



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

Minutes of the Amenities Committee Meeting

held on Monday 20th January at 7.30pm In the Council Offices, Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Lyle (Chair), Rowe (Vice-Chair), Leach, Littlefield and Norton.

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk (AC).

1. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**
The Clerk would be recording the meeting for the purpose of accuracy of the minutes. The recording would be deleted once the minutes had been signed off at the next meeting.
2. **To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence**
Apologies had been received from Cllr Turner due to a family commitment and Cllr Ellery due to work commitments.
3. **Disclosures of Interest**
There were none.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying**
There were none.
5. **Minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 30th September 2024**
RESOLVED that the minutes, previously forwarded to Members were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
6. **Public Open Session**
There were two members of the public present representing Little Birches Nursery School (LBNS). A discussion regarding their proposal for a garden area was brought forward to this point in the meeting. They were putting out feelers to gauge opinion regarding their proposal before they moved forward with a business plan. Since they had recently expanded to include children from 3 months to 2 years; it had become apparent that a dedicated outside garden for the younger children to safely play in would significantly

improve the services they could provide. A discussion was then held which covered topics such as security, location and size, equipment (slides etc), rent, fencing, flooring, consultation (with the Village Hall Trustees (VHT) and Langton Green Community Sports Association (LGCSA) and costs. Members advised that Speldhurst Parish Council (SPC) would not be liable for any costs associated with the project. They were in favour of enabling and encouraging outside play for children in principle, but the nursery would need to consult VHT first to establish if they had any concerns and then more detailed information from LBNS would be required before the matter could be considered further. The interests of other hirers of the hall would also need to be considered in terms of noise and location.

7. **Financial Review**

The finance sheets were discussed.

8. **Risk Assessments**

The AC was asked to contact LGCSA to request a copy of their risk assessment of the football/cricket pitches which was standard practice for all users of the recreation ground. This document would then be added to, to create a document for the whole of the recreation ground. Cllr Norton volunteered to carry out a risk assessment of Groombridge Green.

9. **To consider allowing advertising banners on SPC property including applicable rates**

Two enquiries had been received from members of the public regarding advertising banners on the recreation ground and in particular the pavilion. Members recognised the financial benefit but were also wary of the negative visual impact. Cllr Lyle advised that under the terms of the sub-lease of the recreation ground with LGCSA, SPC could only consider advertising that is of local or community interest or benefit. The AC was asked to go back to the parties who had enquired to ascertain the nature of their businesses before the matter would be considered further.

10. **Parish Council Land**

a) **Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG) including carparks and playgrounds and the Pavilion**

- The AC provided an update. The playgrounds were currently in a good condition with no outstanding matters.
- Proposal for a dedicated garden area from Little Birches Nursery School – see Public Open Session.
- It was **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council to instruct AJL Roadmarking to reline the front carpark at a cost of £1,200 and continue to monitor the rear carpark. Cllr Lyle asked the AC to speak to the Groundsman about carrying out repairs to the tarmac in the carpark with a view to getting it repaired before the relining is done.
- It was **RESOLVED** that the maintenance works carried out by the Groundsman on the cricket/ball-stop net in the LGRG were sufficient at the present time and that the net would continue to be monitored.
- It was **RESOLVED** to instruct The Living Forest to carry out works to cut back the beech tree overhanging the cricket net in the LGRG at a cost of £420.
- It was **RESOLVED** to replace 2 signs on the LGRG at a cost of approximately £100 each. The content of the signs would be updated with agreement by members via email.
- It was **RESOLVED** to instruct Capel Groundcare to carry out playground maintenance under the proposed three-year contract from 1st March 2025.
- The issue of flooding onto the recreation ground due to diverted pipework near to 10 Winstone Scott Avenue was discussed. Town and County Housing's (TCH) surveyor had visited site; however, the report

was yet to be received. It was agreed to allow TCH time to investigate the matter however that they should be given a deadline by which to respond before SPC take further action.

b) **The Green at Langton Green**

There was nothing to report.

c) **The Boundary at Langton Green**

It was **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council to instruct The Living Forest to carry out works to clear the Boundary pond and surrounding vegetation at a cost of £1,798.

d) **The Green at Groombridge**

- The AC had been advised by Trevor Myles that the restoration of the village benches would resume in the spring. Both the ironwork and woodwork had been authorised.
- The Groundsman had reinstalled a large stone which had been knocked down on the edge of The Green.

e) **Pocket Parks at Speldhurst**

- The Chair of SPC's Environment Working Group had advised that the new hedging had been planted in Pocket Park and he would be finalising the High Weald grant.
- It was **RESOLVED** to make a recommendation to Full Council for maintenance works to be carried out to an Oak tree overhanging 2 Roopers at a cost of £840. This was the cheaper of the 2 options presented to the committee.

11. **Items for Information**

- The AC reported that she had received an email from a parent of Langton Green Primary School asking if the path between Winstone Scott Avenue and the recreation ground could be widened as the area has become extremely muddy. This concern had been raised previously by parents at the school and as the land in question does not belong to SPC, the matter had been handed back to the school's PTA to progress. The AC would go back to the parent advising them to contact the PTA and send the email received from TCH (landowner) regarding the matter.
- An email had been received from a resident who lives in Eastgate Lodge regarding flooding from the recreation ground. The AC had responded to the resident explaining that the water floods across SPC's land on its journey downhill from higher ground and whilst the parish council sympathises, it was not SPC's responsibility. A sensible next step would be to obtain professional advice.

Cllr Leach left the meeting at 8.54 pm for childcare reasons.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting finished at 8.56 pm.

Chairman