



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

**Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 7th February 2022
at 7.30pm in the Committee Room at Speldhurst Village Hall**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Pate (Chairman), Barrington-Johnson, Curry, Ellery, Langridge, Mrs Lyle, Scarbrough, Mrs Soyke and Mrs Woodliffe.

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs K Neve – Clerk and Mrs C Barrett – Assistant Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE

Borough Cllrs Allen, Sankey and Ms Willis were in attendance.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were two members of the public present.

22/24 Covid Compliance

Cllr Pate asked for feedback from Cllrs about how to manage face-to-face meetings now government restrictions had been lifted. It was agreed that lateral flow testing should continue as good practice. This would be reviewed if lateral flow tests became chargeable items. Although facemasks were a matter of personal choice, there was a consensus that they should continue to be worn while local cases remained high. Ventilation of meeting rooms would also continue. Remote working group meetings would be reviewed in May.

22/25 To enquire if anyone intends to record the meeting

No-one present intended to record the meeting.

22/26 To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Rajah, and Turner for covid-related reasons and Rowe who was on holiday. Apologies had also been received from County Cllr McInroy due to work commitments.

22/27 Disclosure of Interests

Cllr Mrs Lyle declared an interest in item 10e, which was to consider of a further grant toward the Yurt Project. The Assistant Clerk asked to be absent from item 21a, which was a discussion of staff contracts.

22/28 Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

22/29 Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 10th January 2022

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

22/30 Public Open Session

Mr Alex Cornelius (Head Teacher of Langton Green Primary School) spoke on item 10e, which was a request for a further grant towards the Yurt Project at the primary school.

Mr Cornelius explained there had been a rise in mental health issues in pupils in recent years, with some unable to attend school. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) waiting lists were up to 3 years for those with specific needs like psychotherapy. The Yurt Project, which would become Thrive Langton, aimed to fill the gap with 2 Yurts in the school grounds to provide therapy and wellbeing services for pupils and their families. It would start small before opening up to Langton Green teenagers and eventually people from the local area.

Therapies available would include play and nature therapy, together with counselling and psychotherapy. These would be provided by trained professionals including staff members who had received government grants to train in relevant therapies. The primary school was also part of a project whereby a CAMHS representative would visit for a day every week. The Yurts would be heated so they could be used all year round. Members of the public would access the yurts without needing to enter the school and CCTV cameras would operate.

The parish council had initially provided a grant of £10,000 and Mr Cornelius asked councillors to consider granting a further amount towards set up costs once the project was ready to apply for further grants. The project would eventually become a charity and donations would be used to subsidize therapies.

Cllr Pate thanked Mr Cornelius for addressing councillors and Mr Cornelius left the meeting at 8.00pm.

22/31 Borough and County Councillors' Reports

County Cllr McInroy had sent apologies and had reported the following:

- He had attended the recent Highways Working Group meeting and was impressed by the progress being made. He looked forward to assisting the working group wherever he could.
- Further to the recent Household Waste and Recycling Centre consultation, Kent County Council (KCC) had agreed to keep its booking system. This was because of the changes made to enable bookings up to the day before with unlimited half hour slots. KCC had also trialled same day bookings at 25% of Kent's districts with a plan to roll out more across Kent over the next year. This would result in significant cost savings and centres being accessible all the time with reduced queuing.

Borough Cllr Allen reported on the following:

- He had recently attended a Speedwatch session on Speldhurst Road, Langton Green.
- He gave an update on the recent speed limit reduction order on the B2110 and the A264, which had now been made permanent.

Borough Cllr Sankey reported on the following:

- He had attended his first Speedwatch session in Speldhurst and looked forward to participating in more.
- There had been no further update on the payment of garden waste bin collections.

- The Alliance had met with the proposed new owners of the cinema site to discuss a ‘meanwhile use’ for the site, for example pop-up markets and events that could take place until it was developed.

Borough Cllr Mrs Willis reported on the following:

- Two borough councillors had resigned from their parties to become independent councillors.
- The Borough Wards Consultation would run until 21st March. The consultation asked for public feedback on the number of councillors representing wards in the borough.
- Speldhurst and Bidborough had seen the highest uptake of the Covid vaccination booster jabs in the borough. She gave further statistics which indicated that Tunbridge Wells borough had seen a comparatively high uptake of vaccinations at all stages of the roll out.

