



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

Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held in the Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground on Thursday 2nd June 2016 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys (Chairman), Mrs Horne, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Milner and Parker.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were no members of the public present

OFFICERS PRESENT: C May – Clerk and K Plunkett – Assistant Clerk

1. **Election of Chairman:** It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Mrs Jeffreys as Chairman.
2. **Election of Vice-Chairman** It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Mrs Lyle as Vice Chairman in her absence. This had been agreed by Cllr Mrs Lyle in advance of the meeting.
3. **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.
4. **To receive and approve apologies for absence:** Cllr Mrs Lyle (holiday)
5. **Disclosure of Interests:** There were none.
6. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
7. **Minutes – RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated **21st March 2016**, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, be approved and signed as a correct record.
8. **Public Open Session –** There were no members of the public present.
9. **Matters Arising and Correspondence** There were no matters other than those already on the Agenda.
10. **Interim Payments –** There have been six payments on the ALTO card since the last Full Council Meeting on 9th May: £45.10 for weedkiller, £68.43 repair cost for the Stihl Combi, £69.95 for a heavy duty stepladder (for changing the battery on the SID), £1,119.90 for the 2 new computers

in the Parish Office, £15.89 for an internet protection package and a 50p fee from Unity Trust Bank. These were approved by the Committee.

11. Budget Virements – There had been 3 budget virements since the last Full Council meeting. £1,000 had been budgeted for the Microshade backup system which was transferred towards the new computers. Two transfers were required from Earmarked Reserves Repair and Renewal: £669 to repair fencing around the children’s play area at Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG) and £389 for the repair of the cable ride seat on the zip wire. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend that the two transfers from Earmarked Reserves be approved by Full Council.

12. Financial Position as at June 2016 and review of expenditure vs budget to-date

The Committee discussed the summary of receipts and payments to 31st May. It was **RESOLVED** to transfer the balance from Capital Grants: Life Saving Appliances of £285 to a new section for maintenance of defibrillators.

It was noted that £600 had been budgeted for non-domestic rates and no invoice had been received following the successful re-claim last year. A decision on this will be made at the next meeting.

Cllr Mrs Horne queried that 42% of the Langton Green maintenance budget had already been spent. The Clerk explained that the LG maintenance budget had been split into several cost centres and there was an estimated surplus which was being used for the cast iron post improvements to the LGRG car park.

13. Banking and reserves – It had been agreed at the last meeting to transfer £25,000 from Unity Bank to HSBC but the Clerk reported that only £15k has been transferred to increase the balance to £65,000 and to keep the Unity balance below the £75k threshold. This was approved by the Committee.

The Clerk then explained that Unity Bank were changing their terms and conditions and are now charging £6 per month, 15p per transaction and not paying interest. The annual cost to SPC will be approximately £70 lost interest and £100 in charges. Given the excellent service from Unity Bank, who understand how Parish Councils are run, the Committee **RESOLVED** to continue banking with Unity with the proviso that the Clerk investigates any other options that become available.

The Clerk reported that Cambridge Building Society had addressed a statement to the account signatories rather than the Clerk, they had credited interest to the account in December but not notified SPC until May effectively making the SPC Annual Return incorrect.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys enquired how the second half of the precept money would be managed in September. The Clerk said that a decision will have to be taken nearer the date when expenditure in the first half of the year would be clearer.

The Clerk said that there was a rumour that the pre-paid ALTO credit card may be closed in the near future or a fee introduced. He explained the benefits of the pre-paid card and said that reverting to using the Clerk’s personal credit card was not a practicable option. It was decided to wait for Unity Bank to notify the Council.

14. Committee and Working Group expenditure

- a) The Clerk advised the Committee that despite chasing KCC for the £500 invoice for the traffic survey this had still not been received. The invoice for the computer installation has now been received. The work authorised for Treework has been partially carried out on 27th May.
- b) The Clerk requested retrospective authorisation for the mowing of land at the Boundary in Langton Green which needed urgent attention. The cost was £65 which compared favourably to a quote from A1 a year ago. The Committee **RESOLVED** to give retrospective

authorisation. The Clerk also requested authorisation for a quote from Landscape Services for £920 for 8 cuts of the same plot of land at the Boundary. The mowing will only be carried out and charged if it is needed. The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the quote.

- c) The Committee discussed a quote for the intruder alarm in the pavilion for £2,681.10 plus VAT. The Clerk said that a lower quote had been received from the CCTV Company but it was not a like for like comparison. The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the quote and discussed the convenience of having different intruder codes for different sets of users. The Clerk will enquire further about how many codes are possible.
- d) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that SPC will be purchasing the container required for the Cricket Club and recommended renting it to LGCC. Guy Lambert from LGSA has obtained a quote for 3 containers, two of which are being paid for by LGSA and the cost of the one for the Cricket Club is approximately £4.5k. The LGCC also require a ramp for getting the roller in and out of the Container so in total the cost is not expected to exceed £5k. All Containers will be partially wood clad to match the new pavilion. Guy Lambert has advised that a clause should be included in the hiring agreement of the Pavilion and the container to state that regular use of the facilities does not constitute a lease. Cllr Mrs Soyke said that she had a spare set of ramps which might mean that the purchase of a new ramp for the roller was not necessary.
Cllr Mrs Horne asked whether SPC would need to purchase furniture for the new pavilion but Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said she hoped could use the furniture of LGSA.
The Committee thanked Cllr Mrs Jeffreys and acknowledged the significant amount of work she has put in to the pavilion.
- e) It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Chairman and one other nominated Councillor to agree additional expenditure arising on the pavilion until completion up to a limit of £1k. An email will be sent to the Finance Committee if any such expenditure does arise but Cllr Mrs Jeffreys could not foresee significant additional expenditure.

15. Grant requests – to consider the following grant requests

- a) Queen's 90th birthday celebrations – the grant from TWBC awarded to the two events was discussed. The events are a lunch by Langton Green Church and WI and an afternoon tea by the Speldhurst Brownies and Guides Group.
- b) It was **RESOLVED** to grant £800 to St Mary's Church, Speldhurst for Church maintenance.
- c) It was **RESOLVED** to grant £166.81 to ABSA – for the insurance of the raft race day. Details well in advance of the event will be required in future years as the request was only received in May.

16. Staff and Training – The Clerk advised the Committee of the new NALC pay award and impact on salary scales. The SPC salary cost will be slightly over budget as a result of the rise but the impact is minimal.

17. Terms of Reference: The Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference. There was discussion of the £3k spending limit and whether this should be increased but it was **RESOLVED** to keep the limit at £3k.

The maximum number of 7 Councillors on the Committee was discussed and whether the Chairman of any Committee always has a casting vote. The Clerk clarified that the Chairman always has the casting vote and therefore an additional term was not required in the 'Terms of Reference'.

18. Items for Information: There were none.

19. Date of next meeting: It was agreed to cancel the meeting due on Monday 20th June. This would now be allocated to Amenities. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys requested that the next meeting of the Finance Committee be held in the second half of August.

The meeting closed at 8.35pm.

Chairman