



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

**Draft Minutes of the Highways Working Group Meeting held on Tuesday 14th June 2022 at 7.30pm
Conducted via Microsoft Teams electronic communication**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Pate (Chair), Barrington-Johnson, Langridge, Rajah, Turner and Woodliffe with Mr Whittaker.

BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS PRESENT: There were none.

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

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs K Neve – Clerk and Mrs C Barrett – Assistant Clerk.

1. Election of Chair

It was **RESOLVED** to re-elect Cllr Pate as Chair of the working group.

2. Election of Vice-Chair

It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Langridge as Vice-Chair of the working group.

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

The meeting was recorded by the Clerk for administrative purposes.

4. To receive and approve apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Ellery (personal commitments), Norton (holiday) and Scarborough (work-related). County Cllr McInroy and Borough Cllr Sankey had also sent apologies.

5. Declarations of Interest

There were none.

6. Declarations of Lobbying

Cllr Langridge reported that he had received a request for a 'Slow Down for Horses' sign from a resident, who had offered to pay for the sign and support him with votes at future elections.

7. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Highways working group meeting dated 12th April be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

8. Public Open Session

There were no members of public present. The resident who had been due to attend to talk about 'Slow Down for Horses' signs was now unavailable.

9. Review of the action points

The action points were reviewed. Action Points 19/21, 5/22, 7/22a, 11/22, 12/22, 13/22, 14/22, 15/22, 16/22, 17/22 and 18/22 were marked as complete. Action points 10/22 and 19/22 were to be actioned.

10. Future meetings of the Highways working group – to decide how future meetings are to be conducted

It had been resolved at June Full Council that working groups who had operated as committees prior to the Covid pandemic should decide for themselves whether to remain as a working group or resume committee status. A working group could only make recommendations to Full Council, rather than making decisions itself. A committee could make decisions but had to meet in person to do so.

After some discussion it was agreed to continue as a working group, subject to review in six months' time, when any delays caused by operating as a working group would be considered. This would allow members for whom shielding continued to be necessary, to attend meetings and input virtually.

11. Review of Highways Working Group's Budget

There was nothing to report.

12. Fixed Asset Register – to evaluate fixed assets under the remit of the Highway Working Group

It was agreed that Cllrs Barrington-Johnson, Langridge and Pate would help evaluate the fixed assets. An action point was set for them to work with the Clerk on this.

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

Before addressing the HIP by village, the following updates were given:

- Speedwatch information had been provided by Kent Police. The Clerk said this must not be shared outside the Highways working group.
- Cllr Pate reported that he and the Clerk had attended a virtual meeting with KCC Highways earlier that day. It had been a productive meeting, and KCC Highways were keen to help the parish council achieve its aims. The Clerk had provided headline information from the working group's HIP and KCC Highways would incorporate this into their own Highways Improvement Plan. There had been a virtual walk through of key sites and the relevant updates by village are shown below. An in-person site visit was scheduled for late July/early August.

Ashurst

- Following an on-site meeting with Cllr Mrs Soyke, the Clerk had circulated photos of potential new sites for SIDS. However, it was felt that with three sites already in operation, Speedwatch was likely to be a more effective speed deterrent in Ashurst (HIP item 3). With existing Speedwatch and parish council commitments taking up his time, Cllr Langridge had been unable to initiate Speedwatch sessions. Despite further appeals, there had still not been any interest in volunteering from Ashurst residents. It was concluded that without substantial community involvement, Speedwatch could not go ahead.

Langton Green

- As an outcome of their meeting with Cllr Pate and the Clerk, KCC Highways would undertake the following:
 - A site visit to the A264 Langton Road, eastwards (HIP item 5), to investigate the possibility of a speed reduction and pedestrian crossing. They requested that the parish council continue to send them speeding data. Action points were set for Cllr Barrington-Johnson to check with the Langton Green Speedwatch Co-ordinator whether a new site had been approved at Gypps Cross, and Cllr Pate and the Clerk to request an ATC.

- Investigate ownership of land at Farnham Lane, which had been identified as a potential site for a pavement to be installed (HIP item 8).
- A site visit Speldhurst Road/Lampington Row (HIP item 9) to address speeding concerns.
- The Clerk reported that a resident had contacted Borough Cllr Sankey to request double yellow lines from the Hare to the petrol station. Councillors agreed that having parked cars on this stretch of road was in fact helpful in the absence of other traffic calming measures, since it had the effect of slowing traffic down. The same resident had also requested traffic lights at the Hare junction. After some discussion it was agreed to prioritise the traffic calming goals already included on the HIP for Langton Green. In the meantime, this request would be kept on file and added to the HIP if more residents asked for the same.
- A resident had contacted the office to request a 'Slow Down for Children/Horses' sign on Speldhurst Road between Leggs Lane and Bullingstone Lane. There were several equestrian yards on that stretch of road and the resident said there had been a number of near misses. It was agreed to defer discussion of this until the next meeting, which the resident hoped to attend.

Old Groombridge

- As an outcome of their meeting with Cllr Pate and the Clerk, KCC Highways had advised the following:
 - The challenges of implementing traffic-calming measures such as chicanes on Bird-in-Hand Street could include noise and light disruption, and this scheme would need long-term planning. A speed reduction to 20mph and accompanying signages would be more feasible in the short term. KCC Highways advised that the working group re-visit their HIP for Old Groombridge (HIP item 4) and prioritise a concise list of immediate measures to be taken. An action point was set for Cllr Pate and Cllr Norton to work on this together.

