



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

**Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held in the Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 10.30 am**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Mrs Lyle (Chairman), Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Soyke (10.40am), Milner, Parker, Ellery and Barrington-Johnson (ex-officio)

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

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

1. **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.
2. **To receive and approve apologies for absence:** Apologies received from Cllr Mrs Podbury (prior engagement)
3. **Disclosures of Interest:** There were none
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none
5. **Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting dated **23<sup>rd</sup> October 2017**, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, be approved and signed as a correct record.
6. **Public Open Session:** There were no members of the public present.
7. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:** There were no matters arising
8. **Interim Payments:** The Clerk advised the following: Mastercard: £12.23 petrol; £374.15 from Chairman's allowance for Christmas refreshments
9. **Budget Virements:** There were none.
10. **Financial Position as at December 2017 and review of expenditure vs budget to-date:** The Clerk had circulated summary and detailed reports which were considered. The financial position was noted by the committee. She said that there would be expenditure in January for the pavilion for the PRS licence and annual checks which will need to be carried out.

The Clerk advised that the rates for the pavilion for Sept 2016 – March 2017 were now due and a payment of £1,483.05 was payable immediately.

**11. Banking and Reserves:**

- a) The Clerk noted that the Unity Bank account was within the FSCS limit. The signatories with the Cambridge Building Society have received internet IDs however the Clerks, who administer the account, have not received any. It was therefore agreed to investigate alternative banking arrangements which will allow the Clerks to bank online.
- b) It was **RESOLVED** that the name of the new pavilion bank account to be opened with Unity Trust bank will be 'SPC (Pavilion)'. Chris Allen (LGCSA) is to have viewing rights.

**12. Internal Auditor:** The Chairman noted the helpful report layout received from the Internal Auditor. It was **RESOLVED** to provide an outline summary only of the budget 2017-18 and comparisons with 2016-17 on the website. The Clerk will produce one and circulate it for comment.

**13. Committee and Working Group expenditure:**

- a) The Clerk advised the following: Pavilion burglar alarm is outstanding £2,681.10; SID pole for £800; The Clerk spoke of the damaged Gateway which should be covered by insurance and the TRO application which was sent in October with a cheque for £2,200 which remains uncashed. KCC have responded two months later, after the matter was chased up by saying the drawings were inadequate and will charge £560 to produce acceptable maps. The Clerk has made a complaint and will update councillors when a response is received.
- b) The Chairman said that there has been no progress regarding a maintenance company for the pavilion as they were concentrating on setting up SPC (Pavilion) Ltd. It was thought that it may be possible to maintain the building "in-house".
- c) The Clerk advised that one of the consequences of moving to Microsoft 365 is that the server has changed and in future SPC would need to start paying for email addresses that used @speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk. It was **RESOLVED** to use the Clerk and Assistant Clerk's email addresses only and to cancel the addresses for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Cllr Mrs Lyle.
- d) The pavilion cooker was installed one year ago and its ongoing maintenance was discussed. It was agreed that it would be more effective to call out an engineer as and when required and Cllr Mrs Soyke recommended that Levett and Martin be used if an engineer is needed.
- e) BT price increases were noted.
- f) The Clerk advised that while discussing the mobile phone contract BT suggested that a move to an internal VOIP telephone system would reduce costs by nearly 30%. Cllr Ellery said that he felt that BT did not offer value for money and savings could be made by transferring to a different supplier, reducing the internet speed the office was using and using cheaper handsets. The Clerk said that as a public body consistency of service was essential and though he recognised that BT was not always the cheapest to date the service from BT had been extremely reliable. He had no experience of the technical details of switching suppliers and would take no responsibility if such a move to another cheaper supplier delivered an unreliable service.  
It was agreed that Cllr Ellery would investigate the costs involved of moving systems and provide a spreadsheet for easy comparison and to discuss the matter further at the next Finance Committee meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2018.
- g) Veolia's price increase of £0.68 per lift was noted and it was **RESOLVED** to continue with the service at that price.

**14. Grant requests:**

- a) Councillors considered the request from Speldhurst residents of a grant towards Speldhurst in Flower. It was **RESOLVED** that the grant of £250 would be made to the project as an exception and that this sum would be the limit of SPC's support for this project. The Clerk is to ask the organisers for evidence of expenditure.

**15. Staff and Training: RESOLVED** to send the Clerk(s) on a Governance, Procedures and Transparency Conference at a cost of £60 pp.

**16. Items for Information:** The Clerk said he had attended a very interesting conference on Crime Prevention and circulated questionnaires to councillors for a consultation into where police resources are spent within the borough.

The meeting closed at 11.40 am

Chairman