



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

**Minutes of a Highways Committee Meeting held Wednesday 18th November 2020 at 7.30pm
Conducted via Zoom electronic communication**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Pate (Chairman), Mrs Woodliffe, Ellery, Turner, Scarbrough, Rajah and Langridge with Mr Norton

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There was one member of the public present.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs C Barrett – Administrative Assistant

- 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**
The Clerk reported that Mrs Horne had stepped down from the Committee due to work commitments. Cllr Pate thanked Mrs Horne for her contributions to the Committee.
There were no absentees
- 3. Disclosure of Interests**
Cllr Barrington-Johnson disclosed an interest in agenda item 15d (see Lobbying).
- 4. Declarations of Lobbying**
Cllr Barrington Johnson reported that he had been lobbied by Langton Green Village Society (LGVS) regarding agenda highways safety in Langton Green.
- 5. Minutes**
RESOLVED that the minutes of the Highways Committee meeting dated **27th July 2020** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
- 6. Review of action points**
The action points were reviewed.
- 7. Public Open Session**
Mr Tapsell attended the meeting to explain his concerns about road safety on Farnham Lane. Pedestrians using the road – including families walking to and from school - faced daily challenges to their safety due to speeding vehicles and increased heavy goods traffic from the Speeds Farm development. There was no footpath and pedestrians were frequently forced off the grass verge into the road because of parked vehicles. There was also a lack of signage. Cllr Pate expressed empathy with these concerns and explained the boundaries of what SPC could do to help. After

further discussion and input from the Committee it was **RESOLVED** that Farnham Lane would be added to the Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) and include this site for new signage (see minute 14).

8. Matters Arising and Correspondence

It was agreed that correspondence would be addressed under the appropriate headings.

9. Review of Highways Committee's Budget

The financial position had been circulated. The budget for the current financial year was £25,000 and the Clerk had applied for a further £10,000 in 2021, which was the largest budget allocation for any committee.

10. Monitoring of recent accidents in the Parish

There had been one accident reported to the Clerk by Cllr Rajah who had compiled a report detailing accidents in Stockland Green Road. The clerk advised that the Police were no longer sending accident updates. Cllr Pate advised that the Crash Map website showed last year's data. It was agreed that the Administrative Assistant would confirm wording with the Committee, and schedule bi-monthly posts across media platforms asking residents to report road accidents.

11. Highways Improvement Plan (HIP)

No progress had been made on the plan since KCC advised that all members of the design team were now working on government funded Covid-19 enhancements across Kent, which has taken priority and no other work, be it existing or proposed will be actioned before April 2021.

12. KCC Highways Parish Seminar

The seminar was led by Cllr Michael Payne, KCC Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, and Cllr Pate and the Clerk reported back on their attendance. Both asked why Highways work had been put on hold until April 2021 and were given no clear answer. Cllr Pate expressed SPC's dissatisfaction, which was recorded.

There was an update on the Parish Portal and its user-friendliness for anyone wishing to report road faults. It was agreed that the Administrative Assistant would confirm wording with the Committee, schedule reminders to residents about using the Portal, and update the SPC website with links where necessary.

13. Speed Cameras and Speed Watch

- a) The Clerk reported a growing number of Speedwatch volunteers in Langton Green and Speldhurst. It was agreed that Cllr Pate and the Clerk would write to Speedwatch explaining that its Covid-19 two sites only policy for Speedwatch sessions was not appropriate given the number of villages in Speldhurst Parish. An action point was set for the Administrative Assistant to regularly repeat key messages around Speedwatch across media platforms.

With increasing numbers of speeding vehicles recorded, Cllr Ellery asked how much data was needed before the Police would take action. It was agreed that Cllr Pate would update himself on the data and approach the Community Safety Unit.

- b) SIDs: rotation and other issues

The Clerk reported that the SIDS had continue to be rotated and suggested investing in another SID with Bluetooth connectivity to capture data. It was agreed that the Clerk would obtain a quote for this. After further discussion, it was also agreed that Cllr Pate and the Clerk would challenge KCC's policy that SIDs could not be used in 20mph zones. Cllr Ellery circulated a link to an example of a speed camera in a 20mph zone.

