



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 5<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2017 at 7.30pm  
IN ASHURST VILLAGE HALL, ASHURST**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Milner, Mrs Price, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Lyle, Mrs Jeffrey, Turner, Kerby, Parker and Allen (8.00pm)

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** County Councillor James McInroy.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** There were no members of the public present.

**17/110 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.

**17/111 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** Apologies received from Cllr Mrs Horne, Cllr Mercieca, Borough Cllr David Jukes and Borough Cllr Julian Stanyer (all previous engagements).

**17/112 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:** The Assistant Clerk declared an interest in agenda item 20a).

**17/113 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING:** Cllr Mrs Lyle said that she had been approached by Langton Green School in relation to coaches in the carpark. Cllr Kerby said that he had been lobbied – both for and against – the Joy Festival.

**17/114 MINUTES:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on **8<sup>th</sup> May 2017** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**17/115 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:**

- Cllr Barrington-Johnson congratulated County Cllr James McInroy on his recent election and welcomed him to his first meeting with SPC. Cllr McInroy advised that he had nothing to report as this stage.
- Borough Cllr Mrs Soyke is now installed as Mayor and as she therefore no longer sits on any of the TWBC committees, she is not able to keep the Parish Council updated.
- Cllr Mrs Podbury said that she had been busy with the elections and had nothing to report.

**17/116 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:** There were no matters for discussion.

**17/117 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL RETURN:** The Clerk explained that the figures for the Annual Return had been reviewed and approved by both the Internal Auditor (David Buckett) and the Governance Committee. Cllr Mrs Podbury queried some of the larger differences and the Clerk said he would circulate a form that explains the variances. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Return and was signed by the Chairman and the RFO and

Proper Officer.

**17/118 FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

- a) Cllr Mrs Jeffrey said there had not been a Finance Committee meeting since the last Full Council meeting.
- b) There were no virements.
- c) Interim payments - the following interim payments have been made from the current account with Unity Trust Bank: £84.00 Paul Cheater for pavilion cleaning; £250 to Langton Life for a contribution towards the business article; £60.00 to Trevor Piper for repair of dishwasher; £102.07 transfer to Mastercard to clear the balance and £69.60 to Veolia for waste disposal. The following payments were made by Mastercard - £6.00 card fee; £96.32 to Travis Perkins for materials; £19.30 to Travis Perkins for materials; £11.11 for petrol and £34.50 to Currys for office equipment.
- d) The following payments have been made under delegated authority since the last Full Council meeting: £60 dishwasher repair; £115.62 materials for path and new wheelbarrow; £11.11 petrol and £34.50 for office equipment.
- e) It was **RESOLVED** to grant £1,000 to St John's Church, Groombridge towards churchyard maintenance.
- f) It was **RESOLVED** to pay for two signs to deter motorists using the private road at The Green at a total cost of £87 + VAT, as recommended by the Amenities Committee.
- g) It was **RESOLVED** to pay £380 to carry out the necessary tree works at The Boundary, as recommended by the Amenities Committee.
- h) It was **RESOLVED** to hire a waste removal company to remove the detritus from Pocket Park and The Boundary up to a maximum of three lorry-loads in total and on the basis the waste is disposed of properly and lawfully. Cllr Milner is to ask Mark Leeves (Scouts) if he wants to help himself to any wood first.
- i) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that the Clerk had received an unofficial enquiry from a member of PCC All Saints' Church, Langton asking whether SPC would contribute towards the redecoration of the vicarage. Councillors were concerned about setting a precedent and agreed that this kind of expenditure does not fall within the Council's remit so would be unable to help.

**17/119 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:** Invoices verified by Cllr Kerby

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

Date Paid	Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Detail
01-Jun	BT PLC	DD	30.00	Mobile
06-Jun	Streetlights	MT1045	25.20	Street light maintenance
06-Jun	Speldhurst Cricket Club	MT1046	3,000.00	Grant towards nets
06-Jun	M R Lawrence	MT1047	855.00	Grass/hedge cutting
06-Jun	Ashurst McDermott Hall Trust	MT1048	169.10	Grant re Raft Race Insurance
06-Jun	David Buckett	MT1049	519.35	Internal Audit
06-Jun	RIP Cleaning Services	MT1050	172.80	Canine Refuse Collection
06-Jun	Speldhurst News	MT1051	14.00	Subscription
06-Jun	Mr L Cooper	MT1052	25.86	Expenses
06-Jun	C May	MT1053	17.55	Expenses
06-Jun	Kate Harman	MT1054	36.45	Expenses
13-Jun	BT PLC	DD	411.58	Telephone and Broadband
20-Jun	N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT1055	25.36	Pensions Contribution
20-Jun	Mr L Cooper	MT1057	640.70	Salary
20-Jun	Kate Harman	MT1058	572.14	Salary
20-Jun	C May	MT1059	1,807.47	Salary
30-Jun	HMRC	MT1056	2,626.08	Tax NI Apr-June
			<b>£10,948.64</b>	

It was **RESOLVED** to pay the invoices listed above, authorise the electronic payments and sign the cheques drawn on Unity Trust Bank.

