



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

**Minutes of a Highways Working Group Meeting held Monday 28th June 2021 at 7.30pm
Conducted via Zoom electronic communication**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Pate (Chairman), Barrington-Johnson, Mrs Woodliffe, Ellery, Turner, Langridge and Myles with Mr Norton.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were three members of the public in attendance

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr C May – Clerk, Mrs K Neve - Clerk and Mrs C Barrett – Assistant Clerk

1. Election of Chairman

Cllr Pate was elected as Chairman of the Working Group.

2. 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.

3. To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Rajah (prior appointment) and Cllr Scarbrough (work commitments).

4. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

5. Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

6. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Highways Committee meeting dated 24th March 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7. Review of the action points

The action points were reviewed. It was agreed that action points 9/20, 14/20, 18/20, 2/21, 3/21, 4/21, 5/21 and 8/21 would be taken off. Action points 15/20, 17/20, 9/21, 10/21, 11/21, 14/21, 15/21, 16/21 and 17/21 would be marked as complete. Action points 1/21, 6/21, 7/21, 12/21 and 13/21 would be carried forward.

8. Public Open Session

The Chairman opened the session with a reminder that the parish council was not the authority on highways matters, but as a stakeholder, can have an influence. He added that the parish council's Highways budget was allocated internally using a portion of the annual precept.

Paul Curry introduced himself as a Speldhurst resident and Speedwatch Volunteer. He looked forward to Speedwatch sessions re-starting in Speldhurst and thanked the Chairman for the council's commitment to highways safety.

Linda Meades is a Speldhurst resident and acknowledged the parish council's efforts to tackle speeding in Speldhurst village. She expressed her frustration at the lack of progress and said there had been discussion in the village and on the Speldhurst Community Facebook page. Mrs Meades said the 20mph speed limit had made things worse not better, particularly on Langton Road where vehicles coming out of the 40mph zone hit the village at high speed. Mrs Meades suggested physical speed deterrents such as outcrops to slow traffic in this location. She asked if the council could obtain a costing for two outcrops and suggested that villagers raise funds to help pay for this. She asked for more information about Speedwatch and the PCSO's speed-monitoring activities.

The Chairman agreed that the road from Langton Green into the village was challenging. Despite the limitations of what the parish council could do and the demands of other critical road-safety locations in the parish, this location was very much on its radar. He informed Mrs Meades that the police had attended and imposed fines on drivers of speeding vehicles earlier in the year, and that the PCSO was currently carrying out his own speed checks around the parish.

The clerk said Kent Highways had stated that 20mph zones could not have flashing lights as they were supposed to be self-enforcing, and that traffic calming must have street lighting. He added that the Speldhurst Speedwatch Co-ordinator would soon be arranging further sessions and that additional sites had been confirmed for Barden Road.

Other working group members then gave feedback, and the following actions were set:

- Review 20mph start point coming into the village and propose a 30mph zone between the 40mph and 20mph zones to KCC. The clerk would contact Kent Highways about this.
- Cllr Ellery to join the Speedwatch group
- Work on recruiting and training more Speedwatch volunteers in order to have a Speedwatch 'blitz'. The clerk would liaise with the Speldhurst Speedwatch Co-ordinator.
- The Chairman would write to the Community Safety Unit (CSU) regarding enforcement, giving details of Speedwatch dates, with a copy to the PCSO.
- The clerk would chase CSW re Speedwatch signage.
- The clerk would ask Kent Highways about traffic calming measures that did not need street lighting.

David Whittaker was attending as Chairman of the Langton Green Village Society (LGVS). He asked the council to share Speedwatch data more regularly on its website and social media pages and amplify all highways news.

9. Matters Arising and Correspondence

The clerk had received two emails from an Ashurst residents expressing concern about speeding and had invited them to attend the evening's meeting.

Another Speldhurst resident expressed frustration at speeds on the Penshurst Road.

A Langton resident suggested improvements to the junction at The Hare.

Highways England had notified the Clerk about planned works on the A21.

10. Review of WG Terms of Reference (ToR)

It was agreed that replacing 'committee' with 'working group' was the only change to be made to the ToR. The Chairman and clerk would also write an appendix stating that while the working group did not have the authority of a committee, it would adopt the same principles, making recommendations to Full Council when it could not operate in the usual way. This would be added to the next Full Council meeting agenda for approval.

11. Review of Highways Committee's Budget – to review the expenditure to-date

The £15,000 had been paid to KCC Highways for the speed limit reduction on the a264 and B2110 reducing the available funds to £17,817.00.

