



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

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 10th January 2022
at 7.00pm in the Palmer Room at Langton Green Village Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Mrs Lyle (Vice-Chairman – in the Chair) Barrington-Johnson, Curry, Ellery, Langridge, Rowe, Scarbrough and Mrs Woodliffe.

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs K Neve – Clerk and Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE

Borough Cllrs Allen and Sankey were in attendance.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were two members of the public present.

A minute's silence was held for Trevor Parker who had been a councillor for SPC and a longstanding servant to the community.

22/01 To enquire if anyone intends to record the meeting

No-one present intended to record the meeting.

22/02 To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Pate, Rajah, Mrs Soyke and Turner for covid-related reasons. Apologies had also been received from County Cllr McNroy and Borough Cllr Mrs Willis due to work commitments.

22/03 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

22/04 Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

22/05 Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 6th December 2021

RESOLVED that the minutes, previously forwarded to Members were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22/06 Public Open Session

No members of the public present wished to speak.

22/07 Borough and County Councillors' Reports

County Cllr McInroy had sent apologies and had nothing new to report.

Borough Cllr Allen reported on the following:

- **Speedwatch** – He had taken part in a productive Speedwatch session in Speldhurst at Wallers junction with Cllr Richard Ellery on 18th December. PC Wright had visited them at the SID which helped to provide a visible law enforcement presence.
- **Cinema Site** – The land publicly known as the Cinema Site had been purchased for a new development by AXA owned Retirement Villages Group to build retirements apartments, units for retail, provision for a cafe and a restaurant amongst other ventures within the proposal.
- **Garden waste collection** – A one-off collection for garden waste had started with subscribers being advised of the arrangements by letter, email and via TWBC's website and social media account.

Borough Cllr Sankey reported on the following:

- **Planning Committee** – All three Borough Councillors were registered to speak at the TWBC Planning Committee meeting regarding Scriventon Farm and Buildings and they would be liaising beforehand to ensure their collective 9 mins was used in the best possible way.
- **Forthcoming Meetings** – He had a meeting this week with Gary Stevenson to discuss Street Scene enforcement borough wide, and another with Jane Fineman to discuss parking enforcement in the ward.
- **Garden waste collection** – He advised that approximately £2m revenue in unpaid residents' subscriptions had been lost by TWBC who were legally obliged to continue paying the contractor for the waste collection despite them failing to provide a service. A legal case was being pursued by TWBC and the matter was being investigated by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Borough Cllr Mrs Willis had sent apologies but had submitted a reported on the following:

- **Garden waste collection** - Starting from the 10th of January a one-off garden waste collection was to take place for all subscribers. The council was still working with the contractor and hoping to restart as soon as possible.
- **The Amelia Scott** – The Amelia Scott would be opening during the last week of April.
- **Scriventon Farm and Buildings, Speldhurst** – The planning application would go to Planning Committee on Wednesday 12th January. Cllr Mrs Willis was preparing to speak in objection at the meeting.

22/08 Review of Action Points

The updated Action Points Table had been shared with councillors and the Clerk provided a brief update as follows:

- A policy on recording council meetings was being prepared and would be reviewed by the Governance Committee before going to Full Council.
- She was waiting to receive further information from LGCSA regarding the donated defibrillator.
- Staff contract updates would be carried over to the February Full Council meeting.

The newly updated list of action points, incorporating the additional actions from this meeting, are shown at the end of these minutes.

22/09 Finance Committee – Report by Cllr Ellery

- a) Cllr Ellery reported that a Finance Committee meeting had taken place on 5th January and referred to the draft minutes which had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- b) Budget virements: there were none.
- c) Interim payments: Unity Bank: £100 Toy Appeal donation; £36.56 Eon streetlighting; £174.74 BT quarterly DD and Telephone; £128.70 Initial – annual pavilion contract; £25.08 mobile; £32.55 UTB quarterly bank charges. Mastercard: £9.00 Bank charges; £13.91 Petrol for tools; £54.85 Van MOT; £277.50 Van tax; £51.71 Van petrol; £74.44 Groundsman Hi Viz; £9.00 badge and £17.97 bin liners.
- d) Decisions made under delegated authority: there were none.
- e) It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated Finance Terms of Reference on the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

Cllr Ellery went on to advise:

- That the Grant Awarding Guidelines would be reviewed at the next Finance Committee meeting.
- A standing order had been set up to HSBC to prevent charges during periods of inactivity.
- The contract with Landscape Services had been reviewed and would be renewed.
- The pest control contract for the LGRG carpark would be extended to include the pavilion and the café proprietor would be reimbursed for recent pest control call out charges.
- It was agreed a standing order would be set up to Cloudy IT to cover the monthly service payments. Councillors agreed they would be looking for more action and better value than was currently being provided.
- Consideration was given to paying off the existing Public Works Loan; however the redemption penalty SPC would incur made this unviable.

