



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

**Minutes of an Amenities Committee Meeting held in the Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground
On Friday 7th June 2019 at 10.30am**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Mrs Podbury (Chair), Milner (Ex-officio), Mrs Soyke, Mrs Lyle and Turner

OFFICER PRESENT: Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk

In the absence of the Chairman, Cllr Mrs Podbury was elected to chair the meeting.

1. **Election of Chairman** – It was **RESOLVED** that, further to his previous agreement, Cllr Rowe would become the new Chairman of the Amenities Committee.
2. **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.
3. **To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** Apologies were received from Cllr Rowe (family commitments), Cllr Mrs Woodliffe (work commitments) and Cllr Mrs Price (work commitments).
4. **Disclosure of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests:** Cllr Mrs Lyle advised that she is a trustee of the LGCSA.
5. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
6. **Minutes:** **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2019 be approved as a correct record with one correction - item 10 vi) Gary Stevens should be changed to Gary Stevenson. The minutes were then signed by the Chairman.
7. **Public Open Session:** No members of the public were present.
8. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:** The Assistant Clerk had circulated an email from the Chairman of the Langton Green Village Society advising that further to a request in the Parish Plan for tennis facilities in Langton Green for young residents, the VS were paying for Year 5 children from LG Primary School to have tennis lessons on a nearby court.
9. **Financial Review:** The finance sheets had been circulated. It was noted that the playground would require expenditure in the next few years and that there was currently £60K in earmarked reserves for this purpose. The budget would be considered in October.
10. **Parish Council Land:**
 - a. **Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)**
 - i. Langton Green Village Hall – there was nothing to report.

- ii. Pavilion – Cllr Mrs Lyle provided an update on drainage problems at the pavilion. Dyno Rod had completed a full investigation of the drains using cameras however their quotation to carry out the work suggested to resolve the problems was expensive. The Clerk and Cllr Mrs Lyle would liaise to obtain alternative quotations. Users of the toilets were putting wet wipes and bundles of toilet tissue down the toilets which was contributing to the blockages. Alternative toilet roll dispensers which give out one sheet of paper at a time were being investigated. It was noted that it is unlikely SPC would have any comeback from the builders for bad design of the drainage system because the warranty was for a year which had now expired. Cllr Mrs Podbury reported a boy at the recent football fiesta had had his toenail ripped off by the pavilion door which was noted.
 - iii. Sports Clubs – Cllr Mrs Lyle said that the recent football fiesta had gone well and in particular the parking management was very good. Ashurst Park’s field had been used for cars and motorists were charged £4 for parking. The LGCSA had been successful in obtaining a grant from the FA Football Fund and it was therefore hoped that the works on the drainage of the pitches would commence towards the end of June. Cllr Mrs Lyle and the Clerk would meet to discuss a letter to LGCSA outlining clearly the conditions under which SPC’s grant towards the drainage work would be made which would include a request for a traffic management policy. Additionally, a letter confirming their acceptance of the terms would be requested. The importance of enforcement was noted. The cricket club had been in communication with the football club however she was not sure that the stoolball team had been in contact. Cllr Mrs Lyle was to bill the Cricket Club for use of the pavilion this year.
 - iv. Play Area –
 - The flooring underneath the gyrosipiral would need replacing and the Assistant Clerk was to obtain a quotation from the supplier recommended by our playground consultant, Maria Cook.
 - Cllrs Mrs Podbury, Soyke and Jeffreys had held a meeting with Maria Cook, looking at the longevity of the existing playground facilities. Mrs Cook advised that the playgrounds are in good condition for their age and could last another ten years with ongoing maintenance. She did however recommend that additional items of play equipment could be added to make the facilities more interesting for children. It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk would attend future meetings but in the meantime she would ask Ms Cook to recommend two additional items suitable for the teenage play area and Councillors would visit parks to see them in action before deciding which one to install. It was suggested that an additional item could be installed every year for the next few years to gradually improve the facilities and spread the cost. It was noted that in future when items are out of use, it was not adequate to tape the item with a sign stuck on – the items must be removed for maximum safety.
 - Barge had recently attended site to repair the pedal roundabout however it appeared not to be improved. The Assistant Clerk was to ask Maria Cook for advice.
 - Barge had tried to repair the gyrosipiral however it was discovered that an essential part was missing from the equipment which would cost £212.50 + VAT to replace. It was **RESOLVED** to ask Barge Group to order and install the replacement item.
 - v. Use of the recreation ground – The Assistant Clerk advised that Zurich had come back to her regarding charging fitness instructors who use the recreation ground for their paying classes. Zurich’s advice was that if SPC were to charge, it would be their responsibility to make sure the area was in an adequate condition. Cllr Mrs Lyle said that the Governance Committee had felt the benefits of charging would not outweigh the liability and therefore suggested that SPC do not charge. Cllr Mrs Podbury pointed out that the users’ insurance liability is for that purpose and supported charging. It was **RESOLVED** to delay the decision on charging until after the drainage works have been completed and put the matter to Full Council in 2020.
 - vi. Car park – Cllr Turner asked if the carpark would be available for the LG fete bearing in mind the drainage works were going ahead. It was suggested that Cllr Turner approach Ashurst Place to enquire about using their field.
- b. **The Green at Langton Green** – The Assistant Clerk said that Landscape Services had not carried out the patching works to the path along the Green despite months of chasing. It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk get quotes from alternative companies as recommended by other parish clerks.

Cllr Milner asked if SPC could remove the old broken bench opposite the Green which is an eyesore. It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk ask Tom Shields who is the owner of the land for permission and, if given, to obtain a quotation to have it removed.

- c. **The Green at Groombridge** -
- Repairs to picket fence – It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Finance Committee to have the fence repaired at a cost of £2724.05 plus VAT.
 - Green Erosion – The Assistant Clerk was to write to residents who live in the houses surrounding the Green for suggestions on how it can be preserved. A deadline for comments should be given and the suggestion with the greatest majority would be undertaken providing it is feasible and affordable.
- d. **Pocket Parks at Speldhurst** – It was noted that permission had been granted to have the trees with TPO's maintained following the recommendations in the tree survey. The Groundsman had carried out a general tidy up.
- e. **The Boundary** – there was nothing to report.
- f. **Signs on Council Land** – there was nothing to report.
- g. **The Groundsman** - The Assistant Clerk advised that the Groundsman was attending the pesticides course in mid-June and that the course was going ahead despite the college going into receivership. The Groundsman would be working with Cllr Milner to carry out further works on various footpaths and seasonal vegetation.
11. **Trees:** An email had been received from the Chairman of the Village Society asking for SPC's support in obtaining protection for trees which were considered important in the parish. The Assistant Clerk was to ask the Village Society to identify the trees they would like to protect and then the matter would be passed to the Planning Committee.
12. **Public Rights of Way:** It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk, Administration Assistant, Cllr Milner and the Clerk (if available) would update the list of footpath adopters to work out which paths are not covered before going out for more volunteers.
13. **Items for Information:** Cllr Mrs Soyke reported a dead hawthorn tree in a twitten in Ashurst.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 11.36am.

Chairman