12. Monitoring of recent accidents in the Parish

One accident had been reported on Langton Road in Langton.

There had been anecdotal reporting of an accident at the junction of Langton Road and Burnt House Lane but no formal reports. It was agreed that the assistant clerk would keep asking residents to report accidents to the parish council via website news alerts and on social media.

13. Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

It was agreed that items on the HIP would be taken alongside the matters under item 18, where Issues village by village were to be raised.

14. Road closure Langton Green July/August

SGN's planned road closure between Langton Green and Speldhurst had been shared via website news alerts and social media, with further reminders scheduled. It was confirmed that pedestrian access would remain open throughout. The clerk would email SGN asking them to put Drive Slowly signs on Farnham Lane and Burnt House Lane where the road narrowed.

15. Old Groombridge traffic improvement plans - next steps

It was agreed that this item would be incorporated into item 18, Issues by Village.

16. Speed Cameras and Speed Watch

a) After discussion it was agreed that the Chairman would approach County Cllr McInroy, asking him to take up a pricing discrepancy with Kent Highways concerning the cost of a new SID. The manufacturer had quoted £3000 for the SID, however it was required that the purchase of the SID is made through Kent Highways, who had then quoted £4200. In the meantime, the working group would ask for approval from Full Council for the higher amount in case this was required.

b) There having been a full discussion of Speedwatch earlier in the meeting, the clerk confirmed that additional Speedwatch sites in Speldhurst had been established and he would chase up the request for Old Groombridge.

17. Road Safety Signage

Cllr Langridge confirmed there were spare speeding signs available to put up at the beginning of Furzefield Avenue. He would arrange this with the clerk.

18. To consider issues by Village

Ashurst

- There had been no objections at consultation stage to the proposal to reduce the speed limit on the A264 into Ashurst (HIP item 2). KCC would now advertise the proposed works and if there were no further objections, work would commence in Autumn. If there were objections, the proposal would need to be addressed at a JTB meeting.
- It was agreed that the assistant clerk would publish an appeal to for Speedwatch volunteers in the next Ashurst Broadsheet using data from Langton Green Speedwatch sessions to show what could be done. Cllr Barrington-Johnson volunteered to work with her on drafting this.

Old Groombridge

- There had been no objections at consultation stage to the proposal to reduce the speed limit on Groombridge Hill (HIP item 1). Same as above.
- Cllr Myles reported on the traffic improvement plan for Old Groombridge which he had drafted with Mr Norton. On consultation with the Old Groombridge community, they agreed

that the increase in heavy-goods vehicles and speeding on Bird-in-Hand Street presented a genuine danger to residents and Cllr Myles proposed making this road a 20mph zone and putting up an Ice warning sign. He stressed the importance of refining these requirements with costings and a design from Kent Highways well in advance of receiving s106 contributions from the Burrswood development. Mr Norton added that with the prospect of developer funding available to pay for these measures, it was important to be clear what was needed. The Chairman thanked them both for their work and said this would be added to the HIP. The Chairman and clerk would contact Kent Highways about moving forward.

Langton Green

- The Chairman had met David Whittaker of LGVS on 28th June. It was agreed that LGVS would put together an inventory of what they would like to see in the village, which included a pedestrian crossing on the A264 (HIP item 5). Mr Whittaker expressed an interest in joining the Working Group.
- It was agreed to remove Broom Lane from the HIP
- The Chairman encouraged the local members of the WG to walk Farnham Lane and report back with their ideas for potential traffic-calming measures at the next meeting.

Speldhurst

- There was no update on the Automated Traffic Counter (ATC) for Stockland Green Road and the clerk would follow up progress with Kent Highways.
- There having been a discussion about the additional Speedwatch site on Barden Road earlier in the meeting the Chairman reiterated the importance of contacting the Community Safety Unit (CSU), so that regular Speedwatch sessions were backed up by a more frequent law enforcement presence.

19. Media

It was agreed to share data from Speedwatch sessions more frequently and Cllrs Turner and Ellery volunteered to help the assistant clerk with graphics to present the data if needed.

20. Items for Information

The clerk said he would look into costs for a new finger post at the junction of Burnt House Lane and Farnham Lane as requested by Cllr Langridge.

The clerk would double check whether Speedwatch sessions could now begin in Old Groombridge and let Cllr Miles know the answer.