22/32 Review of Action Points

The updated Action Points Table had been shared with councillors and these were reviewed. The newly updated list of action points, incorporating additional actions from this meeting, are shown at the end of these minutes.

22/33 Finance Committee – Report by Cllr Ellery

- Cllr Ellery reported that there had been no meeting of the Finance Committee meeting since the last Full Council meeting.
- Budget virements:** there were none.
- Interim payments: Unity Bank:** £220 Speldhurst Lunch Club Grant; £250 The Counselling Centre Grant; £21.25 Langton Green Charitable Trust Meeting Room Hire; £410 SLCC for CiLCA training for Clerk; £24.72 DD Mobile Phone. **Mastercard:** £9.00 Bank charges; £178.22 K&M Citroen Van Service.
- Zoom Membership:** It was agreed to start moving working group meetings onto Teams. This would give councillors and staff time to familiarise themselves with using the Teams remote meeting function before the Zoom expiry date.
- Further Grant towards the Yurt Project:** There was nothing to report since this project was not yet at the grant application stage.
- Pavilion Electricity Contract for 2023:** There had been an offer from Utility Aid to fix the parish council’s tariff commencing January 2023. It was felt that the quote provided was too high, and councillors were concerned about committing to this fixed rate for three years. It was agreed that the contract would be reviewed again in Q4.

22/34 Accounts for Payment

RESOLVED that the invoices as listed, be paid, excepting Hadene.

Hadene had previously billed for a service of the pavilion boiler, which it was later discovered had failed to inspect the roof space. There was now a fault with the boiler and Hadene had advised they would charge extra to do any necessary work in the roof space. It was agreed to withhold payment until the matter had been investigated further.

Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Detail
Langton Green Primary School	MT2168	10,000.00	Grant for Yurt
M R Lawrence	MT2169	600.00	Tree Cutting
JS Facilities Management	MT2170	171.00	Pavilion Cleaning
Cloudy IT	MT2171	263.70	IT
PPL PRS Ltd	MT2172	162.84	Pavilion Music Licence
Plandscapes	MT2173	210.00	LGRG Maintenance
Kidman's Ltd	MT2174	35.01	LGRG Maintenance
Knockout Print	MT2175	42.00	Printing

Hadene	MT2178	919.20	Pavilion Boiler Maintenance
JS Facilities Management	MT2170	-171.00	Reversal
JS Facilities Management	MT2170	154.50	Pavilion cleaners
Langton Green Charitable Trust	MT2179	42.50	LGVH hire
Tivoli	MT2180	120.00	Canine waste
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	DD	313.71	Trees
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT2176	394.04	Pension Contributions
Employees	MT2177	4,399.43	Salaries
EDF Energy	DD	362.00	Pavilion Electricity
Veolia	DD	237.41	Waste Disposal

Total: **£18,256.34**

22/35 Planning Committee

The Clerk presented a report Cllr Rajah had submitted on the Planning Committee meeting that had taken place on 17th January and referred to the minutes which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

Cllr Pate said that Cllr Rajah had written to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) challenging the worth of parish council input when it appeared that no notice was taken. Chief Executive William Benson had given a comprehensive response.

22/36 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. Cllr Mrs Lyle said that she had found a matting company and would investigate further once she had established that there was still a need for matting underfoot.
- d) **Update on the drainage project:** this matter was on hold whilst a contractor is found.

22/37 Annual Parish Meeting

The Clerk reported that the Working Group had met on 1st February. A further meeting had been arranged for 22nd February and arrangements for the meeting were in hand.

22/38 Vacancy on the Council

The Clerk reported that the expiry of the notice was 14th February when a meeting of the working group would be arranged to interview the applicant(s). A provisional interview date had been set for 21st February.

22/39 KALC Community Awards Scheme 2022

Three nominees had been suggested and after some discussion councillors **RESOLVED** to support Cllr Barrington-Johnson's nomination by a majority vote. Cllr Barrington-Johnson would provide the Clerk with wording to include in the form for submission. The deadline for submissions was 14th February.