22/10 Precept 2022-23

The 2022-2023 budget and precept had been discussed in some detail at the Finance Committee meeting on the 5th January and a recommendation was made for a 7.3% increase. Cllr Ellery explained the reasoning and process behind the decision, noting that there was a 0% increase last year, and that this increase ensured the books were balanced in the budget. It was **RESOLVED** that the precept request would be £166,600 which was a 7.3% increase on 2021-22.

22/11 Accounts for Payment

RESOLVED that the invoices as listed, be paid.

Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Detail
Tivoli	MT2143	£120.00	Canine waste disposal
Tivoli	MT2144	£120.00	Canine waste disposal
C May	MT2145	£28.00	Expenses
Katie Neve	MT2146	£8.10	Expenses
Catherine Barrett	MT2147	27.00	Expenses
Kate Harman	MT2148	20.00	Expenses
Langton Green Charitable Trust	MT2149	48.88	Meeting rooms December
Emma Pye	MT2150	285.00	Reimbursement Pavilion pest control
Langton Pavilion Café	MT2151	135.89	Christmas expenses
Dave Pate	MT2152	100.00	Reimbursement RFO gift
Langton Life	MT2153	300.00	Advertising
Cloudy IT	MT2154	263.70	Monthly payment
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	MT2155	853.50	LGRG maintenance
Commercial Services Trading Ltd	MT2156	393.92	Groombridge maintenance
JLM Pest Control	MT2157	150.00	LGRG Quarterly contract

Employees	MT2158	4,399.63	Salaries
NEST Pension Services	MT2159	394.04	Pension payments
TW and District CAB	MT2160	1,000.00	Grant
St Mary's Church, Speldhurst	MT2161	1,000.00	Churchyard Grant
St John's Church, Groombridge	MT2162	1,000.00	Churchyard Grant
JS Facilities Management	MT2163	234.54	Pavilion cleaning
Unity Trust Mastercard	Top up	500.82	to reduce balance to zero
EDF Energy	DD	362.00	Pavilion electricity
Castle Water	DD	5.00	Pavilion water
Veolia	DD	280.54	Waste Disposal

Total: **£12,030.56**

22/12 Planning Committee

The Clerk presented a report that Cllr Rajah had submitted detailing that a Planning Committee meeting had taken place on 13th December and referred to the minutes which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

- a) **Terms of Reference:** It was **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated Planning Committee Terms of Reference on the recommendation of the Planning Committee. The new terms included reference to the Tunbridge Wells Agreement.
- b) **Pockets of Land:** Cllr Barrington-Johnson asked councillors to consider whether the parish council would be prepared to adopt various pockets of land around the parish to prevent land-grabbing. It was agreed in principle that this was something the parish council should consider but on an individual basis at the time and that maintenance costs would need to be taken into account.

22/13 Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)

- a) **Report from the Pavilion Management Working Group:** Cllr Mrs Lyle reported as follows:
- b) **Traffic management and installation of grid matting to alleviate parking:** this matter was under review with the situation being monitored during the winter months.
- c) **Improvements to the pathway from Lampington Row to the LGRG:** this matter was also under review and being monitored during the winter months.
- d) **Update on the drainage project** this matter was on hold whilst a contractor is found.
- e) **Contract to manage the hospitality at the Pavilion for 2022:** Cllr Mrs Lyle had spent some considerable time working on the contract and discussing the matter with the café proprietor and a draft contract had been circulated to members and discussed in some detail in the finance committee meeting. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the contract to manage the hospitality for the Pavilion for 2022. Councillors requested that Cllr Mrs Lyle ask the café proprietor for ongoing information regarding the amount of bookings that are taken so that they could ensure a fair rental was agreed the following year and also to allow for continuity should the proprietor change at a later date.

22/14 Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk reported that the Working Group had met on 4th January and had agreed to plan for a face-to-face meeting. The meeting notes had been circulated. A further meeting had been arranged for 18th January.

