



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

**MINUTES OF A THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON MONDAY, 16th MAY 2011 at 7.30pm
IN ASHURST VILLAGE HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys (Chairman) Mrs Hull, Mrs Soyke, Hemming, Langridge, Milner, Parker, Pendleton, Ringrose, Owen and Woodward

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs M Flemington – Assistant Clerk
Borough Councillor Julian Stanyer
Trevor Palmer – Langton Green Charitable Trust (LGCT)
Six members of the public

11/059 SIGNING THE DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE:

All Councillors signed the book of Declaration of Acceptance of Office and agreed to observe the Code of Conduct adopted by the Parish Council on 25th June 2007

11/060 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND SIGNING OF DECLARATION OF OFFICE:

Cllr Mrs Soyke proposed that Cllr Mrs Jeffreys continue as Chairman. This was unanimously agreed. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

11/061 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN:

Cllr Pendleton proposed that Cllr Mrs Soyke continue as Vice Chairman. This was unanimously agreed.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr Mrs Podbury (prior engagement), Cllr Brown (prior engagement), County Councillor John Davies and Borough Councillor David Jukes

11/062 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST:

Personal: Cllrs Mrs Hull, Milner and Owen – Agenda item 10iii) – all attend St Mary's Church, Speldhurst.

Personal and Prejudicial: Cllr Parker – Agenda item 10ii) – he is a Trustee of LGCT.

11/063 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING: There were none.

11/064 MINUTES: The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **11th April 2011**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.

11/065 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:

The meeting was adjourned.

Five members of the public spoke and asked questions in connection with the Local Needs Housing proposal. The questions included whether a copy of the original survey could be made available (answer–yes); whether the land has been acquired yet (no); had the Council any details of the land owner (no); who is to be the new Chairman of the committee (to be decided at the next committee meeting); would street lighting be used for traffic calming (no); any further surveys should concentrate on the use of the identified site and not the general need (to be discussed);

had Councillors received a copy of the petition results (yes); if members of the public could join the committee (not decided) and if the Parish Council still had the right of veto (yes).

There was much discussion and the questions were answered by Councillors as per the brackets.

The meeting was re-opened.

11/066 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES INCLUDING KALC REPRESENTATIVE:

A list of proposed committees for 2011-2012 had been circulated to members and were **AGREED** subject to Cllr Woodward joining Local Needs Housing, Cllr Pendleton leaving the Highways Committee and Ann Norton joining as a public member, one or two Councillors possibly joining Cllr Milner on Public Rights of Way and Cllr Brown and Cllr Mrs Hull remaining as KALC representatives. An amended list is attached to the minutes.

11/067 FINANCE COMMITTEE – Report by Cllr Parker

- i) Cllr Parker reported that there had been nine email decisions by the Finance Committee. The Committee agreed that the land opposite the Green in Langton be mowed every two weeks at a cost of £70 per mowing, to maintain the hedge by the ISS at Ashurst at £100 and trim that area at £150, the Twitten at Speldhurst at £150, the hedge on the A264 at £150 and to refurbish the area at the corner of Furzefield Avenue at a cost of £250. It was agreed to grant Langton Green Rural Society £400 and Speldhurst Fete Committee £385 toward the cost of insurance for their Fetes and to pay for the emptying only of an additional dog waste bin on Speldhurst Recreation Ground at £4.50 per visit. The Committee agreed the Clerk's overtime of 14 hours and that the Clerk and Assistant Clerk attend a Clerks' Conference in Lenham on 15th June at a cost of £60 each. It was also agreed that the cricket field rental should be maintained at £682 and that the Stoolball Club should pay an initial amount of £100 with a review at the end of the season. Both clubs had paid.
- ii) Trevor Palmer of LGCT was present to provide information and answer questions regarding the Trustees request for a short term loan of £50,000 until September 2011 in connection with the Village Hall extension. Cllr Parker left the room. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that the clerk had been in contact with Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) who agreed that the loan was legal and advised that there should be a full written and binding agreement. After much discussion it was **AGREED** that the loan would be made subject to the Trustees meeting all legal and administrative costs and lost interest on the money. Cllr Parker rejoined the meeting.
- iii) Some additional information had been provided by St Mary's Church, Speldhurst with regard to their request for a contribution towards the cost of renovation of the Church clock. After discussion a vote was taken on the amount of the grant, which was decided at £500 by 6 votes to 5.
- iv) The Governance Committee have recommended that the Parish Council consider placing an amount of funds on deposit to gain a fixed rate of interest. It was **AGREED** that decision be deferred until September 2011 when the loan to LGCT has been paid back.