22/40 The Queen's Jubilee

The council had previously agreed to participate in planting trees in each village as part of the Queen's Green Canopy initiative to mark Her Platinum Jubilee. The question of further participation was raised after an Old Groombridge resident had enquired whether the parish council could assist in securing funding from TWBC towards village celebrations. After some discussion it was agreed that the parish council did not have the capacity for the additional work involved in applying for funding in four different villages. It was agreed that the

Clerk would assist by providing links to a road closure application form and other relevant information. Councillor Mrs Soyke advised that Ashurst were arranging a Jubilee celebration at Ashurst Village Hall and the Clerk requested that councillors send her details of any events they were aware of for inclusion in the TWBC calendar.

Borough Cllr Sankey left the meeting at 8.24pm.

22/41 Householders' Email Addresses

The Assistant Clerk had been considering ways of reaching more residents with important information from the council. One option was to write to every household asking them to subscribe to an electronic newsletter. The other option was to publish this request in Local Magazine, which was a free magazine produced by TWBC that went to all households in Tunbridge Wells Borough. It was agreed that Local Magazine was the best option, together with a fresh appeal in village magazines, social media, and noticeboards. Cllr Curry would assist by ensuring that GDPR was observed.

22/42 Newsletter

The Assistant Clerk had provided the final draft of the newsletter for councillors to consider. It was agreed that she could go ahead with distributing the newsletter once the relevant changes had been made.

22/43 Chairman's Report

There was nothing to report.

22/44 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:** After discussion, it was **RESOLVED** by a majority to accept the new staff contracts, which had been updated in line with National Association of Local Councils (NALC) guidelines.
- b) **Highways Working Group** – A meeting had taken place on 1st February 2022 and the minutes had been circulated. Cllr Pate highlighted a planning application at Ashurst Place which had caused concern regarding the likelihood of traffic increases on Lampington Row and Speldhurst Road. It had been agreed to request that a specific developer contribution be made to pay for a pedestrian crossing opposite Langton Green Village Hall car park if this application was granted.
- c) **Amenities Working Group** – No meeting had been held since the last full council meeting.
- d) **Air Traffic Working Group** – No meeting had been held since the last full council meeting.
- e) **Footpaths** – No meeting had been held since the last full council meeting. Cllr Langridge would liaise with the Assistant Clerk about securing landowner information from the KCC PROW Officer. Once the relevant information had been provided by Kent Fire and Rescue, a parish fire hydrant audit would be combined with footpath checks.
- f) **Environment Working Group** – A meeting had taken place on 24th January and the meeting notes had been circulated. The Clerk presented a report that Cllr Turner had submitted.
 - **Climate emergency message for SPC:** Councillors considered the statement of commitment to addressing the global climate emergency drafted by Cllr Turner. Councillors agreed that including such a statement on the parish council website was necessary and were in favour of using the message Cllr Turner had prepared. This message would be signed by the Chairman, Cllr Pate.

- Cllr Turner had requested a sum of up to £500 in his report; this was to cover the cost of re-working the parish council logo for inclusion in Environment Working Group communications, and packets of wildflower seeds, ‘no mow’ lawn signs and insect hotels to give residents as part of a biodiversity campaign. It was agreed that this amount would be made available. Cllr Pate requested that the re-worked logo be presented for approval at the next full council meeting.
 - The Environment Working Group wanted to make the Pocket Park at Roopers a designated area of biodiversity. The aim was to use this land to demonstrate to residents what they could do in their own gardens to improve biodiversity. After some discussion it was agreed that this was a sound idea in principal and the working group should liaise further with the Amenities Committee.
- g) **Defibrillator Working Group** – Cllr Curry reported that the installation of a new defibrillator at Langton Green Recreation Ground Pavilion was now in progress.
- h) **KALC** – There was nothing to report.

