



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 4TH APRIL 2016 at 7.30pm  
IN ASHURST VILLAGE HALL**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Mercieca, Milner, Parker and Turner.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Borough Councillor David Jukes and County Councillor John Davies

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs K Plunkett – Assistant Clerk

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** There were five members of the public present including the Treasurer of Ashurst Church and the two candidates selected to be new Councillors – Mrs Judy Price and Mr John Kerby.

**16/064 TO ENQUIRE IF ANYONE PRESENT INTENDS TO FILM, PHOTOGRAPH AND/OR RECORD THE MEETING:** No-one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.

**16/065 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies received from Cllr Mrs Lyle (holiday), Cllr Mrs Horne (illness), Cllr Allen (prior engagement) and Borough Councillor Julian Stanyer (prior engagement)

**16/066 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:** There were none.

**16/067 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING:** There were none.

**16/068 MINUTES:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **7th March 2016** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**16/069 CO-OPTION OF COUNCILLORS**

Mrs Judy Price and Mr John Kerby left the meeting. Cllr Barrington-Johnson explained that three candidates had been interviewed to be Councillors and the interview panel would have selected all three if that had been possible. However they chose Mrs Price and Mr Kerby and the panel recommended to Full Council that the candidates be approved. The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the new candidates and they were invited back into the meeting and signed the declaration of acceptance. Cllr Barrington-Johnson welcomed the two new Councillors.

It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Mrs Price was assigned to the Planning Committee and Cllr Kerby to Highways and Amenities.

Following discussion it was decided that at present no Councillor would be added to the Air Traffic Committee but Cllr Milner would be willing to attend in an ex-officio capacity if required.

**16/070 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS:**

County Councillor John Davies said that major repairs will be undertaken to Barden Road in Speldhurst in the next financial year.

Borough Councillor David Jukes said that there is a plot of land for sale in Wallers in Speldhurst which could possibly be developed. He also said that he is not allowed to speak as planned at the SPC AGM at the end of April in view of the forthcoming elections but William Benson will speak instead.

Cllr Mrs Soyke and Cllr Mrs Podbury had nothing to report.

**16/071 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:** There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

**16/072 FINANCE COMMITTEE – Report by Cllr Mrs Soyke**

- a) The last Finance Meeting was held on 21<sup>st</sup> March and the minutes have been circulated.
- b) There have been 5 budget virements which should make the accounting process more transparent. Amounts have been allocated to new Budget codes as follows:
 

Groundsman	£5,500
Canine Refuse (LGRG)	£2,300
LGRG Maintenance	£3,300
Land Maintenance	£4,000
LG Play area inspections	£250
- c) There have been two interim payments since the last meeting – a grant of £1,000 to Hospice in the Weald and a payment of £15.20 for New Councillor booklets both approved by the Finance Committee.
- d) No payments were made under delegated authority.
- e) The Council **RESOLVED** to grant the insurance cost of Speldhurst Pram Race at a cost of £328.50.
- f) The Council **RESOLVED** to grant funds of £800 to St. Martins Church, Ashurst towards the maintenance of the Church grounds.
- g) The Council **RESOLVED** to continue supporting the Ashurst Broadsheet with a grant of £450.

**16/073 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – Invoices verified by Cllr Horne**

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque/Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
ACRK	SO	50.00	Annual membership
RIP Cleaning Services	MT762	216.00	Canine refuse
The PCC All Saints Church, LG	213	800.00	Churchyard maintenance grant
KALC	MT763	1,482.00	Annual subscription
CPRE	214	36.00	Annual membership
Event Insurance Services	MT764	328.50	Grant re pram race insurance
Mr L Cooper	MT765	404.00	Groundsman duties
K Plunkett	MT768	39.15	Expenses
C May	MT769	47.40	Expenses
Langton Green Charitable Trust	MT770	50.00	Office Lease
K Plunkett	MT748	559.86	Salary
C May	MT749	1,085.40	Salary
<b>Total payments</b>		<b>5,098.31</b>	

\*Payment made under the Clerk's delegated authority

It was **RESOLVED** to pay the invoices listed above, sign the cheques and authorise the BACS in Unity Trust Bank

**16/074 HIGHWAYS:**

A meeting was held on 16<sup>th</sup> March and the draft minutes have been circulated.

