



**Speldhurst
Parish Council**

*Working for the
whole community*

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

**Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held in The Committee Room, Langton Green
Village Hall on Monday 8th November 2010 at 7.30pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs. Parker (Chairman), Mrs Hull, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Waters, Wheeler, Pendleton and Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys (ex officio)

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk, Mrs Meirion Flemington – Assistant Clerk

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Mr & Mrs Ponsford, Mr & Mrs Phillips and Mr Baker

1. **Declarations of Interests:** Cllr Mrs Waters declared a personal and prejudicial interest in Speldhurst School – she has three children at the school. Cllr Mrs Soyke declared a personal interest in the Ashurst play area and Ashurst Church.
2. **Declarations of Lobbying:** None received
3. **Apologies for Absence:** There were none.
4. **Minutes** of the meeting dated **19th July 2010**, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed as a correct record.
5. **Public Open Session:** Mrs Ponsford asked for consideration of the less well-off members of the community and to give some consideration to cutting back on some expenditure.
6. **Matters Arising and Correspondence** – Cllr Parker asked if anything had been done regarding an information package for anyone who wants to be a Parish Councillor. The clerk replied that details had been uploaded on to the new website under “Council FAQ”. He also asked if the dates of future Finance meetings had been circulated and the clerk confirmed that they had.
7. **Financial Position as at 30th October 2010** - The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Position and this was duly noted by the Committee.
8. **2010-11 Budget and Supplementary Information** – It was agreed that this would be covered under the budget forecast.
9. **Review of budget vs expenditure** – It was agreed that this would also be covered under the budget forecast.
10. **St Martin of Tours Church, Ashurst** – A letter had been received from the Treasurer requesting that the Parish Council give favourable consideration to making a contribution towards the upkeep of the churchyard and possible additional assistance towards the renewal of half of the perimeter fence which would cost £1,500. Councillors discussed the request and asked the clerk to enquire about the financial situation of the Church before it could determine an appropriate amount.

11. 2011-12 Budget Forecast – Setting the precept for the next financial year – Cllr Parker advised that the Finance Committee would propose the precept to Full Council for approval at the December meeting. The clerk had prepared a list of financial recommendations for the committee to review and there was a long discussion on a number of issues including the clerk's hours; funding of an election; the pavilion at the Langton Green Recreation Ground; planting and maintenance of trees; a budget for the Highways Committee; further funding for the Speldhurst School outdoor facilities; transferring the allocation of funds from Ashurst play area to Highways and a figure towards the refurbishment of the play area on the Speldhurst Recreation Ground. The majority of the recommendations were agreed and the following key decisions were taken-

- That the precept should include an increase in the clerk's hours to 30 a week
- £15,000 be put aside for refurbishment of the Speldhurst Recreation Ground play area
- £5,000 be transferred from Amenities (Ashurst Play Area) to Highways
- A further £3,500 be set aside for the Speldhurst School outdoor facility
- £15,000 be carried forward to the next financial year for the LGVH extension
- £600 for Common Ground legal fees not be carried forward
- The contingency account of £25,000 be carried forward
- £20,000 be earmarked for repair and renewal of property owned by the Parish
- A new fund of £6,500 be established for trees on Parish properties

It was **AGREED** that a precept for the coming year (2011-12) of £133,900 be recommended to Full Council at the December meeting.

12. Banking Arrangements – The clerk advised the Members that he had asked Barclays Bank for an automatic transfer service from the HID Acc to the current Acc but had been advised that there was a charge for this on Business Accounts. He would review other Banks and see if they were more competitive and report back to the committee.

13. Royal Mail – The clerk reminded the committee that the redirection of mail, which had been in place for a year, was due to expire. The committee decided that it would not renew it.

14. Dates and Venues for Finance Committee meetings 2011 – these had been circulated.

15. Items for Information – There were no items for information

The meeting closed at 9.08pm

CHAIRMAN