



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

Minutes of a Highways Committee Meeting held in the Ellis Room, Langton Green Village Hall on Monday 9th November 2015 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Milner (Chairman), Mrs Horne, Allen and Mercieca with Mrs Norton, Mrs Watson and Mr Wheeler

OFFICER PRESENT: Mr C May – Clerk

There were two members of the public present

- 1. To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** No-one present intended to film, photograph or record the meeting.
- 2. To accept apologies and reason for absence:** Cllr Turner (prior appointment), Cllr Mrs Lyle (family commitment)
- 3. Disclosure of Pecuniary or Other Significant Interests:** There were none.
- 4. Declarations of Lobbying:** Cllr Mrs Horne and Mrs Watson had both been lobbied regarding speeding in the Parish.
- 5. Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Highways Committee meeting dated **10th September 2015** which have previously been distributed to all members, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- 6. Public Open Session:** Mrs Fitzsimmons of Stockland Green Road (SGR) said she approached Southborough Town Council (STC) about HGV traffic using SGR which is an inappropriate route because of the narrow points and sharp bends. STC lobbied KCC to install a sign on Church Road in Southborough where lorries turn off the A26 and continue past Modest Corner which reads "Not suitable for heavy vehicles". This has reduced heavy traffic but they are still seeing HGVs approaching from Speldhurst via Etherington Hill and asked if the Committee could lobby KCC for a similar sign at the other end. The Committee agreed and the Clerk was asked to submit a request.
- 7. Matters Arising and Correspondence:** The Clerk said an incident had been reported where a motorist had driven up the footpath alongside the Vicarage to avoid a traffic queue at The Hare junction. This would be on the agenda of the Amenities Committee meeting on 30th November. As an interim measure he will ask the Groundsman to install two posts to prevent this happening again.

- 8. Monitoring of recent accidents in the Parish:** The Clerk had circulated the up to date list of accidents and advised that the SPC keep these records to support requests for safety measures where the Police and Highways records may be incomplete. He had not received a report from the PCSO and only two accidents had been reported since the last meeting. Residents are encouraged to report any accident they witness with photographs if possible to the Clerk.
- 9. Report on KCC Highways Seminar held on 9th November:** Cllr Milner gave a brief synopsis of the seminar attended by KCC Cllr Clive Pearman, Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport. Cllr Pearman spoke of wider issues such as Budget reductions, Operation Stack and the goal to achieve safe roads. He spoke of Parish Councils being allocated money to spend on local Highways issues and urged all Councils to complete the budget consultation and the Highways and Transportation survey. There were presentations on key activities for KCC Highways from Highways staff on their major projects, resurfacing, street lighting replacement scheme and road works. Cllr John Rivers, Chairman of Wittersham Parish Council spoke of the success of the Parish Caretaker Scheme that they have implemented with three other small councils.
- 10. Campaign to support 20mph outside schools:** The Clerk explained that he has been receiving mixed signals from KCC which has caused a delay of some months. It has now been explained that our KCC Cllr can endorse one or two projects per year without being funded directly from his member fund which will allow a Parish Council to access the Member Highways Fund Team and have priority planning and implementation. It is hoped that John Davies will be able to back our project. Further complications have arisen due to KCC insisting that unless there is a mean speed of 24mph or less then any 20mph zone will require traffic calming. The Clerk has asked for clarification on this. KCC Cllr Clive Pearman said (at the seminar) that KCC was to produce a policy on how Parish Councils can fund improvements to highways which he hoped would be available in January.
- 11. Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs):** It was agreed initially to approve four sites for SIDs, some of which could be used either way. They were: Groombridge Green (north); Park Farm, Langton Road, Langton Green (west); Ashurst Hill on newly acquired land (both ways) and Speldhurst Hill (both ways). These sites would be submitted to KCC Highways for approval. It was agreed that a SID with a smiley or sad face or saying “thank you” or “slow down” was desirable.
- 12. Outstanding issues by village:**
- a) **Groombridge**
 - Request for traffic calming measures. Cllr Milner, the Clerk and Anne Norton were scheduled to meet the Old Groombridge Community Group on Monday 16th November.
 - b) **Ashurst**
 - Ashurst Bridge – Claire Watson explained that vegetation was obscuring signage near the bridge. The Clerk would ask the Groundsman to clear it.
 - c) **Speldhurst**
 - Barden Road – the new double yellow lines had made the sight line of motorists approaching from Bidborough clearer as no cars now parked there. It was agreed to monitor the situation over the next two or three months to see if the situation improved.
 - Parking issues – the sign still had not been installed. A van was consistently parking near the Church end of Barden Road between the two new railings recently installed. The Clerk was asked to request that the double yellow lines were repainted.
 - Stockland Green Road – see Public Open Session
 - Speldhurst Road - review of 60mph zone. The Clerk reported that he had been advised by Earl Bourner, District Manager – Tunbridge Wells that a traffic survey was the best way to verify the mean speed along the 60mph stretch of road. If the speed was near 40mph then Highways could adjust the speed limit. If it is too high then another approach would be needed. The Committee agreed to recommend that a traffic survey be carried out at a cost of about £550.00.

d) **Langton Green**

- The Hare crossroads – Cllr Milner and the Clerk would re-examine the problem of cars mounting the pavement.
- Broom Lane – the Clerk was asked to request better signage about the height restriction of the bridge at the A264 end of the lane.

13. Bus Shelters: The Clerk would be proceeding with their installation.

14. Speedwatch:

- a) The Clerk said that more volunteers were approaching him and one or two Councillors were needed to lead the sessions. Cllr Allen put his name forward and another call for a volunteer would be requested at Full Council in December. The Clerk would request another training session.

15. Entry Statements to villages (gateways): This was to be progressed possibly in conjunction the installation of 20 mph if traffic calming was required.

16. Review of Highways Committee's budget: The Clerk circulated and reviewed the figures. He said that the money allocated would be spent on the SIDs and 20mph projects and only 50% would be re-instated in the next financial year.

17. Items for Information: Cllr Mercieca said that Southern Gas has started work in Dornden Drive and is expected to finish in January. He was monitoring the situation.
Cllr Mrs Horne asked that the Clerk request that Hurst House, Langton Road, Speldhurst be requested to cut their hedge back to the correct height.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.37pm

Chairman