22/15 Vacancy on the Council

- a) The Clerk provided an update explaining that Trevor Myles' resignation took effect from 31st December 2021 and a notice for his replacement had been advertised on 4th January. A vacancy for co-option would be advertised on the 18th January if there had been no call for an election.

- b) It was **RESOLVED** that the co-option of a candidate be delegated to a working group consisting of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cllr Ellery who would make their recommendation for the successful candidate to Full Council.

22/16 Newsletter

The Assistant Clerk (CB) had provided a draft newsletter for councillors to consider. She had asked them to consider using an e-newsletter in the future with a few copies printed in-house and distributed to shops in the parish for those who were not online, potentially saving £150. A discussion was held regarding the necessity for a newsletter in addition to village magazine articles and it was decided that it was best practice to communicate with as many parishioners and in as many ways as possible and that the newsletter provided more depth and detail which could not be included in magazine articles. Councillors approved the layout and production of it in-house, and the move to e-newsletters. Councillors contributing to the content of the newsletter were asked to submit their copy to the Assistant Clerk (CB) as soon as possible. It was suggested that the Assistant Clerk (CB) ask parishioners for feedback on the newsletter when it is posted.

22/17 KALC Community Awards Scheme 2022

Two suitable nominees had been suggested and the Clerk was asked to make some enquiries to KALC before a final decision is made at the February Full Council meeting.

22/18 Old Groombridge Christmas Lights

It was **RESOLVED** to give the residents of Old Groombridge ongoing permission for the annual Christmas lights along the Walks and to site a Christmas tree on the Upper Green.

22/19 Public Consultation on Refreshed Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan

It was **RESOLVED** that this paper be passed to the Environment Working Group for review and a response if appropriate on behalf of SPC.

22/20 Chairman's Report

In the Chairman's absence, there was nothing to report.

22/21 Working Group and other reports to include any meetings held since the last Full Council Meeting, the draft minutes having been previously forwarded to all Members.

- a) **Governance Working Group** – Cllr Mrs Lyle reported. No meeting had been held since the last full council meeting.
 - **Staff Contracts:** This item was deferred until the February meeting.
- b) **Highways Working Group** – No meeting had taken place since the last Full Council meeting. The next meeting was in the process of being arranged for the beginning of February.
- c) **Amenities Working Group** – It was **RESOLVED** that the updated Terms of Reference for the Amenities Working Group be adopted on the recommendation of the Amenities Working Group.
- d) **Air Traffic Working Group** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson reported that there had been no further consultation but he was expecting one on the revision of air space. He would present a report at the appropriate time.
- e) **Footpaths** – Cllr Langridge reported that a meeting had taken place with KCC on 21st December 2021 which had been disappointing with an apparent lack of budget preventing them taking any real action on footpath repairs within the parish. It was hoped that KCC would provide a list of landowners to SPC so that the responsibility of maintenance could be passed on.

- f) **Environment Working Group** – A meeting had taken place on 1st December 2021 with another meeting to be organised in the near future. The Electric Vehicle Charging Point Installation Contract was reviewed which gave rise to a number of outstanding queries, in particular whether the Distribution Network Operator (DNO) charges to install a new electricity connection would be paid by KCC or SPC. It was **RESOLVED** to wait until clarification had been received from KCC before a decision is made regarding the installation. Cllr Barrington-Johnson asked to record thanks to Cllr Mrs Lyle for the valued contribution she had made towards progressing this matter.
- g) **Defibrillator Working Group** – Cllr Curry reported that following the decision by Full Council in December, to go ahead with the purchase of the equipment and package for Groombridge, the working group would reconvene to agree how the item is moved forward.
- h) **KALC** – There was nothing to report.

22/22 Diary Dates

17th January – Planning Committee Meeting – 7.30pm – LGVH

24th January – Expiry of Election Notice

7th February – Full Council Meeting – 7.30pm – SPVH

Tuesday 15th February – Planning Committee – LGVH

7th March – Full Council – LGVH

14th March – Planning Committee – LGVH

28th March – Annual Parish Meeting – 7.30pm – LGVH

22/23 Items for Information:

- Cllr Rowe asked if any further information had been received regarding the redevelopment of Burrswood in Groombridge. Nothing had been received and the Clerk confirmed that SPC were registered to receive updates from TWBC.
- Cllr Ellery provided an update on the recent Speedwatch session he had undertaken with Cllr Curry which had been attended by PC Wright who had driven to Speldhurst from Margate to attend site, triggered by the recent activity in Speldhurst. Cllr Mrs Lyle asked the Clerk to liaise with Cllrs Ellery and Curry to compose an email to PC Wright thanking him and expressing our appreciation. Cllr Langridge asked if a request for him to attend at Langton Green Speedwatch sessions could be added.

