



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

**MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 10th JANUARY 2011 at 7.30pm
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SPELDHURST VILLAGE HALL**

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Chris May, Clerk

KCC Cllr Mr Davies, Borough Councillors Mr Jukes and Stanyer and 8 members of the public present.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Mrs Hull, Mrs M Flemington, Assistant Clerk (both prior family engagement)

11/001 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST:

Personal & Prejudicial Cllr Mrs Soyke – 6ii) Consideration of a grant to St Martin of Tours Church, Ashurst. She is a member of the PCC.

Personal & Prejudicial Cllr Parker -11) Parish Council Office – he is a Trustee of the Langton Green Charitable Trust.

Personal & Prejudicial Cllr Ellis – 11) Parish Council Office – he is a Trustee of the Langton Green Charitable Trust.

11/002 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING: There were none.

11/003 MINUTES: The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **6th December 2010**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.

11/004 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:

The meeting was adjourned.

Mr Critchlow was concerned with the condition of the grass at the corner of Barden Road and Furzefield Avenue. The area had deteriorated because the developers in Furzefield Avenue had driven over it and the gas company had dumped tarmac on it. He also wondered if the cast iron signpost could be listed. There was a general discussion about the recent roadworks for the gas mains and the clerk advised that when Northfields was shut next month that traffic lights would be installed if it proved necessary. There was a discussion about the mud and debris that had been left on the roads by the Gas works vans and will they be cleaning the roads. **The clerk would contact Morrisons to enquire about their obligation to clean the roads. The clerk would write to the Developers requesting the re-instatement of the grass at the corner of Barden Road and Furzefield Avenue.** Mr Larkin asked what stage the development of Local Needs Housing (LNH) was at in the field south of his house. Cllr Wheeler gave him a brief synopsis of the current situation, recognising his concerns, assuring him that nothing was decided and that the Open Meeting on 16th February was a consultation day only. The meeting was re-opened.

11/005 FINANCE COMMITTEE – Report by Cllr Parker

- i) Cllr Parker reported that there had been three email decisions by the Finance Committee. A payment of £320.00 for the publishing of the first newsletter was approved. A payment of £365.00 (plus VAT) to the TWBC was approved being the planning application fee for the Building Regulations Approval application in respect of the LGVH extension/Parish Council Office. A payment of £20.00 was approved being identification stickers for the container.

Cllr Mrs Soyke left the room.

- ii) Consideration was given to the request for an increased grant towards fencing the perimeter of the churchyard of St Martin of Tours Church, Ashurst. Despite additional information having been requested from the Treasurer it was felt that it was still unclear and there was still insufficient information on which to base a decision. The clerk was requested to ask for further information.

Cllr Mrs Soyke rejoined the meeting.

- iii) A review of the financial information provided by the clerk would be reviewed at the next Finance Committee meeting.

11/006 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – Invoices verified by Cllr Pendleton

<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
Langton Green Charitable Trust	994	£39.00	Hall Hire
Rymans	995	£55.67	Stationery
Monson Engineering	996	£881.25	Engineering Fees
Flo Print	997	£320.00	Printing newsletters
Prestige Web Marketing	998	£10.00	Website updates
Mr L Cooper	999	£100.00	Groundsman duties
El Parido	3000	£117.50	Newsletter design
El Parido	3001	£23.50	Printing container stickers
Union Transport Goup plc	3002	£1,200.00	Dog waste bin and dispenser bags
KCC (KCS)	3003	£965.58	Groombridge Maintenance
KCC (KCS)	3004	£1,020.97	Langton Green Maintenance
Viking Direct	3005	£156.46	Printer ink
Speldhurst Village Hall	3006	£19.02	Hall Hire
C Worcester	3007	£52.00	Langton Pavilion plumbing
LGCT	3008	£24.00	Hall Hire
R Milner	3009	£25.60	Mileage claim
RIP Cleaning Services	3010	£132.19	Emptying dog bins
Ashurst McDermott Hall Trust	3011	£24.00	Hall Hire
HMRC	3012	£534.63	Tax and NI
C May	3013	£1,073.32	Salary
C May	3014	£164.99	Expenses
M Flemington	3015	£386.50	Salary
M Flemington	3016	£60.20	Expenses
BT PLC	3017	£30.49	Mobile
C Worcester	3018	£93.00	Dog dispenser installation
St Thomas Church Magazine Fund	3019	£15.00	Cost of postage and magazine
RIP Cleaning Services	3020	£105.75	December canine refuse collect
LGCT	3008	-£24.00	Paid in error
	Total Payments	£7,606.62	

