



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 3rd DECEMBER 2012 at 7.00pm
IN THE ELLIS ROOM, LANGTON GREEN VILLAGE HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys (Chairman), Mrs Horne (arrived 7.50pm), Mrs Hull, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Hemming, Langridge, Milner, Owen, Parker, Pendleton, Turner and Woodward

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs M Flemington – Assistant Clerk

Borough Councillor David Jukes

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There was one member of the public present.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: County Councillor John Davies and Borough Councillor Julian Stanyer

12/348 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY OR SIGNIFICANT OTHER INTERESTS: There were none.

12/349 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING: There were none.

12/350 MINUTES: The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **5TH November 2012**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed as a true record.

12/351 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS: Borough Councillor David Jukes reported that the Borough Council will not know their Council Tax base until 21st December but that likely reductions will necessitate the Borough Council cutting back on services and staff. This in turn will mean the Borough Council passing responsibility for services such as allotments, street lighting, public toilets etc. to Town and Parish Councils.

TWBC was already looking for savings and had merged its IT department in Maidstone saving £200k. The Council Tax increase in the next financial year was limited to 1.9% without a referendum.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys asked about Southwood Road playing fields and he confirmed that after the boundary change in 2015 this will be back in Rusthall parish.

Cllr Mrs Soyke expressed concern at the impact the proposed expansion of Langton Green Primary School could have on Langton Green Recreation car park. He said that KCC would have to put in place the infrastructure, including car parking, for any school expansion.

12/352 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION: Peter Ponsford, a Langton Green resident spoke and asked why the Langton Green Primary School expansion proposals were not on the agenda for this meeting. Cllr Mrs

Jeffreys advised that as the feasibility study is not completed yet and as the consultation runs until 14th January 2013 it will be on the agenda for the meeting on 7th January 2013.

He asked why a neighbourhood plan has not been started yet. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys and Cllr Mrs Hull advised that work had already been started in that the Working Group had been appointed. However, it was not considered to be cost effective for the Working Group to make immediate or detailed plans which might conflict with Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) and TWBC proposals, noting that KALC and TWBC are still working on the template for Parish Councils to use. A meeting of the Neighbourhood Planning Working Group, including volunteers from members of the public, has already been scheduled and will be held on 21st January 2013. Early actions will be to review the template and then to progress from there. Several Councillors are attending a Neighbourhood Planning seminar on 10th December.

He also referred to the precept and urged Councillors to spend it wisely. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys assured him that every decision on expenditure is carefully considered.

12/353 FINANCE COMMITTEE – Report by Cllr Mrs Jeffreys

- i) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported that the Finance Committee meeting due to be held on 19th November had been cancelled.
- ii) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported that there had been seven email decisions in the last month; it was agreed to join the email notification system for the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign at a cost of £10 for a year; it was agreed to support the Speldhurst website hosting (for the last time) at a cost of approx. £75; it was agreed to grant £500 to St Mary's, Speldhurst for churchyard maintenance; it was agreed to spend up to £200 fixing the Christmas lights at Groombridge; it was agreed to donate £55 to the Mayor's Christmas toy appeal; it was agreed to spend £30 for the local KALC secretary honorarium; it was agreed to donate £50 to Victim Support.
- iii) Langton Green Netball Club grant request – After discussion it was **AGREED** that the Clerk will obtain further information from the Netball Club and the decision will be deferred until the meeting on 7th January 2013.
- iv) Landscape Services Contract for maintenance of LGRG and other Council owned areas – The Clerk advised that the playground inspections will no longer be part of the contract costs as they will be carried out by the Groundsman. After discussion it was **AGREED** that the figures put forward by Landscape Services are acceptable but that the Clerk will seek to obtain a three year contract at a fixed rate if possible.
- v) Precept 2013/14 – As the Council Tax base has not yet been advised it was **AGREED** to confirm to TWBC the precept of £125,000 for 2013/14 agreed at the Full Council meeting on 5th November with the caveat that it can be revised if the government measures affecting parish councils change significantly.