The Clerk reported that the SID has been ordered and an installation date is still awaited.

A quotation to carry out an outline design for the 20mph scheme at a cost of £500 has been accepted.

It was reported that the SID used in a recent speedwatch session is faulty and needs to be serviced. The cost of the service is unknown but the Clerk will report back at the next meeting if it is excessive.

Cllr Milner said that Broom Lane is in poor condition generally and there is evidence of two fly-tipping incidents on this road which he has asked the Clerk to report.

Cllr Mrs Podbury asked whether Mr Fielding's query about Broom Lane signage had been followed up. The Clerk agreed to action this point.

**16/075 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):**

- a) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported that she had received an email from the Cricket Club Chairman who is concerned about encroachment of the new Pavilion on the outfield and also about the size of the adjoining patio. Use of the top two pitches is now in question. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys will be attending a meeting later this week with the Chairman of the Cricket Club to address these points. She also advised that safety of people in the Pavilion will be the responsibility of the Cricket Club.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that she had received a letter from the Headmaster of LGPS about the school's intended use of the new Pavilion. The school's Budget is unknown at this time and although the Headmaster has a vision of using the Pavilion 3 part or full days per week he cannot commit at this stage.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that a meeting had taken place between Langton Green Charitable Sports Association (LGCSA) and Directline, the builders, of which she had been unaware and had not been invited. An email of notes taken at the meeting was circulated to all Councillors at the beginning of the meeting. The meeting notes concerned heating, lighting and water heating but the email does not include costings. The heating design now includes infra-red heaters that were not approved by Councillors at the last Full Council meeting when decisions were made about heating.

The next meeting will be on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys will convey the Council's concern about not being kept informed of discussions. Cllr Turner suggested limiting the financial commitment to the project. Part of the issue is the running cost of the heating as there is no new information on the likely electricity bills if infra-red heaters are now included in the build.

Cllr Mrs Soyke said that the infra-red heaters need to be programmable.

Cllr Turner said that once the level of electricity bills are known, the Council may have to re-negotiate with the LGCSA.

Cllr Parker asked about the capital costs SPC are committed to and Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that SPC will fund CCTV, Entrance Security and one Container.

Cllr Mercieca suggested push button shower controls to deter excessive use of hot water. He also said that careful attention should be paid to the type of tariff the Pavilion is put on as certain electricity tariffs carry high prices even if usage is not as high as expected.

Cllr Mrs Soyke suggested that the Architect be asked to attend the next Full Council meeting. Cllr Mercieca said that an architect would not be able to answer the type of questions about heating now being asked. Cllr Turner suggested that Guy Lambert be asked to attend the next Full Council meeting.

After further discussion it was agreed that Cllr Mercieca would prepare a list of questions to assist Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys in preparation for Friday's site meeting.

Cllr Turner said that smart meters would be needed.

**16/076 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTATION**

Councillors had reviewed the KCC Funded Bus Service consultation and **RESOLVED** to respond individually as the area under discussion is not within Speldhurst Parish. A link to the Consultation will also be added to the SPC website and a note to warn residents that all bus passes applied for are charged to KCC, whether they are used or not.

### **16/077 TWBC DRAFT SPORTS AND ACTIVE RECREATION STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

Councillors **RESOLVED** to respond individually to this consultation.

### **16/078 KALC TRAINING: EMERGENCY PLAN**

There are two training sessions in May on 6<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> which will give guidance on emergency plans. Cllr Milner agreed to attend and report back at the June Full Council meeting.

### **16/079 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

The Chief Exec of TWBC will speak at the AGM. Councillors should arrive at 7.15pm latest to set up for a 7.30pm start and volunteers will be needed to serve drinks.

Borough Councillor David Jukes asked if a PowerPoint presentation would be useful and the Clerk said that he would advise Mr Benson directly.

