

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SPELDHURST PARISH COUNCIL

HELD ON MONDAY, 21st JANUARY 2008 at 7.45pm

IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SPELDHURST

PRESENT: Cllrs. Crundwell, Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Paulson-Ellis, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Waters, Ellis, Jukes, Palmer, Parker, Stevens and Wheeler

15 Members of the Public

1997 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. Dixon – recovering from operation

1998 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS:

Cllr. Mrs Soyke – Personal - Ashurst Play Area

1999 MINUTES: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 10th December 2007, having previously been distributed to members, were approved and signed.

2000 AGENDA ITEMS

1937 Pockets of Land Roopers – Decision by Parish Council

Cllr. Crundwell gave background information and advised that the Parish Council were seeking to alleviate their financial responsibility for ongoing maintenance of these two areas. The Parish Council had received a large number of letters of concerns from residents and members of the public present were given an opportunity to air their views. The majority were strongly in favour of the Parish Council retaining the land and their covenants which states that they must be kept as public open spaces, footpaths and landscaped areas.

i) Pocket 1 – Fronting number 2 – 8

It was unanimously agreed that this Pocket of Land should remain in the ownership and the responsibility of the Parish Council with efforts being made by residents to clear leaves and keep tidy. The Parish Council would obtain quotes to reduce the row of Cypresses close to the entrance.

The Parish Council would consider reducing the height of the Beech hedge and Cllr. Stevens would report back.

ii) Pocket 2 – Fronting numbers 12 -16

Currently these three houses are served by one narrow driveway and the Parish Council had been approached to consider a further driveway, over the grassed area, to enable easier access to the properties.

Following a meeting with the three owners, Cllr. Crundwell and the clerk met with TWBC's Tree Officer who advised that the area of green that the proposed new driveway would cross contains a number of mature trees. Any route taken through the trees would have to respect their Root Protection Areas. It was the view of the

Tree Officer that to construct a driveway would put these trees under too much pressure and also have a detrimental impact on the landscape.

It was the unanimous decision of the Parish Council that that area fronting numbers 12 -16 Roopers should remain in the ownership and responsibility of the Parish Council.

2001 Marchiennes – Update by Gerry Colley, Co-ordinator

Gerry Colley`s report, had previously been distributed to Councillors. Gerry gave a brief update to the meeting.

Cllr. Crundwell advised that the role of the Parish Council was as an enabling body encouraging local groups to meet.

2008 was the 10th Anniversary and a celebration, possibly a day trip was suggested with a special programme for children, comprising a tour of the Pantiles, lunch and a steam train trip to Groombridge. Thought should also be given to using the Langton Green Village Hall and the New Play Area.

Gerry would find out numbers involved and approach the Parish Council to consider a funding contribution.

1887-7 Play and Teen Areas

Cllr. Mrs Soyke updated the meeting. Three quotations had been received :

Wicksteed Playscapes Ltd	£100,000.00
Proludic	£ 99,983.00
Husson UK	£ 98,998.00

The Play Area Committee`s recommendation, based on play value and value for money, was that the Parish Council accept the quotation from Husson. This was unanimously agreed.

The Parish Council were required to sign a Contract with TWBC, the terms and conditions of which would also be agreed with BLF. It was unanimously agreed that the Contract should ensure that the interests of the Parish Council are safeguarded. It was unanimously agreed that Cllr. Crundwell be given authority to sign the Contracts with TWBC and Husson.

1935 Heathgate Corner

The following work would be carried out this financial year:

- advanced warning signs
- reflector posts (tidy old ones and install new)
- double bend signs (glow in the dark)
- improve speed signs and speed road markings.

The resurfacing will commence end of April which would include centre hatching round bends at Heathgate Corner and small coloured surfacing (red rectangles) either end of double bends. Cllr. Palmer asked that clarification be obtained regarding the anti-skid surfacing.

1975 Parking Concerns – Consideration for Parish Council signs

The clerk was asked to liaise with Cllrs. Crundwell and Wheeler on wording for the signs to be placed outside the retail shops in Langton and also outside the doctors' surgery in Speldhurst.

