

Local Government Act 1972



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

MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING

Held at 7.30 pm on Monday 3rd August 2026 in Langton Green Village Hall.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Curry (Chair), Barrington-Johnson, Cleaver, Ellery, Farley, Littlefield, Norton and Turner.
S Neve (Deputy Clerk), A Dry (Administration & Communications Coordinator – Minutes)

IN ATTENDANCE

Tunbridge Wells Borough Councillor Ian Standing and Kent County Councillor John Moreland. Apologies were received from Tunbridge Wells Borough Councillors Matthew Sankey and Jayne Sharratt.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were 7 members of the public, 4 representatives from the Burrswood development team and 1 representative from Langton Green Community Sports Association (LGCSA).

137/ 26 TO ENQUIRE IF ANYONE INTENDS TO RECORD THE MEETING

The Chair advised that an audio recording had been started by the Deputy Clerk which would be used to ensure accuracy of minutes. Anyone who wished to speak should consider that their voice may be recorded and the recording could be requested via Freedom of Information.

138/26 TO ACCEPT AND APPROVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllrs Bains and Dickens (holiday) and Cllr Leach (illness)

139/26 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Cllr Norton due to being one of the trustees on LGCSA.
Cllr Ellery due to being on the board for Speldhurst Village Hall.
Cllr Farley due to his involvement with Speldhurst Village Hall.

140/26 DECLARATION OF LOBBYING

Cllr Norton regarding the Burrswood development.

141/26 MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3rd JULY 2026

It was **RESOLVED** to approve that the minutes, previously forwarded to Members, be confirmed as a correct record and to be signed by the Chair after the meeting.

142/26 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION

Public session procedures were noted

- Members of the public were informed that the Burrswood item would follow immediately afterwards with a question-and-answer section at the end of their presentation.
- No matters were raised by members of the public during the open session.
- The public session was closed

143/26 UPDATE FROM STEVE NEOCLEOUS REGARDING BURRSWOOD, OLD GROOMBRIDGE

Representatives of the Burrswood development team presented emerging proposals for the future of the Burrswood Estate. They reported that consultation with residents and stakeholders was underway, with a public consultation website and event planned before submission of a planning application in autumn 2026. The proposals seek to secure the future of Burrswood House through restoration and residential conversion, together with associated residential development elsewhere on the estate.

Councillors discussed four principal issues:

- Scale of development
- Quality of design
- Construction traffic management
- Future public access to the estate

Additional discussion covered estate management, environmental impacts and access arrangements.

Residents from Old Groombridge raised concerns about the scale of the development and the impact of its traffic, both during and after construction - particularly the dangers from HGVs using Bird in Hand Street, where cottages are very close to the carriageway

The Chair thanked the development team and the residents for attending. The Burrswood representatives left the meeting at 8.20pm.

144/26 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Tunbridge Wells Borough Councillor Ian Standing

Cllr Standing encouraged residents to engage with the forthcoming Burrswood consultation event.

Kent County Councillor John Moreland

Cllr Moreland reported on a highways defect (WT67), ongoing enquiries regarding responsibility for repairs, and an update on highways improvement funding. Councillors agreed to continue monitoring both matters. Cllr Moreland welcomed the opportunity for residents to engage directly with the Burrswood development team.

He then raised the ongoing issue of the highways improvement funding previously allocated to local projects.

The issue with the Langton Green School road safety warning lights (wigwags) remains under investigation by KCC

145/26 CLERKS REPORT

The Deputy Clerk reported:

- 3 Wasp nests treated.
- Fallen tree removed and residents fence repaired.
- Drainage insurance claim progressing.
- Bollard replacement underway at Old Groombridge Green.
- MUGA access path to Langton Green basketball court being installed.
- Recreation ground formal exemption from hosepipe restrictions received.

- Additional dog bins to be installed for Shadwell Woods in September.
- Speedwatch complaint addressed.
- Staff training booked.

146/26 GENERAL MATTERS

The Deputy Clerk reported that the actionable tasks which did not fall to a committee had been completed or were near completion.

147/26 COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS (WG) AND OTHER REPORTS:

a) Highways Committee

Cllr Norton, Highways Chair, reported that there had been no further meeting since 29th June 2026. The next meeting was due to be held on 26th October.

b) Planning Committee

Cllr Curry, Planning Chair, reported that the previous meeting was on the 13th of July and the next meeting was due to be held on the 13th September. In the absence of an August meeting there were two applications to be considered at this meeting:

26/01542/FULL - Laurel Bank, Etherington Hill, Speldhurst

Proposal: Addition of dormer windows, rooflights to main house and garage; outdoor terrace, alterations to fenestration, roof & chimney; conversion of garage to annexe and associated alterations.