11/068 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – Invoices verified by Cllr Langridge

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
11/05/2011	V.J. Coomber (Builders) Ltd	86	£11,400.00	Stage 1 Parish Office
16/05/2011	M R Lawrence	88	£980.00	Maintenance Various
16/05/2011	Langton Green Rural Society	89	£400.00	Fete Insurance
16/05/2011	Ashurst McDermott Hall Trust	90	£85.00	Meeting Rooms
16/05/2011	BT PLC	91	£30.66	Mobile
16/05/2011	Prestige Web Marketing	92	£60.00	Annual Web Hosting
16/05/2011	RIP Cleaning Services	93	£162.00	Canine Refuse Collection
16/05/2011	Langton Green Charitable Trust	94	£6.00	Meeting Room
16/05/2011	Rymans	95	£25.11	Stationery
16/05/2011	Monson Engineering Ltd	96	£600.00	Engineers Consultancy
16/05/2011	Ashurst Place Rest Home	97	£350.00	Field Rental
16/05/2011	Speldhurst Fete Committee	98	£385.00	Fete Insurance
16/05/2011	Langton Green Charitable Trust	99	£40.00	Meeting Rooms

16/05/2011	Treework	100	£576.00	Roopers Trees
16/05/2011	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	101	£613.20	Building Control Inspect Fee
16/05/2011	Direct Technical Services	102	£21.40	Street Lighting Maintenance
16/05/2011	Viking Direct	103	£382.71	Stationery
16/05/2011	Mrs K Bowles	104	£150.00	Event Insurance
16/05/2011	Mr L Cooper	105	£100.00	Groundsman Duties
16/05/2011	Mrs L Jeffreys	106	£75.90	Cllrs retirement
16/05/2011	HMRC	107	£598.64	NI & Tax
16/05/2011	M Flemington	108	£400.95	Salary
16/05/2011	M Flemington	109	£94.11	Expenses
16/05/2011	C May	110	£1,241.68	Salary
16/05/2011	C May	111	£227.60	Expenses
19/05/2011	Langton Green Charitable Trust	112	£50,000.00	Temporary loan (not signed at the meeting)
30/05/2011	KCC (KCS)	DD	£153.94	Grit Bin
Total Payments			£69,159.90	

11/069 HIGHWAYS REPORT

Cllr Langridge reported that three more SPC signs have been put up – two by Speldhurst Nursery on Langton Road and one on Groombridge Hill. He is still in discussion with Kent Police to agree a Speedwatch location for Speldhurst. He advised that the Police would be carrying out a check on Tuesday 17th May in Speldhurst and that speedwatch sessions will commence in June with training on the Agenda for the next Highways Committee meeting.

The clerk had written to Kent Highway Services (KHS) and was informed by written reply that no funding was available for the speed reductions from Langton Green to Ashurst or Groombridge, due to the fact that it was not a high enough priority. **The clerk was requested to initiate discussions with KHS advising them that the Parish Council would pay for the speed limit reduction signs.**

The application for the additional double lines in Speldhurst was agreed at the JTB meeting in April and it was hoped that they could be installed in June.

11/006 ENHANCEMENT OF THE LAND OUTSIDE THE OLD WATSON HALL

The clerk reported that Monson Engineering had advised that KHS have agreed that a cross over licence is not required and accepted a drainage proposal which does not require additional gullies. They are now awaiting a permit to start the work. The clerk has been emailing KHS requesting that they be prepared to install double yellow lines opposite the proposed islands to prevent parking and make ease of turning as a matter of urgency.

