



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2018 AT 7.30PM IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SPELDHURST VILLAGE HALL**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllr Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Mrs Lyle, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Price, Mrs Woodliffe, Mercieca, Ellery, Allen, Milner and Parker

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr C May - Clerk, Mrs K Harman - Assistant Clerk.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** County Councillor James McInroy.

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

The Chairman started the meeting by saying how sad he was about the recent death of John Kerby and acknowledged the contribution he had made in the short time he had been on the Council. He said he had been an excellent representative for Groombridge and will be missed.

**18/048 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.

**18/049 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Jeffreys (vacation) Borough Cllr David Dukes also sent his apologies.

**18/050 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:** Cllr Mrs Woodliffe said that her children play football for LGCSA. The Chairman said that this would be noted and considered as an interest in future meetings.

**18/051 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING:** Cllr Mrs Lyle said that she had attended a meeting as a Trustee of Langton Green Community Sports Association (LGCSA) regarding the proposed survey on Langton Green Recreation Ground.

**18/052 MINUTES:** The Chairman asked Councillors if they considered any changes to the minutes of the last meeting were necessary following distribution of the email comments with suggested changes received from Mrs Buckley. Councillors suggested no change to the minutes that had been circulated and it was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on **5<sup>th</sup> February 2018** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**18/053 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:**

- County Cllr McInroy said that he had nothing to report
- Cllr Mrs Podbury said that there are going to be a series of public open-meetings to discuss the new Civic Centre and that the Clerk had flyers with the details.
- Cllr Mrs Podbury then went on to explain that she is hoping to start a Plastic-free Borough Campaign and has the support of Borough Cllr David Jukes. The Chairman asked Cllr Mrs Podbury to keep Councillors updated.

**18/054 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:** Mrs Buckley advised that there had been an incident on the crossing island near to Dornden Drive. Following an accident, the island is in disrepair and the uneven surface is a trip-hazard. The Clerk said that all problems like this should be reported on the KCC website: Roads and Travel: report a problem. He said he would report the problem, but any member of the public can do so and KCC Highways should resolve the matter within 28 days.

**18/055 FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following:

- There had not been a Finance Committee meeting since the last Full Council meeting.
- Virements – **RESOLVED** that the virements of £2,500 and £3,000 (for grants to ABSA and Speldhurst Recreation Ground) be transferred from the contingency account to the respective grant sections for payment.
- Interim payments since the last meeting – Corrections to codes were noted. From the current account: £5,336.16 to KCC for the additional gateways; £312.79 transfer to MasterCard; £80.00\* for pavilion PAT testing; £87.50\* dishwasher repair and £72.86 for waste disposal.  
From MasterCard: £6.00 charge; £71.82\* toilet paper pavilion; £9.47\* new key for Footpath board; £21.42\* CCTV signs for pavilion; £23.26\* toilet hinges for pavilion; £21.09\* maintenance
- Payments made under delegated authority are starred above.
- The Clerk explained that to open a new account with Unity Bank they need the signatories for the new and existing bank accounts be the same. Cllr Mrs Lyle is to be a signatory on the new pavilion bank account so a new mandate for the existing account must be updated and minuted. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Mrs Lyle would replace Cllr Parker as a signatory on the existing bank account.
- It was **RESOLVED** to send the Assistant Clerk to the KALC Planning Conference. Cllr Mrs Soyke said that she would like to attend and will advise the Clerk as soon as possible.

**18/056 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:** Invoices verified by Cllr Mercieca.

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Detail
BT PLC	DD	30.00	Mobile
Paul Cheater	MT1243	164.00	Pavilion Cleaning
RIP Cleaning Services	MT1245	172.80	Canine waste disposal
Lunar Services	MT1246	52.50	Pavilion maintenance
Knockout Print	MT1247	325.00	Winter Newsletter
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT1263	26.79	Payment Feb
SLCC Enterprises Ltd	MT1260	129.00	Regional Training Seminar
Ashurst McDermott Hall Sports	MT1248	2,500.00	Grant
Roy Harvey	300240	115.00	Village Sign maintenance
CWCS	MT1249	11.99	Hosting
Speldhurst Recreation Ground	MT1250	3,000.00	Grant
Samaritans TW&D	MT1251	250.00	Grant
CPRE	MT1253	36.00	Membership
Langton Life	MT1254	250.00	Advertisement
KALC	MT1252	216.00	Training
KALC	MT1264	72.00	Training

C May	MT1262	42.30	Expenses
Kate Harman	MT1261	14.85	Expenses
Mr L Cooper	MT1244	38.34	Expenses
Langton Green Charitable Trust	MT1265	42.00	Meeting Rooms
Tate Fencing Ltd	MT1266	39.88	Postmix
KCC (KCS)	DD	123.88	Photocopier
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT1256	26.79	Pension contributions
Kate Harman	MT1257	651.19	Salary
C May	MT1258	1,807.27	Salary
Mr L Cooper	MT1259	640.70	Salary
HMRC	MT1255	2,626.28	Tax NI Jan-Mar
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>£13,404.56</b>	

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

**18/057 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE:** In the absence of a Chairman, the Clerk confirmed that a meeting of the Highways Committee had been held on the 19<sup>th</sup> February and the draft minutes had been circulated.