22/45 Diary Dates

Tuesday 15th February – 7.30pm – Planning Committee – LGVH
 Monday 21st February – 7.00pm – Interviews for Co-Option
 Tuesday 22nd February – 7.00pm – Environment Working Group Meeting - Zoom
 Tuesday 22nd February – 7.30pm – Governance Working Group Meeting – Zoom
 Monday 7th March – Full Council – LGVH
 Monday 14th March – Planning Committee – LGVH
 Monday 28th March – Annual Parish Meeting – 7.30pm – LGVH

22/46 Items for Information:

- TW Electoral Review Warding Arrangements
- Thank you from the Mayor’s Toy Appeal

There being no further items the meeting closed at 9.05pm.

Chairman

Full Council Action Points

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
13/21	Scope out what is needed to undertake an accessibility audit.	Clerk: Relates to 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.	Cllr Langridge: Has now heard from NW Liaison Officer. 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'd follow up. Chased 14 Dec, 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
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
11/22	Schedule upcoming working group meetings on Teams	Clerks' office	7/02	TBA
12/22	Set reminder to review 2023 Pavilion Electricity Contract early in Q4	Clerk	7/02	TBA
13/22	Follow up with Hadene re. Pavilion boiler service and maintenance work	Clerk/Cllr Mrs Lyle	7/02	TBA
14/22	Submit KALC community awards nomination form	Clerk/Cllr Barrington-Johnson	7/02	TBA
15/22	Provide info (eg. link to road closure application form) for residents to use when organising village jubilee celebrations	Clerk	7/02	TBA
16/22	Inform Clerk of any jubilee celebrations planned in your village	All Cllrs	7/02	TBA
17/22	Write article for Local Magazine asking parish residents to sign up for an e-newsletter	Assistant Clerk (CB)	7/02	TBA
18/22	Distribute Spring Newsletter	Assistant Clerk (CB)	7/02	TBA
19/22	Share Commitment to global climate emergency statement via media channels	Assistant Clerk (CB)	7/02	TBA
20/22	Submit re-worked EWG logo for approval	Cllr Langridge	7/02	TBA
21/22	Put Pocket Park biodiversity on next Amenities meeting agenda	Assistant Clerk (KH, CB will liaise)	7/02	TBA
1/21	Produce a policy on recording meetings.	Clerk: Policy drafted ready for consideration by Governance.	4/10	Complete
9/21	Draft a piece about the precept for new year's newsletter in time for Jan FC.	Chairman & Cllr Ellery: Final wording being considered at this meeting.	4/10	Complete

10/21	Draft new year's newsletter for January full council meeting.	Assistant Clerk (CB) Final wording being considered at this meeting.	4/10	Complete
35/21	The Queen's Green Canopy – agree exact location of tree in Pocket Park, Speldhurst.	Cllr Pate (with Alan Ford) Tree now planted.	1/11	Complete
45/21	Cllrs to submit nominations for KALC Community Awards Scheme 2002 for Jan FC.	Cllrs (via Clerk)	6/12	Complete
47/21	Prepare staff contracts for the January FC Meeting.	Clerk: Being considered at this meeting.	6/12	Complete
50/21	Update the following Policies on the website: Grant Awarding Guidelines Co-Option Policy CCTV Policy Media Policy	Clerk: Except for Grant Awarding Guidelines which are being considered at the next Governance meeting all have been updated.	6/12	Complete
53/21	Seek further details of the Defibrillator to be donated.	Cllr Mrs Woodliffe; Collecting Defibrillator from Pavilion	6/12	Complete
1/22	Update Amenities and Planning Terms of Reference on Website etc.	Clerk	10/1	Complete
2/22	Notify TWBC of Precept Amount.	Clerk	10/1	Complete
3/22	Raise lack of footpath action with Cty Cllr McInroy.	Assistant Clerk (CB) / Clerk / Cllr Langridge	10/1	Resolved
4/22	Set up Working Group meeting to consider candidates for vacancy.	Clerk	10/1	Complete
5/22	Submit KALC Nominations to Clerk to be considered next month.	Cllrs / Clerk	10/1	Complete
6/22	Notify Groombridge of permission for their Christmas Lights	Clerk	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	Complete
8/22	Newsletter – Can views be tracked and invite feedback.	Assistant Clerk (CB)	10/1	Complete
9/22	Ask TWBC if any update is available on Burrswood Site.	Clerk	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	Complete

