



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

Minutes of an Amenities Committee Meeting held in The Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground on Thursday 20th June at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Milner (Chairman), Owen, Parker, Turner and Mrs Hull

OFFICERS PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk; Mrs Meirion Flemington – Assistant Clerk

1. **Election of Chairman:** It was **RESOLVED** to re-elect Cllr Milner as Chairman.
2. **To receive and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** Cllr Woodward (prior engagement)
3. **Disclosure of Pecuniary or Other Significant Interests:** There were none.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** Cllr Mrs Hull – mowing of verges
5. **Minutes:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on **4th April 2013** were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
6. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:** The clerk updated the committee on correspondence with Mr Courivaud regarding a large bough which had fallen on to his property. The tree was not on land owned by the Parish council.
7. **Public Open Session**

Members of the public are invited to make representations to the Committee on any matters relating to the work of the Committee or to raise any issues of concern.
There were no members of the public present.
8. **Financial Review**

The clerk circulated the figures and details of expenditure to-date were reviewed. He reported that expenditure was within budget and answered several questions. Cllr Mrs Hull queried whether the Council or the users should be paying for the electricity usage in the pavilion.
9. **War Memorials**

The cleaning of the Speldhurst War Memorial is pending a decision by the Church Council who meet mid-July. Cllr Mrs Hull emphasised the importance of keeping and marking records of bronze plaques. The assistant clerk produced detailed records of all memorials in the Parish.

10. Next Phase of Enhancement on The Green

- i. Extension of footpath – the installation of meters by SE Water was behind schedule and the mains works were due to start at The Green on July 1st which will take seven months. The clerk also said that the footpath was a road adopted by KCC and they need to be contacted. It was **RESOLVED** to defer any improvements to the footpath until after the work by SE Water was concluded.
- ii. Planting of a tree – after further research it was **RESOLVED** to plant a yew tree after the work by SE Water was concluded probably in the spring or autumn 2014.

11. Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)

- i. Pavilion - the clerk reported that the Langton Green Sports Club (LGSC) has reviewed the copies of the leases provided and have asked for a number of changes to be considered. The clerk has contacted the Council's solicitor, Donaldson West, to determine the VAT implications and to have a report for consideration at the August Full Council meeting.
- ii. It was **RESOLVED** to increase the rental from the Cricket Club by £18 to £700 for the season and to keep the Stoolball club's rental at £200 to be paid in two instalments if necessary.
- iii. Hiring of recreation ground – there were no outstanding applications.
- iv. Security of container – the clerk advised that a welder had been to see the work required but that it was still outstanding. **Clerk to make further enquiries.**
- v. Car parks
 - a. Parking in disabled bays – it was **RESOLVED** that the clerk compose a letter for distribution to the parents of children in the primary school and nursery asking that they refrain from parking in the disabled bays.
 - b. Security of overflow car park – after much discussion it was **RESOLVED** that, subject to an acceptable estimate, that a mixed conservation hedge be planted with a post and wire fence.
- vi. Dog mess – there was much discussion on the controversial subject but no decision was required
- vii. Groundsman – it was **RESOLVED** to recommend that the Groundsman receives a £250 payment per annum in recognition of the extra mileage arising from a change in the nature of the tasks he now undertakes.

12. Pocket Park, Speldhurst

The clerk had circulated four emails from residents complaining about the state of the grass area. The clerk clarified that there were no budgetary constraints on this issue and there was much discussion on the subject. Thanks were paid to Cllr Mrs Horne and other Councillors who, with the scouts, had helped clear the site. It was **RESOLVED** to authorise a cut of the grass area. Cllr Mrs Podbury would then attempt to cut back some of the shrubs that have become overgrown with possibly the Groundsman's help.

13. Groombridge Christmas Lights

The lights were originally installed in 2009 at a cost of £1,915 (plus VAT) and offset by a small grant from TWBC. The Council approved the installation because individual houses were linking lights from the trees on The Green to their houses with obvious implications of health and safety and litigation. The clerk said that Treadwell Electrical has reported that the lights cannot be repaired. The committee considered that this was a significant sum to spend every three or four years (the lifetime of lights – especially with the trees pollarded annually) and wanted to consider other options. The clerk suggested uplighters which could be used all year round and it was **RESOLVED** that he make further enquiries to establish the cost for consideration. **Clerk to action.**

14. New Notice Board in Speldhurst

The clerk reported that the Groundsman has renovated the wooden notice board and it is ready for installation. Cllr Milner said that there were oak posts in the container that could be used to fix the board. **Clerk to action.**

15. Parking at The Hare

The clerk reported that he had been in contact with the manageress and the company's head office. They suggested that a sign be erected on our grass area requesting that people do not park on the road. **The clerk was requested to propose a suitable sign.**

16. Stone Wall on Penshurst Road, Speldhurst

- i. Repairs – The clerk said that he had received an estimate for the repairs and would submit them to the Finance Committee for approval.
- ii. Asset Register – The clerk has added the wall to the register at nil value and will add a photograph of the wall following repair to the Asset Register.

17. Trees on Council land

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend that the works scheduled to take place within one year be carried out this year. **Clerk to contact Treework.**

18. Public rights of Way

- i. Barrier at the end of the Twitten – the clerk explained that a barrier had been removed some years ago at the end of Breakstones Lane (Langholm Road end) at the request of mobility scooter user. A resident has persistently requested that it be replaced to reduce the likelihood of an accident because it is a private road as well as a footpath. The clerk has suggested an off-set barrier which is suitable for buggies and scooters and has asked KCC for ways to progress the issue. He will report at the next meeting.
- ii. KCC PROW vegetation clearance – Cllr Milner will ask Derek Robinson to liaise with KCC before the deadline of the middle of July.

19. Asset Register

Some additional photographs are required. Maps will be added in due course.

20. Items for Information

Cllr Mrs Hull reported that an old tree in Southfields is to be cut down due to disease and replaced with two varieties of cherry trees. She also reported that the school sign at Speldhurst School is becoming overgrown. **Clerk to contact KCC.**

Cllr Turner reported that the hedge along Langton Road (from site 15 to opposite Went Farm) is in need of cutting back. **Clerk to contact the owner and KCC.**

It was reported that the vegetation around the ISS at Groombridge is in need of cutting back. **Clerk to contact Cllr Pendleton.**

The assistant clerk reported that appropriate weed killer and sprayer had been sourced and said that a proposal would be put before the Finance Committee.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm

Chairman