- 20mph advisory – an update had been expected during the previous week however due to the adverse weather conditions an update was not available.
- TRO application for 60mph to 40mph on Speldhurst Road – progress is being made and the Clerk said he hoped the reduction would be in place by June 2018.
- New gateways – these have been ordered and paid for.
- Groombridge gateway – the installation of the replacement gateway is imminent.
- A serious accident had been reported to the Clerk on Bird in Hand Street, Groombridge where one vehicle had driven into another vehicle and pushed it through the wall of a house. The Clerk has given an initial response to the resident.
- Cllr Allen said he would be willing to Chair the Committee, if elected.

**18/058 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):** Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following:

- The maintenance issues are progressing, and Cllr Mrs Lyle thanked Cllr Mercieca for his assistance.
- PAT tests have been carried out.
- Cllr Mercieca is meeting a specialist electrician on site to check the boiler amongst other things.
- An agreement needs to be drawn up between SPC and SPC Ltd to ensure it has the correct legal standing to be liable as the rate payer for the pavilion. A draft agreement had been circulated and it was **RESOLVED** in principle that an agreement be approved subject to professional advice from a qualified advisor (either a Solicitor or a Chartered Surveyor)
- Cllr Mrs Lyle said that she had attended a Board of Trustees meeting for the LGCSA and that they are investigating alternatives to a 3G pitch. She asked for approval in principle for the services of an FA approved independent agronomist to be employed at a total cost of £4,800 – LGCSA are suggesting the cost for these services is met by LGCSA with a contribution by SPC. The agronomist would carry out investigations as to the most appropriate and effective way to obtain an all-weather, useable pitch as well as costs to carry out any suggested works and on-going maintenance costs. The survey would involve using a mini-digger to carry out soil and subsoil surveys and to allow soakage tests to be carried out. The Trustees of LGCSA plan to obtain feedback from 3-4 other football pitches in the area who have had similar works carried out to obtain advice and recommendations. She said LGCSA hope to carry out the survey as soon as possible with a view to starting the work in September which would mean no football at the Recreation ground next winter. The pitches are mostly unplayable Nov-Feb anyway and LGCSA are able to accommodate the footballers at other pitches that they rent.

Councillors said it was important that the cricket square was protected. The Chairman said that the cricket club would need to be consulted once a better understanding of the works required and the disruption were

known. He also said that any conditions laid down by the FA with regards to funding would need to be agreed by SPC before any works went ahead. The Clerk asked if the survey included the rented field from Ashurst Place and Cllr Mrs Lyle believed it did not. (On later checking, it was found that the survey area did include the additional field). He said that drainage was a step in the right direction away from a 3G pitch and there was money in the budget to fund the survey contribution should Councillors approve. Cllr Mercieca asked if other estimates had been considered and Cllr Mrs Lyle said it was important at this stage to have an FA approved agronomist.

It was **RESOLVED** to allow the survey to go ahead on condition that, if the Finance Committee do not agree to pay half of the survey costs, a caveat needs to be in place for LGCSA to pay it in full. It was also agreed to pre-approve any necessary virement.

**18/059 PARISH PLAN:** The Chairman had nothing to report.

**18/060 LANGTON GREEN ALLOTMENTS:** The Chairman said that he had emailed Mr Bodle on many occasions but had not had a response. He had emailed him again that morning saying that as there has been no progress, he is assuming that the current deadline will be extended. He will update Councillors at the next Full Council meeting. The allotment holders would be updated.

**18/061 BOUNDARY CHANGE:** Cllr Mrs Podbury reported that the impact of a boundary change proposed by Rusthall Parish Council would mean a reduction in precept of approximately £2,000 per year for SPC. She said that the Amenities Committee recommended that the issue be passed to Rusthall PC to progress and that TWBC will assist them through the process. **RESOLVED** that the boundary change is approved in principle and passed to Rusthall PC to lead the project.

**18/062 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ETHIC STANDARDS REVIEW OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT:** **RESOLVED** to follow the advice of Cllr Mrs Jeffrey's report that SPC need not respond.

**18/063 NEWSLETTER:** Copies of the newsletter were given to Councillors for distribution around the parish. The Clerk said that he hopes that the summer issue will be the last newsletter for Councillors to distribute. The new website should be up and running by the summer which will give residents the opportunity to sign up to electronic updates and news. Any residents who want a hard copy would have one mailed to them. Mrs Harman volunteered to help with Speldhurst distribution. Cllr Mrs Soyke and Cllr Barrington-Johnson will deliver to Groombridge.