12/354 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – Invoices verified by Cllr Mrs Hull

<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
<u>Additional Payments in November not listed</u>			
Allsigns	MT42	192.00	Balance of ownership sign
Hospice in the Weald	042	750.00	Donation/Grant
SLCC	043	295.00	Clerks' membership
KCC (KCS)	DD	435.66	Photocopier rental/usage
KCC (KCS)	DD	513.60	Cycle racks
UK Debt Management Office	DD	3,373.94	PWLB Instalment
<u>Payments in December</u>			
Barcham Trees	044	915.60	Trees re Furzefield Avenue
John Roberts	045	366.00	Internal Auditor fees
GACC	046	10.00	Subscription to GACC
Langton Green Primary Sch	047	8,690.00	Grant re fencing

K Lawrence	048	15.00	Cleaner
Mayors Charity Account	049	55.00	Toy Appeal
St Mary's Church	050	500.00	Churchyard Grant
Ashurst McDermott Hall	051	30.00	Meeting Room
TWBC	DD	53.00	Rates
KCC (KCS)	DD	143.99	Rock Salt
M Flemington	MT43	623.41	Salary
M Flemington	MT44	44.20	Expenses
C May	MT45	1,355.57	Salary
HMRC	052	699.68	Tax & NI
Burns Guthrie	MT46	780.00	Post construction services
L G Charitable Trust	MT47	48.50	Meeting Rooms
Mr L Cooper	MT48	100.00	Groundsman duties
Cleartrack	MT49	1,662.13	Tree planting Furzefield Ave
Prestige Web Marketing	MT50	60.00	Website support
RIP Cleaning Services	053	216.00	November dog bins

Total payments **£16,368.08**

12/355 HIGHWAYS REPORT:

Cllr Mrs Podbury advised that she and the Clerk have completed and submitted the KCC Highways Tracker Survey. She reported that there have been several accidents in the Parish in the last month and that KCC Highways Department have no funding left other than for safety critical work for the remainder of the financial year. She expressed concern at the lack of progress on the ISS in Speldhurst and the delays on the urgent works in Groombridge. **The Clerk to contact Kent Highway Services again.** She also expressed concern about the overcrowded school buses. **The Clerk to follow up with County Councillor John Davies.** A Highways Committee Meeting will be held on 18th January 2013.

12/356 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND:

- i) There is nothing further to report on the Pavilion at present.
- ii) The Clerk reported that he is trying to obtain the timber to secure the overflow car park.

12/357 COUNCIL POLICIES ANNUAL REVIEW:

- i) Temporary signs on Council land policy – the decision was deferred until January.
- ii) Grant Awarding Guidelines – the decision was deferred until January

12/358 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported on the Parish Chairmen's meeting she attended on 27th November and the open meeting held at Langton Green Primary School on 20th November to discuss two-class entry in 2013. This will be on the agenda of the January meeting. Cllr Mrs Hull reported that parents from both Langton Green and Speldhurst were concerned about their children not gaining places at village schools.

12/359 COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- i) Governance – Cllr Pendleton said that there is nothing to report.
- ii) Planning – Cllr Langridge reported that nine applications were considered at the last Committee meeting and referred to his report. Cllr Mrs Hull reported the comments of the Committee on the government proposals to relax planning permission for small extensions at the November KALC meeting.
- iii) Amenities – Cllr Milner reported that a Committee meeting was held on 19th November and the minutes have been circulated.
- iv) Footpaths – Cllr Milner reported that he and the volunteers are assessing dangerous junctions of footpaths with roads and asking KCC to assist with hand rails or squeeze stiles in these locations. KCC are going to replace the damaged footpath marker posts on Speldhurst Hill and at

- Ashurst and to carry out improvements to the bridleway in Shadwell Wood. The footpath volunteers will replace the footpath 'Walkers Board' map on new posts outside St Mary's Church.
- v) Broadband – Cllr Woodward reported that the DEFRA bid is now in the hands of KCC and will be submitted by 7th December.
 - vi) KALC – Cllr Mrs Hull reported on the KALC meeting she attended on 14th November and the Local Strategic Partnership meeting she attended on 21st November.
 - vii) Neighbourhood Planning Working Group – Cllr Turner reported that a meeting of Councillors was held on 22nd November. A further meeting of Councillors will be held on 14th January followed by a meeting on 21st January to involve the volunteer members of the public. In addition the Councillors are attending a CPRE training seminar on 10th December.
 - viii) Environment Working Group – Cllr Mrs Hull reported that there is a meeting of the Environment Working Group on 11th December.

