



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 7th NOVEMBER 2016 at 7.30pm  
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SPELDHURST VILLAGE HALL**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Mrs Horne, Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Lyle, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Price, Mrs Soyke, Allen, Kerby, Milner, Parker and Turner.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs K Plunkett – Assistant Clerk

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Borough Councillor Julian Stanyer.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** There were 2 members of the public present, (see public open session).

**16/215 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.

**16/216 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr Mercieca (illness). Apologies also received from County Councillor John Davies and Borough Councillor David Jukes.

**16/217 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:** There was none.

**16/218 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING:** There was none.

**16/219 MINUTES:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on **3rd October 2016** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**16/220 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORTS:** Borough Councillor Julian Stanyer said he was disappointed that Holly Villa had won its planning appeal and so the retail unit will be lost from Langton Green. He said that there are also some sites which have been identified in the 'Call for Sites' which SPC may need to be concerned about. Finally he said that he had received letters of complaint about parking on the Langton Road, particularly by Pantiles Plumbing and he would support action against this behaviour. Cllr Mrs Podbury said there was an error on the 'Call for Sites' document and the Clerk is aware of the details.

**16/221 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:** Marianne Buckley and Kate Harman were observing the meeting.

**16/222 GENERAL POWER OF COMPETENCE** –Cllr Mrs Soyke congratulated the Clerk on passing CiLCA which has allowed the Council to consider the adoption of this power. It was explained that SPC meets the criteria by still having 9 elected councillors (of 13 which is above the 2/3 required) and a qualified clerk. After some discussion on the benefits of the power SPC **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to assume the General Power of Competence (LA2011 S1(1))

**16/223 STAFFING MATTERS** Mrs Kate Harman left the room. It was **RESOLVED** to ratify the appointment of Mrs Kate Harman as the new assistant clerk following questions about her working background and experience of village life. Mrs Harman re-joined the meeting and was welcomed by Cllr Mrs Soyke and other Councillors. The Clerk explained that more and more of the Groundsman's time is being used for bigger specific projects and to guarantee his availability the Council should consider changing his employment to a more mutually beneficial status. It was **RESOLVED** to delegate consideration of this change to the Governance Committee.

**16/224 FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

- a) A meeting was held on 17<sup>th</sup> October and minutes have been distributed.
- b) There have not been any budget virements since the Finance Meeting.
- c) There has been one interim payment since the finance meeting - £12.29 for petrol.
- d) The following payments were made by the Clerk under his delegated authority - £49.59 new external hard drive, £19.45 refreshments for Open Meeting, £12.29 for petrol, £99.98 for 2 new office chairs, £39.95 tree for Alan Passmore, £7.65 for two new keys for container lock. A payment of £352.88 for hygiene supplies for new pavilion was made under the delegated authority of the Chairman and the Clerk.
- e) The Clerk reported that the Mayor of Tunbridge Wells Toy Appeal is underway and SPC has donated £100 in previous years. It was **RESOLVED** to donate £100 to this year's appeal.
- f) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that the budget papers for the next financial year 2017-18 had been circulated and that the Finance Committee was recommending a 4% increase in the precept. The reasons for the increase from last year include the following - an extra £20k has been put towards Highways because of major projects that are in progress, costs relating to the new pavilion are mostly unknown, there may be an increase in costs relating to the Groundsman and there may be a cap on future precept increases. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation by the Finance Committee that the precept be increased by 4% from £137,500 to £143,000.

It was noted that the meeting provisionally booked for Monday 14<sup>th</sup> could be cancelled and this would now be a Governance Meeting.

**16/225 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:** Invoices verified by Cllr Mrs Price.

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque/Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
South East Water	DD	277.76	Pavilion water Mar-Sep
M R Lawrence	MT893	160.00	Mowing
Streetlights	MT894	24.24	Maintenance street light
KALC	MT895	216.00	Finance Conference x 3
Prestige Web Marketing	MT896	180.00	Annual website hosting
Viking Direct	MT897	119.98	New office chairs
Perryhill Nurseries Ltd	MT898	39.95	Alan Passmore tree*
St Johns Church, Groombridge	300223	800.00	Maintenance grant
TW & District CAB	MT899	1,000.00	Grant
Donaldson West	MT900	210.00	Legal fees
RBL Poppy appeal	300224	125.00	Donation to poppy appeal
Langton Life	MT901	250.00	Advertisement
Mark Files	MT902	495.00	Design & artwork Parish plan
Knockout Print	MT903	2,000.00	Printing Parish Plan
SLCC	MT904	118.00	KP annual membership
SLCC	MT905	210.00	CM annual membership
C May	MT906	67.50	Expenses
K Plunkett	MT907	33.75	Expenses
K Plunkett	MT908	604.44	Salary
Mr L Cooper	MT910	452.00	Groundsmans duties

