



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

**Minutes of the Highways Committee Meeting held on Thursday 6th July 2023 at 7.30pm
at Langton Green Sports Pavilion**

MEMBERS PRESENT Cllrs Norton (Chair), Dooley, and Turner, with Mr Langridge and Mr Whittaker.

BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS PRESENT: There were none.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were none.

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs K Neve – Clerk and Mrs C Barrett – Assistant Clerk (CB) (minutes).

Cllr Norton opened the meeting by welcoming Members. He was especially pleased to welcome Cllr Turner back, who was now able to attend in-person meetings once more.

1. Election of Vice-Chair

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Turner as Vice-Chair of the Highways Committee.

2. To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting

The meeting was recorded by the Clerk for administrative purposes.

3. To receive and approve apologies and reason for absence

Apologies had been received from Cllrs Ellery (work) and Muress (holiday).

4. Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

5. Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

6. Minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 2023 – RESOLVED that the minutes of the Highways Working Group meeting dated 7th March be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

7. Public Open Session

Members of the public are invited to make representations to the Committee on any matters relating to the work of the Committee or to raise any issues of concern.

There were no Members of the Public present. Since the postponement of the Highways Meeting on 20th June, Mr Scott MacTaggart, a resident of Lampington Row who had been due to attend the meeting, had met with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk (CB) at the council office. Mr MacTaggart had spoken about his and other residents' concerns regarding dangerous and inconsiderate driving, and parking, by Langton Green Primary School parents on Lampington Row at school drop off and pick up times.

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk had advised Mr Mactaggart of the measures the parish council was taking to tackle road safety around the primary school and had suggested some courses of action that residents could take themselves to address the issues.

The Assistant Clerk had followed up with an email to Mr MacTaggart and his neighbours summarising what had been discussed. County Cllr McInroy and Borough Cllr Sankey had been copied in on this email. Mr MacTaggart had replied that he appreciated the parish council's work and looked forward to being updated on progress.

Mr Whittaker said he was pleased this issued had been raised. As a parent who frequently cycled to school with his children, he shared the concerns about dangerous driving and parking.

Mr Langridge commented that councillors had previously patrolled the area wearing hi-vis jackets at drop off and pick up and the situation had improved when this was carried out regularly. Cllr Dooley said that in her role as a Primary School Deputy Headteacher, similar support from local councillors had been appreciated. Cllr Turner suggested organising a patrol rota and it was agreed that Cllr Dooley would suggest this to the Head Teacher at Langton Green Primary School when they meet to discuss road safety issues on 17th July. It was further agreed that members of the committee would patrol the area in hi-viz jackets at drop off and pick up times whenever possible during the final days of term.

Cllr Norton noted that it was important to remember that the number of repeat offenders was relatively small and measures should be targeted on them wherever possible. He said that further discussion of road safety around Langton Green Primary School would be incorporated into agenda item 10c, relating to the Langton Green Highways Improvement Plan (HIP).

8. Review of action points

The action points were reviewed and points 33/22, 1/23, 2/23, 3/23, 4/23, 6/23, 7/23 and 9/23 were marked as complete. Points 5/23 and 8/23 were still in progress.

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

The Clerk had circulated details of the annual budget which remained on track. There had been a cost of £55 for the production of 'slow down for horses' signage.

10. Highways Improvement Plan (HIP) (including consideration of any new issues by village taking into account correspondence, recent accidents, Speedwatch, and media)

a) Ashurst

- The Clerk had updated Kent County Council (KCC) Highways on speeding in Ashurst. They would await Speed Indicator Device (SID) data to establish a clearer picture of the problem. The Clerk would follow up again with KCC Highways about the 30mph kits which had been offered at a meeting on 14th March. It was agreed that Cllr Norton would email County Councillor McInroy to ask for his support in progressing this and other outstanding KCC actions.
- Due to illness, it had not yet been possible for Cllr Tarricone to set up Speedwatch in Ashurst. The Clerk said that Cllr Tarricone was now recovered, and she would contact him again. It was also agreed that the Assistant Clerk (CB) would submit a standalone article to the September edition of the Ashurst Broadsheet appealing again for volunteers to help Cllr Tarricone. Cllr Turner said it was necessary to make this a strongly worded appeal to Ashurst residents, explaining that if they were concerned about speeding, they must help themselves by volunteering for Speedwatch rather than relying on volunteers from other villages to do it. It was agreed that the article should include SID

data, list the number of accidents in Ashurst in 2023 so far, and emphasise the benefits of Speedwatch as both a deterrent and a steppingstone to further action.