There being no further items the meeting closed at 8.49pm

Chairman

Full Council Action Points

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
1/21	Produce a policy on recording meetings.	Clerk Policy drafted ready for consideration by Governance.	4/10	Carry Over
9/21	Draft a piece about the precept for new year's newsletter in time for Jan FC.	Chairman & Cllr Ellery Deadline for items to CB – 5 Jan (wording to be discussed at Finance Cttee).	4/10	Carry Over
10/21	Draft new year's newsletter for January full council meeting.	Assistant Clerk (CB) Will draft 1 st week in January in time for 10 Jan Full Council.	4/10	Carry Over
13/21	Scope out what is needed to undertake an accessibility audit.	Clerk This relates to the Pavilion and LGRG only. New quote for path to go to Amenities first.	4/10	Carry Over
17/21	Raise awareness of LG car thefts and need for Neighbourhood Watch rep across media channels.	Assistant Clerk (CB)/Cllr Langridge Since the meeting. Ed has now heard from the NW Liaison Officer. He will follow up and report back.	4/10	Carry Over
20/21	Review grant awarding criteria.	Finance Committee Being reconsidered at next mtg.	1/11	Carry Over
22/21	Monitor water levels in swales on LGRG, particularly after heavy rainfall.	Cllr Barrington-Johnson Visited site with Clerk; will continue to regularly monitor through winter.	1/11	Ongoing
30/21	Fire Hydrant Initiative – obtain exact numbers and locations of hydrants within the individual villages in parish.	Clerk Awaiting response from Kent Fire & Rescue. Contacted KALC 24 Nov who said they would follow up. Chased on 14 Dec and since on 12 Jan.	1/11	Carry Over
31/21	Fire Hydrant Initiative – Investigate logistics of combining hydrant checks with the footpaths volunteers.	Cllr Langridge Waiting to hear response from Kent Fire & Rescue.	1/11	Carry Over
35/21	The Queen's Green Canopy – agree exact location of tree in Pocket Park, Speldhurst.	Cllr Pate (with Alan Ford)	1/11	Carry Over
43/21	Cllrs to visit the Langton Green Village Car Park on Saturdays and Sundays to monitor the traffic and parking.	All Cllrs	6/12	Ongoing
45/21	Cllrs to submit nominations for KALC Community Awards Scheme 2002 for Jan FC.	Cllrs (via Clerk)	6/12	Carry Over
47/21	Prepare staff contracts for the January FC Meeting.	Clerk Deferred to February Meeting.	6/12	Carry Over

50/21	Update the following Policies on the website: Grant Awarding Guidelines Co-Option Policy CCTV Policy Media Policy	Clerk	6/12	Carry Over
53/21	Seek further details of the Defibrillator to be donated.	Cllr Mrs Woodliffe	6/12	Carry Over
1/22	Update Amenities and Planning Terms of Reference on Website etc.	Clerk	10/1	
2/22	Notify TWBC of Precept Amount.	Clerk Emailed TWBC on 11/1/22	10/1	Complete
3/22	Raise lack of footpath action with Cty Cllr McInroy.	Assistant Clerk (CB) / Clerk / Cllr Langridge	10/1	
4/22	Set up Working Group meeting to consider candidates for vacancy.	Clerk	10/1	
5/22	Submit KALC Nominations to Clerk to be considered next month.	Cllrs / Clerk Emailed KALC on 12/1 and they said yes.	10/1	Complete
6/22	Notify Groombridge of permission for their Christmas Lights	Clerk Emailed Trevor Myles on 11/1	10/1	Complete
7/22	Organise a meeting of the Env WG to consider whether appropriate to respond to public consultation.	Assistant Clerk (CB)	10/1	
8/22	Newsletter – Can views be tracked and invite feedback.	Assistant Clerk (CB)	10/1	
9/22	Ask TWBC if any update is available on Burrswood Site.	Clerk Emailed TWBC on 12/1 No new update.	10/1	Complete
10/22	Speedwatch – Write to thank PC Wright for attending speedwatch session and ask if he could visit Langton Green	Clerk / Cllrs Curry and Ellery	10/1	