



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

Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2022 at 7.30pm  
in the Gallery Room, Langton Green Village Hall

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**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Cllrs Ellery (Chair), Barrington-Johnson, Pate, Rajah, Scarborough, Mrs Woodliffe, Curry (ex-officio) and Mrs Lyle (ex-officio).

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

There were no members of the public present.

**OFFICERS PRESENT**

Mrs K Neve – Clerk and Mr C May – Finance Officer (RFO).

**1. Election of Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Ellery was elected as Chairman.

**2. Election of Vice-Chairman**

**RESOLVED** that Councillor Scarborough was elected as Vice-Chairman.

**3. Covid Compliance**

Councillors were asked if they were comfortable with the arrangements for the meeting, which they confirmed. There were no other specific items relating to covid compliance.

**4. To enquire if anyone present intends to record the meeting:**

The meeting was recorded by the Clerk for administrative purposes.

**5. To receive and approve apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Cllr Rowe (holiday).

**6. Disclosures of Interest**

There were none.

**7. Declarations of Lobbying**

Cllr Curry advised that he had been contacted about Speldhurst Chapel.

## 8. Minutes

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, be approved, and signed as a correct record.

## 9. Public Open Session

There were no members of the public present.

## 10. Review of Action Points

There were 10 action points 9 were complete and 1 was in progress.

12/22 DD with Cloudy IT is in progress.

## 11. Interim Payments

These are payments made during the month that were not approved at the last Full Council Meeting:

- **Unity Bank:** £1,131.41 transfer to Mastercard; £190.48 Veolia recycling; £32.25 UTB bank charges.
- **Mastercard:** £9 charges; £964.47 computer upgrade.

## 12. Financial position to review expenditure vs budget at 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022:

Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The RFO reported that he had reviewed the annual budget and made the following comments/recommendations:

- **101 – Administration**
- **4000 – Salaries:** During the months of June-September inclusive, the Groundsman would be working an extra day per week.
- **4004 – Salary Administration:** Last year's invoice has been paid. The new company's set up costs have been paid and they will invoice monthly therefore there will be two years' worth of payments for this year. A virement is suggested.
- **4011 – Parish Office:** New desks will be ordered at a cost of around £650. Chairs had been sourced through an office re-fit, saving Speldhurst Parish Council (SPC) around £500.
- **4060 – Computer Capital Spending:** A new laptop plus monitor for the Assistant Clerk had exceeded budget.
- **201 – Amenities**
- **4201 – Groombridge Maintenance:** Includes the new posts around The Green. A virement may be needed at a future date.
- **4206 – LGRG Maintenance:** There had been no unexpected expenditure last year. An increase of £300 had been agreed due to a rise in costs and a virement was required.
- **4208 – CCTV:** A decision had been made to upgrade the office system but was not budgeted. A transfer may be required in the future.
- **4216 – Life Saving Apps:** The Defibrillator had been paid therefore the budget was over. The £600 installation cost by an electrician would be paid next month.
- **4226 – Trees:** The budget was healthy to cover any issues that might arise.
- **203 – Environment (new section):** A budget of £500 had been allocated after the annual budget had been agreed. A virement is suggested.

- **205 – Vehicle**
- £208 had been spent on having half the rear chevrons fitted for health and safety reasons.
- **502 – Capital Grants:** No provision had been made for schools this year as both primary schools had each received a £10,000 last year. It was unusual for schools to request additional grants in consecutive years.
- **4116 – Speldhurst Play Area:** £8,000 is in the committed column.
- **601 – Contingency:** There is a total of £30,600.

### **13. Financial position to review expenditure for the Pavilion at 8<sup>th</sup> June 2022:**

Summary sheets and detailed reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. There was nothing new to report.

### **14. Budget Virements**

The RFO reported a number of budget virements that were necessary. **RESOLVED** to approve the following budget virements from contingency:

- £500 to Environment for the biodiversity project.
- £500 to Salary admin to cover the increase in handover of Clerk.
- £300 to Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG) maintenance to cover increase in costs.

### **15. Banking and reserves**

The funds were under the protection of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS). Cllr Ellery reported that the Nationwide account was now open. There was nothing else new to report.

### **16. Committee and Working Group expenditure**

The RFO reported that no new expenditure had been recommended by committees and working groups under delegated authority this month.

### **17. Grant requests:**

The RFO presented the following grant requests, which were discussed in detail, for consideration:

- a) **Speldhurst Rainbows** – No application had been received at the time of the meeting therefore this item was not considered.
- b) **Speldhurst Primary School** – An informal request for funding for a new kitchen had been received. The school would be required to submit a formal grant application form for consideration. Councillors queried why the work was not being funded out of Kent County Council's (KCC's) schools budget, and the Clerk agreed to query this with the school. Councillors had awarded each of the local primary schools a grant of £10,000 last year and there was therefore no budget allocation for further grants in the current financial year; however, the majority of councillors agreed that if a grant application was received, they would be minded to support a grant of around £3,000, and could consider further assistance later in the financial year if they were still short of funds, and the council's financial situation was clearer.