Relate West and Mid Kent	300225	250.00	Grant
Langton Green Charitable Trust	MT911	134.03	Office electricity
Dawson Hart Solicitors	MT912	904.00	Dawson Hart solicitors
C May	MT909	1,304.01	Salary
UK Debt Management Office	DD	3,029.00	PWLB Repayment

**Total payments** **13,004.66**

\*Payment made under the Clerk's delegated authority

It was **RESOLVED** to pay the invoices listed above, sign the cheques and authorise the BACS in Unity Trust Bank

**16/226 HIGHWAYS:** There has not been a meeting since the last Full Council meeting. Cllr Milner said that he and the Clerk will be attending a Highways Seminar on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November at the Mercure Hotel in Pembury. Cllr Milner said that there had been a lack of progress on highways projects, a quote for the 20mph scheme from Monson Engineering is still awaited and a quote from KCC for the village gateways is also outstanding.

Cllr Mrs Podbury said that Hilary Smith at TWBC had expressed an interest in the traffic schemes for Speldhurst and she should be kept informed of progress.

The Clerk said that the ISS's at Groombridge and Ashurst had been checked by an engineer who has reported that they are working satisfactorily. Councillors disagreed and said that the ISS at Groombridge has not been working for a long time. Cllr Mrs Soyke also said that the Ashurst ISS has not been working. The Clerk will investigate further.

Cllr Milner suggested that the Clerk chase Mr Reynolds of KCC to enquire about progress with the gateways quote.

**16/227 BOUNDARY CHANGE:** There was no progress to report.

**16/228 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):**

- Cllr Mrs Lyle said that LGCSA have signed the Management Agreement which now includes reference to the Containers. She said that the legal framework is now in place and more detailed decisions can be taken e.g. the purchase of crockery etc. She said that a dishwasher is needed and the ladies taking on the café have agreed to pay half of this cost. The approximate cost of the dishwasher is in the region of £1,000 so the cost to SPC will be approximately £500. It was agreed that the Clerk, Chairman and Vice-Chairman can use their delegated authority for the purchase. If after 6 months the café is not viable, LGCSA have agreed to buy their half of the dishwasher back. The café is intended to be a community café and the agreements will be signed on 8<sup>th</sup> November. They plan to open initially for 4 days per week 8.30 – 4.30 but this may change with time.
- Cllr Milner questioned the reference to the Booking Secretary and Cllr Mrs Lyle said that Chris Allen is assuming this role until/ if it becomes unmanageable. The cleaners used for the Village Hall will be quoting for cleaning the pavilion. **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to approve the Management Agreement.
- Cllr Mrs Lyle said that the hire terms document will evolve over time as the Committee learn from experience. **RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to approve the hire terms of the new pavilion
- RESOLVED** by unanimous vote to approve the Storage Licence Agreement
- Cllr Mrs Lyle explained that the rental rate for the initial period for the café is low but that it will increase if the business is a success. **RESOLVED** to approve the Occupational Licence.

**16/229 PARISH PLAN:**

- All Councillors reported that the report has been delivered to most households. Spare copies are held in the Council Office. The Chairman thanked Councillors for their time and effort delivering the heavy documents. Cllr Mrs Soyke thanked Cllr Barrington-Johnson and Cllr Milner for their input into the final stages of the Parish Plan. It is expected to involve Ken Howes in the progress of the action points.
- A meeting of the working party will be arranged by Cllr Barrington-Johnson to review implementation of the plan

**16/230 REMEMBRANCE WREATHS:** The Clerk asked for Councillors to volunteer to present the wreaths at the local Churches. Wreaths will be delivered as follows:

Groombridge – David Crundwell; Speldhurst – Cllr Milner; Langton Green – Cllr Allen or Barrington-Johnson and Ashurst – Graham Riddick

**16/231 ASHURST MCDERMOTT HALL TRUST: RESOLVED** to re-appoint Cllr Mrs Soyke as SPC's representative on the Management Committee.

**16/232 LANGTON GREEN VILLAGE SOCIETY - RESOLVED** to allow the planting of bulbs around the village sign. The Village Society will buy the bulbs and plant them. The bulbs are likely to be daffodils and crocuses.

**16/233 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Cllr Milner gave a short report on the Open Meeting held in October. He said there had been a reasonable attendance by residents and he thanked the Councillors who did presentations. He said he had stressed the need for volunteers to come forward. The Clerk said that notes of the meeting would be ready for the next Full Council meeting.

