



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, 3rd OCTOBER 2011 at 7.30pm
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SPELDHURST VILLAGE HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys (Chairman) Mrs Hull, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Hemming, Langridge, Milner, Parker, Pendleton, Owen and Woodward

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs M Flemington – Assistant Clerk

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Mr M Wheeler, Mr A Halpin and Mrs L Weeks - Ashurst and Blackham Sports Association (A&BSA); Samantha Payne - Courier Representative and Cllr Mrs Codd – Rusthall Parish Council.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr Brown (funeral) and Cllr Ringrose (holiday)

11/168 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST:

Cllr Mrs Soyke 11/173vi) grant request - personal and prejudicial. She is a Trustee of the Ashurst McDermott Hall Trust.

Cllr Parker 11/182 LGCT Trustee – personal and prejudicial. He is a Trustee.

Mr C May and Mrs M Flemington 2249ii) Review of the Clerks' relevant terms of employment – personal and prejudicial.

11/169 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING:

Cllr Mrs Hull has been spoken to by residents about parking in Speldhurst. She and the Clerk are meeting Town and Country Housing on 4th October.

11/170 MINUTES:

The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 5th September 2011, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 4th April 2011, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.

11/171 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:

The meeting was adjourned.

The members of the public introduced themselves and the three representatives from A&BSA said they would answer any questions from Councillors regarding the grant application under item 11/173vi).

11/172 APPROVAL OF STANDING ORDERS – FINANCIAL REGULATIONS:

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys proposed that the Standing Orders – Financial Regulations, previously circulated to all Members be approved. This was unanimously **AGREED**.

11/173 FINANCE COMMITTEE – Report by Cllr Parker

- i) Cllr Parker referred Members to the draft Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on 26th September which have been circulated.
- ii) Cllr Parker reported that there had been four email decisions by the Finance Committee. It was agreed to invest £50,000 in a twelve month Bond with Nat West at 2.5% interest. The cost of £80 for signs at Stone Cross, Barrow Lane and Langton Green Recreation Ground Car Park was approved. The Clerk's overtime of 9.25 hours was approved. Additionally it was agreed not to submit the Parish Council's address in BT's classifieds which would have incurred costs of £11.49 per quarter.
- iii) Cllr Parker referred to the minutes of September's Full Council meeting when it had been agreed that £50,000 be invested for one year with a main UK High Street Bank and that the final decision would be made by the Finance Committee. He reported that the Finance Committee had **AGREED** to the investment of £50,000.00 of Council Funds in a Nat West twelve month Bond at 2.5% interest and that a Business Reserve Account would also be required as a feeder account. The signatories for the accounts would be the same as the other accounts and would consist of Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys, Parker and Milner. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys read out the Bank's Resolution and this was **AGREED** to be passed.
- iv) The adoption of new Terms of Reference would be deferred until the next meeting on 7th November.
- v) Cllr Parker and the Clerk explained that additional costs had been incurred on the office build. This was over and above the expenditure authorised in August and consisted of heating and electrical costs totalling £3,835. This meant that the contingency amount would be exceeded by £1,400. Since then it was learnt that additional costs for additional lightning protection may be necessary of up to £2,000. It was **AGREED** to authorise expenditure on additional costs in connection with the building of the Parish Council Office up to £3,362.00 over the contingency amount.
- vi) Cllr Parker reported on the Grant request from A&BSA which had been considered at the Finance Committee meeting on 26th September. He advised that members of the A&BSA had put in approximately 1,000 volunteer hours and raised approximately £178,000 (including Gift Aid) and that prior to the winter urgent work was required to the pavilion roof, to creating secure storage and to providing car parking. Cllr Parker advised that any figure that is agreed is not in the Budget and would need to be debited to the Contingency Account which had adequate funds. He said that the Finance Committee strongly recommended granting money for adding a plastic coated metal roof to the pavilion. Many questions were asked by Councillors regarding the roof quotations and asbestos and answered by the representatives of the A&BSA to the satisfaction of Councillors. Cllr Mrs Soyke left the room.

Mrs Weeks advised that she has just made a grant application to Withyham Parish Council.

Cllr Parker read out the recommendation that the Parish Council make a grant of £6,600.00 to A&BSA to cover the cost of the roof. This was unanimously **AGREED**.