11/007 HIGHWAYS REPORT

- i) Thanks went to Cllr Jukes for organising the meeting on Thursday 6th January with Nick Chard, KCC Cabinet Member for Highways. Mr Chard confirmed that the priority of Kent Highway Services (KHS) in the coming financial year would be the maintenance of assets and less priority would be assigned to traffic calming unless traffic accident statistics showed the work was urgent. Progress was made regarding the installation of double yellow lines in Speldhurst which was estimated to be June 2011, a current review was being made of the Groombridge and Ashurst roads and a response was expected by the end of January. KHS would investigate ways of making accident statistics more accessible.
- ii) There would be no update on traffic calming proposals concerning the LNH in Speldhurst until after the Consultation process had been completed.
- iii) A response had been received from KHS regarding speeding issues in the Parish stating that crash records look at a three year period.
- iv) A road safety event had been organised by Kent Police at short notice and three Councillors had volunteered to attend at the TW Police Station on Thursday 13th January at 2pm. Speed watch training would be part of the event. The speed watch results had been passed on to PC Howson.
- v) Cllr Hull had asked if consideration could be given to funding a salt bin for Furzefield Avenue because it did not qualify under the new criteria and the road had been treacherous in recent snow. The issue was discussed and it was decided that there were many roads in the Parish that needed this kind of assistance and it would not be possible for the Council to support all requests. It was proposed that the Clerk write to the developers of the recent building works requesting a donation towards a bin. **Clerk to write.**
- vi) The first meeting of the Highways Committee was to be held on Monday 17th January at the Langton Green Village Hall. This was the same date as the JTB meeting and Cllr Mrs Podbury asked if she could attend it because there was consideration of a representation by a Speldhurst resident. It was agreed she should attend the JTB meeting.

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

The drawings were received from Monson Engineering and have been approved by KHS. The Conservation Officer now needs to give approval and tenders can be sought. **The Clerk was asked to advise Monson Engineering to seek some quotes for the work and he would write to advise residents.**

There was a discussion about the lockable posts that had been requested and whether residents should pay for them but no decision was made.

10/008 PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE:

There had been no meeting of the working party but the website had been updated with Councillor profiles, and was continued to be updated by Prestige Web Marketing and mostly done very efficiently. It was considered that this was reasonable value and would continue until the end of the financial year at £10pm.

Cllr Pendleton said that Prestige Web Marketing had offered to take on the hosting of the Speldhurst website for £60pa. No decision was made. **Clerk to make further investigations.**

2249 PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE:

Donaldson West advised the Council that the legal fee to complete the legal advice regarding the variation of the lease (and other issues such as transfer of land) would be about £1,000+VAT (Keogh Caisley having drafted the documentation) and Council **AGREED** to authorise this.

Cllrs Parker and Ellis left the room.

There was much discussion regarding the proposals of the Trustees to include the use of the patio in the new lease (at a loss of £1,000 annual income) in return for use of conveniences in the hall and heating of the office. Also considered was a proposal that ownership of the office be transferred to the Trustees in return for a long lease at a peppercorn rent. It was decided to wait for legal opinion and no decision was made. **The clerk was asked to advise the Trustees that they may have to consider that the decision regarding the patio may not be favourable.** Cllr Mrs Jeffreys suggested that she may ask Trevor Palmer to attend the next meeting of the Full Council.

Cllrs Parker and Ellis rejoined the meeting.

The clerk had received a telephone call from Mr Herve Back, owner of Ashdene House, Langton Green and had been offered an office for an annual rent of £2,500 with utilities added on. The offer was considered but was rejected for a number of reasons; most important was the fact that it was upstairs and would not be accessible by elderly residents and that it was not large enough to hold committee meetings. **The clerk to advise Mr Back.**

11/007 LOCAL SCHOOLS

There had been no further meeting and the clerk was asked to arrange a meeting in the near future with the Chairman and Cllr Milner who would like to discuss Marchiennes. **Clerk to arrange a meeting.**

11/008 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

There was no report.