**16/080 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Cllr Barrington-Johnson had nothing to report.

### **16/081 COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a) **Governance** – A meeting was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> March and minutes have been distributed. Cllr Parker proposed that the Governance Committee's recommendation of a new policy on correspondence and to approve the annual review of the following policies and terms of reference: Complaints policy, Grants policy, Grants Template, Financial Control, Co-option policy, Internal Audit Review Checklist Parts 1 and 2, Terms of Reference of the Governance Committee and Internal Audit be accepted. The Council **RESOLVED** to accept all the recommendations of the Governance Committee.
- b) **Planning** – a meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> March and the minutes have been circulated. The next meeting is on 11<sup>th</sup> April. The Clerk drew the Council's attention to the online petition calling for Parish Councils to have the right to appeal planning decisions. Cllr Mrs Soyke expressed concern over the cost of appealing decisions and Cllr Turner expressed concern about adding further layers of bureaucracy. However, it was decided that although the power would rarely be used, it would strengthen the Parish Council's position to have the power. Councillors **RESOLVED** to respond to the petition individually.
- c) **Amenities** – There has been no meeting since the last Full Council meeting and the next meeting will be held later in the month.
- d) **Air Traffic** – There has been no meeting since the last Full Council meeting. Councillors discussed the new draft letter prepared by Cllr Barrington-Johnson.  
Cllr Milner said that Howard Davies should be addressed as 'Sir' and with this change the draft was accepted by Council.  
Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that the recent meeting of the High Weald Council Group had focused on airport expansion.  
Cllr Barrington-Johnson reported that Gatwick has accepted all the recommendations from the recent independent review but there are no implementation plans as yet.  
Bo Redborn has been asked to head up the Independent Noise Management Board. A further meeting of the High Weald Group is scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> April.
- e) **Footpaths** – Cllr Milner reported that he and Derek Robinson have done some work on the footpath near the Salomons Estate. He said that there are some steps right next to a busy road at Stockland Green Road and Cllr Mrs Podbury had recently slipped on the steps and fallen into the road. Cllr Milner has put in a temporary anti-slip measure but KCC needs to implement a permanent solution. There are several other places in the Parish where this occurs. Cllr Milner will try to get clarification from KCC about liability if work has been carried out by the Parish Council and an accident occurs.
- f) **Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson reported that there had been no KALC meetings.
- g) **Parish Plan Working Group** – a meeting was held on 10<sup>th</sup> March and the notes have been circulated. Cllr Turner said that he had missed the last meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> March but he had seen draft reports and good recommendations were evident. However Planning will be an issue as there is no agreement on this within the Group. The next meeting is scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> April.

The Clerk said that the letter from Ken Howes about the results of the recent residents' survey, distributed to Councillors at the beginning of the meeting, will be sent to approximately 12 recipients including County Councillor John Davies and Borough Councillor David Jukes. All Councillors agreed for the letter to be sent.

**16/082 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 7th MARCH 2016:** No other matters.

**16/083 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

1. Langton Green Primary School Newsletter 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2016
2. Letter dated 20<sup>th</sup> March to Lion Security Services asking for the illuminated alarm cover to be removed at 61 The Boundary, Langton Green as no street lights are permitted in this area.
3. Letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March from Hospice in the Weald enclosing the Spring Newsletter
4. 'Oast to Coast' magazine of 'Action with Communities in Rural Kent' – Spring 2016 Edition
5. Markerstudy Leisure Newsletter March 2016
6. Came and Company – local Council insurance newsletter – Spring 2016

**16/084 DIARY DATES:**

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> April** – TWBC Unauthorised encampments – **10am – 12pm**

**Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> April** – Police Contact Point – St Mary's Lane, Speldhurst – **12-1pm**

**Friday 8<sup>th</sup> April** – Pavilion Meeting – **10am**

**Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April** – Planning meeting

**Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April** – Police Contact Point – St Mary's Lane, Speldhurst – **12-1pm**

**Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April** – Annual Parish Meeting – Speldhurst Village Hall **7.30/8**

**Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> April** – Internal Audit **1.30pm**

All meetings are in the office and start at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated.

**16/085 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:**

Cllr Turner said that potholes in the Parish were a problem causing him several flat tyres a year and this could become a significant liability for KCC.

The Clerk noted that Unity Trust Bank will be charging £6 per month for their banking service in the future and they will also not be paying interest. The cost of approximately £140 pa will be discussed at the Finance Meeting.

The Clerk also mentioned various problems at LGRG such as a construction vehicle crashing into the bin enclosure, a van driving into another post and the dog bin being demolished by Pavilion workers.

Separately a car has crashed on the verge next to the gas works and this claim is being settled by insurance companies.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.12pm

Chairman