The Clerk will ascertain from HMRC whether SPC can pay the Contractor's invoice direct and therefore incur the costs net of VAT i.e. £5,500.00. If this is acceptable then the grant will be for £5,500.00.

Cllr Mrs Soyke rejoined the meeting.

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council's accounts had been passed by the Audit Commission and he confirmed that there had been no comments from the external auditor.

The Clerk reported that the second instalment of the precept had been received on 30th September 2011.

11/174 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – Invoices verified by Cllr Mrs Soyke

<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Cheque Ref</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
Nat West	191	£50,000	Investment Bond
Greenbarnes Ltd	192	£1,974	Office Notice Board
Mr E Langridge	193	£74	NALC Conference x 2
Allsigns	194	£459	Deposit Office Sign
Prestige Web Marketing	195	£45	Maintenance Oct-Dec
The Site Supply Co	196	£49	6 x XL Vests
M R Lawrence	197	£320	Maintenance Sept
BT PLC	198	£31	Mobile
Cleary & Downey	199	£198	Kerb repair

Ltd			
Langton Green Charitable Trust	200	£12	Meeting rooms August
RIP Cleaning Services	201	£151	August
Alan Ashby	202	£80	Wall Repair
Tate Fencing Ltd	203	£538	Posts
Mr L Cooper	204	£100	Groundsman
			Sept
HMRC	205	£604	NI & Tax
M Flemington	206	£401	Salary
M Flemington	207	£86	Expenses
C May	208	£1,196	Salary
C May	209	£318	Expenses
Premiere Digital	210	£360	BB & Open Day Posters
	Total	£56,995.60	
	Payments		

11/175 HIGHWAYS REPORT:

Cllr Mrs Podbury reported that the barrier extensions have now been installed at Speldhurst School and that she and Cllr Langridge will be putting up 'Slow Down – Dangerous Bends' signs at Stone Cross and 'Slow Down' signs at Barrow Lane. She reported that she attended the JTB meeting on 3rd October and Bidborough have achieved a speed limit reduction from 40mph to 30mph with County Councillor John Davies providing member funding. Cllr Hemming referred to an accident at Ashurst reported in the Courier.

The Clerk reported that Greg Clark MP had made enquiries regarding progress on improvements at Stone Cross since his September 23rd surgery where he had been approached by a resident. He had updated him on working with KHS and many delays over the year. Cllr John Davies will arrange a meeting with the KCC Cabinet Member and the Director of KCC highways department with SPC in the near future.

2249 PARISH COUNCIL OFFICE:

- i) Matters in connection with the building costs have been dealt with under 11/173 v). The Clerk reported that he would be presenting costs for office equipment to the next Finance Committee Meeting on 24th October for consideration.
- ii) After discussion regarding the Clerk's Contracts and opening hours of the Parish Office the Clerk and Assistant Clerk both spoke and then left the room.

It was **AGREED** that the Clerk's Home as Office Allowance will remain in place until 1st April 2012 when it will be reviewed and that the Assistant Clerk's Home as Office Allowance will be paid on a pro-rata basis based on how many hours it is necessary for her to work at home between the opening of the office and 1st April 2012. She was asked to monitor hours worked at home using a time sheet. Appropriate opening hours for the office were discussed and it was generally agreed that it was important to be flexible about opening hours and to ensure that opening hours did not drive an increase in the Clerks' working hours. This was to be set against the need to offer the public reasonable access, and to that end there was general agreement that a rota of Councillors could cover at least one opening session per week.

The Clerks rejoined the meeting.

11/176 LOCAL SCHOOLS:

Several Councillors and both Clerks attended the opening of the Outdoor Classroom at Speldhurst School conducted by Cllr Mrs Soyke.

The barrier extensions have been installed by KHS outside Speldhurst School.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys will arrange to visit Langton Green School with Cllr Brown to start discussions about an environmental project involving Langton Green and Speldhurst Schools and the Parish Council. St Paul's Primary School, Rusthall may be interested in the bicycle shelter from Langton Green.

11/177 LGRG SPORTS PAVILION:

A copy of the Lease between SPC and LGCT has been sent to the Langton Green Sports Club.

11/178 BROADBAND: Cllr Woodward reported that collection of the paper surveys will start on 8th October and should be completed by 15th October. There had been 125 hits on the website. A meeting of the Broadband Working Group will be held thereafter.

