



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

**MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 6th DECEMBER 2010 at 7.30pm
IN THE LANGTON GREEN VILLAGE HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys (Chairman), Mrs Paulson-Ellis, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Hull, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Waters, Brown, Ellis, Langridge, Milner, Parker, Pendleton and Wheeler

OFFICERS PRESENT: Chris May, Clerk; Mrs M Flemington, Assistant Clerk

There were approximately 15 members of the public present.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: There were none

10/168 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST:

Personal & Prejudicial Cllr Mrs Soyke – 14 – appointment of trustee for Ashurst McDermott Hall Trust.

Personal & Prejudicial Cllr Parker - 11 – Parish Council Office, 13 – appointment of trustee for Langton Green Charitable Trust and 15 – request from Langton Green Rural Society to place their Christmas tree close to the village sign on council land.

Personal & Prejudicial – Cllr Ellis – 13 – appointment of trustee for Langton Green Charitable Trust

Personal & Prejudicial – Cllr Mrs Waters – 12 – Local Schools

Personal Cllrs Brown and Langridge – 15 – the request from Langton Green Rural Society to place their Christmas tree close to the village sign on council land

Personal & Prejudicial The clerk - approval of his overtime (10/155i)

10/169 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING: Cllr Mrs Podbury had been contacted by a number of residents regarding the precept but did not express any opinions.

10/170 MINUTES: The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **1st November 2010**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.

The Minutes of the Extraordinary Full Council Meeting held on **29th November 2010**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.

10/171 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:

Jeremy Sterling said he thought the Parish Council should not get involved with matters such as Highways. Chris Ponsford stated that she thought that £115,000 should be the maximum precept and not a suggested figure as recorded in the minutes of the meeting dated 29th November. She said that many people would be willing to volunteer and save Parish Council expenditure. Mike Bender said that Langton Green Sports Club will help with cleaning and maintenance of the pavilion but would like some more storage space. Miles Phillips stated that he is still unhappy with the 98% increase without consultation. John Jeffrey said he is still concerned about reserves and contingencies and is also now concerned about the highways measures required for Speldhurst Local Needs Housing. Peter Ponsford stated that the Government advises restraint and he wants the precept reduced. He produced spreadsheets with drastic budget cuts showing a precept of £35,000. Ian Danks referred to the KALC

40% recommendation and said that he disputes it. He is also worried about items of expenditure that might arise from the Speldhurst Local Needs Housing.

10/172 FINANCE COMMITTEE – Report by Cllr Parker

- i) The clerk left the room. The clerk's overtime was **APPROVED**. The clerk rejoined the meeting.
- ii) Cllr Parker reported that there had been four email decisions by the Finance Committee. A payment of £500.00 to St Mary's Church Speldhurst towards Churchyard maintenance was approved. A donation of £50.00 to the Mayor of Tunbridge Wells Christmas Toy Appeal was approved. The subscription to the Woodland Trust was approved. Payment of £81.41 for the hosting of Speldhurst Village Website was approved.
- iii) Consideration and approval of the Precept for 2011-2012
Cllr Mrs Jeffreys invited all members to make any further points they felt were relevant.
Cllr Wheeler said the Precept was discussed at length at the Finance Committee Meeting on 8th November and voting was 7-0 in favour of £133,900. Cllr Mrs Podbury said she had concerns about a precept of £133,900 and would like it reduced to £123,900 but not any lower. Cllr Ellis spoke in favour of £123,900. Cllr Langridge confirmed that he had proposed a precept in the region of £110-115,000 at the Extraordinary Meeting on 29th November. He accepted that there is always work to be done in the Parish but feels the lower figure showed constraint. Cllr Milner echoed Cllr Langridge's views and said volunteers should be helpful in keeping costs down. Cllr Mrs Waters said it needs to be considered that even small budget cuts could have an adverse effect on the community. Cllr Mrs Paulson-Ellis accepted that the Council had taken some criticism from members of the public but pointed out that they have every opportunity to attend Parish Council meetings but rarely do so. Cllr Brown said he doesn't believe the Parish Council should get involved in expenditure on items such as Highways and he will vote for the lowest figure. Cllr Mrs Hull said Parish Vision was always about involving the whole community and she would like to see the precept at £113,900. Cllr Pendleton reminded the council that there was a unanimous vote for a precept of £133,900 at the Finance Meeting, he would like this kept to, and Parish Vision was to establish residents' priorities. Cllr Mrs Soyke said the nicest thing she had heard all evening was the offer of volunteers from residents of the parish. She also pointed out that for a Band D property the difference of £10,000 between precept amounts equates to 42p/month. Cllr Parker stated that nothing apart from public views has changed since the Finance Committee voted 7-0 in favour of a precept of £133,900. He is concerned for the future if it is reduced and wants and supports a precept of £133,900. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said she really appreciates all the offers of help; Parish Vision has produced lots of volunteers and long term goals. She respects what has been said by members of the public but the Council needs to consider the future. Cllr Mrs Soyke added that all Councillors want to be very careful about the precept and will continue to scrutinise all expenditure. Cllr Pendleton added that if the Finance Committee had been aware of the Football Club's offer in terms of Langton Green Pavilion the budget figure for this item could have been reduced.

