



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

**Minutes of a Highways Committee Meeting held in the Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground  
on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.30pm**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Pate (Chairman), Mrs Woodliffe, Ellery, Turner and Mr Norton

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

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr C May – Clerk

1. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** No-one present intended to film, photograph or record the meeting.
2. **To receive and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** Cllr Round, Scarbrough and Mrs Horne (previous engagement)
3. **Disclosure of Interests:** There were none
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** Mr Norton advised that he had been approached regarding concerns about traffic issues on Bird In Hand Street, Groombridge
5. **Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Highways Committee meeting dated **24<sup>th</sup> September 2019** which have previously been distributed to all members, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
6. **Public Open Session:** Mr Myles, a resident of Groombridge, referred to several years of correspondence regarding speeding issues in general in Groombridge and since a serious incident in 2018 concerns of the speed of traffic on Bird in Hand Street. Mr Harmes, also a resident of Groombridge, endorsed Mr Myles concerns. Mr Myles was aware that residents had a part to play and had volunteered to be the Speed Watch co-ordinator for the village. Councillors asked whether the closure of Burrswood had had an impact on the amount of traffic and although traffic may have reduced, speed had not. The Clerk said that SPC had been able to achieve a reduction in the speed limit on Groombridge Hill from 60mph to 50mph and had installed a SID which had now been replaced with a mobile SID. He spoke of a meeting held in November 2018 with KCC Highways to discuss a Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) for the Parish and confirmed that Bird in Hand Street was listed in the plan. The meeting had however been inconclusive with Highways stating lack of staff to cover all Parish Councils in Kent and suggested SPC employ a consultant to advise on possible improvements. The Chairman closed the session but said the Committee would now discuss agenda item 12 and 13a.

**12. To consider the employment of a consultant to report on recommendations for Groombridge Hill:**

Cllr Pate said that both he and the Clerk had attended a Seminar hosted by KCC Highways last week on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> and he had circulated a brief report which was included in the papers for this meeting. He had approached the KCC Highways Design Team explaining that following on from the HIP meeting SPC was about to employ a consultant for advice on highways issues. The Clerk had also raised an issue at a question and answer session saying he considered the whole HIP project a PR exercise after being told that they did not have enough staff to assist individual parish councils. The outcome was that the Design Team has committed to reviewing Groombridge Hill and Cllr Pate said he would ask that Bird in Hand Street was included. A meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2020 in the Council Office and it was his recommendation that SPC hold off employing a consultant until then. This was agreed by the Committee, but they said that it was important that a time frame was included and that it did not drag on beyond March. It was also agreed that a Committee meeting be scheduled soon after, so matters were progressed.

- **Action:** Clerk to arrange a meeting in January. **Owner:** Clerk

**7. Matters Arising and Correspondence:** There were no matters other than listed on the agenda

**8. To review the action points:** Cllr pate asked that the completed action points be identified by “greying” the box. He asked that points 1/19; 2/19; 4/19; 6/19; 7/19; 8/19; 9/19 and 12/19 be marked as completed. 11/19 was to be included in the HIP. Other points were ongoing.

**9. To report on the KCC highways Seminar:** The Chairman referred to his report on the meeting and it was requested that a copy be included for all Councillors in the papers for the Full Council meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Reference was made to presentation by a senior spokesman, Tim Read, who advised that KCC Highways was now obliged to support developments and could only object if there were **severe** reasons and congestion was not considered to be a reason.

**10. Review of Highways Committee’s Budget –** the Clerk advised that the Finance Committee had recommended a £10,000 budget for the next financial year, which was the biggest increase of any committee. Figures were due to be confirmed at the Full Council meeting in December. The present balance remains unspent at £15,350 but there was committed expenditure for employing a consultant included in that figure.

**11. Monitoring of recent accidents in the Parish –** the Clerk had updated the list with additional incidents advised by the Police. He advised that our PCSO had now left the area to join the full police and so the Parish was unrepresented at this level for now.

**13.To consider issues by Village**

**a) Groombridge**

- See 12.

