



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 Tuesday 24th September 2019 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Pate (Chairman), Ellery, Round, Turner Barrington-Johnson (ex-officio) and Mr Norton

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were two 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 Mrs Woodliffe, Scarbrough and Mrs Horne (previous engagement)
3. **Disclosure of Interests:** There were none
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
5. **Minutes:** The Chairman reviewed the action points and it was agreed to carry forward action numbers 2/19 and 3/19. **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Highways Committee meeting dated **10th June 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 & Mrs Watson live on Ashurst Road and reported to the committee the circumstances of an incident on 11th September when a car damaged their property at about 11pm. They were obviously still shocked by the incident and said there have been a number of road traffic collisions on this 30mph stretch of road over the past 5+ years, mostly all occurring during dark evenings. They had spoken to neighbours and thought of effective ways on how to reduce further incidents and the main recommendation was a speed camera which would be effective both ways. Cllr Pate empathised on behalf of the committee and explained that the ultimate responsibility for road safety was with KCC Highways Authority and their criteria for site assessments and safety improvements was usually triggered on statistical data regarding incidents where people are killed or seriously injured. Enforcement of speed limits was a matter for the Kent and Medway Camera Partnership and the Police. Cllr Pate went on to say SPC, as a key stakeholder, was able to put forward to Kent Highways requests for traffic calming measures including speed limit reduction but that funding was limited for the Parish Council. He said that SPC was currently seeking solutions through highways specialist on traffic speed reduction on Groombridge Hill which involved the use

of consultants, which was new ground for the Parish Council. He said that Ashurst Road was under consideration once the first part of the plan had been managed. He opened to the committee for comments:

Cllr Barrington-Johnson asked if 30mph roundels were marked on the road; Mr Norton said that Old Groombridge was facing similar circumstances to Ashurst. The Clerk spoke of the improvements over the last 10 years when permanent SIDs were introduced, then mobile ones and the speed limit had been cut from 60mph to 50mph. He said there was definite scope for improvements; for example, the gateways can be improved. He said that a speed camera was a possibility but KCC Highways did not allow them everywhere; he said that most traffic calming required some sort of lighting. Lastly Speed Watch was mentioned, and he said that despite numerous calls no one from Ashurst had put their name forward.

It was agreed that data collection needs to be improved and the Clerk was asked to contact the SID company.

Action: to contact the company that manufactured the SID. **Owner: Clerk**

Action: 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. **Owner: Cllr Pate**

7. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:** The Chairman advised the Committee that Mr Wheeler, a former Parish Councillor, and member of the Committee since its instigation had decided to step down. On behalf of the Committee he offered his thanks for all the work that he had done during his time on the Committee.
8. **Review of Highways Committee's Budget:** The Clerk had circulated the financial sheets. The budget for the financial year was £15,350 and there had been no transactions.
9. **Monitoring of recent accidents in the Parish:** The Clerk had circulated a sheet of reported accidents for 2019. He had updated the report with public notifications as no Police report was available. Cllr Pate said that the reporting of accidents will be reviewed in due course.
10. **Consultants:** Cllr Pate had contacted two Consultants, both from an approved list provided by KCC Highways. The two companies had both been sent the same brief regarding speed reduction on Groombridge Hill and both had submitted their fees. Members considered both submissions and after much discussion about the scope of works, disbursements and data it was **RESOLVED** to forward both submissions to Full Council stating a preference for Socium at this stage, subject to referral to neighbouring Parish Councils that had used the consultants. It was considered that a cap of £7k would be required before further referral to Full Council.
Action: to contact neighbouring Parish Councils. **Owner: The Clerk**
11. **To consider correspondence on issues by Village**
 - a) **Groombridge**
 - **Groombridge Hill** – the Chairman said that this covered under item 10.
 - b) **Ashurst**
 - **Parking at Ashurst Station** – an email had been received from a resident about possible future issues regarding parking on the main A264. The matter was discussed, and it was decided that it would not be possible to install preventive measures at this stage.
 - **A264 Ashurst Road** – this has been discussed under 6 and 10
 - c) **Speldhurst**
 - **Review of the 20mph speed limit in the village** – the works involving 3-way traffic lights has deferred comments recently, but it was generally agreed that the 20mph area starts too early on the approach to the village, however factors prevent any immediate change.
 - **3-way traffic lights** – there was dismay that the works had been extended till mid-October

- **Bullingstone Lane** – the Clerk advised that roadworks will be carried out for up to 40 weeks to renew water mains
- d) **Langton Green**
- **20mph advisory scheme** – the Clerk had contacted KCC to change the times and he had reported the north side lights not working on certain mornings.
 - **Action:** to contact KCC re the above. **Owner: Clerk**

12. SIDs and Speedwatch

- a) **Update on Speedwatch:** The Clerk advised that members from Langton Green were due to commence training on Tuesday 8th October at 10.30am. Sites need to be given the go ahead by Community Speedwatch (CSW) and then sessions can start. Speldhurst has been hindered by the 3-way traffic lights but should begin in October.
- **Action:** Contact CSW for site approval. **Owner: Clerk**
- b) **SID rotation:** The Clerk had asked the Groundsman to detail the steps required to change the locations of the SIDs and their batteries so that the committee was aware of was entailed. The Clerk said that the battery for the SID which collected data was very heavy and it could even be a two-man job. There was some discussion regarding the use of his vehicle, and this would be discussed further in due course.
- c) **SID in 20mph:** The Clerk referred to email correspondence where KCC said that SIDs in 20mph were not permitted.

13. Items for information: There were none

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. Unhelpful Clerk to contact Wescotec
6/19	contact Monson Engineering	Cllr Pate	10/6	Done
7/19	update committee members and broadsheets with	Clerk	10/6	Updated 16/7

	instructions on how to join Speedwatch			
8/19	Respond to residents	Clerk	10/6	Emailed 16/7
9/19	To contact CSW regarding Langton Speedwatch sites	Clerk	24/9	
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	

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm

Chairman