b) Groombridge

- **Bird-in-Hand St, Groombridge, Village Green to end of existing 30mph limit (HIP item OG6)** It was agreed to archive this item, which had been merged with item OG5.
- **B2110 Groombridge village entrance to River Grom Bridge / East Sussex border plus Bird in Hand Street to end of existing 30mph zone (HIP item OG5)** Cllr Norton had met with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk (CB) who felt the parish council might have more success if they restricted their application for a 20mph speed limit to Bird in Hand Street. However, Cllr Norton was keen to apply for a 20mph zone throughout the centre of Old Groombridge, incorporating Bird in Hand Street, The Walks and Groombridge Hill. He would provide photographs of these locations to the Clerk to forward to KCC so that they could action an Automatic Traffic Count (ATC). Cllr Turner asked if KCC had indicated that a 20mph zone was viable, and Cllr Norton replied that viability would best be assessed through running an ATC.
It was agreed that it would be beneficial to look at the SID data to ascertain which direction was the worst for speeding on Groombridge Hill.
The Clerk said that KCC Highways had also spoken about virtual calming in Old Groombridge at their meeting on 14th March. She would chase up this point with them again.

c) Langton Green

- **Lampington Row / Winstone Scott Ave / Speldhurst Rd junctions (HIP item LG9)** Cllr Dooley and The Clerk had outlined the proposal for a pedestrian crossing to the KCC Highways Schools Travel Planner. The Travel Planner had explained that having an active school travel plan was key in achieving traffic calming measures near schools. Langton Green Primary School were in the process of updating their travel plan. Mr Whittaker asked when this was going to happen, and Cllr Dooley explained that she and the Clerk would make clear to the Head Teacher at their upcoming meeting that a travel plan was needed to support the case. The following action points were set:
 - The Assistant Clerk (CB) would update the HIP to say the pedestrian crossing had been submitted to KCC Highways as the parish council's top priority.
 - The Clerk would ask KCC Highways for another face-to-face meeting to update on progress.
 - The Clerk would get Speedwatch data as a priority.
 - Cllr Norton would draft an email asking County Cllr McInroy for his support in getting the pedestrian crossing approved.Mr Whittaker confirmed that Langton Green Village Society (LGVS) would fundraise for the crossing.
- **A264 Langton Rd, travelling east towards Tunbridge Wells (HIP item LG5b)** It was agreed to archive this item which related to a pedestrian crossing and speed reduction on the A264. Tactical measures such as signage had been implemented and Speedwatch was ongoing.
- **Farnham Lane (HIP item LG8)**
 - **Dornden Drive past Great Footway to Farnham Close** There had been some progress with Miller Homes, whose legal team were looking into making over the land either to KCC or the parish council. However, Cllr Norton said that his preferred option would be for Miller Homes to keep the land and let the parish council make an informal footpath. An action point was set for Cllr Norton to draft an email to Miller Homes. It was noted that if this course of action was taken, it would be necessary to put up signage to warn pedestrians that the footpath was an informal one. It would also be necessary to talk to residents and keep them informed of developments.
 - **Dornden Drive to Burnthouse Lane, Burnthouse Lane itself and Farnham Lane heading towards Rusthall** The Clerk would go back to KCC with a specific location for an ATC.
- **Layby outside Cheyne House, A264 Langton Road (HIP item LG10)** The Clerk was waiting for formal approval to proceed with installing the planters from KCC Street Scene. It had been agreed

that residents would look after the planters. It was agreed that the Clerk would follow up with KCC again informing them that the installation would go ahead in August. It was agreed that committee members would help Mr Langridge install the planters as needed.

d) Speldhurst

- Cllr Norton had been unable to meet with a councillor from Speldhurst to confirm priorities for the Speldhurst HIP. An action point was set for Cllr Norton to meet with Cllrs Curry and Ellery before the next meeting.
- It was agreed to archive the following items on the Speldhurst HIP:
 - SP9 Junction of Cobhams and Barden Road – Double yellow lines were due to be painted. The Clerk would chase these up, but the item could be archived.
 - SP10 Junction of Ferbies and Langton Road – as above.
 - SP13 Junction of Langton and Peshurst Road – this related to the narrow footpath, which pedestrians were forced to step off when passing each other, putting them at risk from speeding traffic despite 20mph limit. Since the new residents of Wechylstone had cut back their hedge by a foot the situation had improved.
- It was agreed to defer discussion of other items on the Speldhurst HIP until there were more councillors present from Speldhurst. However, it was noted that the council's letter to residents on Barden Road (leaving the village) outlining plans to gather evidence to support a speed reduction had been opposed by one resident, who had asked that their opposition be recorded. This would be looked at in greater detail at the next meeting.

