paid.

Date	Payee Name	Reference	Amount £	Detail
06/06/2023	Woodsmith	MT2474	816.00	Works to Roopers
06/06/2023	Seal Calibration	MT2475	154.80	Defibrillator Service
06/06/2023	Seal Calibration	MT2476	154.80	Defibrillator Service
06/06/2023	Seal Calibration	MT2477	154.80	Defibrillator Service
06/06/2023	M R Lawrence	MT2478	835.00	Mowing and Strimming
06/06/2023	JLM Pest Control	MT2481	230.00	Pest Control Visit
06/06/2023	Tate & Tonbridge Fencing	MT2482	714.11	Fencing at Groombridge
06/06/2023	AgriFactors (Southern) Ltd	MT2486	840.00	Pitch Maintenance
06/06/2023	KALC	MT2487	72.00	Dynamic Cllr Training
06/06/2023	Kidman's Ltd	MT2488	14.10	Stihl Oil and Plug
06/06/2023	JS Facilities Management	MT2489	117.26	Cleaning of Pavilion
06/06/2023	Viking Direct	MT2490	124.54	Pavilion – toilet paper
06/06/2023	Kestrel Mech Services	MT2491	1,668.00	Pavilion – Boiler Pipework
06/06/2023	Cloudy IT	MT2492	254.58	Monthly IT Services
06/06/2023	Langton Green Village Soc	MT2493	1,000.00	Grant – Fringe Festival
06/06/2023	Kate Harman	MT2494	25.00	Office Cleaning
10/06/2023	HMRC	MT2484	1,181.21	Tax and NI
13/06/2023	KCC (KCS)	DD	191.06	Photocopier
13/06/2023	BT PLC	DD	180.70	BB and Telephone
20/06/2023	Katie Neve	MT2479	29.54	Expenses
20/06/2023	Kate Harman	MT2483	186.48	Expenses
20/06/2023	EDF Energy	DD	1,721.00	Pavilion Energy
20/06/2023	Employees	MT2485	4,756.92	Salaries
27/06/23	Fuzion	MT2480	722.40	Emergency Lighting Annual
28/06/2023	Castle Water	DD	50.63	Pavilion Water
	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>£16,194.93</b>	

### 23/135 Speldhurst Chapel Project – To receive an update

Cllr Rowe reported that he had held a Zoom call with the Trustees who owned the Chapel. They were looking for a clean sale with no conditions about how the building could be used in the future. They were now waiting for a valuation of the building; Cllr Rowe added that its previous valuation had been priced at £275,000.

Cllr Rowe would have a Teams Meeting with KALC later in the week to understand better what was needed from the Parish Council to progress next steps in applying to the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb). He hoped to hear more about how to implement a public consultation.

Cllr Rowe said that there would be a number of steps in the process that could affect decision making about whether to go ahead with the PWLB. For the Parish Council these included the valuation price of the Chapel, the results of the public consultation, and the outcome of the survey that the Parish Council would commission on the building. For the Speldhurst Chapel Project, it would be necessary to go out to residents with a community share offer in order to raise money for refurbishments. If insufficient funds were raised, it may not be possible to proceed.

The Chapel was likely to go on the open market in September.

There would be a public meeting later in the month which Cllrs Curry and Rowe would attend.

**23/136 Planning Committee – Report by Cllr Rowe including any Committee Meetings held since the last Full Council meeting, the minutes having previously been forwarded to all Members.**

- a) A meeting had been held on the 15<sup>th</sup> May and draft minutes had been circulated. The committee had remained neutral on the majority of applications they had considered, supporting one, and objecting to another.

The Clerk and Cllr Norton had attended a community meeting between local residents and the Developers of the Burrswood Estate. The Developers had explained that there were a number of options as to how to develop the estate, but no decisions had been made. They had guaranteed that in the meantime they would keep access to the grounds open. Cllr Muress commented that he felt the meeting had been poorly publicised, and it had seemed that tenants of the estate had been given little or no notice of it happening.

- b) **To consider the following planning applications:**

**ADDRESS:** 19 Salisbury Road, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN3 0ES

**APPLICATION NO:** 23/01029/FULL

**PROPOSAL:** Erection of single storey rear extension, erection of front porch and detached car port with garden store

**Decision:** It was **RESOLVED** not to comment further on this application, since it had already been considered at the Planning Committee Meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> May.

