

Speldhurst Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON

MONDAY, 8th SEPTEMBER at 7.45pm IN THE VILLAGE HALL, SPELDHURST

PRESENT: Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Hull, Mrs Paulson-Ellis, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Waters, Brown, Ellis, Langridge, Stevens and Wheeler

County Councillor John Davies

Four members of the public – Agenda Item 15 – Smallbrook Farm Fields

2083 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllr. Brown – Personal Interest in Item 20 (Holmewood House School – Future Development) – as he lives in a neighbouring road

Cllr. Mrs Paulson-Ellis – expressed a Personal & Prejudicial interest in Item 15 as she personally knows the mother of the tenant of Smallbrook Farm and duly left the room.

2084 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs. Mrs Soyke - holiday

Cllr. Colley - unwell

Cllr. Parker - holiday

2085 MINUTES: The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st July, having previously been distributed to members, were approved and signed.

2086 AGENDA ITEMS

It was unanimously agreed to bring Agenda Item 15 forward – see 2089

2072 Your Parish Council

It was unanimously agreed to defer this item to the October meeting.

2073 Standing Orders and Financial Regulations – Adoption by Council

Following clarification from KALC it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Standing Orders as previously circulated.

2074 Parish Council Questionnaire

Cllr. Langridge had drafted a questionnaire which had been circulated prior to the meeting. It was agreed to delay further discussion until after the Affordable Housing questionnaire had been circulated.

2087 TWBC`s Ward Walks – Parish Walks

TWBC were carrying out a series of Ward Walks – Speldhurst Parish Council`s would be in 2010.

2075 Parish Council Notice Board – Langton Green

It was unanimously agreed that the Langton Green Notice Board be moved to the Recreation Ground and the Clerk was asked to obtain a price for a new Notice Board to be placed in Ashurst.

2015 P.A.C.T. (Partners and Communities Together)

Cllr. Brown advised that he had attended two PACT meetings one in Rusthall and the other in High Brooms and felt that Speldhurst Parish Council were already addressing the issues that were raised at these meetings.

It was agreed to delay any further discussion.

2028-3 TWBC – Affordable Housing Needs Survey – Approval of Letter

Cllr. Mrs Waters felt that the proposed letter could be misleading to residents and it was agreed that Cllr. Mrs Waters and the Clerk would meet to discuss.

2060 Appointment of Parish Council Representative on Langton Green Charitable Trust

Although two residents had expressed an interest both were unable to pursue further. It was agreed to place a small ad in the Langton Life magazine.

2018-3 Speed Hump and Give Way Lining

It was unanimously agreed to proceed with the Sturgeon`s quotation of £940.00 for the speed hump and £395 for the lining.

2080 Mayor to visit all Parish Council – the Clerk was asked to contact the Mayor`s office for a suitable date (possibly a Surgery).

2088 Highways – Speldhurst

During the summer break, the Clerk had been contacted by a number of Speldhurst residents expressing concerns with traffic in Speldhurst. Copy correspondence had also been received via Greg Clark MP`s office. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys advised that a meeting had been arranged with County Councillor Keith Ferrin and a Senior Highways Engineer for 18th September. It was unanimously agreed that Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys, Podbury and the Clerk should attend this meeting and report back to the Parish Council.

2089 Smallbrook Farm Fields – Rave

The Parish Council had been contacted by residents in Speldhurst following a late night Rave. This incident had been discussed at the recent Parish Council Surgery with Borough Councillor David Jukes who was dealing with this via the various departments at Borough Council.

2090 Hollonds Farm

- **Travellers** – The recent occupation by travellers was discussed.

- **Adjacent Allotments – damage to water pipes.** It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk should contact the Secretary of the Allotments asking them to contact the Parish Council should they need funding assistance.

2091 Parish Council – Style of Name Change

The Clerk had received information regarding alternative names and styles for Parish Councils. A brief discussion took place and the Clerk was asked to obtain further information.

1960 PARISH COUNCIL SURGERIES

2nd September - attended by Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Hull, Mrs Paulson-Ellis, Mrs Podbury, Langridge, Ellis, the Clerk and Borough Councillor David Jukes.

Lawrie Hurst – Speldhurst resident. Expressing concerns with regard to mobility in and around Speldhurst village - cars parked on pavements make this impossible.

Andrew and Sarah Frazer – Speldhurst residents. Concerns with the use of Smallbrook Farm Fields following recent RAVE.

Roger Dixon – Speldhurst resident. Concern with tree opposite his property.

PCSO Ray Nuttall – Police Speed Watch sessions on 10th and 17th September.

2092 Disability Village Walk

PCSO Ray Nuttall had been contacted by a Langton Green resident regarding the lack of disability access around the village. Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Hull, Langridge, Parker and the Clerk had attended a walk of the village and had identified a number of concerns which would be brought to Kent Highway Services` attention. Overhanging vegetation had been reported and had already been actioned.

Cllrs. Mrs Podbury and Hull would also carry out a similar walk of Speldhurst and report trouble areas to the Clerk.