**b) Ashurst**

- A264 speed limit – see action point 11/19
- Flooding on A264 – this has been reported to KCC Highways, but the road is still flooding on the road towards Ashurst from Tunbridge Wells.
- **Action:** Clerk to chase for the culvert to be cleared. **Owner:** The Clerk

**c) Speldhurst**

- Review of 20mph speed limit: The speed limit was under constant review and would continue to be an agenda item
- 3-way traffic lights at the junction of Speldhurst Hill and Langton Road had been taken down after 3 months and Councillors asked why there was still scaffolding restricting traffic.
- **Action:** Clerk to ask why restrictions still in place. **Owner:** The Clerk

- Bullingstone Lane – works to stay for 40 weeks with maintenance crews using a nearby field for storage of vehicles.
- Barden Road – review of correspondence. Two emails had been received by residents stating speeding traffic and the dangers of walking along the road. The Chairman and Clerk will respond stating that their correspondence will be kept on file and advising that Speed Watch sites along the road would be investigated.
- **Action:** Clerk and Chairman to respond. Clerk to contact CSW regarding possible new Speed Watch sites and to request criteria for such sites. **Owner:** Clerk and Chairman

**d) Langton Green**

- Review of 20mph advisory speed limit: The Clerk advised that the advisory lights, installed one year ago, were still not working. He has been chasing this with KCC, keeping the Chairman informed. This will remain an open action point.
- Crossing to the Recreation Ground from the Twitten – The Clerk was requested to discuss this again with the Headmaster to try and see if a crossing person is a possibility.
- **Action:** Clerk to ask LGPS Headmaster. **Owner:** The Clerk
- Monteith Close correspondence regarding delamination. The Clerk has passed this to the KCC Highways Manager (Julian Cook) for comment.
- Farnham Lane – it was agreed that Farnham Lane is an issue that will be exacerbated by the additional houses being built at Speeds Farm. The issue will continue to be monitored.
- New bus shelter – a request had been received from a resident for a new bus shelter to be sited at the Hare junction opposite the old Post Office. The Clerk advised that this is something within the powers of the Parish Council, should they wish to do so. The item was discussed, and the majority considered the funds were needed for more high priority issues, however, should more requests come in it would be re-considered. **Action:** Clerk to obtain costs, including insurance liability. **Owner:** Clerk

**12. Speed Cameras and Speed Watch**

- a) Update on progress on Speed Watch. The Clerk reported that the first Speed Watch session had been held on 14<sup>th</sup> November in Langton Green. A training session for Speldhurst members was to be held this week.
- b) SID rotation – the Clerk produced the battery used for the larger SID. It was agreed that a risk assessment was necessary.

**13. Items for information**

- Mr Norton asked if the signage on the corner of the Groombridge/Ashurst junction, near the Farm Shop was an issue? Cllr Pate will ask it to be considered in any review.

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
1/19	Place item on SPC website and FB re reporting of highways incidents incl collisions	Clerk	10/6	Done and taken off. News alert sent 17/6. Will be added again.
2/19	draft an article to publicise the projects for the newsletter, the website and Facebook	Cllr Pate	10/6	Done and ready to on website
3/19	Contact LGPS regarding operating hours of advisory signs	Clerk	10/6	Met headmaster 18/6. Times agreed. KCC advised September

				Clerk to contact KCC to check if changed and both sets of lights working
4/19	send list of roads to KCC Highways. Owner:	Clerk	10/6	Email sent 12/6
5/19	to contact KCC for instructions on how download data and costs for a new SID.	Clerk	10/6	KCC contacted at seminar. They are to revert with info.
6/19	contact Monson Engineering	Cllr Pate	10/6	Done
7/19	update committee members and broadsheets with instructions on how to join Speedwatch	Clerk	10/6	Updated 16/7
8/19	Respond to residents	Clerk	10/6	Emailed 16/7
9/19	To contact CSW regarding Langton Speedwatch sites	Clerk	24/9	Done
10/19	To contact KCC regarding new operating times for 20 mph advisory signs and confirm both working	Clerk	24/9	
11/19	to consider Ashurst and the A264 stretch from Langton Green to the Sussex border when discussing the outcomes of any findings by highways consultants working on the Groombridge section should SPC proceed.	Cllr Pate	24/9	
12/19	To arrange a Committee Meeting in January	Clerk	25/11	
13/19	Follow up on flooding on A264 towards Ashurst	Clerk	25/11	
14/19	To ask why restrictions are still in place at Speldhurst junction	Clerk	25/11	
15/19	To ask Headmaster about a crossing person	Clerk	25/11	
16/19	Bus shelter costs for installation and insurance liability	Clerk	25/11	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.14pm