**ADDRESS:** Greengarth, Ewehurst Lane, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN3 0JX

**APPLICATION NO:** 23/01015/FULL

**PROPOSAL:** Erection of single storey and two storey rear extension with new roof, rear dormer and front porch.

**Decision:** Remain neutral, leave to Planning Officer.

**23/137 Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)**

- a) **Update on the Pavilion Review** – Cllr Lyle had spoken further with Guy Lambert of Langton Green Community Sports Association (LGCSA) about Heads of Terms. It was important to crystallise the parties' understanding of what had been agreed at the mediation meeting into one version so that all the parties were clear. It was also hoped to sign an interim hire agreement by the end of the week. This would commence the grace period until September so that Emma Howden could continue to operate Langton Pavilion Café while a permanent hire agreement was put in place. This agreement would be put to Full Council to vote on in due course.

For the benefit of the new councillors, Cllr Lyle gave some background to the Pavilion, explaining that in its early days of operation it had made a small profit, with funds of up to £16,000 in the RRIM (Repair, Renewal, Improvement and Management) account in 2022. However, rises in electricity costs had hit the Parish Council hard, although it had taken steps to cut electricity costs with more energy efficient heating systems, which had helped.

The Parish Council had made a small increase in the Pavilion Café's rent, but it was a balancing act between increasing rental rates and retaining a community asset.

There was now resolve to reach an agreement between all parties, and it was noted that SPC would be maintaining a relationship with LGCSA for at least the next 20 years, until the building became Parish Council property. Cllr Rowe added that there was still an issue to resolve with LGCSA about who has control over the Pavilion.

Cllr Lyle had attended the Langton Green Football Fiesta and reported back that it was an extremely well-run event, with very organised parking and a lovely atmosphere.

- b) **SPC Pavilion LTD** – Cllr Lyle would need to file the final accounts before dissolving the company. She was in contact with the RFO about this.

**23/138 Committees and Working Groups (WG) and other Reports: to include any meetings held since the last Full Council meeting, the draft minutes having previously been forwarded to all Members**

- a) **Governance Committee** – There had been no meeting.
- b) **Highways Committee** – There had been no meeting.
- c) **Amenities Committee** – Report by Cllr Lyle. A meeting had been held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May.
  - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation for £2,998 From Dyno Rod for drainage repairs at LGRG. Cllr Lyle explained that a child had been injured when a manhole cover over a sewerage drain had tipped up, causing the child to fall into the drain. Interim measures had immediately been carried out to make the manhole safe, and Dyno Rod had carried out a full survey of LGRG. Two additional manhole covers were discovered to be faulty and these would also be mended. The plastic covers were to be replaced with cast iron.
  - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation for £204 From Capel Groundcare to replace the springs in the Spring Snail as recommended in the playground inspection report.
  - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Winter Weather Policy. It had previously been proposed to change the policy but having received advice from our insurers, it was agreed that no changes were needed.
  - Cllr Lyle added that the committee was seeking more information on replacing dog waste bins with general bins at LGRG. They were also looking into replacing wooden posts with stronger, more visible posts in the car park, and investigating replacing the fencing around the playground.
- d) **Air Traffic Committee** – There had been no meeting.
- e) **Environment WG** – There had been no meeting. The Chair said that the working group delegated to look at the contract sent by Kent County Council (KCC) for the installation of Electric Vehicle Chargers was now making progress after some delays and would meet later in the week to go over the drawings sent by KCC's contracted Installer.
- f) **KALC** – The next meeting had been deferred for a month.

**23/139 Diary Dates** – The following dates were noted:

12<sup>th</sup> June – Planning Committee (change of date from 19<sup>th</sup> June)

20<sup>th</sup> June – Highways Committee

26<sup>th</sup> June – Finance Committee

3<sup>rd</sup> July – Full Council

10<sup>th</sup> July – Governance Committee

**23/140 Items for Information:**

Cllr Lyle reported that she had attended the recent LGCSA Trustees meeting and added that this has been a positive event. The Trustees had clarified that they did not wish to force Emma Howden and the Langton Pavilion Café out of the Pavilion, only to be able to use it more frequently as a sports pavilion themselves.

The Trustees had also spoken about their plans for the field adjacent to the current football pitches at LGRG, and that they would be seeking local feedback on in due course.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.42pm.