2093 Matters for updating from the Minutes dated 21st July 2008

1825-3 Ashurst Village Play Area / Registering of Common Ground - Nothing to report

1887-4Highways

- i) **Highways Projects** - See Finance Report
- ii) **Crossing from the Recreation Ground to The Twitten** - chasing Jacobs Report
- iii) **Speldhurst Hill – safe crossing** - chasing Jacobs Report
- iv) **Barden Road – footpaths** - chasing Jacobs Report

1939-7 Langton Green School – Safer Crossing Area - Nothing further to report

2007-2 Ashurst Interactive Speed Sign - See Finance Report

2043 Trustees of Langton Green Charitable Trust – letter dated 31st March 2008

Transfer to the Parish Council of the strip of land to the side of the former Watson Hall – Nothing to report

Future expansion of the Langton Green Village Hall - Nothing to report.

1965 Conservation Area – the Clerk had received an email from Brian Hayward concerning partnership costs for work to the Langton Green War Memorial. As funding had not been discussed the Clerk was asked to write expressing the Parish Council's concerns and copy in Cllr. Mrs Elizabeth Thomas – Portfolio Holder.

2042 BT Telephone Box – TWBC Planning had confirmed that they had no objections to the removal of the telephone call box.

2047-2 Barbed wire fencing at the top of Groombridge Hill. Cllr. Stevens would investigate.

2062-3 Accident on A264 – It was agreed that any contact with the driver would be unlikely.

2062-9 Overhanging trees from The Twitten – Roopers – Cllr. Stevens had arranged a site visit by Jonathan Bibby to ascertain ownership.

2077-1 Holmewood Ridge East Limited – delay until Planning Application received for Holmewood House School

2077-2 Holmewood House School – Development of School – Planning Application should be received shortly.

2077-6 Parking in The Chapel – the Clerk had received a response from the Chapel Coordinator; `this has been discussed at length by the Chapel Committee and the conclusion reached was that it was impractical to rent out car parking spaces`.

2093 DIARY DATES

18th September – Highways Meeting

14th October – Kent Highway Services – Parish and Town Seminar - Clerk attending

15th October - Parish Council Surgery – Ashurst Village Hall – 2pm - 3.30pm

20th October – Parish Council Meeting – Ashurst Village Hall 7.45pm

2094 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

1. KCC – Annual Plan 2008/09 – Handed to Cllr. Mrs Podbury
2. Speldhurst Village Fete – thank you for £500 grant towards the cost of Fete Insurance.

3. Clerks` Satisfaction Survey September 2007 – August 2008. An opportunity for clerks to express their views upon the strengths, weaknesses and effectiveness of the Standards Committee.
4. TWBC – Feedback from the Training for Parish Chairman/Vice-Chairmen and Clerks on the Workshops arranged by the Standards Committee Chairman.
5. TWBC – letter from Chief Executive Sheila Wheeler. As part of the investigation into TWBC`s organisation the Audit Commission has requested a list of key stakeholders so that they can be contacted with regard to a short questionnaire with regard to TWBC`s performance re-assessment. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys and the Clerk to complete.
6. St John`s, Groombridge. Thank you for £400 grant towards churchyard maintenance.
7. SAT NAVS – Following article which in appeared in the Courier. Roads have been identified in our Parish as causing problems. Councillors to let the Clerk have any additional roads that they feel should be included.
8. Kent Highway Services – Parish & Town Council Seminar 14th October. Mainly for clerks and limited to one place per Parish Council.

Content : Community Operations Role, Liaison Officers and Engineers, role of the Liaison Officer. Talk from Contact Centre followed by a Q&A.
9. TWBC Draft Vision 20/26. Cllrs. Brown and Langridge to discuss and forward observations to the Clerk in time for a letter to be submitted by 29th September.
10. Kent Volunteers 2008 Awards – handed to Cllr. Mrs Podbury
11. Kent Tree Scheme – Clerk to find out more information

2095 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Planning. Cllr. Mrs Paulson-Ellis reported on the meetings held on 11th August and 2nd September, the Minutes having previously been distributed to Councillors.

It was agreed that the Planning Committee would draft `Terms of Reference` for approval by the Parish Council.

Finance. In the absence of Cllr. Mrs Soyke, Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys reported on behalf of the Finance Committee.

- i) **Community Funding Bids as part of the Budget Process** – A lengthy discussion took place following the written reports of Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys and Colley which had been distributed with the Agenda. As Cllrs. Mrs Soyke and Colley were not present a discussion took place as to whether a decision should be deferred to the next meeting. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys advised that it was always possible that a full Council may not be present at meeting and as a quorum was present a decision could be made.

It was proposed that the Budget for 2009/10 should be set under the same conditions as in previous years, and the motion was carried by 6 votes to 3. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys did not take part in this vote.

Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys advised that the Council may want to consider more structure in the future and it was agreed that this would be re-visited in May 2009. Cllr. Mrs Hull abstained from this decision.