11/179 SHOPS IN THE PARISH: Cllr Langridge reported that the lay-by in Langton Green could not get the go ahead to be used for marked parking until 2012. There was confusion whether this was KCC or TWBC responsibility. **The Clerk would seek clarification.**

11/180 QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE: The money available from TWBC is 50p per resident which for Speldhurst Parish equates to approximately £2,400. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys suggested Speldhurst Parish Council match fund this and advertise in all the Village Magazines that organisers of Jubilee events with community benefit to be held within the Parish can make an application for a grant on a first come first served basis. This was **AGREED** in principle and the sum of money to be made available will be recommended for approval at the next meeting. Notices would be placed in all magazines in December.

11/181 OPEN MEETING: Councillors and the Clerks will arrive at 7.00pm with drinks being served from 7.30pm and the meeting commencing at 8.00pm. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys advised that she will make a short introduction, Cllr Woodward will speak on Local Needs Housing and Broadband and Cllr Parker will answer any questions asked on Finance matters. **The Clerks to organise drinks for the evening.**

11/182 LGCT TRUSTEE: Cllr Parker left the room.
It was **AGREED** that Mrs Marianne Buckley be re-nominated as the Parish Council's Representative on the Langton Green Charitable Trust.
Cllr Parker rejoined the meeting.

11/183 BIG TREE FUND: Cllr Mrs Hull has worked on a project to have trees installed in Furzefield Avenue and Southfields in Speldhurst. She has collated information and confirmed that in this case the trees would have to be planted by approved contractors and not volunteers because of all the services in the roadside verges. Cllr Mrs Soyke advised that ACRK Funding Buddies provides useful information about funding. The Clerk reported that there is money in the budget for tree planting and Cllr Mrs Podbury stated that having more trees in the Parish was an objective from Parish Vision.
It was **AGREED** the Parish Council will match fund 50% of the cost of this project which totalled £2,676.00

11/184 PARISH DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Cllr Langridge and Cllr Woodward attended the NALC Conference in September where this subject was discussed. Cllr Mrs Hull reported that it was also discussed at the KALC Area Committee meeting that she and Cllr Brown attended in September.
It would be a community project supported by the Parish Council.
It was **AGREED** that the matter will be reviewed in Spring 2012 and Cllr Woodward will keep a watching brief in the meantime.

11/185 BOUNDARY CHANGES – 2013 REVIEW OF PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCIES: It was agreed that the proposals do not affect the Parish.

11/186 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: Cllr Mrs Jeffreys referred to her written report on the Parish Council Chairman's meeting which she attended on 6th September. Following questions from Councillors she confirmed that the LNH scheme in Speldhurst would not become a 'hybrid site' and that Cllr Ransley's scheme could not be imposed on Speldhurst Parish Council. There was general agreement that should any proposal by TWBC be made to change the nature of the site then the scheme could no longer be endorsed by the Parish Council.
Cllr Mrs Jeffreys sought confirmation that Councillors would wish to have poppy wreaths for all four Village Churches for Remembrance Sunday. **The Clerk to order the Wreaths.**

11/187 COMMITTEE REPORTS

- i) Governance Committee – Cllr Pendleton reported that Terms of Reference and Standing Order review dates for all Committees have been listed and would be monitored.
- ii) Planning – Cllr Mrs Podbury referred to her written report and thanked Cllr Milner for preparing the report on the meeting with Greg Clark MP on 23rd September.
- iii) Amenities – A Committee meeting is proposed for 17th October. There are repairs to be carried out on LGRG playground.
- iv) Footpaths – Cllr Milner referred to his written report and to a meeting held on 20th September with Jonathan Bibby (KCC) and Melvyn Twycross (Enforcement Officer) regarding the route of WT95. Goudhurst has produced a footpath map that can be purchased in local shops. **The Clerk would make enquiries about a similar one for our Parish.**
- v) KALC – Cllr Mrs Hull referred to the written report of the KALC Tunbridge Wells Area Committee meeting held on 21st September.

- vi) Local Needs Housing – Cllr Woodward referred to his written report. The second Public Meeting is to be held on 9th November 4.00 - 8.00pm at Speldhurst Village Hall. Notification of this will be delivered to all residents in the Parish when the Broadband surveys are collected.
Cllr Mrs Jeffreys thanked Cllr Langridge for all his hard work in producing so many posters and arranging all of the printing of surveys and leaflets. All Cllrs endorsed this.
- vii) Environment – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys referred to Cllr Brown's written report from the Committee meeting held on 28th September.