It was agreed that the decision to apply for yellow lines at the junction of Ferbies and Langton Road would be deferred, and the clerk would put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting ended at 9.37pm.

Chairman

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
15/20	Challenge use of SIDs in 20mph zones	Clerk/Chairman	18/11	Complete
17/20	Contact CSU regarding Speedwatch data requesting support from Police	Chairman	18/11	Complete
1/21	Monitor congestion caused by parking on the junction of Cobhams and Barden Road.	Cllr Ellery/Cllr Langridge/Chairman	11/1	Carried forward
6/21	Ask KCC if the LG Primary crossing can be moved from Lampington Rd to the Twitten opposite LG village hall carpark	Clerk	11/1	Carried forward
7/21	Ask KCC Highways to do an ATC on Stockland Green Rd. Request data from recent Barden Rd ATC.	Clerk	11/1	Carried forward
9/21	Schedule regular posts across all media platforms using agreed key messages from Highways comms plan.	Admin Assistant	11/1	Complete
10/21	Record video about using parish portal to report highways faults.	Admin Assistant	11/1	Complete
11/21	Amend ToR	Clerk	24/3	Complete
12/21	Investigate making HIP an Excel spreadsheet	Admin Assistant/Chairman	24/3	Carried forward
13/21	Progress Speedwatch sites on Bird-in-Hand St and Barden Rd. Request possible site on SGR	Clerk	24/3	Carried forward
14/21	Ask Full Council to approve purchase of additional speed capture data	Clerk/Chairman	24/3	Complete
15/21	Update social media and news alerts about graffiti on signage	Admin Assistant	24/3	Complete
16/21	Send meeting minutes to Speldhurst resident regarding measures taken to address traffic calming on Langton Road/Ferbies	Admin Assistant	24/3	Complete
17/21	Respond to residents regarding requests for traffic calming and 20mpg zones	Clerk	24/3	Complete
18/21	Undertake training to become a speedwatch volunteer in Speldhurst	Cllr Ellery	28/6	TBA
19/21	Contact Kent Highways about	Clerk/Chairman	28/6	TBA

	A 30mph zone approaching Speldhurst village, between the 40mph and 20mph zones; Traffic calming measures that do not require street lighting; The cost of two outcrops			
20/21	Liaise with Speldhurst Speedwatch Coordinator to recruit more volunteers.	Clerk	28/6	TBA
21/21	Write to the Community Safety Unit (CSU) regarding enforcement, giving details of Speedwatch dates, with a copy to the PCSO.	Chairman	28/6	TBA
22/21	Chase Speedwatch signage	Clerk	28/6	TBA
23/21	Amend ToR and write appendix	Clerk/Chairman	28/6	TBA
24/21	Schedule regular media updates asking residents to report RTAs	Assistant Clerk	28/6	TBA
25/21	Email SGN re. planned road closures, asking for Drive Slowly signs on Farnham Lane and Burnt House Lane where road narrows	Clerk	28/6	TBA
26/21	Ask County Cllr McInroy to take up a pricing discrepancy with Kent Highways concerning the cost of a new SID	Chairman	28/6	TBA
27/21	Ask Full Council for approval of additional funding for SID	Chairman	28/6	TBA
28/21	Put speeding sign up at beginning of Furzefield Avenue	Cllr Langridge/Clerk	28/6	TBA
29/21	Publish appeal for Speedwatch volunteers in next Ashurst Broadsheet	Cllr Barrington-Johnson/Asst Clerk	28/6	TBA
30/31	Contact Kent Highways about progressing Old Groombridge road safety requirements	Clerk/Chairman	28/6	TBA
31/21	Add Old Groombridge road improvements report to HIP	Asst Clerk	28/6	TBA
32/21	remove Broom Lane from HIP	Asst Clerk	28/6	TBA
33/21	Walk Farnham Lane and report back with traffic-calming ideas	All local Councillors	28/6	TBA
34/21	Follow up Stockland Green Rd ATC progress with Kent Highways	Clerk	28/6	TBA
35/21	Share regular Speedwatch data media updates.	Asst Clerk/Cllrs Ellery and Turner	28/6	TBA
36/21	Obtain costings for a new finger post at junction of Burnt House Lane and Farnham Lane	Clerk	28/6	TBA

37/21	Confirm Speedwatch sessions can begin in Old Groombridge and notify Cllr Myles	Clerk	28/6	TBA
38/21	Put double yellow lines at junction of Ferbies and Langton Road on next meeting agenda	Clerk	28/6	TBA

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