



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2017 at 7.30pm  
IN ASHURST VILLAGE HALL**

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

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Borough Councillors David Jukes (left 8.07pm) and County Councillor John Davies.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** There were three members of the public present.

**17/064 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.

**17/065 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Apologies received from Cllrs Mrs Horne and Mrs Lyle (both holiday).

**17/066 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:** There were none.

**17/067 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING:** There were none.

**17/068 MINUTES:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on **6<sup>TH</sup> March 2017** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**17/069 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:**

- County Councillor John Davies advised of a footpath closure from 28 April to 1<sup>st</sup> May near Groombridge Place. He said that this is the last meeting he will be attending in his role as County Councillor and that he had enjoyed working with Speldhurst Parish Council (SPC). Cllr Barrington-Johnson thanked County Cllr Davies on behalf of SPC for all his hard work over the years.
- Borough Cllr David Jukes said that there would be elections on 4<sup>th</sup> May. He congratulated County Cllr Davies, particularly on all the work he has done behind the scenes within the Borough. Cllr Parker asked if TWBC was going to charge for garden waste disposal. Cllr Jukes said it was under consideration.
- Borough Cllr Mrs Soyke advised that the Government has apparently removed information relating to the status of AONBs from websites, so that it is now difficult for members of the public to obtain information on them, particularly re their protection. She noted the application at Pease Pottage where 600 new houses and a care home for 48 have recently been approved in an AONB and warned we must be vigilant in order to protect our countryside.

**17/070 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:** Nick Coffin (Speldhurst Cricket Club) was attending the meeting to update the Council on the club's installation of cricket nets. He advised that he had submitted an application for Planning permission for cricket nets on Speldhurst Recreation Ground which will be decided in two weeks' time. He had

approached Veolia again who had advised him that any grant application would be considered in their next tranche which would mean any monies wouldn't be received until late summer 2017 which would be too late to benefit from the nets this summer. He was also advised by Veolia that grant requests only have a 21% success rate. Mr Coffin said that he had received generous offers of assistance towards the nets from residents which means they now only have a shortfall of £3K. Cllr Barrington-Johnson advised Mr Coffin to re-submit his grant application to SPC for the reduced sum and said it would be considered at the May meeting on the proviso that Planning Permission is granted. Cllr Jukes asked to be informed of the planning decision.

#### 17/071 FINANCE COMMITTEE:

- a) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said there had not been a Finance Committee meeting since the last Full Council meeting.
- b) There were no virements.
- c) Interim payments - the following interim payments have been made from the current account with Unity Trust Bank - £205.94 Unity Trust Mastercard; £856.80 Sunstone – CCTV maintenance; £1,503.24 Barge Group – repair to playground ride; £1,368.00 Treework various works; £25.18 – NEST Pension Scheme; £7,353.18 – Commercial Services Trading Ltd – Pavilion pathway; £984.00 – Treework – Lime on the Green; £69.60 Veolia – waste disposal; £30.00 – BT – mobile
- d) The following interim payments have been made on the Mastercard - £3.00 Unity Trust Bank – card fee; £17.87 – Homebase – new padlocks; £12.00 – Rymans – files; £10.86 – Amazon – Office equipment; £79.00 – Dropbox – upgrade computer files; £79.00 – Dropbox – upgrade computer files £83.85 – LexisNexis – New edition Charles A Baker.
- e) The following payments have been made under delegated authority since the last Full Council meeting: £17.87 locks, £12 files, £10.86 new light bulbs, 2 x £79 Dropbox and £83.85 new edition CAB.
- f) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys explained that when the budget for the new financial year was drawn up, a figure of £1000 per churchyard was allocated. She explained the obligation that Parish Councils have should churchyards go into disrepair and suggested that the new figure be granted. It was **RESOLVED** by a majority vote to grant All Saints' Church £1000 towards churchyard maintenance.  
Cllr Mrs Soyke withdrew from the following two votes regarding Ashurst.
- g) It was **RESOLVED** by a majority vote to grant St Martin's Church £1000 towards churchyard maintenance.
- h) It was **RESOLVED** by a majority vote to grant Ashurst broadsheet £500 towards production costs.
- i) It was **RESOLVED** by a majority vote to grant West Kent Mediation £250 towards their services within the Parish.
- j) It was **RESOLVED** to purchase an additional SID for Parish use, as recommended by the Highways Committee. The new SID will be slightly smaller but considerably lighter and cheaper and will fix to the existing poles.