Decision: Remain neutral defer to Planning Officer. We would request a condition indicating that this accommodation must remain ancillary to the existing property.

26/01590/FULL – 19 Little Footway, Langton Green

Proposal: Garden room.

Decision: No objection, remain neutral and defer to Planning Officer

c) Amenities Committee

Cllr Turner, Amenities Chair, reported that the meeting scheduled for 22nd June 2026 had been inquorate and therefore was unable to proceed. Next meeting is 12th October.

Members considered the request for a commemorative bench in Speldhurst.

RESOLVED: To approve the request in principle, subject to agreement on location and design.

d) Environment Working Group (EWG)

Cllr Turner noted there had been no meeting since the previous full council meeting and advised the date of the next meeting Wednesday 21st October.

e) Langton Green Recreation Ground Working Group (LGRG WG)

- Cllr Farley reported that the Working Group had met twice since the previous meeting and was considering options for future development of the Recreation Ground, including funding opportunities and site constraints.
- Positive improvements to the playing surface were noted following recent remedial works.
- Future LGCSA operational updates will be reported through this agenda item.
- Cllr Curry reported on the operation of the temporary irrigation system installed to support recovery of the recreation ground playing surface following extensive improvement works. The water usage has now settled to a predictable pattern. SPC agreed to pay for the elevated bill in July, and it was **RESOLVED** to accept the principle of a 50:50 cost-sharing arrangement between Speldhurst Parish Council and Langton Green Community Sports Association for the water bill in August. This arrangement would be revisited/renewed at the end of August.

f) Pavilion Working Group

Cllr Curry reported that the bid process remains on schedule with interviews with potential operators underway.

g) KALC

Cllr Curry provided an update on Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and Devolution.

- Councillors noted that the Government has selected a preferred restructuring model for Kent, which differs from the options originally proposed by local authorities.
- The proposed arrangements are not expected to have a significant impact on the day-to-day operation of Speldhurst Parish Council.
- Cllr John Moreland noted that Speldhurst Parish Council currently has one of the lowest parish precepts in the area and that there had been discussion around the possibility of council tax harmonisation across larger authority areas in the future, although no details have yet been confirmed.
- The Council will continue to monitor developments and receive updates through KALC as further information becomes available.

h) Committee Membership

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Farley be appointed to the Finance and Governance Committee and be removed from the Highways Committee.

148/26 FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Cllr Cleaver stated that a meeting had been held on 20th July.

- Councillors noted the detailed budget reports in the folder. Cllr Cleaver reported that four months into the financial year, there were no significant concerns within the current budget position.
- Report on interim payments made since the last meeting. Cllrs noted the payments and it was **RESOLVED** to approve them.

Unity Trust Mastercard

Payee Name	Reference	Amount Paid	Transaction Detail
Quickfix		£197.10	School Trophies
Kidmans		£45.50	Strimmer Maintenance
Knockout Print		£162	Car Park Signage
Alison Dry		£4.99	Mileage Expenses
Barnard Environmental		£90	Wasp Nest
Langton Life		£375	Monthly Ad
Bonard Electrical		£347.52	Socket for irrigation system

- Councillors noted there had been no decisions made under delegated authority since the last Full Council meeting.
- It was **RESOLVED** to approve the internal audit terms of reference noting there had been no significant changes.
- To consider grant applications from:
 - Speldhurst Village Hall
Members considered a grant application from Speldhurst Village Hall towards improvement works.
RESOLVED: To award a grant of £5,000
 - Nourish Community Foodbank
Members considered a grant application from Nourish Community Foodbank.
RESOLVED: To award a grant of £750

- f) It was **RESOLVED** to approve the updated Financial Regulations and Standing Orders as recommended by the Finance & Governance Committee.

149/26 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the payment of invoices presented for approval, having been reviewed and verified by Cllr Farley.

150/26 UPDATE ON VACANCIES ON THE COUNCIL

It was noted that a potential applicant was due to contact the Clerk for more information and could be available from the end of the year.

151/26 DIARY DATES

- Next Full Council Meeting Monday 7th September, Speldhurst Village Hall

152/26 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- Members discussed concerns previously raised by Langton Green Village Society regarding trees planted near the road on the green behind the Hare and their potential impact on visibility and parking.
Cllrs Turner, Curry, Barrington-Johnson and Farley reported that they had inspected the trees and did not consider them to be causing any immediate obstruction to vehicles or road users.
The Council agreed that this was primarily a matter for the relevant landowner and the planning and highways authorities.
- Cllr Curry informed the Council that he was planning to move house and relocate outside the parish. Succession planning is required.

With no other issues to discuss the meeting finished at 9:15

Chair
Cllr Paul Curry