**17/120 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE:** There had not been a Highways meeting since the last Full Council meeting. Cllr Milner reported the following:-

- Speedwatch- the Police training had taken place and a number of volunteers are now qualified and able to teach others to use the equipment.
- SID – a new SID had been ordered. The existing post opposite the exit from Ashurst Village Hall is considered too dangerous for it to be used and the solar panel needs to be taken away. The Clerk suggested an alternative location could be on the opposite side of the road and said he will liaise with Highways. Cllr Mrs Soyke asked that the new positioning does not restrict visibility for motorists exiting the hall. Cllr Kerby asked if the SID in Langton Green could be adjusted to make it more easily visible for motorists.
- Gateways – The gateway in Groombridge is still under consideration – the Clerk is liaising with KCC. The gateway in Ashurst is yet to be installed. It was reported that the vegetation in Speldhurst needs to be cut back for it to be more effective.
- 20mph – The Clerk advised that the consultation period will run from 9<sup>th</sup> June to 3<sup>rd</sup> July when 300 Speldhurst residents will be contacted. He also circulated a draft of where the new signs for Langton Green will be situated.
- The Clerk reported that the TW District Manager (Earl Bourner) and the Engineer (John Reynolds) from Highways are both moving to different assignments within KCC Highways.

**17/121 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):**

a) Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following:

- Bookings are continuing to come in and currently run up until October.
- The café have requested booking the pavilion on certain days in the summer holidays. Cllr Mrs Lyle felt that whilst this will reduce the opportunity for party bookings (which individually make more money), the café is a regular guaranteed income so should be considered favourably.
- Burglar alarm activation – this is still unresolved and Cllr Mrs Lyle is continuing to follow up the matter.
- Income from May was £1,784; expenditure was £202.
- Broadband is being installed in the pavilion on 6<sup>th</sup> June, in line with the café rental agreement.
- Rental charges for the pavilion will be reviewed in December 2017.
- The LGSCA has requested an enhanced level of maintenance for the football pitches. The Clerk is to investigate a quote for having the two pitches re-seeded and aerated as a short term measure (the second pitch in the grounds of Ashurst Place would not be paid for by SPC). This could be paid for out of the RRIM account. Consideration is also to be given to options for an improved drainage system and the associated costs as well as investigating any grants available. This would provide a longer-term solution.

b) School coach parking issues – Coaches have used the newly extended car park area where lorries and coaches are prohibited, as the surface is not strong enough for large vehicles, and this may lead to long term maintenance costs. On the last occasion there had been communication between the Clerk and the Bursar of the school and subsequent conversations between the Chairman and the Headmaster in which the Chairman reconfirmed the school's obligation to ensure coaches booked by the school used the correct part of the car park. The Chairman considered the matter closed. Cllr Turner suggested that a written agreement is necessary to ensure both parties understand the protocol for coaches using the car park. The Chairman agreed and will action.

**17/122 PARISH PLAN:**

Parish Plan working party – Cllr Barrington-Johnson reported that he had no updates to report other than he had chased Arriva regarding the review they promised back in January.

**17/123 LOCAL PLAN: ISSUES AND OPTIONS AND DRAFT LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT SPD: TWBC**

**Public Consultations: 2nd May-12<sup>th</sup> June 2017.** Cllr Mrs Price said that the Planning Committee had composed a

response to the questions in the consultation that they felt were appropriate to the parish and that these were detailed in the Planning Committee minutes. She then went on to provide a brief summary of the five options suggested by TWBC and asked Councillors for their feedback.

- Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that it was important to take into consideration the wishes of the residents as expressed in the Parish Plan regarding the level of acceptable development.
- Cllr Mrs Lyle noted the need for infrastructure to support housing – the schools for example in the area are already at capacity.
- Cllr Turner said a garden city would take too long to build and would not meet current housing needs.
- Cllr Mrs Soyke noted the large amount of AONB within the Borough, which reduces the area of potential land available for development.
- Cllr Mrs Jeffrey advised that the figure of 13,000 (TWBC's figure for the amount of new homes needed within the borough by 2033) did not take into account the amount of AONB and greenbelt in the borough.

After careful consideration and much discussion, Councillors voted for the options they felt most appropriate as follows:-

Option 1 – Focussed Growth – 6 councillors

Option 2 – Semi-Dispersed Growth – 4 councillors

Option 3 – Dispersed Growth – 0 councillors

Option 4 – Growth Corridor-led Approach – 7 councillors

Option 5 – New Settlement Growth – 6 councillors

It was agreed that SPC's response to the consultation should emphasise the need for the option to reduce the figure of 13,000 should be strengthened. Liaison with other parishes should also take place.

