

Speldhurst Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 8th DECEMBER 2008 at 7.30pm IN THE VILLAGE HALL, LANGTON GREEN

PRESENT: Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Hull, Mrs Paulson-Ellis, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Waters, Brown, Colley, Ellis, Langridge, Parker, Stevens and Wheeler

Borough Councillor David Jukes and approximately 20 members of the public

2125 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr. Mrs Soyke – Personal Interest – Agenda Item 7 (The Crown, Groombridge – Christmas Lights) – local pub

Cllr. Mrs Soyke – Personal Interest – Agenda Item 13 (Ashurst Village Play Area / Registering of Common Ground) – lives in Ashurst

The Clerk advised that an additional paragraph would be included on all Councillors` Agendas regarding Declaration of Interests. This had been suggested by the Standards Committee as an example of best practice.

2126 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE – All Councillors were present

2127 MINUTES: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th November 2008, having previously been distributed to Members, were approved and signed with the following being added under Items for Information ` Cllr. Stevens reported that a school Parent Group were considering removing a hedge to the side of the school entrance and the Clerk was asked to write advising that as this was in a Conservation Area approval should be obtained`.

The Clerk advised that following advice from the Internal Auditor Minutes now included page numbering and the Meeting date at the top of each page.

2128 AGENDA ITEMS

2129 Finance Committee Report by Cllr. Mrs Soyke

Funding, Barden Road Footway - Cllr. Mrs Soyke was delighted to report that following a very successful meeting with Kent Highway Services they had agreed to fund the re-surfacing of both stretches of the Barden Road footway in the current financial year. Councillors agreed that this was excellent news.

2115 Setting the Precept 2009/10 - Cllr. Mrs Soyke proposed that **taking the above into account the previous approved Precept of £115,000 be rescinded and the Parish Council approve a Precept of £99,000 for the financial year 2009/10 and that this is submitted to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council.** This was seconded by Cllr. Parker and unanimously approved by Councillors. This is the same Precept as for the current financial year 2008/09.

2088 Highways – Speldhurst – Letter to Speldhurst residents

Councillors had hand delivered 544 letters to households within Speldhurst and 268 had been returned. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys thanked Cllr. Langridge and the Clerk for carrying out the analysis of the voting forms. See attached analysis breakdown.

Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys proposed that **the suggestion to close Barden Road should not be taken further.** This was unanimously agreed.

Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys requested that members of the public should write to the Clerk with their comments.

Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys confirmed that Kent Highways had agreed to commission a traffic survey to ascertain type, volume and speed of traffic and the Parish Council had requested that counters be placed in Langton Road, Speldhurst Hill and Barden Road (Barden Mill area).

2088 Further Parking Restrictions – Speldhurst

A discussion took place regarding the request for further parking restrictions in Speldhurst. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys proposed that **all the restrictions as indicated on the plan which had been circulated to councillors be put forward to Kent Highways**. This was agreed by 11 councillors with Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys not taking part in the vote and Cllr. Colley abstained. Cllr. Brown agreed to the parking restrictions in principle but not in the private road of St Marys Lane. The Clerk advised that consultation with residents would take the form of notices being placed by KHS. Cllr. Brown requested that the plan include the length of the yellow lines.

1887-4 Speldhurst Hill – Safer Crossing – This project was now being dealt with by another Kent Highway`s Engineer who had been poorly briefed on the funding situation. He would advise current status as soon as possible.

1887-4 Crossing from the Langton Green Recreation Ground to The Twitten including consideration for parking restrictions and interactive sign – 2 replies had been received from the residents of the private driveway (which had previously been forwarded to Councillors) and both were in favour of Highway`s suggestions to make the crossing safer. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys proposed that **the Highway`s proposal (as submitted) be accepted. Street lighting should not be included but monitored following the changes. The Parish Council request that an interactive speed sign be considered by KHS as part of the project.** This proposal was unanimously agreed.

2124-1 Play Area incident – A report from a Play Area Inspector had been received and circulated to all Councillors. It was unanimously agreed that this was an unfortunate accident.