1989 Fenced and Paved Area Outside of Village Hall

The recommendation of the Transfer of Land Committee is that the Parish Council enter into an agreement with the Village House Nursery School for their exclusive use of the fenced and paved area outside of the Village Hall during the Nursery's operation (27 hours per week over 40 weeks a year) at a cost of £600 per annum. The Committee felt that the Village Hall Trustees needed time to establish themselves and to ascertain whether they would in fact benefit from exclusive use of this area and it was their recommendation that no agreement be entered into at this time.

It was unanimously agreed that a meeting should be set up with the Nursery School owners explaining the terms of the exclusive use.

Cllrs. Palmer asked that the Committee consider the terms that would be granted to the Trustees of the Village Hall, should they make a request for exclusive use.

1939-7 Langton Green School – Safe Crossing – Funding for work and professional fees

The clerk had received a detailed drawing from Kent Highways.

Donaldson West, solicitors had quoted a sum of £500 to act in connection with the Easement over the land belonging to Mr Tom Shields. These legal fees were unanimously agreed and also a similar sum representing the legal fees for Mr Tom Shields.

County Councillor John Davies had agreed to fund this project to a sum of £5,000.

The clerk was asked to obtain quotations.

The clerk was asked to inform Kent Highways that the Parish Council felt so strongly about the speed of traffic outside of their schools, that they are considering seeking media support.

2001 Speldhurst Hill Footpath

Following the placing of temporary bollards outlining the route of the proposed extension to the pathway, a number of concerns were received from local residents with regard to the potential danger. Cllrs. Mrs Podbury, Mrs Waters, Crundwell and the clerk met with Andrew Young, Kent Highways to consider possible alternatives.

It was agreed that the proposed extension to the pathway was dangerous and could in fact make a danger for pedestrians walking on the opposite side of the road alongside the Church. Various alternatives were considered and Andrew Young agreed to do some further design work.

The clerk had written requesting that this funding is not 'lost' but safeguarded until alternative solutions have been considered.

2002 PIPKIN – Report by Cllr. Mrs Joy Podbury

Cllr. Mrs Podbury`s report, having previously been distributed to Councillors, was discussed. Cllr. Mrs Podbury was disillusioned and frustrated with Kent Highways and in particular the lack of input that Parish Council`s seem to have within their Parishes.

2003 TWBC – Expenditure Questionnaire

It was agreed that the clerk should complete the questionnaire.

1960 Parish Council `Surgeries

Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys, Ellis, Parker and Wheeler attended the surgery with the clerk and were joined by PC Chris Carter and four members of the public (at varying times).

Issues raised :

Concerns regarding the planning application for the Police Houses – advised to write to TWBC planning.

White line marking when exiting the LGRG – clerk will make enquiries

Overgrown and muddy footpath along Speldhurst Road just before Burnt House Lane – clerk will make enquiries

Gerry Colley – Marchiennes update. Interested in becoming a Parish Councillor

2004 Parish Councillor Vacancies – Procedure

The clerk confirmed the procedure for advertising of Parish Councillor vacancies and was asked to clarify the position regarding Election if there was more applicants than vacancies.

2005 Annual Parish Council Meeting – Format and Guest Speaker

It was unanimously agreed that the Annual Meeting should be less formal. Wine would be available from 7.15pm and the meeting would start at 7.30pm. County Councillor Keith Ferin, Cabinet Member for Highways would be invited as a Guest Speaker and the clerk was asked to action.

1992-2 – TW Police PACT (Partners and Communities Together)

The clerk was asked to invite PC Chris Carter to the February meeting.

2006 MATTERS FOR UPDATING from the Minutes dated 10th December 2007

1987 Furzefield Avenue – Appeal Decision

Nothing to report.

1988 Middlefield – Planning Application

Cllrs. Crundwell and Dixon had met with the solicitors, Buss Murton, who had sent a letter to TWBC Planning on behalf of the Parish Council. No acknowledgement had been received.

1825-3 Ashurst Village Play Area / Registering of Common Ground - The clerk had written to Burrswood. Cllr. Mrs Soyke would visit Maidstone before the next meeting.

1887-4 Highways Projects Nothing to report.

