



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

**Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held in the Council Office, Langton Green
Recreation Ground on Thursday 12th December 2013 at 7.30pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Owen, Parker, Milner, Pendleton, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke and Cllr Mrs Jeffreys (ex-officio)

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Mr I Goodsell

OFFICERS PRESENT: C May – Clerk

1. **Election of Chairman:** It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Owen as Chairman of the Finance Committee
2. **Election of Vice-Chairman:** It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Milner as Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee
3. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Mrs Horne, Cllr Parker and Mrs M Flemington, Assistant Clerk (all prior engagement)
4. **Declarations of Pecuniary or Other Significant Interests:** There were none.
5. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
6. **Minutes:** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting dated **21st October 2013**, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed as a correct record.
7. **Public Open Session:** Mr Goodsell was here to update Councillors on the progress being made with the playground project at Speldhurst. It was decided to bring item 11 forward.
11. **Speldhurst Recreation Ground:** Mr Goodsell had previously forwarded a copy of successful grant applications totalling £18,000. He expected the Veolia grant application of £33,000 to be granted in January and with the £15,000 already committed by Parish Council meant that a total of £66,000 would be available for phase 1 which could start in May/June (there is a 8-10 week lead time when ordering equipment). He was also in the process of applying for a Lottery grant of £25,000 and a local event was planned for March/April which could bring in a further £10,000. It was hoped that phase 2 would be implemented soon after. The committee had hired Maria

Cook as a consultant and although her fees were about £3,500 she believed she could reduce the total project bill by 10-15%.

Councillors informed Mr Goodsell that further funds were available from the Council should they be required and that he should contact the Council when there was further progress to report.

- 8. Matters Arising and Correspondence:** The clerk reported on the following matters:
- The recent storm had caused damage in the LGRG and the clerk, together with the Chairman, had requested Treework to urgently deal with a number of fallen branches that were dangerous. The cost was £340 plus VAT.
 - The new s137 limit for the next financial year was £7.20 per elector.
 - Some large invoices had been received after the meeting and he would be requesting authorisation of these payments in the next week.
 - Speldhurst village website had found no sponsor and the Parish Council will have to consider the issue at the January Full Council meeting.
- 9. Financial position as at December 2013:** The clerk had circulated all the financial papers and the position was noted by the committee.
- 10. 2013-2014 review of expenditure vs. budget to-date:** The figures were discussed and the clerk considered all expenditure within plan. It was noted that money not spent from this year's contingency would be transferred in to the earmarked reserves.
- 12. Grant requests:**
- a) Groombridge Sports Ground Association: An application had been received from GSGA for a grant of £1,000 towards the pavilion/clubhouse project at The Tanyard, Corseley Road, Groombridge. It was **RESOLVED** to grant £1,000 from the contingency account towards this project subject to a successful planning application. **The clerk will notify GSGA.**
 - b) St Mary's Lane, Speldhurst: It was noted that there may be a grant application next year for the re-surfacing of St Mary's Lane on behalf of the SVH and SRG.
- 13. Maturing Deposit:** It was **RESOLVED** that at maturity the money on deposit with the Co-op Bank be transferred to the HSBC current account and **noted** that a decision on where to invest reserves be taken at the February meeting.
- 14. Insurance:** It was **RESOLVED** that the current insurance policy be extended for four months to 31st July 2014 at a cost of £725.39. It was noted that the three year deal will now expire on 31st July 2016.
- 15. Amenity expenditure:**
- a) Leaf blower – it was **RESOLVED** to purchase at a cost of £250.00
 - b) Snow shovels – it was **RESOLVED** to purchase at a cost of £30.00
 - c) Chain saw course – it was **RESOLVED** to send the Groundsman on a course at a cost of £155.00
- 16. Village Magazines:**
- a) Groombridge magazine – it was **RESOLVED** to contribute £140.00 towards the cost of publicising Parish Council news per annum. **The clerk will advise Rev Sharon Francis.**
 - b) Langton Life – it was **RESOLVED** to pay the Council's contribution on an issues basis. **The clerk will notify Langton Life.**

- 17. Road Closure Equipment:** A request had been received by Rusthall Parish Council to contribute towards the purchase of road closure equipment for future events. There was much discussion on the issue and the committee was informed that Speldhurst Fete committee have enough equipment for their event and the village pram race. In the absence of an apparent need for the equipment for events or by organisations within the parish, it was therefore decided not to participate in the purchase of the equipment. **The clerk will advise Rusthall Parish Council.**
- 18. Draft Regulations Consultation: Future of Local Audit:** The committee noted that when the current contract with Littlejohn expires that SPC will have to appoint its own auditors.
- 19. Transfer of Land from TWBC:** Donaldson West advised that the legal fees for the transfer of land will be £550. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the quotation. **The clerk will send confirmation.**
- 20. Website:** The clerk had requested certain upgrades to the website and the quotation for this was £120.00 and it was **RESOLVED** to accept this. **Clerk will advise the webmaster.**
- 21. Items for Information:** There were none.

The meeting closed at 8.42pm

CHAIRMAN