The proposed amendment to £113,900 was voted on and defeated 5-7 with one abstention.

The proposed amendment to £123,900 was voted on and **CARRIED by 8 votes to 4** with one abstention.

Councillors then **RESOLVED** that the amended precept of £123,900 be submitted to TWBC for collection.

10/173 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – November 2010 – Invoices verified by Cllr Wheeler

<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount</u> <u>Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
St Mary's Church	966	£500.00	Churchyard Grant
C May	967	£2,890.50	C May
C May	968	£29.38	Padlock
Mr L Cooper	969	£100.00	Groundsman
St George's Community	970	£50.00	TW Mayor's Toy Appeal
The Woodland Trust	971	£33.00	Membership
KALC	972	£17.00	AGM
John Roberts	973	£348.00	Internal Audit
C May	967	£2,890.50	Wrong cheque detail
C May	967	£2,890.50	Footpath container
BT PLC	974	£34.49	Mobile
Prestige Web Marketing	975	£30.00	Website Updates Oct-Dec

C May	976	£58.52	Sleepers
M R Lawrence	977	£130.00	Ashurst Strimming
M R Lawrence	978	£90.00	Speldhurst Roopers
LGCT	979	£23.50	Hall Hire Oct
Ashurst McDermott Hall Trust	980	£77.50	Aug-Nov Hall Hire
Viking Direct	981	£130.07	Paper
C May	982	£39.98	Storage Boxes
RIP Cleaning Services	983	£105.75	Canine Refuse
N Burgess	984	£81.41	Speldhurst Website
HMRC	985	£618.55	Tax & NI
M Flemington	986	£386.50	Salary
M Flemington	987	£118.56	Expenses & Travel
C May	988	£1,205.12	Salary
C May	989	£0.00	Cheque Cancelled
C May	990	£194.00	Expenses
	Total	£7,291.83	
	Payments		

10/174 HIGHWAYS REPORT

- i) The ISS installations in Ashurst and Groombridge are already having a beneficial effect on traffic speeds.
- ii) Nothing has been received in writing yet from English Rural Housing Association regarding traffic calming in Speldhurst.
- iii) **The Clerk will reply to the letter from KHS re the Speed Limit Review Process.**
- iv) **Speed watch results will be sent to Kent Police.** The speed watch carried out a Speldhurst Nursery School was very successful and a good public relations exercise.
- v) Speed watch training will be organised in the New Year. It is open to members of the public as well as Councillors. Any members of the public wishing to be speed watch trained should contact the Clerk.
- vi) The one tonne salt and grit bag has been delivered to LGRG car park. Lots of the roadside bins are now empty or very low. A working party of Councillors and members of the public will spread the salt/grit at LGRG car park on 7th December. A decision on whether to purchase a lockable salt bin will be made once it has been established if the one tonne bag can be refilled/replaced by KHS.

10/175 ENHANCEMENT OF THE LAND OUTSIDE THE OLD WATSON HALL

The drawings are awaited from Monson Engineering.

10/008 PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE:

The meeting due to be held was cancelled due to the snow.

2249 PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE:

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys and the Clerk are meeting the Council's Solicitors Donaldson West on 7th December regarding the transfer of land.

10/176 LOCAL SCHOOLS

Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Podbury and Mrs Waters attended a meeting on 12th November with Mrs Hayward Headteacher of Speldhurst Primary School regarding grants, speed/road safety and Marchiennes. A second meeting was arranged for 1st December but had to be cancelled because of the snow.

Cllrs Mrs Soyke, Ellis and Parker left the room

10/177 APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEE FOR LANGTON GREEN CHARITABLE TRUST

Marianne Buckley was willing to serve for another 12 months. It was **AGREED** that she was re-appointed.

10/177 APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEE FOR ASHURST McDERMOTT HALL TRUST

Cllr Mrs Soyke was willing to serve for another 12 months. It was **AGREED** that she was re-appointed.

10/178 TO CONSIDER THE REQUEST FROM LANGTON GREEN RURAL SOCIETY TO PLACE THEIR CHRISTMAS TREE CLOSE TO THE VILLAGE SIGN ON COUNCIL LAND

This was **AGREED** provided it was safely secured.

Cllrs Mrs Soyke, Ellis and Parker re-joined the meeting.

10/178 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Cllr Mrs Jeffreys thanked those Councillors who placed poppy wreaths on Remembrance Sunday. She reported that she has met Mrs Law and there are no more unresolved planning issues. She attended the Parish Council Chairman's meeting on 2nd November where available funds for Heritage Projects were discussed; the land outside the Old Watson Hall may be eligible. There was also discussion regarding the QE2 Project – Playgrounds for the future. This will be passed on to the new Amenities Committee.