Councillors were asked to inform the Clerk if they were aware of any project that may require the support of the Parish Council in the next financial year to enable this to be considered at the Finance Budget Meeting. A notice would also be placed in the Village Magazines so that organisations were aware that the Parish Council would be setting their Budget for 2009/10 in early November and should write to the Clerk with their Grant requests.

- ii) **Grants outside of the Parish** – A lengthy discussion took place following the written reports of Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys and Colley which had been distributed with the Agenda. Cllr. Mrs Podbury advised that a £600 grant to Hospice in the Weald would fund one patient for two and a half days and that £500 would support two families obtaining advice from CAB to avoid repossession of their properties. It was unanimously agreed that grant requests from within and outside the Parish would continue to be decided and awarded on merit. Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys did not take part in this voting.

iii) **Grant Request – Part Re-roofing – St Mary`s Church, Speldhurst**

Cllrs. Mrs Soyke, Hull, Parker and the Clerk had met with Douglas Wren. Whilst the Council agreed in principle to a grant towards the part re-roofing of St Mary`s the Clerk was asked to write to Rev. Wren requesting copies of the tenders in time for the Budget Meeting. Cllr. Stevens advised that the re-roofing was last carried out about 20 years and the Clerk was asked to obtain confirmation.

iv) **Langton Green Recreation Ground :**

It was unanimously agreed to appoint a Groundsman for the Langton Green Recreation Ground for approximately 4 hours a week and an ad would be placed in the Langton Life magazine.

The Clerk was asked to obtain costs to sweep clean the Recreation Ground car park on a regular basis.

- v) It was unanimously agreed to fund five items from the Highways Projects List (items 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8) at a total cost of £6,000. Cllr. Brown asked that it be noted that by agreeing to these works, the Parish Council were not setting a precedent for future works. It was unanimously agreed to fund an Interactive Speed Sign for Ashurst at a cost of £2,000 subject to assessment by KHS.

As the meeting had reached its 2 hour duration, Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys asked for approval of the Council to continue the meeting.

Footpaths. Cllr. Stevens reported that there would be a working party towards the end of September. Cllr. Stevens would look at the damaged posts in Southfields.

Recreation. Cllr. Ellis advised that the Recreation Ground Committee would be meeting on 15th September.

The Committee were obtaining prices for an ownership sign to be placed outside the Recreation Ground.

The play area graffiti had been cleaned by TWBC and it was unanimously agreed to follow TWBC and other Parish Councils and adopt a `zero tolerance` to graffiti.

It had been reported that despite 10M high ball stop netting being installed the cricket ball continued to land in the play area.

K.A.L.C. Nothing to report – Cllr. Colley hoped to attend the meeting on 10th September.

2096 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – AUGUST 2008

1.	Craigdene Ltd	£ 3,995.00	Project Manager`s Fees
2.	Jacksons Fencing	£1,621.50	Ball Stop Netting
3.	Jacksons Fencing	£4,906.80	Ball Stop Netting
4.	Jacksons Fencing	£5,318.66	Ball Stop Netting
5.	Allianz Insurance	£ 747.00	Additional Insurance
6.	Ashurst Place	£ 300.00	Field Rental
7.	RIP Cleaning Services	£ 98.70	Canine Refuse
8.	LGCT	£ 33.24	Hire of Hall
9.	Speldhurst News	£ 8.00	Subscription
10.	Simon Remordina	£ 300.00	Pram Race Insurance
11.	KCC	£1,075.41	Half Yearly Maintenance - LG
12.	KCC	£ 545.82	Half Yearly Maintenance - Groombridge
13.	Ashurst McDermott Hall	£ 129.50	Hire of Hall
14.	Pauline Lambell	£ 1,235.93	Salary
15.	Inland Revenue	£ 454.71	Tax / NI
TOTAL		£20,770.27	

2097 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – SEPTEMBER 2008

1.	Speldhurst Village Hall	£ 30.00	Hire of Hall
2.	M.R. Lawrence	£ 200.00	Strimming Pocket Park - Roopers
3.	M.R. Lawrence	£ 180.00	Grass Cutting - Roopers
4.	KALC	£ 282.00	Councillors` Training Day
5.	RIP Cleaning Services	£ 98.70	Canine Refuse
6.	St Martin of Tours Church	£ 500.00	Agreed Grant – Churchyard Maintenance
7.	Husson UK Ltd	£7,192.27	Play Area – additional equipment
8.	Husson UK Ltd	£112,730.70	Play Area
9.	Trevor Stevens	£ 11.75	Fencing Pegs
10.	Ron Ellis	£ 31.66	Padlock and keys
11.	Pauline Lambell	£ 1,235.93	Salary
TOTAL		£122,947.72	

2098 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

1. The Clerk would carry out a Risk Assessment of Parish Council owned land and property and Cllr. Mrs Hull and Podbury agreed to assist.
2. The Clerk would purchase Councillor name badges

The meeting closed at 10.10pm

CHAIRMAN