#### 17/072 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT: Invoices verified by Cllr Mercieca.

##### To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Detail
03-Apr	ACRK	SO	£50.00	Annual Membership
03-Apr	SE Water	DD	£108.10	Water bill Pav 6 mos
03-Apr	KCC	MT1003	£273.57	HGV Sign at Victoria Rd
03-Apr	MR Lawrence	MT1004	£160.00	Mowing LG & Sp
03-Apr	Viking	MT1005	£59.11	Stationery
03-Apr	LGVS	MT1006	£400.00	Grant re Fete Insurance
03-Apr	KALC	MT1007	£1,500.00	Annual Membership
	Event			
03-Apr	Insurance	MT1008	£328.50	Grant re Pram Race Ins.
03-Apr	Mr L Cooper	MT1009	£22.98	Expenses
03-Apr	Mrs K Harman	MT1010	£24.30	Expenses
03-Apr	Mr C May	MT1011	£97.20	Expenses

03-Apr	LGCT	MT1016	£50.00	6 mos lease
03-Apr	KALC	MT1017	£324.00	Training
03-Apr	RIP	MT1018	£216.00	Canine Refuse
03-Apr	Paul Cheater	MT1019	£112.00	Pavilion cleaning
18-Apr	EDF	DD	£1,123.25	Electricity bill Pav 3 mos
20-Apr	NEST	MT1012	£25.36	Pension Contributions
20-Apr	Mr L Cooper	MT1013	£640.70	Salary
20-Apr	Mrs K Harman	MT1014	£572.14	Salary
20-Apr	Mr C May	MT1015	£1,317.05	Salary

**£7,404.26**

It was **RESOLVED** to pay the invoices listed above, authorise the electronic payments and sign the cheques drawn on Unity Trust Bank.

**17/073 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE:** There had been a meeting on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> March, the minutes having been distributed. Cllr Milner reported the following:-

- SID – As discussed under item 17/071i.
- 20 mph – He advised this is progressing.
- Gateways – These are currently being installed. Concern was raised by Councillors as to whether the gateways are as ordered, particularly the one in Groombridge. Cllr Milner and the Clerk to investigate.
- Speedwatch – Cllr Mrs Horne has signed up and two Cllrs will do so this week. The Clerk will organise training.
- He will provide an update on Highways at the APM.

**17/074 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):**

The Clerk advised that the large boiler in the pavilion heating the water in the changing rooms has been on permanently for the last 6 months and unused which may have resulted in higher fuel bills. Cllr Mercieca said that if the cylinder is well insulated it would be more economical to leave the power on as it will take a large amount of energy to reheat the complete volume of water when allowed to go cold. The best solution is to consider installing a small heater for the kitchen and toilets.

- The Clerk advised that one of the two ladies who run the Pavilion Café has decided to leave and that the existing partner intends to keep the café running.

**17/075 PARISH PLAN:**

Parish Plan working party – Cllr Barrington-Johnson advised that the Working Party meeting didn't go ahead due to illness however it had been rescheduled for Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April. He provided the following update:

- Letter to Chief Constable of Kent – He had received a letter back saying that an Inspector will visit SPC. Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that they would need to decide who the Inspector will see on his visit and it was agreed he would be shown around the Parish's hotspots followed by a meeting to discuss current issues. Cllr Barrington-Johnson will write to the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner once the visit has taken place.
- Speedwatch – Cllr Barrington-Johnson repeated the need to reinvigorate this campaign.
- Cycling Strategy – Despite placing local advertisements, no volunteers have come forward to investigate a strategy.
- Environment Working Party – this is now up and running.
- Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr Barrington-Johnson said it was too close to the production of the Parish Plan in terms of costs and manpower/volunteers and suggested waiting before this is given further consideration.
- Gatwick – most actions have been completed and those not yet done so are in hand.

- Post Office in Langton Green – he had received a letter from the Post Office saying that they will review demand in the area and look into the possibility of a sub-Post Office in one of the retail outlets.
- Doctors' surgery in Langton Green – demand needs to be investigated by a volunteer.
- Bus service – a letter has been received regarding the Arriva 281 providing a more frequent service into Speldhurst. Arriva have advised that they will investigate the demand.
- Train services in Ashurst – a response has yet to be received.

**17/076 CHAFFORD LAND SLUICE – THE WEIR:** There was nothing to report.

**17/077 UK POWER NETWORKS** – A letter had been received from UKPN asking SPC to help them identify vulnerable residents in the parish for priority services. It was agreed that a number of applications would be put in Pat's coffee mornings, an advert would be placed in the next newsletter and the Clerk would respond to UKPN advising them to advertise their services in magazines.

**17/078 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING:** The meeting is scheduled for Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April in the Main Hall in Langton Green Village Hall and starts at 8pm with refreshments from 7.30pm. It was agreed that Councillors should be at the hall no later than 7.15pm to help set up the chairs and be ready to greet members of the public. The Clerk will purchase some refreshments. It was agreed to purchase posters as per the copy circulated and the agenda was to be signed by the Chairman.