**17/124 TWBC "LOVE WHERE WE LIVE AWARDS 2017"** – the Clerk asked Councillors to forward any suggestions they had regarding the awards to him, for consideration at July's Full Council meeting.

**17/125 TW OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** – The Clerk said that the TW Overview and Scrutiny Committee have asked for feedback regarding issues Councillors would like investigated. Cllr Milner suggested fly-tipping and travellers and it was agreed that these suggestions would be forwarded as SPC's response.

**17/126 DCLG PARK RUN CONSULTATION** – The issue of whether or not parishes should be allowed to charge runners a fee to go towards maintenance was discussed. It was agreed to support NALC and that it should be up to each individual parish to decide whether it should charge.

**17/127 NEWSLETTER** – The Clerk asked Councillors for suggestions of items he could include in this summer's newsletter. The following suggestions were made:-

- Pavilion;
- 20 mph update and other highways issues;
- Aircraft noise;
- The Groundsman and a reminder to report any overgrown pathways/hedgerows;
- Pocket Park and the Boundary – works carried out;
- Fly tipping and Country Eye;
- Road-kill and how to report it for removal.

**17/128 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** There was nothing to report.

#### **17/129 COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a) **Governance** – Cllr Milner advised that he had been elected as the new Chairman of the Governance Committee. There had been a meeting on 31<sup>st</sup> May, the draft minutes of which had been circulated.

- On the recommendation of the Governance Committee, it was **RESOLVED** to retain the Internal Auditor for a further year.

The Assistant Clerk left the room for the following item.

- a) On the recommendation of the Governance Committee, it was **RESOLVED** that Mrs Kate Harman had passed her probation period and her new pay scale was approved from LC1 15 to LC1 18 back dated to 14<sup>th</sup> May.

The Assistant Clerk re-joined the meeting.

- b) **Planning** – Cllr Mrs Price advised that she had been elected as the new Chairman of the Planning Committee. There had been a meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> May, the draft minutes of which had been circulated.
- A draft letter in response to a complaint regarding 1 Cricketers was circulated. The wording was considered by Councillors and it was **RESOLVED** to send the letter to the resident.
  - Cllr Mrs Podbury asked the Assistant Clerk to start monitoring the validation date and also the date applications are received in response to a proposal to change the “call-in” period to within five weeks (35 days) of the date that the application is originally made valid.
- c) **Amenities** – There had been a meeting of the Amenities Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> May, the draft minutes of which had been circulated. Cllr Mrs Podbury had nothing further to report. The Clerk noted the article on local businesses in Langton Life.
- d) **Air Traffic** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that there had been a meeting of the Air Traffic Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> May to consider SPC’s response to the DfT Airspace Change consultation. He had nothing further to report.
- e) **Footpaths** – Cllr Milner reported back on a successful day on 11<sup>th</sup> May repairing gates, fences and styles with the Kent High Weald Project on the footpaths between Southborough and Stockland Green. He said the working group could be a useful resource for future works if necessary.
- f) **KALC** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson had circulated brief notes of KALC’s Area Committee Meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> May. He had nothing further to report.
- g) **Environment Workshop** – Cllr Mrs Price said that she will hold the next Environment Workshop group meeting in July.

**17/130 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017** – there were none.

**17/131 – CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

1. Email from SPVH re St Mary’s Lane closure from 6<sup>th</sup> June for 3 days
2. KCC Inside Track issue 245 – grant, lottery and trust funding schemes
3. Letter from BT advising that we have met our spending commitment for the year
4. Letter from AON regarding insurance
5. ACRK email regarding a Village Hall Networking Event on 15<sup>th</sup> July held at LGVH
6. Email from organisers of Speldhurst Pram Race advising that the event went well and thanking SPC for supporting the event
7. Letter from Thameslink Railway responding to our letter regarding a request for trains to stop at Ashurst. More information to follow
8. Woodland Trust appeal for Hucking Estate
9. EON Newsletter
10. Email from Valley Landscape Management advising of their services

**17/132 – DIARY DATES:**

**Thursday 8<sup>th</sup>** – General Election; Planning Committee meeting

**Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup>** – Rude Mechanicals outdoor theatre LGRG

**Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July** – Full Council meeting – LGVH Palmer Room

**17/133 – ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:**

- Cllr Milner advised Councillors of his new email address [rcrmilner@gmail.com](mailto:rcrmilner@gmail.com).
- Cllr Mrs Podbury said that she had attended an excellent workshop by Lyndsay Frost on Neighbourhood Plans.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Chairman