14. Road Safety Signage

Cllr Langridge suggested putting up SPC signage around the parish as a traffic calming measure. This had proved effective before. It was agreed that this should go ahead before the next meeting, starting with key locations. The wording would be agreed, and costings signed off by delegated authority.

15. To consider issues by Village

a) **Groombridge**

- There was much discussion regarding the proposed design for Groombridge Hill and it was agreed it was that affordability would be a problem unless cost estimate or design were revised or s106 money was available. It was agreed to apply to KCC for a reduction of the speed limit from 50mph to 40mph which would be funded by SPC and require Full Council approval. Further traffic calming would be considered after the reduction.

b) **Ashurst**

- A264 speed reduction – awaiting KCC action
- Flooding – drains had been cleared and appeared resolved.

c) **Speldhurst**

- The Clerk noted there had been dissatisfaction on social media among residents over the effectiveness of the 20mph speed limit and concern about speeding outside Speldhurst Primary School.
- Barden Road – KCC to be asked to install an ATC for traffic and speed count. The clerk has requested a Speedwatch site on the road.
- It was agreed that Stockland Green Road would benefit from more signage. Cllr Rajah said he thought a lower speed limit of 30mph would be appropriate along the road because of the natural constraints of the narrow road. The Committee would put the location in its Highways Improvement Plan (HIP.)
- The Clerk reported that Speldhurst Primary School had approached him about implementing double yellow lines at the junction of Ferbies and Langton Road. The Committee agreed they would not object to this and he would investigate who should apply.

d) **Langton Green**

- Further to earlier discussion regarding Farnham Lane, the Committee agreed this location would go in its HIP.
- The Clerk advised that the school now had a crossing person. The advisory lights were finally working properly. It was agreed to investigate the possibility of moving the official crossing site to the twitten and the Recreation ground. (added to HIP)
- Cllr Barrington Johnson reported that LGVS would be pushing for pedestrian crossings by bus stops, particularly on the A264 which children had to cross daily when leaving the school bus. The Committee agreed that this point would go in its HIP

16. Items for information

There were none.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 9.42pm.

Chairman

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
16/19	Bus shelter costs for installation and insurance liability	Clerk	25/11	Carried forward
1/20	To contact Headmaster and i) identify co-ordinator for Travel Plan. ii) To discuss flooding	Clerk/Chairman	10/2/20	Carried forward
5/20	To add an agenda item to August Full Council meeting for the Community Shop to be considered CRB status	Clerk	27/7	Complete
6/20	To contact Chris K to request a new ATC on Barden Road when schools return	Clerk	27/7	Reported actioned
7/20	Add an agenda item to Full Council requesting authorisation for spending to reduce speed limit on Ashurst Road	Clerk	27/7	Approved, awaiting KCC Highways
8/20	New ATC to be requested in Barden Road once schools are back	Clerk	27/7	Complete
9/20	Instigate a Zoom meeting with KCC Highways re progressing Groombridge Hill	Clerk	27/7	Carried forward
10/20	Schedule bi-monthly posts on social media asking for reports on accidents in the parish	Admin	18/11	To be actioned
11/20	Schedule posts on social media requesting the public to report faults on the KCC Highways Portal	Admin	18/11	To be actioned
12/20	Post on social media reports from Speedwatch sessions	Admin	18/11	TBA
13/20	Request more than two sites per parish for Speedwatch during lockdown	Clerk	18/11	Complete
14/20	Investigate cost of new SID with Bluetooth technology	Clerk	18/11	TBA
15/20	Challenge use of SIDs in 20mph zones	Clerk/Chairman	18/11	TBA
16/20	Produce SPC road safety signage for use on certain locations	Cllr Langridge/Clerk	18/11	TBA
17/20	Contact CSU regarding Speedwatch data requesting support from Police	Chairman	18/11	TBA
18/20	Contact KCC for cost of speed reduction from 50mph to 40mph on Groombridge Hill	Chairman/Clerk	18/11	TBA
19/20	Add Stockland Green Road, Farnham Lane and Langton Road (A264) to HIP	Clerk	18/11	Complete