**17/079 TWBC LOCAL PLAN: ISSUES AND OPTIONS:** The Clerk reiterated that this was important information that Councillors should be aware of and urged Councillors to attend. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys will attend on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April and Cllrs Milner and Turner will attend on 27<sup>th</sup> April. The Clerks and Cllrs Mrs Horne, Mrs Price and Barrington-Johnson had already registered.

**17/080 COMMITTEES AND TRAINING:** The Clerk advised Councillors that at the Annual Statutory Meeting in May the Chairman and Vice-Chairman had to be elected and that on a number of Committees the Chairmen had served the three years. The Chairman of both Planning and Governance had served three years and replacements would need to be elected at the first meeting held after the May Full Council Meeting. The Chairman of Finance was also standing down to make way for a new Chairman, Cllr Mrs Lyle. The Clerk advised Councillors to consider the Committees they serve on and advise the Chairman (copy to the Clerk) if they wished to change. The Clerk had attended a recent KALC/KFAS information event about devolution and the need for local Councillors to be trained. He said there were two events being hosted by KALC Councillors should consider attending: a Councillors' Conference on 8<sup>th</sup> July and Neighbourhood Planning Workshops, but said he realised it was not always convenient nor was the venue within a reasonable distance. To that end he intended to try and get local training and would send round a questionnaire asking Councillors what their requirements were and would then try and get other local Councils involved.

**17/081 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Cllr Barrington-Johnson had written a report of the Chairman's meeting which had been circulated. He advised that he had received a letter from the Speldhurst Bowls Club asking if SPC can help them boost their decreasing membership numbers. It was agreed Cllr Barrington-Johnson would respond inviting them to do a brief talk at the APM and suggesting they get in contact with Langton Short Bowls Club.

**17/082 COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a) **Governance** – Cllr Parker advised that the following Council Policies had been reviewed by the Committee and recommended for adoption:
  - i. Internal Audit Review Checklist Pts 1&2 – one minor amendment indicated in red.
  - ii. Co-Option Policy – one minor amendment indicated in red.
  - iii. Documents, Records and Correspondence Policy – no changes.

It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the Policies as recommended.

- b) **Planning** – A meeting was held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March, the minutes having been distributed. It was **RESOLVED** to delegate authority to Cllrs Mrs Horne, Mrs Price and Mrs Jeffreys to respond to the Government's White Paper "Fixing our broken housing market" on behalf of SPC.

- c) **Amenities** – there was nothing to report
- d) **Air Traffic** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson advised that there had not been a meeting since the last Full Council meeting. He requested delegated authority for the Air Traffic Committee to respond to the consultation on airspace changes, taking into account responses from GACC and High Weald. It was **RESOLVED** to allow delegated authority to the Air Traffic Committee.
- e) **Footpaths** –
  - Cllr Milner said that some minor repairs had been carried out in Shadwell Woods.
  - Pocket Park – Cllr Milner reported that the Groundsman had basically finished his work in this area for now.
  - Cllr Milner also noted that residents had volunteered to help with maintenance.
- f) **Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)** – There had not been a meeting since the last Full Council meeting.
- g) **Environment Working Group** – Cllr Mrs Price reported that the first meeting had been held
  - Cllr Mrs Soyke suggested changing ‘Committee’ to ‘Working Group’. It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the TOR as recommended, incorporating this one change.
  - An Environment Policy would be agreed at the next meeting and then brought to Full Council for approval.
  - Discussions regarding re-vamping the SPC webpage had been discussed.

**17/083 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017:** No other matters.

**17/084 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

1. Letter dated 14<sup>th</sup> March from PA to CEO Post Office addressed to NBJ apologising for not responding to our earlier letter which had probably got lost in the post
2. E-on are increasing deemed contract rates from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2017
3. KALC Subscription details and membership information pack for 2017-18 via email dated 28<sup>th</sup> March
4. Letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> March from Post Office re Post Office in Langton Green
5. Kent Voice – CPRE bi-annual magazine

**17/085 DIARY DATES:**

**Monday 10th** – Cllrs to meet to respond to White Paper – 11am

**Monday 10th** – Environment Working Group

**Wednesday 20th** – Planning Committee

**Monday 24th** – Annual Parish Meeting

**Wednesday 26th** – TWBC Local Plan Consultation 10am-12noon

**Thursday 27th** - TWBC Local Plan Consultation 5pm-7pm

**17/086 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION: -**

Cllr Mrs Price advised that a group of Speldhurst residents are trying to get a MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) installed in the small football area next to the playground on the recreation ground. The Clerk said that he had received an email from Kate Plunkett regarding this matter.

Cllr Kerby advised that the A&E signs had been removed from the Green at Groombridge.

Cllr Milner queried regulation under planning for mobile phone masts.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.03 pm.

Chairman