11/009 COMMITTEE REPORTS

- i) Governance Committee – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys reported that there had been no meeting since the last Full Council meeting. The Internal Financial Control System document had been circulated to Councillors and was **APPROVED**.
- ii) Planning – Cllr Wheeler had attended a Western Area Planning meeting to observe the decision of an application at 34 Asher Reeds which had been “called in” by Cllr Jukes and reported that Cllrs had rejected the application even though it was supported by the Planning Officer.
- iii) Parish Vision – Cllr Mrs Podbury reported that because of a number of factors no progress had been made adapting the Terms of Reference and said it would be done in due course. Cllr Langridge said that progress was being made towards wider usage of the tennis court in Langton Green. Cllr Mrs Podbury said that Mr Hobbs who was running the new “Youth Cafe” was looking for volunteers to help.
- iv) Recreation Ground – Cllr Ellis reported that the new dog bag dispensers were being installed. The clerk advised that a salt bin was required for the Recreation Ground and Councillors **AGREED** to purchase a large lockable salt bin and rock salt. The Groundsman had requested that the Council consider purchasing a blower and petrol for clearance of the car park and pathways. Most Cllrs were against this method of clearance and Cllrs decided NOT to go ahead with the purchase and recommended purchase of a rake.
- v) Footpaths – Cllr Milner referred to his report and said that the stables used by the Council for storage of footpath equipment for so many years, were now clear and all equipment had been transferred to the container. Thanks were given to Cllr Paulson-Ellis for her generosity in allowing the equipment to be stored for so long. Some tree work had been done on WT75. He also reported that an email had been received from a resident, who was a footpath monitor, asking for the metal gates to be installed because a number of elderly people were having trouble with some of the stiles which were slippery and too high. There was a discussion on the issue and it was decided to install new gates where appropriate, as long as KCC supplied them, and to reduce the height of some of the more awkward stiles.
Cllr Parker asked if there was any screening being considered for the container.
Cllr Mrs Waters asked about the footpath to Shadwell which had been lethal in the cold weather.
Cllr Milner said that screening was being considered. He also said that a French drain was required on footpath WT77 but KCC might have to delay installation due to budget constraints.
- vi) KALC – Cllr Brown referred to his report on the meeting of the TWAC KALC Meeting on 8th December 2010. It was recommended that all local matters concerning KHS be referred to the JTB, either initially or by cc. This would be noted for use by the Highways Committee.
- vii) Local Needs Housing – Cllr Wheeler confirmed that the Open Day of public consultation would go ahead on Wednesday 16th February at the Speldhurst Village Hall between 2pm and 7pm.
- viii) Environment – Cllr Brown reported that “Eco-Saver” tips would be put in the Village magazines and if anyone had any suggestions then they would be welcome and should be sent to him. They would also be put on the website in due course.

11/008 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 6th DECEMBER 2010

There were two matters outstanding: no progress had been made regarding the 285 bus and not stopping at Sainsburys; the response regarding the enquiry about Danemore Farm (although initial contact had been made) was also still outstanding.

10/165 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- i) Letter from Dorman regarding Varitext's Vehicle Activated Signs and Safer Routes in the Community (these are the people from Southport who installed the ISSs in Groombridge and Ashurst).
- ii) Email regarding alternative methods of payment for Parish Councils.
- iii) NALC Legal Briefing on 'Responsibilities for clearing snow and ice on highways'.
- iv) KALC Newsletter – AGM Special.
- v) Came and Company Insurance – Parish Matters publication Autumn 2010.
- vi) Letter from St Mary's Church Speldhurst thanking the Parish Council for the grant towards maintenance of the Churchyard.
- vii) List of Tunbridge Wells Borough Council Parish/Town Council Office-Holders 2010-2011
- viii) Brochure from Norris and Fisher specialists in Village Hall insurance.
- ix) ACRK Oast to Coast Winter 2010 publication.
- x) Letter from Landlord Assist regarding Landlord and Tenant issues with Council tenants.
- xi) CPRE Fieldwork December 2010 publication.

- xii) Letter from Protect Kent regarding The Localism Bill: Briefing for Parish Councils and Amenity Groups
- xiii) Christmas cards from KALC, Greg Clark, David and Hilary Crundwell, Martyn Lawrence and Husson
- xiv) ERHA Winter leaflet
- xv) Letter from TWBC Licensing Team regarding consultation on the Draft Sex Establishment and Sexual Entertainment Venues Policy
- xvi) Letter from The Royal British Legion enclosing 'Great Poppy Party Weekend' Brochure
- xvii) Letter from M&N Communications Ltd regarding the future of the civic complex with 6 forms and a questionnaire (copy of letter given out meeting)
- xviii) Letter from TWBC confirming receipt of the precept request.
- xix) Telephone call from Mr Herve Back re office
- xx) Telephone call from Mrs Hitchens of Southfields requesting re-instatement of trees

Cllr Waters said she had received a nice letter from the Nursery thanking Cllrs for the "speedwatch" day.

There was a discussion about tree planting and it was decided to encourage residents to plant trees.

10/166 DIARY DATES

- i) Monday 17th – Highways Committee Meeting 7.30 pm Committee Room Langton Green Village Hall
- ii) Wednesday 26th January – Environment Committee Meeting Committee Room Ashurst Village Hall
- iii) Clerk holiday 26th January – 9th February
- iv) **Monday 7th February – Full Council at Committee Room Langton Green Village Hall**

10/105 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

Cllr Brown gave information about CSU dates and hate crimes.

Cllr Langridge advised the Council that the Rural Society had applied to KHS for "Entry Statements" for Langton Green.

Cllr Milner said that 16 Northfields had been empty for one year; that a bus was parking in Ferbies on a daily basis, presumably while work proceeds in Southfields, but no advice or permission had been sought. **Clerk to contact Arriva.** He also mentioned that the Twitten crossing in Langton Green was not being used.

Cllr Parker advised Cllrs about a scam from people pretending to be a gas company.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys read an email from Cllr Mrs Waters who advised that because family commitments she would no longer be able to dedicate the necessary time that being a Councillor demanded. She was very sad to lose her and thanked her for her contribution and all she had done - everyone gave their best wishes and signed a card.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.40pm

CHAIRMAN