2130 The Crown, Groombridge – Christmas Lights – the Clerk had forwarded a note to Councillors of conversations that had taken place regarding the putting up of Christmas lights in trees on Parish Council owned land without permission. It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should write to the publican advising that unless a qualified electrician`s certificate was received by mid-day on Friday, 12th December the lights must be removed.

2043 Transfer of Land either side of the former Watson Hall – Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys and the Clerk had met with Trevor Palmer (Trustee) who confirmed that as far as the Trustees were aware the land had always been maintained by Kent Highways. The Trustees would request that Highways repair the large pot hole.

Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys duly signed the Agreement.

2060 Appointment of Parish Council Representative on Langton Green Charitable Trust – Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys was waiting to hear back from the Chairman of the Charitable Trust.

2130 Langton Green Village Web Site – following advice from the Internal Auditor it was unanimously agreed that the Village web sites should not contain any Council information but include a link to the Council`s web site.

2080 Mayor to Visit all Parish Councils – A successful meeting with the Mayor and Mayoress at the recent Surgery which was attended by seven Councillors, the Clerk and PCSO Ray Nuttall.

2119-8 Courier Mini Web Site (BLOG) – It was agreed that items of interest should be placed on the Speldhurst Blog – all items being placed via the Clerk. The Clerk would contact the Langton Green Reporter to ascertain if there was a similar BLOG link.

2131 Matters for updating from the Minutes dated 17th November 2008 including :

2088 – Speldhurst Bus Service – the Clerk would arrange a meeting with Arriva to discuss a `shuttle` style bus service between the villages.

1887-4 Parish Council Funded Highways Projects – nothing further to report.

1825-3 Ashurst Village Play Area / Registering of Common Ground – Cllr. Mrs Soyke hoped to have a survey ready for distribution in January. Village residents had recently cleared the site and the Clerk was asked to take a photograph for files.

1965 – Conservation Area - the Clerk would chase Brian Hayward, Heritage Officer for a meeting.

2972 Your Parish Council – The Clerk and Cllr. Mrs Waters would meet and report back to the Parish Council.

2074 Parish Council Questionnaire - Discuss January 2009 meeting.

2075 Parish Council Notice Board – Langton Green - Clerk would obtain prices

2028-3 TWBC – Affordable Housing Needs Survey – The response to the survey was 22%.

2091 Parish Council – Style of Name Change - The Clerk would obtain further information.

2124-5 Marchiennes – Cllr. Colley reported that photos of the recent Tree Planting Ceremony were on the Marchiennes` web site.

2124-6 Speldhurst School Parent Group – the Clerk had been informed that it was not the intention to remove the hedge.

2132 – Correspondence Received

1. Kent Highways Services – Highway Improvements – advanced notification of road re-surfacing – Groombridge Hill (Ashurst Road to Groombridge Place) 6th March 2009 (5 nights)
2. Acknowledge with thanks from the Finance Administrator of St Mary`s Church for the £500 grant towards the cost of maintaining the churchyard at St Mary`s Church
3. Thank you to the Parish Council from the Speldhurst Recreation Ground Committee for the £1,200 to assist in Phase 2 of the Recreation Ground Project.

2133 Parish Council Chairman`s Report – Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys advised that she had received notes of thanks for the Council`s support to the Mayor`s Toy Appeal and the Poppy Appeal.

2134 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning – Cllr. Mrs Paulson-Ellis reported on the meeting of the Planning Committee held on 26th November, the Minutes having previously been forwarded to all Members. Cllr. Mrs Paulson-Ellis updated the Council on the following items :

Middlefield – letter from Mrs Ruth Chambers was read out (copy attached).

Black Lion House – The Clerk was requested to write to the Head of Planning regarding the large pillars which had been erected on the property without planning permission.

Footpaths – Cllr. Stevens reported that a stile had been repaired in WT81 (between Leggs Lane and Old House Lane).