**18/064 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING:** The Clerk said that final details will be agreed in April. Borough Cllr Jukes is unable to speak due to purdah because it is in the run up to the election however the Chief Executive of TWBC will talk to residents with Borough Cllr Jukes on hand to answer any questions residents may have.

**18/065 BATTLE'S OVER – A NATION'S TRIBUTE:** Cllr Barrington-Johnson asked Councillors if they had made any progress taking this campaign to their villages. He said that the Langton Green Village Society (LGVS) were planning an event including a beacon and he would report back once details had been finalised. Cllr Mrs Soyke said that she would put an article in the Ashurst Broadsheet. There was nothing to report from Speldhurst.

**18/066 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Cllr Barrington-Johnson said he had nothing to report as he had been away for most of the past month.

#### **18/067 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

- a) **Governance** – Cllr Milner said that there had not been a meeting of the Governance Committee since the last Full Council meeting. The next meeting is being held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> March when several of SPC's policies will need to be reviewed. He is doing the governance checks this month.
- b) **Planning** – Cllr Mrs Price said that there had been a very lively and productive Planning Committee meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February – the minutes having been distributed. The application for a bell mouth loading bay on Burnt

House Lane was discussed with many residents and a representative from Tilhill attending to discuss the application in detail. The meeting due on 27<sup>th</sup> February had been postponed because of the snow and had been rescheduled for Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> March at 7.30pm.

- c) **Amenities** – Cllr Mrs Podbury said that there had not been a meeting of the Amenities Committee since the last Full Council however it was hoped one would be arranged for the end of March.
- d) **Air Traffic** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that there was nothing to report. Cllr Mrs Soyke said that there had been general discontent as to what the Noise Management Board have been unable to achieve. It is hoped an Air Traffic meeting could be organised for April.
- e) **Footpaths** – Cllr Milner said that he and the Groundsman had put up two parish footpath maps – one in Ashurst and one outside Speldhurst church.
- f) **KALC** – The Chairman noted the Clerk's notes from the recent Chairmen's meeting.
- g) **Environment Workshop** – Cllr Mrs Price said that the Working Group was planning to get together during March. She had spent a lot of time preparing an Environmental Audit which she has asked the Working Group to go through, as well as a review of the environmental assets in the parish. The Chairman thanked Cllr Mrs Price for all the hard work she had put into preparing these documents. Cllr Mrs Price said that the Working Group were planning to do both an Environmental Quality Audit Walk and a Parish Social Walk in April and would advertise the date for this in the village magazine once it has been agreed.
- h) **Website Working Group** – The Clerk said that they had prepared a schedule of requirements for the hosting, redesign and maintenance of a new website and sent it to six companies to quote. Tenders had been received and would be reviewed by the Working Group.

**18/068 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018** – there were none.

**18/069 CLERK'S REPORT:**

- The Clerk said that there had been an attempted break-in to the office on Friday morning at 3am.
- The Groundsman had done an excellent job of clearing and gritting the paths around the village hall during the previous week's snow and ice however the salt was nearly three years old which had made it a lot less effective. In future salt would be purchased in smaller, more frequent quantities. The severe weather conditions had also highlighted the need to make sure the snow clearing procedure meets SPC's insurance requirements. This matter would be discussed at the Amenities Committee meeting.
- A bollard in the LGVH carpark had been knocked over that morning.
- The LGVS AGM is on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2018. The Chairman asked for it to be noted that SPC had no objections to the LGVS AGM sign being put up, as in previous years.
- The signs for a Councillor vacancy would be put up on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> March. TWBC had been notified.

**18/070 DIARY DATES:**

**Monday 5<sup>th</sup>** – Full Council Meeting in Committee Room, Speldhurst Village Hall

**Friday 16<sup>th</sup>** – KALC planning Conference, Lenham

**Monday 19<sup>th</sup>** – Finance Meeting

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>** – SLCC Regional Training Seminar, East Sussex National Resort (clerks attending)

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>** – LGVS AGM LGVH

**Monday 26<sup>th</sup>** – Governance Meeting 1.30pm

**Friday 30<sup>th</sup>** - Good Friday

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Easter Monday

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Full Council Meeting in Ashurst VH

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

**18/071 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:**

- Cllr Mrs Soyke said that she had been contacted by a resident of Speldhurst who was very worried about a badger sett in St Mary's churchyard. The Clerk said that he would investigate the matter.

- Cllr Ellery said that he had been approached by several residents of Speldhurst asking for a sign to be put up on Barden Road warning motorists of the deer in the area who are liable to cross the road. The Clerk suggested that Cllr Ellery reports it on the KCC website in the first instance and then come back to Full Council if nothing is done.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Chairman