11/188 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 1st AUGUST 2011: There were no matters arising.

11/189 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED:

- i) Email dated 15th Sept from KCC advising that the recycling centre on North Farm will close for two weeks starting Monday 3rd October (previously circulated)
- ii) Further email from Steve Shaw, National Co-ordinator (Sustainable Communities Act) asking for SPC support for the proposal agreed by Leiston-cum-Sizewell TC re empowering parish and town councils. This was considered by the Planning committee agreed to support the proposals in principle but felt that the Localism Bill would affect implementation.
- iii) Email from TWBC Planning Policy who are currently updating their information they hold on the level of service provided by settlement. Services means shops, employment, schools and community facilities. **All comments to the Clerk who will respond.**
- iv) Letter dated 23rd Sept from NALC with CPRE enclosing a guide "How to respond to planning applications" – passed to Planning Committee
- v) Letter dated 21st Sept from the Boundary Commission for England regarding proposals to change the number of MPs.
- vi) Email from TWBC Planning Policy re Core Strategy Review Consultation responses, Timetable for future consultations (28 Nov -20 Jan 2012) and Draft National Planning Policy Framework Consultation
- vii) Letter dated 7th Sept from TWBC Planning Dept re Planning Applications and the Parish Charter. They propose to change so that TWBC does not make a planning decision for at least a week after notification to the Local Council
- viii) Issue 356 KALC "The Parish News" (circulated)
- ix) Broadleaf – Woodland Trust Autumn 2011 Magazine (given to Cllr Milner)
- x) Issue 107 from ACRK "Rural News" (circulated)
- xi) Letter from SLCC informing that they have negotiated a new arrangement with LSI Utility brokers to enable us to save up to 20% against renewal rates on utility bills
- xii) Email from Mrs Maria Monti of The Boundary who is trying to walk her children to Holmewood School but is finding crossing the road difficult with 3 young children (only the eldest goes to school) and would like a request pedestrian crossing installed – to be passed to Highways. **Clerk to respond**
- xiii) Email from Sevenoaks DC re their LDF consultation
- xiv) Email from TWBC re Boundary changes (circulated)
- xv) Notification of new charges for room hire from 1st Jan 2012 – Main Hall £7.50ph; Committee Room or new committee room both £6.50ph (Main Hall now Mary Watson Hall; committee room now Ellis Room and new committee room now Palmer Room
- xvi) Letter from LGCT enclosing repayment of loan plus interest
- xvii) Letter from EDF explaining new, simpler charges
- xviii) Email from Launceston Town Clerk re Village SOS competition
- xix) Letter dated 26th Sept from **TWBC Planning Policy Manager** re TWBC Local Development Scheme (LDS) (LDF) advising that they have adopted a revised version of the LDS enclosing a copy (available for download at www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/lds)
- xx) email from Messagemaker – they make LED Highways signs.

11/190 DIARY DATES:

1. Thursday 6th – Planning meeting – LGVH Committee Room
2. Friday 7th – Finance Day – Lenham
3. Monday 10th – **Open Meeting** – Speldhurst Village Hall – Main Hall
4. Thursday 13th – The Dynamic Councillor – Goudhurst 6.30pm
5. Wednesday 19th – KALC Minutes and Record Management course - Charing
6. Thursday 20th – FOI and Data Protection – Sevenoaks TC
7. Monday 24th – Finance Meeting – Precept – Speldhurst Village Hall Committee Room
8. Saturday 29th – The Clerk in action – KALC course – Salomons TW

9. Monday 7th November – **Full Council Meeting** – Ashurst Main Hall

11/191 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:

Cllr Woodward asked if there will be a budget next year for additions to the website.

Cllr Langridge referred to the NALC Conference and stated that things for Parish Councils are going to get increasingly busy.

Cllr Mrs Soyke reported that Ashurst are considering reinstating the Raft Race in 2012.

Cllr Mrs Hull asked whether in the future consideration should be given to stating transparency on Terms of Reference and Standing Orders. There was general agreement and when they were due for updating it would be added.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.43pm

CHAIRMAN