1896-12 Local Crime Community Sentence Nothing to report.

1925-3 Parish Plans Nothing to report.

1952-3 Parish Council Web Site The clerk reported that a new web site was in the process of being set up

1965 Conservation Area Nothing to report.

1978-5 Rural Bus Service – The clerk had received feedback from Cllr. Mrs Podbury, Soyke and Parker and had had replied to the survey.

1978-6 Hollonds Farm – The clerk was asked to arrange for Cllr. Mrs Paulson-Ellis and Crundwell to meet with Paul Cole on site

2007 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

1. Concerns regarding the parking of cars on two pieces of grass fronting Cobhams. The Clerk would contact Highways.
2. Ashurst resident – concerns about the speed of traffic through the village. Highways have carried some re-surfacing which now gives a superb surface to speed and brake rapidly. Cars now travel in excess of 50mph under the single track bridge. Traffic lights have been taken off their sensor and now run on a timer. Clerk to action.
3. Department for Communities and Local Government – Consultation on Orders and Regulations relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England. Response by 15 February. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys would report to the clerk on the document.
4. A letter of resignation had been received from Cllr. Trevor Palmer who will be leaving the Parish Council with effect from the April 2008 meeting.

2008 DIARY DATES

26th January – Cockney Night – Village Hall & Rotary Club.

12th February – Surgery – Speldhurst Village Hall 2pm– 3.30pm

2009 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning. Cllr. Palmer reported on the two meetings held on 13th December 2007 and 9th January 2008, the Minutes having previously been distributed to Councillors.

Next meeting 4th February in Langton Green Village Hall.

Finance. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported that a sum of £440 plus VAT had been agreed by email for tree work outside of the Langton Green Recreation Ground as requested by KCC.

Footpaths. It was reported that the conifers alongside Aysgarth Farm had been topped but not removed. Cllr. Jukes would have another word with the owner.

Recreation. Nothing to report.

K.A.P.C. Cllr. Mrs Soyke attended the meeting on 12th December and a report had previously been circulated to councillors.

2010 ACCOUNTS TO BE PAID – January 2008

1.	EDF Energy	£ 196.32	Electricity Pavilion
2.	Speldhurst Village Hall	£ 6.00	Hire of Hall
4.	KCC	£ 982.11	Second Half Yearly Grounds Maintenance – Groombridge Green
5.	BT	£ 193.22	Telephone / Fax
6.	RIP Cleaning	£ 123.38	Canine refuse bins
5.	Cllr. Joy Podbury	£ 19.74	Copying – Planning documents
6.	Cllr. Joy Podbury	£ 21.21	Travel expenses
7.	Ashurst Parish Church	£ 5.00	Ashurst broadsheet
8.	EDF Energy	£ 35.57	Fixed charges
7.	David Crundwell	£ 129.70	Xmas Drinks (£200 cheque Cancelled)
8.	C. Worcester	£ 267.00	Renew wooden rails – play area Erect direction post Refurbish notice board
9.	Langton Green Charitable Trust	£ 11.00	Hire of hall
10.	Audit Commission	£ 646.25	Fixed fee – Annual accounts
11.	Nick Burgess	£ 6.93	Speldhurst Village web site
12.	Pauline Lambell	£1235.34	
13.	Inland Revenue	£ 453.60	Tax / NI
TOTAL		£4,332.37	

2011 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. The clerk was asked to contact Cliff Worcester for a quotation on hanging the gates to entrance of LGRG.
2. The clerk was asked to contact Highways regarding the continuous closure of Penshurst Road for maintenance work.

3. The clerk was asked to obtain an update on the bund and gate on land adjacent to Rusthall House.
4. Planning Applications for 55 Dornden Drive – Inspectors Meeting on 5th February. Cllr. Parker would attend.
5. Blocked drain Barden Road / Speldhurst Hill – clerk to action
6. Block drained Broom Lane – clerk to action
7. Cllr. Crundwell reported on his recent Chairman`s Meeting.
8. Article to be placed in village magazines asking for information on members of the Armed Forces from the Parish who have been killed in action since 1945 – War Memorials to be updated.

The meeting closed at 10.35pm

CHAIRMAN