- c) **St Martin's, Ashurst** for churchyard maintenance (£1,000) and towards publication costs of their Broadsheet (£300). **RESOLVED** to grant St Martin's, Ashurst £1,000 for the costs of churchyard maintenance and £300 towards the Broadsheet.
- d) **Victim Support** for a financial donation towards the work of Victim Support. No formal grant application had been received and councillors felt that support should come through the Police and therefore did not award a grant on this occasion.
- e) **Speldhurst Recreation Ground** – A grant of £8,000 had been agreed in the last financial year but SPC had not yet been asked for payment. Speldhurst Recreation Ground have asked if there was an end date as they were struggling to raise the funds needed. No deadline had been specified and the grant was still allocated and available to them. Councillors acknowledged that costs may have increased in the intervening period and suggested that should this be the case, they come back and talk to SPC, although no guarantee would be made that further funds would be granted.
- f) **Speldhurst Fete** towards the insurance costs. **RESOLVED** to grant Speldhurst Fete £223.23 towards insurance costs.
- g) **Speldhurst Chapel** – This was for information only so that councillors were aware that a possible grant application may be forthcoming should the residents of Speldhurst Village decide to go ahead with the purchase of Speldhurst Chapel.

## 18. Staff and Training

The Clerk was continuing with her Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA) training and would be attending the Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) Annual Clerk's Conference along with the Assistant Clerk (KH) which would cost in the region of £100.

## 19. Items for Information

- Cllr Pate asked councillors' view on whether the SPC van could be utilised on the Groundsman's non-working days for use by the Ukrainian effort for transporting essentials, for example cots to host houses within the borough. A lengthy discussion took place, and the Clerk was asked to contact the council's insurance company for information on adding additional drivers to the policy. Councillors, in principle, wanted to support the Ukrainian effort in general but there were a number of concerns about the use of the SPC van. This item would need to be referred to Full Council for a decision.
- Cllr Lyle reported that the Langton Green Community Sports Association (LGCSA) had agreed and negotiated a new 40-year lease on the far pitch of the LGRG which will give them the opportunity to apply for further Football Association Funding.
- The RFO reported that the Zoom subscription had inadvertently renewed automatically, and he would seek a refund.
- The RFO reported that the Rialtas Cloud system was now live for the RFO and Clerk. The read-only user profile had not yet been installed as there was some confusion over the pricing. He said there was a 3-month trial available for the read-only user and suggested that this was taken up so the committee could decide whether it was worth the outlay of £19 per month. Cllr Ellery said he recalled that it had been agreed that the additional read-only user was to be on a 'floating' basis, so any councillor could use it. The RFO was not sure if this was possible but would investigate.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Chairman

#### Finance Committee Action Points

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
12/22	Set up a direct debit with Cloudy IT	RFO	5/1	In progress
24/22	Carry out the following virements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£500 to Environment for the biodiversity project.</li> <li>£500 to Salary admin to cover the increase in handover of Clerk.</li> <li>£300 to LGRG maintenance to cover increase in costs.</li> </ul>	RFO	13/6	
25/22	To pay the following grants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>St Martin's, Ashurst</b> for churchyard maintenance (£1,000) and towards publication costs of their Broadsheet (£300).</li> <li><b>Speldhurst Fete</b> towards insurance costs (£223.23)</li> </ul>	RFO	13/6	
26/22	Update the List of Grants Issued Spreadsheet	RFO/Clerk	13/6	
27/22	Seek a refund on the zoom subscription	RFO	13/6	
28/22	Contact Insurance Company to enquire about additional drivers of the SPC van	Clerk	13/6	
29/22	Set up 3-month free trial on Rialtas Cloud for Cllr Ellery	RFO	13/6	
17/22	Write letter to HSBC closing account	RFO	21/3	Complete
18/22	Investigate opening an account with Nationwide BS, Coventry BS and other Banks/BS	RFO	21/3	Complete
19/22	Under grants correct schools committed column	RFO	21/3	Complete
20/22	Utilise the committed expenditure column	RFO	21/3	Complete
21/22	Add FC agenda item if a new account is to be opened	Clerk	21/3	Complete
22/22	Renew CPRE membership	RFO	21/3	Complete
22/22	Amend Grant awarding guidelines policy	RFO	21/3	Complete
23/22	Amend Financial Risk Assessment	RFO	21/3	Complete
23/22	Pay grant to Rainbows	RFO	21/3	Complete