11. SID Read Outs – It was agreed to continue to keep Ashurst and Old Groombridge as priorities for collecting SID data. The following action points were set for the Clerk:

- Send photos of SID locations to councillors
- Download reports for Ashurst and Old Groombridge once a month between meetings.

12. To consider a way forward in actioning maintenance issues on Footpaths/Public Rights of Way (PROW)
Cllr Muress had agreed to take over as Footpaths Co-ordinator. He would meet with Mr Langridge for a handover.

13. Items requiring Full Council approval

There were none.

14. Items for information

- www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem - The Clerk reminded Members to use and share this reporting tool for Highways faults.
- KCC Soft Landscaping works schedule
- The Tunbridge Wells Public Transport Forum would take place on Thursday 21 September at 6.30pm – anyone interested in attending should contact the Clerk.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting ended at 9.15pm.

Chairman

Action Number	Action	Owner	Date created	Status
30/22	Investigate privately owned land at locations where mirrors could be installed for horse & rider safety. <i>KCC advise not safe.</i>	Clerk	02/11	Closed
33/22	Contact residents on Barden Rd where 20mph ends leading out of village to Bidborough re. near miss register.	Clerk/Asst Clerk (CB)	02/11	Complete
1/23	Add all new information to the H.I.P.	Asst Clerk (CB)	07/03	Complete
2/23	Request white lines for LG layby. <i>Residents advised to apply to KCC.</i>	Clerk	07/03	Complete
3/23	Contact Cllr Turner regarding return to Committee status.	Chair	07/03	Complete
4/23	Amend ToR.	Clerk	07/03	Complete
5/23	Coordinate volunteers for Ashurst Speedwatch.	Cllr Tarricone	07/03	TBA
6/23	Liaise with Clerk's office about progressing a plan to support the primary schools with their travel plans.	Cllr Dooley	07/03	Complete
7/23	Issue all Cllrs with footway parking fliers.	Clerk	07/03	Complete
8/23	Arrange meeting to prioritise items on Speldhurst H.I.P.	Chair	07/03	TBA
9/23	Appeal for new Speldhurst Speedwatch volunteers in media.	Asst Clerk (CB)	07/03	Complete
10/23	Present all items for approval at April FC.	Clerk/Chair	07/03	Complete
11/23	Members of the committee to patrol LG Car Park and surrounding roads area in hi-viz jackets at school drop off and pick up times whenever possible during the final days of term.	Highways Committee	06/07	
12/23	Provide Ashurst SID data to KCC.	Clerk/Asst Clerk (CB)	06/07	
13/23	Contact Cllr Tarricone re Ashurst Speedwatch.	Clerk	06/07	
14/23	Cllr Norton to write to Cty Cllr McInroy and Cc Borough Cllr Sankey.	Cllr Norton	06/07	
15/23	Clerk to provide list of items to include in his email to Cty Cllr McInroy.	Clerk	06/07	
16/23	Request update and another face-to-face meeting with KCC and invite Cty Cllr.	Clerk	06/07	
17/23	Include article in Ashurst Broadsheet to seek Speedwatch volunteers – include SID data/ accident data etc).	Asst Clerk (CB)	06/07	
18/23	Asst Clerk to update HIP with crossing as priority and archive SP9, 10 & 11.	Asst Clerk (CB)	06/07	
19/23	Provide SID data to KCC to back up HIP priorities.	Clerk/Asst Clerk (CB)	06/07	
20/23	Cllr Dooley to liaise with Clerk to progress ideas for LG Primary Sch Travel Plan.	Cllr Dooley/Clerk	06/07	
21/23	Chase KCC for update on virtual traffic calming at Groombridge.	Clerk	06/07	

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22/23	Request data from LG Speedwatch Co-ordinator at school crossing and request further sessions at school times.	Clerk	06/07	
23/23	Cllr Norton to draft email to Miller Homes suggesting informal path at Farnham Lane.	Cllr Norton	06/07	
24/23	Write to KCC to say, unless we hear otherwise, we plan to put planters in place during August. Residents will take on responsibility for maintenance.	Clerk	06/07	
25/23	Cllr Norton to suggest positioning for ATCs and provide photos.	Cllr Norton	06/07	
26/23	Two Cllrs to meet Asst Clerk/Cllr Norton on site at Northfields/St Mary's Lane-accidents.	Asst Clerk (CB)	06/07	
27/23	Ask KCC when double yellow lines will be painted at Ferbies/Cobhams.	Clerk	06/07	
28/23	Cllr Norton to meet with Speldhurst Cllrs to discuss HIP priorities.	Cllr Norton	06/07	
29/23	Provide SID read-out for Ashurst and Groombridge for next meetings and include photos of all SID sites.	Clerk/Asst Clerk (CB)	06/07	