



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

**Draft Minutes of the Amenities Working Group Meeting
held on Friday 7th October 2022 at 10.00 am in the Parish Council Office, Langton Green,
with an option to attend via Teams Electronic Communication**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Office: Cllrs Mrs Lyle (Chair), Norton and Mrs Soyke
Teams: Cllr Turner

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk (AC), Mrs K Neve – Clerk and Mr C May – Finance Officer (for item 8 only).

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

1. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting**
The AC 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 Rowe (prior engagement) and Cllr Mrs Woodliffe (work commitments).
3. **Disclosures of Interest**
There were none.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying**
Cllr Norton had been lobbied by residents of Groombridge regarding the rewilding of Groombridge Green.

5. **Minutes of the Amenities Committee meeting held on 27th June 2022**

RESOLVED that the minutes, previously forwarded to Members were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. **Public Open Session**

There were no members of the public present.

7. **Review of Action Points**

The AC ran through the table of action points – see action grid at end of minutes.

8. **Financial Review**

- a) The finance sheets were reviewed vs budget and the Finance Officer answered councillors' queries.
- b) To consider any budget requirements for 2023/24
Members reviewed the finance sheets and considered budget requirements for 2023/24. In liaison with the Finance Officer, suggestions were made to amend the future budget figures for submission to the Finance Committee. It was acknowledged that tree maintenance expenditure could be high for the following year. Cllr Turner asked that a new budget allocation for EV chargers be considered and the Finance Officer recommended £1K be budgeted. The pavilion energy rates would be discussed at a meeting of the Pavilion Management Committee on 18th October when consideration would also be given to the installation of solar panels.

9. **Terms of Reference**

Members reviewed the Amenities Committee/Working Group Terms of Reference. It was **RESOLVED** that a recommendation be made to Full Council that paragraph 8 referring to public footpaths be removed. It was agreed that footpaths would be a more natural fit under either the Highways committee or Environment Working Group. The matter would be resolved by Full Council.

10. **Parish Council Land**

a) **Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG):**

- To consider the installation of a commemorative bench: A request had been submitted for a commemorative bench to go on the LGRG. Councillors approved the requested location of the bench and wording for the plaque. After careful consideration of the style of the bench submitted by the applicant, councillors felt that it would be more beneficial for the overall amenity of the LGRG as a whole if the bench was more in keeping with the benches which were planned for outside the pavilion and the AC was asked to communicate this to the resident.
- To consider booking 2023's playground inspection: It was **RESOLVED** to accept an invitation from The Play Inspection Company to book next year's inspection at 2022 rates.

b) **The Green at Langton Green:**

- To consider the installation of a litter bin on The Green: A litter bin had recently been re-sited on SPC's land by TWBC next to the bench and complaints had been received from residents because they believed the problems associated with the original site were being relocated and not resolved. Additionally, councillors did not agree that a litter bin should be sited in such a prominent position in a conservation area. After much discussion it was

agreed that the bin was probably unnecessary as there is another in close proximity and the AC was asked to discuss its removal with the Rural Society (who had initially installed it in its original position in 2002).

- To consider maintenance work to the Beech tree: Cllr Mrs Soyke advised councillors that the tree in question is a Lime. The AC was asked to obtain a quotation for the necessary works.
- To consider maintenance work to the Copper Beech tree: The AC was asked to obtain a quotation for the necessary works.

c) **The Boundary, Langton Green**

- To consider maintenance work to an Oak tree adjacent to the pond: The AC was asked to obtain a quotation for the necessary works as well as clearing the vegetation around the culvert which was causing a blockage.
- The AC advised that since the meeting agenda had been posted, a request had been received for maintenance work on an overgrown tree behind no. 34 The Boundary. The AC was asked to obtain a quotation for the necessary works.

d) **The Green at Groombridge**

- To consider rewilding the lower section of The Green: Cllr Turner advised that the matter of rewilding the lower section of the Green was on the agenda for consideration at the next Environment Working Group meeting and that if agreed, a proposal would be made directly to Full Council. Cllr Norton advised that a recent poll of Groombridge residents came back with a majority of 41 residents for the rewilding and 4 against. Councillors were in support of the suggestion.

e) **Pocket Parks at Speldhurst**

There was nothing to report.

