



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 Wednesday 27th June 2018 at 7.30pm**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Lyle (Chairman), Ellery, Mrs Soyke, Milner, Barrington-Johnson (ex-officio)

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

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

1. **Election of Chairman** - It was **RESOLVED** to re-elect Cllr Mrs Lyle as Chairman of the Finance Committee.
2. **Election of Vice Chairman** – **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Ellery as Vice-Chairman.
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:** Apologies received from Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys and Mrs Podbury – both previous engagements.
5. **Disclosures of Interest:** Cllr Mrs Lyle declared an interest in item 18c) – Langton Green Primary School grant request – she is a School Governor
6. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
7. **Minutes:** **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated **19th March 2018**, 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. Cllr Mrs Lyle said that the Headmaster of Langton Green Primary School had hoped to attend the meeting to support the school's grant request however he was unable to do so due to personal circumstances.
9. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:** It was **RESOLVED** that this item would be removed from future agendas.

- 10. Interim Payments:** The Clerk advised the following payments since the Full Council meeting: Mastercard: £6.00 bank charge; £6.00 Land Registry enquiry; £28.99 weed killer and £8.23 tape. Current account: £115.50 transfer to pay balance on Mastercard; £1,750 TBNT grant; £91.08 Veolia waste disposal; £149.89 photocopier; £452.65 BT for broadband and phone lines and £34.65 bank charges.
- 11. Budget Virements:** The Clerk advised that virements were required for the CCTV of £1,965 and TBNT grant of £1,750 from the contingency account which will reduce it from £35,200 to £31,485. These were noted and agreed. Councillors decided that the Agronomist survey £2,400 should come from the allocated funds for Sports Clubs. **RESOLVED** to recommend that the two virements from the contingency account be approved by Full Council at the July meeting.
- 12. Financial Position as at 30th June 2018 and review of expenditure vs budget to-date:** Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. The Clerk advised that after consulting RBS Rialtas (book-keeping system company) the Ear Marked Reserves (EMR) had been set up incorrectly. He noted that the summary page was not consistent with the figures set aside and this had been corrected with two virements and the budget figures removed because it was being double accounted. The summary sheet now shows the correct figures and any payment from EMR will be transferred from that code. **RESOLVED** to recommend that the two virements to correct the book-keeping be approved by Full Council at the July meeting.
- 13. Financial Position as at 30th June 2018 and review of expenditure for the Pavilion:** The Clerk had circulated summary sheets. Cllr Mrs Lyle said replacement kitchen units with lockable doors had been discussed and approved in principle and she was liaising with the café proprietor regarding which ones were most suitable. It was noted that the pavilion might be losing one of the regular hirers. The Management Committee was meeting soon to review the figures in detail.
- 14. Banking and Reserves:**
- a) To consider present banking arrangements: The Chairman noted that the accounts were all within their FCFS limits.
 - b) An update on the changes to the mandates to incorporate Cllr Mrs Lyle as the new signatory: The Clerk confirmed that the Unity Bank mandate had been set up successfully and the other two bank accounts were progressing.
 - c) To advise on progress regarding the opening of two pavilion bank accounts: Cllr Mrs Lyle said that SPC Ltd will have its own separate bank account and then the intention is to have a further separate account or ledger for Parish Council expenditure and income on pavilion-related matters, to be reviewed as matters progress.
- 15. Insurance:** Councillors discussed the three quotations from Came and Co and one from Zurich and it was considered that the two most competitive insurers offer similar cover. Zurich's quotation had been approximately £1K cheaper than the best one sourced by Came and Co. The Clerk had asked other Clerks for feedback on Zurich which had been positive, the main advantage being that they offer a dedicated contact for help and advice. It was **RESOLVED** to engage Zurich for SPC's insurance for a period of three years.
- 16. Internal Auditor (IA):** The Clerk explained that the Internal Auditor's report had not been received in time for the meeting. The budget summary will go on the new website.

17. Committee and Working Group expenditure:

- a) Expenditure authorised but not yet invoiced: The main outstanding was Highways orders, however no invoices had yet been received.
- b) Update on changing the telephone service: The Clerk said that he understood the need to shop around for a better deal or improve the current one with BT. Now that SPC was out of contract this would be easier to accomplish, however he said that the office had always received a good internet service from BT and this was a priority. The Clerks would need advice on how to action and Cllr Ellery will meet with the Clerk to discuss the matter further and decide the best way forward. A report will be then be put to the committee.
- c) Overgrown Cypress Trees in Roopers: The Assistant Clerk circulated photographs of the existing trees and said that after consultation with the residents and TWBC Tree Officer, it had been agreed at the Amenities Committee to replace the firs with Hornbeam. It was **RESOLVED** to ask Treework to carry out the removal and replacement of the existing Cypress trees with Hornbeam at a cost of £1,124 plus VAT.
- d) It was **RESOLVED** to employ the Groundsman for 2 extra days per week for 3 weeks for footpath clearance. It was noted that he had done an excellent job last year and it was well worth the investment.

18. Grant requests:

- a) To consider how the Council manages grant requests: The Clerk said that with the current system of ad-hoc grant applications, too many are being put to Full Council for a decision, rather than being made by the Finance Committee. He suggested explaining to applicants that they will need to wait until the next Finance Committee except on urgent occasions which may be considered by Full Council as an exception. It was agreed that the dates for Finance Committee in 2019 needed to be more regular. It was **RESOLVED** that all grant requests would in future be put to the Finance Committee unless there are special circumstances or exceed the delegated limit.
- b) A grant request for the resurfacing of St Mary's Lane had not been received in time for the meeting and a decision was therefore postponed.
- c) It was **RESOLVED** to recommend a grant of £8,000 towards the cost of the refurbishment of toilets at Langton Green Primary School. Full Council will be asked to approve this grant as it is above the delegated authority.
- d) A grant request with updated financial information had not been received in time from Speldhurst School and a decision was therefore postponed.

19. Staff and Training:

- a) It was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk would be given an SPC Mastercard to allow her to make purchases when the Clerk was not in the office. The overall limit of £2,000 would stay the same and the new card limits would be: Groundsman: £150; Assistant Clerk: £250 and Clerk: £1,600.
- b) It was **RESOLVED** that SPC would sponsor the Assistant Clerk in completing her CiLCA certificate.

20. Items for Information:

Cllr Mrs Lyle noted the need for a further member on the Finance Committee, following the resignation of Trevor Parker. It was agreed that the Clerk would ask Cllr Mrs Woodliffe.

The meeting closed at 8.57pm.

Chairman