Speldhurst

- As an outcome of their meeting with Cllr Pate and the Clerk, KCC Highways had advised the following:
 - It was apparent from the virtual walk through of the junctions at Cobhams and Barden Road (HIP item 9), and Ferbies and Langton Road (HIP item 10) that these were congested locations. KCC requested a consultation relating to the installation of double yellow lines. An action point was set for Cllr Pate and the Assistant Clerk to draft a consultation letter to residents living nearby.
 - Finding a solution to the issues caused by parked cars on the bend at school drop off/pick up times on Penshurst Road approaching the Langton Road junction (HIP item 12) would need input from Speldhurst primary school. KCC would look into helping them with their travel plan. An action point was also set for the Clerk to write to residents explaining the importance of keeping their hedges cut.
- Cllr Rajah would continue to collect speeding data for Stockland Green Road (HIP item 2) so that this could be raised with KCC Highways in the future. Cllr Pate said he would continue to send updated information from the HIP to KCC Highways so that they had the most current picture of what was happening in the parish.
- The Clerk reported that she and the Assistant Clerk had undertaken training in downloading data from the SIDS. This could be presented in a range of ways to show speeding data from SID sites over a given period of time. It was agreed that this was an invaluable tool in providing evidence to support traffic-calming measures, and that data should be shared with residents through media channels and at events such as the Annual Parish Meeting. Cllr Pate requested a standard item on future meeting agendas to address SID data, and an action point was set for the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk to present 2-3 graph formats for discussion at the next meeting.

14. Items for Information

- The Clerk had included a note about proposed changes to 292/285 bus route from Speldhurst to Tunbridge Wells – changes would mean an early bus would only operate on school days.
- There was a reminder to the Assistant Clerk to ask residents to report highways faults via the online reporting tool: www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem.
- The Assistant Clerk said that KCC had posted on social media incentivising schools to set up a walking bus. Langton Green previously had a walking bus, but this stopped due to Covid. It was agreed that the parish council should support both Speldhurst and Langton Green primary schools in establishing walking buses.
- Cllr Langridge said the latest Speedwatch Newsletter had promised to erect Speedwatch signs as soon as possible. The newsletter also stated that Speedwatch could prosecute speeding vehicles if the entire session was recorded. There was some discussion about this, and Cllr Pate advised that it could cause issues between the Speedwatch volunteer doing the recording and the offender, if both turned out to be local residents who knew each other. It was agreed that Speedwatch remained effective as a deterrent rather than an enforcement tool.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting ended at 8.53pm.

Chairman

| Action Number | Action | Owner | Date created | Status |
|---------------|--|--|--------------|---------|
| 10/22 | Share relevant messages from meeting via media channels | Assistant Clerk | 12/04 | Ongoing |
| 19/22 | Download SID data to feedback at next meeting | Clerk | 12/04 | Ongoing |
| 20/22 | Evaluate fixed assets on fixed asset register | Cllrs Barrington-Johnson/ Langridge/ Clerk | 14/06 | TBA |
| 21/22 | Check with LG Speedwatch Co-ordinator whether a new site had been authorised at Gipps Cross | Cllr Barrington-Johnson | 14/06 | TBA |
| 22/22 | Request ATC at A264 Langton Road Eastbound | Chairman | 14/06 | TBA |
| 23/22 | Update Borough Cllr Sankey on decision regarding traffic lights/double yellows at the Hare/A264 | Clerk | 14/06 | TBA |
| 24/22 | Re-visit OG HIP following KCC advice relating to prioritising traffic-calming measures | Chairman/Cllr Norton | 14/06 | TBA |
| 25/22 | Draft consultation letter to residents ref. HIP items 9 & 10 | Chairman/ Assistant Clerk | 14/06 | TBA |
| 26/22 | Write to Penshurst Road residents explaining the importance of keeping their hedges cut ref. HIP item 12 | Clerk | 14/06 | TBA |
| 27/22 | Add standalone SIDS agenda item to next meeting agenda | Clerk | 14/06 | TBA |
| 28/22 | Add agenda item to end of Highways agendas for items needing FC approval | Clerk | 14/06 | TBA |

| | | | | |
|-------|--|--------------------|-------|-----------------------------|
| 19/21 | Contact Kent Highways re. 30mph zone approaching Speldhurst village, between 40mph and 20mph zones; traffic calming measures that do not require street lighting; cost of two outcrops | Chairman/ Clerk | 28/6 | Complete |
| 5/22 | Investigate Langton Green Speedwatch volunteers covering Ashurst | Cllr Langridge | 01/02 | Complete |
| 7/22a | Apply to KCC Highways for a speed reduction & pedestrian crossing on A264 Langton Green | Chairman/ Clerk | 01/02 | Complete |
| 11/22 | Make agreed changes to next meeting agenda to accommodate H.I.P. | Clerk | 12/04 | Complete |
| 12/22 | Recommend changes to ToR to Full Council | Cllr Curry/Pate | 12/04 | Complete |
| 13/22 | Re-establish communications with KCC regarding design of speed reduction on Bird-in-Hand St (H.I.P. item 4) | Clerk/Cllr Pate | 12/04 | Complete |
| 14/22 | Investigate alternative SID locations in Ashurst (H.I.P. item 3) | Clerk | 12/04 | Complete |
| 15/22 | Initiate Speed Watch in Ashurst (H.I.P. item 3) | Cllr Langridge | 12/04 | Action cancelled - complete |
| 16/22 | Communicate with Speldhurst primary school about parent parking on bend at Penshurst Road (H.I.P. item 12) | Clerk | 12/04 | Complete |
| 17/22 | Monitor parking at school drop off and pick up times: on bend of Penshurst Rd between Langton Rd junction & Northfields) and Ferbies/Langton Road junction (H.I.P. items 12 & 10) | Cllr Langridge | 12/04 | Complete |
| 18/22 | Investigate next steps regarding LGVS traffic improvement plan (H.I.P. items 5 & 9) | Clerk/Cllr Pate | 12/04 | Complete |