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The Clerk reported that the PWLB loan of £65,000 has been approved.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported that the building work is progressing quickly and the next site meeting will be held at the end of May. The first instalment has been paid out of general reserves.

10/008 PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE

The automatic link from the old website to the new website is now in place. The annual hosting charge is £60 and this has been charged retrospectively to October 2010.

The site had been updated with details of the new Councillors but more would be added once Committee membership had been finalised.

11/070 NEWSLETTER

This will include a welcome to the new Councillors, details of the Parish Office project, Highways issues and the Local Needs Housing proposal. Cllr Langridge will start drafting, **Councillors should send any information for inclusion to him or the Clerk and distribution is planned for June/July.** The Clerk advised that the aim is for future editions to be distributed electronically.

11/071 LOCAL SCHOOLS

The barrier extension outside Speldhurst School is due to be installed soon (as advised by KHS).

A meeting was held at Langton Green School on 5th May with members of the Environment Committee and

the clerk. A possible role for the Parish Council with the School's environmental proposals will be discussed at the next Environment Committee meeting.

The clerk will ask Langton Green School if they would like the cycle shelter from the Recreation Ground car park.

11/072 QUEEN ELIZABETH II FIELDS CHALLENGE

This will be passed to the Amenities Committee and a copy of the original email will be passed on to new members.

11/073 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys advised that she is attending the Mayor's Inauguration Ceremony and she, Cllr Mrs Soyke and Cllr Mrs Hull are attending Tunbridge Wells cricket week.

11/074 COMMITTEE REPORTS

- i) Governance Committee – A meeting is to be held on 18th May
- ii) Planning – Cllr Mrs Soyke reported that she has called in the planning application in respect of the Summerhouse at Jessup's Farm, Station Road, Ashurst – TW/11/01046/FUL/ARJ
- iii) Amenities – It was **AGREED** that up to £300 will be paid by the Parish Council for materials to enable the Football Club to redecorate the pavilion. **The Amenities committee will consider any further proposals and requests from the Football Club.**
- iv) Footpaths – Cllr Milner referred to his written report. A Rusthall resident has written to the parish Council suggesting a 'Friends of the Shadwell Wood' group. He plans to start replacing some stiles with metal gates and to improve the surface of the high Weald Way where it crosses '18 acre field'.
- v) KALC – No meetings this month and nothing to report.
- vi) Local Needs Housing – Nothing further to report.
- vii) Environment – A meeting was held with the Langton Green Primary School on 5th May. The next Committee meeting will be held on 1st June.

11/075 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 11th APRIL 2011

Cllr Mrs Hull is collating a list of volunteers for 'The Big Tree Plant'

11/076 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- i) Email dated 23rd April from Secretary of Langton Green Rural Society inviting members to attend their AGM on 17th May (previously emailed to members)
- ii) Emails dated 5/6 May from Brian Barrett (copies enclosed) regarding the suspension of cycling facilities at LGVH while building works continue. **The clerk was requested to convey their apologies and that facilities would be re-instated when the building work was complete.**
- iii) ROSPA circular advising that inspections to playgrounds in our area are being conducted - **to be passed to Cllr Mrs Podbury.**
- iv) Hospice in the Weald Spring Newsletter
- v) TWBC annual report from Standards Committee
- vi) PHS waste services offering a waste collection service – to be passed to the Amenities committee.
- vii) SMP playground equipment spring letter - **to be passed to Cllr Mrs Podbury.**
- viii) Mayor invite to TWBC Cricket Day on Monday 30th May 2011 for a charity event. Tickets £35 per head
- ix) CPRE Spring newsletter
- x) Email from Sana Smith-Tilley regarding a summary of findings of a petition circulated by Speldhurst residents in March.
- xi) Telephone call from Alan Waterman who is a member of the Langton Green Sports Club who would like to use the LG Recreation Ground for a football training course for youngsters for the week beginning 25th July to 31st July. The **clerk was requested** to convey that in principle Councillors were not opposed to this request providing proper insurance was in place.
- xii) Telephone call from John Aviss requesting permission for a one night camp on the Recreation Ground for 15-17 year old Air Cadets. Weekend 21/22nd May. Councillors requested that the **clerk convey that it was too short notice** to for them to consider.
- xiii) CPRE Spring 2011 Magazine
- xiv) Open Spaces requesting donations – **to be referred to the Finance committee.**
- xv) Newsletter from West Kent Mediation April 2011
- xvi) Letter from Donaldson West dated 11th May advising that the paperwork is completed re Lease extension and the documents are being registered.
- xvii) TWBC letter dated 9th May regarding results of a Private Sector Housing Condition Survey 2010 –