Recreation Ground – Cllr. Ellis reported that he was continuing to collect litter from the Recreation Ground and it was agreed to increase efforts to find a `Groundsman`.

KALC – Cllr. Colley would be attending the next meeting on 10th December and would report back to Council.

2135 DIARY DATES

10th January – Surgery – Speldhurst Village Hall 10.30am – 12 noon

19th January – Council Meeting – Speldhurst 7.45pm

28th February – Rural Society`s Quiz Night. Anyone interested in getting together a `Parish Council table` should contact Cllr. Langridge.

2136 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – DECEMBER 2008

1.	Kevin Funnell	£ 210.00	Internal Audit
2.	Donaldson West	£ 40.00	Lang Registry Fee
3.	Donaldson West	£ 587.50	Professional Fees – Lampington Row
4.	Woodland Trust	£ 33.00	Subscription
5.	Speldhurst School PTA	£ 2,300.00	Approved Grant
6.	Ashurst McDermott	£ 77.00	Hire of Hall
7.	RIP Cleaning	£ 98.70	Canine Refuse
8.	Speldhurst Village Hall	£ 31.20	Hire of Hall
	Administration	£ 1,777.16	

TOTAL **£5,154.56**

Balance in Bank Accounts £51,970.06

2137 Items for Information

1. Consideration for a Speaker for the AGM – Agenda for January
2. Cllr. Mrs Soyke advised that Ashurst Village Hall were considering a small extension to the Hall to assist with storage.
3. The Rural Society was putting up a Christmas tree by the Village sign and the lights were being switched on 10th December.
4. PCSO Ray Nuttall advised that Police speed checks had been carried out at the bottom of Groombridge Hill, Speldhurst Road (by the Recreation Ground) and Langton Road (by the school). 24 verbal warnings were given and 7 fixed penalty tickets were issued.

PCSO Nuttall would also be placing notices on vehicles parked inconsiderately and illegally.

PCSO Nuttall informed the Council that he was attending a meeting at Speldhurst Primary School regarding their School Travel Plan. Cllr. Mrs Waters would enquire if councillors could attend and inform the Clerk.

5. The Clerk advised that the Play Area Project Manager had broken her knee and it was agreed to send a small get well gift.

The meeting closed at 9.15pm

CHAIRMAN

8th December 2008

Speldhurst Parish Council
Winterfold
Old Lane
St Johns
Crowborough
E Sussex
TN6 1RX

Please ask for: Ruth Chambers
Extension: 2089
Email: ruth.chambers@tunbridgewells.gov.uk
Our Reference: TW/09/01939

28 November 2008

Dear Ms Lambell

Application reference TW/07/01939 – Middlefields and Rusthal Elms Site

Thank you for your letter of 28 November regarding the above.

I understand that Councillor Jukes does wish for the proposed details of the condition relating to access to be brought back to committee for determination when the time comes. However, no decision has yet been issued so the conditions are not yet applicable. No details in relation to this proposed condition have been submitted by the applicant for us to consider.

The Committee on Wednesday will reconsider some proposed terms of the 'headings' of the Section 106 Agreement, and one of the conditions (relating to permitted development) at the request of the applicant. The only reason why this is being reported back to Committee is that Members made the original resolution and officers should not therefore change the terms of that resolution without Members' approval.

I hope this has helped to clarify the current position.

Yours sincerely

Ruth Chambers
Team Leader (Western)

Speldhurst Parish Council

POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF BARDEN ROAD

ANALYSIS OF VOTING FORMS

Total Number of Households distributed 544

Total Number of Voting Forms returned 268

Total Number of potential votes 1,090

30.5% of voting forms returned by post (82 forms)

69.5% of voting forms posted in voting box (Village Shop)

47.98% voted (523 votes)

21.5% in favour (112 votes)

78.5% against (411 votes)

1 household unable to vote either way as they feel KHS are opting out of their responsibilities

**Voting analysis carried out by Cllr. Ed Langridge and Pauline Lambell
on 2nd December 2008**