

Speldhurst Parish Council

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 Wednesday, 10th June 2009 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT : Cllr. Mrs Hull
Cllr. Mrs Podbury
Cllr. Mrs Soyke
Cllr. Colley
Cllr. Parker
Cllr. Wheeler

OFFICER PRESENT : Pauline Lambell – Clerk

No members of the public present

1. Declarations of Interests : None received

Personal - Cllr. Colley – Agenda Item 13 - Marchiennes Co-ordinator

2. Declarations of Lobbying : None received

3. Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys – prior meeting
Cllr. Mrs Waters – prior commitment

4. Minutes of the meeting dated **9th February 2009**, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.

5. Nominations for Committee Chairman and Declaration of Acceptance of Office – Cllr. Parker proposed that Cllr. Mrs Soyke continue in the role of Committee Chairman. Cllr. Mrs Soyke felt that she was unable to accept as she was currently heavily involved with the Standards Committee. Cllr. Mrs Soyke proposed Cllr. Parker and this was seconded by Cllr. Wheeler and was unanimously agreed. Cllr. Parker duly accepted the office of Committee Chairman.

A brief discussion took place regarding the appointment of a vice-Chairman, similar to the Planning Committee. The Clerk advised that as the Finance Committee only met four or five times a year, unlike the Planning Committee who met every two or three weeks, meetings would always be arranged to accommodate the attendance of the Finance Committee Chairman. It was unanimously agreed that there was no need for a vice-Chairman.

6. Financial Position as at 31st May 2009 - The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Position and this was duly noted by the Committee.

7. 2009 – 10 Budget and Supplementary Information – the Clerk had previously circulated the up-to-date Budget Sheet together with supplementary sheets and explained that these were now being produced in a new monthly format to ensure that the Committee were fully informed and the Budget could be closely monitored.

Committee Members agreed that this new format was excellent and thanked the Clerk.

8. Budget Forecast to 31st March 2010 – This was duly noted.

9. Committee Terms of Reference

These were agreed and would be put to the Full Council for agreement at the July meeting.

10. Speldhurst Fete Committee – Grant request – Fete Insurance – it was unanimously agreed to a grant of £500.

11. St John`s Church, Groombridge – Grant request – professional fees in connection with roofing work

The Clerk was asked to write requesting a copy of the quinquennial report.

A lengthy discussion took place and it was the unanimous decision of the Committee that a recommendation be put to Full Council that a grant of £3,850 be awarded representing Work Stages A – D, which includes the Stage One Grant Application, as specified in the Architect`s letter dated 2nd March 2009. The Clerk was asked to send a suitably worded letter to Mr Mike Bullett (copy to David Crundwell) stating that :

- i) the grant is not a guarantee of future funding and any further request will be considered at the time a) on merit and b) the availability of Parish Council funds.
- ii) the grant will be paid once assurances are given by the PCC that they are in a position to proceed.

12. Langton Green Allotments – Grant request – three strand barbed wire fence

This request had been received via Borough Councillor Julian Stanyer who had been approached by the Club for assistance.

This is the first time the Parish Council has been contracted by the Langton Green Allotments. The total cost of the work was quoted at being £1,800 and the club`s contribution would be 10%. It was unanimously agreed to a grant of £1,620.

13. Langton Green Primary School – Grant request – assistance with annual visit to Marchiennes

It was unanimously agreed to a grant of £400.

14. Grant Request – Speldhurst Bowls Club

Again, this request had been received via Borough Councillor Julian Stanyer.

The Club has 35 members, at least two thirds coming from Speldhurst and Langton Green.

It was unanimously agreed to grant the full sum of £924.50, representing the full Maintenance Programme for work to the Club Pavilion and Ladies Toilet. When making this decision the Committee took into account that the Club were providing the labour themselves.

15. Grant Request – Hospice in the Weald – The Clerk had ascertained that 26 residents of the Parish were currently being supported by Hospice in the Weald and it was unanimously agreed to a grant of £600.

16. Payment of Broadband – request from Cllr. Mrs Soyke that the Committee consider an additional lump sum reimbursement to the Clerk

Cllr. Mrs Soyke asked that the Committee consider paying an ex-gratia payment to the Clerk in recognition that she had been paying the Broadband costs of £15.65 per month for the last four and a half years, and for at least the last year with no benefit to herself. It was unanimously agreed to an ex-gratia payment of £200 being made.

- 17. Items for Information** – the Clerk advised the Committee that the Audit Commission required further information with regard to the Annual Return as the Council's expenditure in the previous financial year had exceeded £200,000. The Clerk felt that as the information was not financial this was something that the Full Council should be made aware of and intended to report to them at the next Full Council Meeting. The Committee offered their assistance should this be required. The Clerk advised that she had already informed the Parish Council Chairman who had also offered her assistance.

The meeting closed at 8.25pm

CHAIRMAN