copies to be sent to Cllr Mrs Hull and Cllr Woodward.

11/077 DIARY DATES

- i) Tuesday 17th May LGRS AGM
- ii) Wednesday 18th May Governance Meeting – Ashurst
- iii) Monday 23rd May Planning Meeting – Langton Green
- iv) Wednesday 25th May Finance Meeting – Ashurst (upstairs)
- v) Thursday 26th May Internal Auditor 10am – 12 noon
- vi) Monday 30th May – Spring Bank Holiday
- vii) Wednesday 1st June – Environment Meeting – Ashurst
- viii) Sat/Sun 4th-5th June – Football Fiesta
- ix) **Monday 6th June – Full Council Meeting – Committee Room, LGVH**

11/078 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

Cllr Mrs Soyke advised that a Langton Green resident has asked her about the barrier at 'The Twitten'.

Cllr Mrs Soyke advised that she is attending a 'Faster Broadband' Seminar on 20th May. She asked whether the Parish Council would consider meeting the cost approx. £50 of attendance by another Parish Councillor. **This will be dealt with by email decision.**

Cllr Langridge reported that there is a tree in the Langton Green Vicarage garden which is dying of honey fungus and there is concern at whether the nearby mature Copper Beech tree on Parish Council land might be at risk. **Clerk to seek advice from tree experts.**

Cllr Langridge asked whether consideration could be given to a Notice Board at green opposite The Hare. **This will be considered by the Amenities Committee.**

Cllr Parker reminded members that the Langton Green Rural Society AGM will be held on 17th May.

Cllr Mrs Hull advised members that she recently attended a 'saving village shops' Seminar and has circulated her notes. **This will be on the Agenda for the next Full Council meeting.**

Cllr Milner raised the matter of parking problems at The Hare.

The Clerk advised that there is a NALC Conference on 22nd September and said consideration should be given soon to how many places to apply for and it was considered that up to **five places should be reserved** depending on the cost.

The assistant clerk said that the Speldhurst Cricket Club had asked her to say a big thank you for the substantial contribution to the pavilion and what a pleasure it was now to use it.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.48pm

CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEES 2011-12

Finance Committee

Trevor Parker
Chris Pendleton
Joy Podbury
Julia Soyke
Crispin Owen
Tony Hemming

Planning Committee

Joy Podbury (Chairman)
Rosemary Hull
Peter Brown
Ed Langridge
Rupert Milner
Chris Woodward

Public Rights of Way

Rupert Milner

Amenities

Rupert Milner
Trevor Parker
Crispin Owen
Chris Woodward
Peter Ringrose

Environment *

Peter Brown
Joy Podbury
Rosemary Hull
Peter Ringrose

KALC Representatives

Peter Brown
Rosemary Hull

Highways **

Joy Podbury
Julia Soyke
Ed Langridge
Tony Hemming

Local Needs Housing

Julia Soyke
Rosemary Hull
Ed Langridge
Peter Brown
Rupert Milner
Chris Woodward

Governance Committee

Chris Pendleton (Chairman)
Julia Soyke
Trevor Parker
Lynn Jeffreys

Note that The Chairman and Vice Chairman are ex-officio members of **all** committees and can attend any meeting in a voting capacity

*Plus 2 members of the public – Debbie Siddle and Alan Ford

**Plus 3 members of the public – Charlotte Waters, Richard Wheeler and Anne Norton