



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

**Draft Minutes of the Amenities Working Group Meeting
held on Monday 27th June 2022 at 7.30pm via Teams Electronic Communication**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Rowe (Chair), Mrs Lyle, Norton, Turner, Mrs Woodliffe and Soyke (8.00pm).

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk (AC).

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

1. To Elect a Chairman

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Mrs Lyle as Chairman of the Amenities Working Group/Committee.

2. To Elect a Vice-Chairman

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Rowe as Vice-Chairman of the Amenities Working Group/Committee.

The AC and members thanked Cllr Rowe for all the hard work and commitment he had put into the role during his term as chairman.

3. To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting

The AC would be recording the meeting for the purpose of accuracy of the minutes. The recording would be deleted once the minutes had been signed off at the next meeting.

4. To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Langridge and Norton – both holidays.

5. Disclosures of Interest

There were none.

6. Declarations of Lobbying

Cllr Mrs Lyle said that she was part of the meeting regarding parking for school parents and widening of the pathway from Lampington Row.

7. Minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 1st March 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes, previously forwarded to Members were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8. Public Open Session

There were no members of the public present.

9. To consider the format of future meetings

It had been resolved at the June Full Council meeting that working groups which had operated as committees prior to the Covid pandemic should decide for themselves whether to remain as a working group or resume committee status. A working group could only make recommendations to Full Council, rather than making decisions itself. A committee could make decisions but had to meet in person to do so.

After some discussion it was **RESOLVED** to continue as a working group, subject to review in six months' time. This would allow members for whom shielding continued to be necessary to attend meetings and input virtually. It was also noted that virtual meetings are preferable for members who would otherwise require childcare.

10. Review of Action Points

The AC ran through the table of action points.

Cllr Mrs Woodliffe asked for an update regarding works to the tree in Roopers which had been declined by the Tree Officer. The AC explained that the works were no longer considered necessary and confirmed that all the applicable paperwork regarding the decision not to take any further action would be kept safely on file to illustrate that SPC had acted reasonably.

11. Financial Review

The finance sheets were noted.

12. Parish Council Land

a) Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)

• **To consider the replacement of wooden posts in the rear carpark**

The Groundsman had advised that most of the posts around the rear disabled bays were rotten and would need replacing in the near future. A quotation for two options to replace the posts were provided and it was **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council to replace with the existing type at a cost of approximately £400.

• **To consider responses to the recent survey on the provision of dog bags**

Only one response had been received from a resident regarding the provision of dog bags on the LGRG and members therefore agreed that continuing was not economically sensible. It was **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council to cease provision of dog waste bags

once the existing stocks had been used up. A sign would be put on the dispensers, giving residents a date and at least one month's notice to source their own supplies.

- **To consider removal of the Covid 19 signage in the playground areas**

It was **RESOLVED** to remove the Covid 19 playground signs.

- **To consider replacing the gas rams on the playground gates**

The AC advised that there were currently no gas rams on the gates to the playground (the remaining one having been recently removed by the Groundsman because it was broken) and that replacing them could cost in the region of £1K. The Groundsman had advised that previous gas rams had been very problematic, unreliable, expensive and only had a short life. The Play Inspection Company (who carry out SPC's annual survey) had advised that they were not a health and safety requirement. The gates without the rams were safe and easy to close manually. It was **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council to not replace the gas rams on the playground gates for a period of six months, after which time the decision could be revisited if necessary.

b) The Green at Langton Green

The AC was in the process of obtaining details of all the title registers and in particular the wayleave agreements for properties on The Green. The purpose of this was to make sure a full set of documents showing the rights and responsibilities of all concerned was kept on file for reference.

c) The Boundary, Langton Green

There was nothing to report.

d) The Green at Groombridge

There was nothing to report.

e) Pocket Parks at Speldhurst

Cllr Turner, as Chairman of the Environment Working Group (EWG), advised that they had been busy with their plans to improve the biodiversity of the Pocket Park. They were currently considering various proposals which would be discussed and agreed further at the next Environment Working Group meeting and then referred to the Amenities Working Group for further consideration.

13. Items for Information

- Cllr Rowe had provided an updated schedule of SPC's fixed assets for insurance purposes. It was noted that the replacement value of the playground equipment had more than doubled in price since it was installed. The Chairman thanked Cllr Rowe for all the time and effort spent completing this project.
- Cllr Mrs Soyke asked the AC to find out which part of Ashurst Hill is owned by SPC.

- The swale warning signs had been removed from the recreation ground because they were regularly being vandalised and the swales were currently empty. The AC had diarised for them to be reinstalled in September or sooner should there be an extended period of heavy rain.
- School children were climbing on the stone pillars at the entrance to the LGRG carpark. It was discussed and agreed that it was the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that this stopped.
- Correspondence had been received regarding unauthorised parking in the disabled bays, particularly during school pick up time and the AC had sent an email to the school asking for parents/carers to be reminded that this was not acceptable. This had sparked an email from a parent complaining about the lack of parking provision for the school. The parent in question had been invited into the office for a chat with Cllr Mrs Lyle and the clerks who had explained that no further provision was available. The most effective solution would be for her to work with other parents/carers to reinstate the walking-bus and also park in some of the nearby roads and walk through the alleyways to the school. She had also asked about widening the path leading from Lampington Row and the clerk had put her in touch with Town and Country Housing (TCH) who owned the majority of the land in question. She could come back to SPC once TCH's permission had been obtained.
- An email had also been received via the Village Hall Trustees regarding parking in the disabled bays by non-blue badge holders. Members agreed that temporary signs should be made up which would be attached to the posts adjacent to the parking bays at the front of the office sporadically to remind members of public that the spaces are for blue badge holders only. They asked the AC to contact the Village Hall Trustees requesting that parking considerately is made a condition of all hall bookings and that repeat offenders are written to individually. Cllr Mrs Lyle said that SPC is under no legal obligation to police disabled parking bays – this is out of SPC's remit and staff or councillors do not have the authority to challenge or charge offenders.
- Cllr Turner advised that a feasibility survey had been carried out to investigate EV chargers being installed in the LGRG carpark. Several options are being evaluated and once the results of the survey are available then the EWG will make a recommendation.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting finished at 8.45pm

Chairman

Action	Owner	Date created	Status
Benches on LGRG outside pavilion primarily for café use	KH.	29/11	Benches chosen. Awaiting confirmation from planning officer on how to order/pay for them with developer's fund from TWBC.
Survey of parish trees	KH	Sept	Awaiting quote from Jim Quaife for actions required.
Installation of path on LGRG.	KH	1/3	Quotation obtained. Awaiting confirmation from TWBC regarding how to access developer funding.
Broken bench on LGRG	KH	1/3	Donator to carry out repairs. Check it's been done.
Ownership of LG Green.	KH	1/3	In process of obtaining Title Register documents.
Village Hall Trustees to include condition not to park in disabled bays and write to individual offenders	KH	27/6	KH written to Chair of Trustees. Chair responded, agreed with our request.
Disabled bay signs to be made	KH	27/6	
Replacement of wooden posts in carpark.	KH	27/6	Awaiting agreement from Full Council. KH to instruct groundsman as/when agreed.
Provision of dog bags on LGRG. Current stocks to run out mid-August. KH to put sign on dog bins giving final date after Full Council meeting.	KH	27/6	Awaiting agreement from Full Council.
Covid-19 signage to be removed from carparks	KH	27/6	KH to instruct Groundsman
SPC ownership of Ashurst Hill	KH	27/6	KH to ask Chris May.