Options for refreshments after the December Full Council meeting were discussed and it was decided to go to The Hare in Langton Green. Cllr Barrington-Johnson volunteered to arrange the event.

Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that he and the Clerk had met with the two heads of the local primary schools this week and notes would follow shortly.

#### **16/234 COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a) **Governance** – Cllr Parker said there had been a meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October and the minutes had been circulated. He detailed changes to some policies and some remained unchanged. It was **RESOLVED** to agree the following policies:
  - Full Standing Orders (no change)
  - Winter Weather policy (no change)
  - Media Policy – minor change to paragraph referring to the website
  - Investment Policy – a change regarding the governments FSCS guarantee of Council funds.
- b) **Planning** – A meeting was held on 19<sup>th</sup> October and the minutes have been circulated. The next meeting is on 16<sup>th</sup> November. Cllr Mrs Horne said that the Landscape Character Area assessment workshop had been very interesting and the level of interest shown by the Borough was encouraging. She also mentioned the site allocation plan and said that the next stage would be for the Borough Council to look at the sites and decide which to take forward to the next stage. She said there are issues with a couple of large sites on the edge of Speldhurst and Langton Green but no action is necessary at this stage. Cllr Mrs Horne said she was very disappointed in the appeal ruling on Holly Villa especially as a second scheme has just been looked at by the Planning Committee and was considered better, retaining the retail unit, but it was the first scheme that was approved. Cllr Milner asked whether any Salomons planning applications are on the agenda for the next planning meeting and Cllr Mrs Horne said that there is a current application to build 7 residential units.
- c) **Amenities** – Cllr Mrs Podbury said that a meeting was held on 24<sup>th</sup> October. She said that the tree for Alan Passmore had been planted by the Groundsman and an area of brambles in Pocket Park had also been cleared. She said that the playground equipment at LGRG had been inspected by the Groundsman and minor repairs are underway. The Clerk will contact the manufacturers about repairing equipment.
- d) **Air Traffic** – A meeting will be held on 9th November. Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that a HWCAAG meeting had been scheduled for 1 November but it had been postponed. He said that there was still a long way to go until the next runway is built at Heathrow.
- e) **Footpaths** – Cllr Milner said that he will be undertaking some minor repairs in the next few weeks.
- f) **Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC)** – Nothing to report.
- g) **Environment Working Group** – Cllr Mrs Price explained that the workshop to work through ideas for the new SPC environment policy would be held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January in Langton Green Village Hall. She said that the workshop will be advertised in village magazines and invitations would also be sent to

individuals known to have an interest in the environment. Cllr Mrs Price said she hopes to obtain a map from the Borough Council, detailing environment issues for the Parish.

**16/235 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 3rd October 2016:** No other matters.

**16/236 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:**

- 1) Kent Voice – CPRE Kent Autumn/Winter Magazine
- 2) Came & Co Autumn Magazine
- 3) Letter from CAB addressed to the Chairman thanking SPC for the grant of 31,000
- 4) Letter from The Mayor of TW advertising the Remembrance Service at the memorial on Sunday 13 Nov
- 5) Inside Track magazine from KCC
- 6) Imago Community – brochure about their work caring for communities
- 7) Invitation from KALC to attend their AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> Nov (Sat) – only 2 attendees per council
- 8) Flyers from Greenfingers – ground maintenance company
- 9) Letter from Hospice in the Weald advising a new fundraising event “Art for Art’s sake” Mar 3-5 2017
- 10) DoT response to our letter addressed to Prime Minister regarding Airport capacity in Sof England

**16/237 DIARY DATES:**

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Meeting with Stephanie Hayward (SPS) 9.30am (NBJ/CM)  
**Monday 7<sup>th</sup>** – Meeting with Alex Cornelius (LGPS) 10am (NBJ/CM)  
**Monday 7<sup>th</sup>** – Full Council Meeting – Committee Room, SPVH  
**Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Air Traffic Meeting 11am Office  
**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup>** – Highways Seminar (TW Mercure Hotel) 9.00am-1.00pm  
**Sunday 13<sup>th</sup>** – Remembrance Sunday  
**Monday 14<sup>th</sup>** – Governance Meeting  
**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>** – Internal Auditor 1pm  
**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>** – Planning Meeting  
**Monday 21<sup>st</sup>** – Highways Meeting  
**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> Dec** – Full Council 7.00pm

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

**16/238 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:**

Cllr Mrs Soyke said that she has reported the growth of the hedge near Ashurst Manor and she will send photos to the Clerk. She said there have been two cars written off recently.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 8.57pm.

Chairman