10/163 COMMITTEE REPORTS

- i) Governance Committee – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported that there had been no meeting since the last Full Council meeting and that the Risk Assessment is in progress and should be ready for approval at the January meeting.
- ii) Planning – Cllr Mrs Podbury advised that there was nothing to report.
- iii) Parish Vision – Cllr Mrs Podbury reported that there had been a meeting on 12th November. After some discussion Cllr Mrs Podbury advised that the Terms of Reference will be amended and re-presented at the next Full Council Meeting.
- iv) Recreation Ground – Cllr Ellis reported that there has been no meeting since the last Full Council meeting. The clerk reported that he has ordered the dog bag dispensers and an additional bin and had saved in the region of £450 by choosing a combi bin and bag dispenser.
- v) Footpaths – Cllr Milner reported that the Container is being delivered on 7th December.
- vi) KALC – Cllr Brown thanked Cllr Mrs Podbury for attending the AGM on 13th November. Cllr Mrs Hull advised that the Courier newspaper would welcome more news reports on local events.
- vii) Local Needs Housing – Cllr Wheeler reported that a committee meeting was held on 5th November together with a meeting with ERHA. It was **AGREED** to accept the offer from TWBC that Langton Green residents will be eligible for 3 of the houses on the Middlefield development. Cllr Mrs Hull reiterated that she considers TWBC Policy is fragmenting the Parish. A consultation for Site 15 LNH in Speldhurst is to be held on 16th February 3-7pm in Speldhurst Village Hall. Cllrs considered that there should be an additional date with possibly varying times too.
- viii) Environment – Cllr Brown reported that there had been a meeting on 24th November. It is proposed to put 'Eco Tips' in the village magazines. The new Terms of Reference were **AGREED**.

10/164 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 1st NOVEMBER 2010

There were no matters arising

10/165 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- i) Letter from Kent Fire and Rescue Authority advising of its Consultation Document 'Towards 2020'. Closing date for comments is 17th January 2011.
- ii) Letter from David Jukes regarding the Mayor's Charity Quiz Night on Saturday 22nd January 2011 in aid of Pepenbury and the National Rheumatoid Arthritis Society. Ticket applications by 17th December 2010. **The Parish Council will consider taking a table.**
- iii) Letter from M&N Communications Ltd regarding the future of the Civic Complex in Tunbridge Wells.
- iv) Letter from the Office of Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Kent giving details of the annual Civic Service at Canterbury Cathedral on Tuesday 29 March 2011. **No one is available to attend.**
- v) Email from Charlotte Conroy Secretary of Langton Green School PTA Committee asking for the Parish Council's permission to hang an advertising banner on the gate at LGRG for the School Christmas Bazaar and the Summer Fete on 26th June 2011.
- vi) Letter from Greg Clark MP stating he will consider carefully the Parish Council's comments on the Government's Community Right to Build proposals.
- vii) Email from Kent High Weald Partnership asking for support in highlighting the work they do for KCC to bear in mind at this time of cutbacks. **Given to Cllr Milner.**
- viii) Letter from KCC regarding their Annual Performance Report for 2009/2010.
- ix) Letter from Porchlight promoting their new Campaign 'Change a Future' which aims to get the public involved in letting them know the whereabouts of rough sleepers in Kent.

- x) Letter from UK Power Networks advising that from 1st November 2010 the former EDF Energy Networks businesses will operate under their name.
- xi) Letter from Greg Clark MP thanking the Parish Council for sending him the Parish Vision report and asking if he can be of any help with the speeding traffic issues .
- xii) Letter from Patricia Bowdidge asking for help in locating Danemore Farm, Leggs Lane on the old 1809 maps. Given to **Cllr Mrs Podbury**.
- xiii) Open Spaces Society Autumn 2010 publication.
- xiv) ACRK Oast to Coast Autumn 2010 publication.
- xv) CPRE Countryside Voice Winter 2010 publication.
- xvi) Brochure from the Colvin Commercial Services Cleaning Group.

10/166 DIARY DATES

Tuesday 7th 2pm – Chairman and clerk meeting with Wendy Bishop Donaldson West Solicitors regarding transfer of land advice for the LGVH extension and office.

Wednesday 8th – KALC TWAC Meeting 7.30pm

Tuesday 14th – Planning Committee Meeting 7.30pm LGVH

Wednesday 15th – Clerk's Meeting at TWBC – Paul Cummings and Parish Clerks 9.00am

Monday 10th January – Full Council at Committee Room Speldhurst Village Hall

10/105 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

Cllr Brown wished everyone happy Christmas as in the interests of the environment he will not be sending cards.

Cllr Parker warned of bogus phone calls about computer problems. He also advised that Roger Mallett has had a heart attack and he will send him best wishes from the Parish Council. **A card will be sent to him from the Parish Council.**

Cllr Langridge advised that a successful litter patrol was carried out in Langton recently with help from members of the public.

Cllr Mrs Podbury advised that the 285 bus did not always go to Sainsbury's. **Clerk to enquire.**

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.10pm

CHAIRMAN