Items for Information

- The AC had been asked to outline SPC's land in Ashurst which was shared with councillors.
- Suggested meeting dates for 2023/24 were circulated.
- A request had been received for a park run on the LGRG. After much consideration, councillors asked the AC to respond saying that whilst they would like to support events which encourage the health and fitness of residents, regretfully, an organised event of this nature would logistically be unsuitable for the LGRG at the same time the fields were being used by the football club. The main problem was the parking issues it would create at a time when the carpark and surrounding roads are already overwhelmed with vehicles.
- The AC reported repeated problems with Tivoli, the contractor used to service the dog bins. Bins collections were often missed and the Finance Officer had to chase invoices. It was agreed that the AC should go out to other clerks in the borough asking for recommendations which could be considered at a future meeting.
- A resident had raised concerns about the islands on The Green at Langton Green being untidy. It was agreed to ask the Groundsman to carry out an annual tidy-up of the islands

including some strimming and grass seed sewing in an effort to neaten the area whilst retaining its wildness which had been a condition of the original funding to install the beds.

- A request had been received from the Headmaster of Langton Green School requesting use of the LGRG on Wednesdays after school for a club. Councillors agreed that the school could use the LGRG as long as they complied with the terms of Use of Council Land Policy.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting finished at 11.50am.

Chairman

Action	Owner	Date created	Status
Benches on LGRG outside pavilion primarily for café use	KH.	29/11	Benches chosen. Developer's funding in place. Awaiting pay-out from TWBC. AC to chase TWBC.
Survey of parish trees	KH	Sept	Awaiting quotes from Jim Quaife and Living Forest for actions required.
Installation of path on LGRG.	KH	1/3	Quote increased by £563.03. AC to chase TWBC. To be put to Full Council if necessary.
Broken bench on LGRG	KH	1/3	To be reviewed in 2023. Cllrs to check and advise AC if additional works necessary.
Ownership of LG Green.	KH	1/3	Title registers obtained. AC and Cllr Mrs Lyle to review documents.
Village Hall Trustees to include condition not to park in disabled bays and write to individual offenders	KH	27/6	Chair of Trustees agreed to request. Complete
Disabled bay signs to be made for posts outside council office.	KH	27/6	In progress.
Replacement of wooden posts in carpark.	KH	27/6	Groundsman replacing wooden posts as required. Complete
Provision of dog bags on LGRG to cease.	KH	27/6	Provision of bags ceased. No apparent repercussions. Complete
Covid-19 signage to be removed from carparks	KH	27/6	Complete
SPC ownership of Ashurst Hill	KH	27/6	Maps circulated to cllrs. Complete
Dog bins – problems with Tivoli emptying and invoicing	KH	7/10	AC to go out to other TWBC clerks for recommendations for service provider.

Dog bin behind office regularly overflowing	KH	7/10	AC to obtain quotes for additional single bin (to make a double) and replacement double as comparison.
Terms of Ref – make recommendation to FC for para 8 footpaths removed.	KH	7/10	For November FC
Terms of Ref – update document if approved.	KH	7/10	Awaiting approval by FC
Commemorative bench on LGRG.	KH	7/10	AC to respond to donator.
Book 2023 playground inspection	KH	7/10	In progress
Re-sited litter bin LG Green. Liaison with Rural Society and TWBC.	KH	7/10	AC to liaise with Rural Society.
Tree maintenance: - lime tree on Green, Copper beech on Green, Oak adj pond on Boundary, Oak adj no.34 Boundary	KH	7/10	Quotations for work being obtained - in progress.
Request for parkrun on LGRG.	KH	7/10	AC to respond.
Maintenance to islands on LG The Green.	KH	7/10	AC to ask Groundsman to carry out annual tidy up.
Use of LGRG by Langton School on Weds PMs.	KH	7/10	AC to reply to Headmaster.

Shaded boxed are complete.