12/360 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 5th NOVEMBER 2012:

Cllr Langridge reported that he had been to visit Mrs Bradley of Cyclists Rest.

The posts at LGRG car park that keep getting hit by cars and the quality of the Village Hall CCTV camera were discussed. Cllr Parker said that the Trustees would look into upgrading the CCTV but may not have the funds. The Clerk will have the posts repaired.

12/361 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

1. Letter dated 2nd November from the Co-Operative Bank confirming the £75,000 investment in the Corporate Fixed Rate Deposit Account
2. Letter dated 8th November from the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal thanking SPC for their donation
3. Letter dated 12th November from Kent County Council and NHS Kent Primary Care Trusts with an invitation for free 'winter warmth' awareness training
4. Letter dated 14th November from South East Water regarding their Compulsory Metering Programme – It was **AGREED** that notices about this will be put on the notice boards and website
5. Letter dated 15th November from the Office of Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Kent inviting the Chairman of SPC to the Annual Civic Service at Maidstone All Saints Church on Tuesday 13th March 2013 – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys is unable to attend – **Cllr Milner will attend**
6. Letter dated 17th November from Mrs Dena Green asking whether the Parish Council would give her permission to put a seat or bench in the Pocket Park, Speldhurst in memory of her husband – It was **AGREED** that the Clerk will write to her to give permission as long as the bench complies with SPC requirements
7. Email dated 30th November from Team CSU – November newsletter (circulated)
8. Letter dated 21st November from English Rural enclosing their 2012 Annual Report
9. Undated letter from Woodland Trust asking for support
10. Internal Audit Report dated 21st November
11. ACRK Rural news edition 123
12. Unity Trust Newsletter issue 3
13. Letter dated 26th November from Ashurst & Blackham Sports Association – thank you for the grant
14. Letter dated 20th November from Hospice in the Weald thanking us for the grant
15. Email dated 8th November from St John Ambulance Brigade regarding concern in the public sector workplace about not enough trained first aiders
16. Invitation to the CPRE Kent AGM on 13th December at Lenham at 2pm and a copy of Autumn/Winter edition of Kent Voice
17. Email dated 2nd December from Mr Salvidge (resident of Lampington Row) outlining the reasons why he is against the proposed expansion of Langton Green Primary School and asking what the stance of the SPC is.

12/362 DIARY DATES:

1. Monday 3rd December – Meeting at Langton Green Primary School – **2pm**
2. Monday 3rd December – **Full Council Meeting** – Langton Green Village Hall, Committee Room
3. Thursday 6th December – Clerks' lunch
4. Thursday 6th December – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys meeting at Speldhurst School – **1pm**
5. Monday 10th December – CPRE Neighbourhood Planning Seminar – Borough Green
6. Tuesday 11th December – Meet local Police Officers at LGVH 12noon – 1pm
7. Tuesday 11th December – Environment Working Group Meeting – Parish Council Office
8. Wednesday 12th December – First Aid Course, Pepenbury, Pembury – Assistant Clerk
9. Monday 24th December – Tuesday 1st January 2013 – office closed
10. Monday 7th January – **Full Council Meeting** – Speldhurst Village Hall, Committee Room

12/363 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

Cllr Milner reported on the CPRE Positive Planning Seminar that he and several other Councillors attended on 30th November.

Cllr Mrs Soyke reported that car parking charges are being introduced at Ashurst Station soon.

Cllr Owen reported that a van regularly parks by the Texaco garage on Langton Road making the garage access dangerous. **The Clerk to ask the PCSO to investigate.**

The Clerk thanked Cllr Mrs Hull and the Assistant Clerk for all their work on the Furzefield Avenue and Southfields tree planting project.

Cllr Mrs Podbury advised that she is stepping down as the Parish Council's representative on Speldhurst Village Hall Trust and that Cllr Turner is willing to be the new representative. This will be on the Agenda at the Full Council Meeting on 7th January 2013.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.17pm

CHAIRMAN