

Speldhurst Parish Council

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

MINUTES OF A FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 4th JANUARY 2010 at 7.30pm IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SPELDHURST VILLAGE HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs. Mrs Jeffreys (Chairman), Mrs Hull, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Waters, Mrs Soyke, Brown, Ellis, Langridge, Milner, Parker, Pendleton and Wheeler

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May, Clerk

Borough Cllrs David Jukes and Julian Stanyer

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Cllr Mrs Paulson-Ellis – family engagement

10/001 DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST:

Personal – Cllr Mrs Soyke – Ashurst Village Play Area – resident of Ashurst (1825-3). Cllr Langridge – 10/008 his son's company had worked on the logo (there is no payment for this work).

Personal & Prejudicial – Cllr Mrs Soyke - 10/007 vii) footpath near her house. Cllrs Mrs Soyke, Mrs Podbury, Ellis and Parker – 10/009 all are trustees of respective Village Halls.

10/002 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING: No declarations were received

10/003 MINUTES: The Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **14th December 2009**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.

10/004 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION – Cllr Jukes was able to update the Parish Council on 10/010 and he confirmed there were no plans to move the Borough Council offices out of Tunbridge Wells. He said that the offices in Cranbrook will be demolished in due course.

10/005 FINANCE COMMITTEE – Report by Cllr Parker

- i) Cllr Parker said that the Governance committee would meet later this month (20th January)
- ii) The Clerk would meet with the Internal Auditor on January 7th (now postponed to January 12th because of the weather) and there would be a review of the financial workings of the Council.
- iii) Approval of payment of overtime to the Clerk – There was no overtime in December.
- iv) The Finance Committee had agreed two payments by email. The first was a grant to St Mary's Church, Speldhurst towards the maintenance of the Churchyard for £500. The second was for the web hosting company that supports the Speldhurst Village website for £73.34. This Committee felt that the website was not updated regularly but recognised that the payment had to be made or the website would be shut down. The whole issue of websites was due for review and would be included in item 10/008.

The Clerk advised members that our precept would be published in more detail because it was over £140,000.

10/006 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT –December 2009 – Invoices verified by Cllr Milner
The following payment had been made and authorisation was requested retrospectively.

The Crown Inn	£	296.15	Xmas Drinks (paid – Chairman's Allowance)	751
TOTAL	£	296.15		

ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT – December 2009 – Invoices verified by Cllr Milner

Void			752
Greenbarnes Ltd	£ 1,360.80	Ashurst Notice Board	753
BT	£ 33.55	Mobile	754
BT	£ 103.50	Internet	755
RIP	£ 1 26.50	Dog bins	756
Mr N Burgess	£ 73.34	Speldhurst website	757
St Mary's Church	£ 500.00	Maintenance grant	758
Mr C May	£ 1,041.98	Salary	759
Mr C May	£ 172.40	Expenses	760
HMRC	£ 514.90	N.I./Tax	761
Rymans	£ 83.43	Stationery	762

TOTAL £ 4,010.40

10/007 HIGHWAYS REPORT - The Clerk had circulated a report to all Councillors prior to the meeting which included updates on a number of Highways issues.

- i) Parking restrictions in Speldhurst – we are still awaiting a timetable for action.
- ii) 2190 Langton Green – Land outside the old Watson Hall – The Clerk had received a firm quote from Warren Drives of £6,600 with kerbs and £8,500 with bricks. He was meeting KCC Landscapes on Jan 13th at the site so that they can forward another quote.
- iii) 2213 Groombridge Hill – a speed watch team had been out during December but results were distorted by traffic lights necessary for work near the bridge. Another effort would be made soon.
- iv) Ashurst ISS – The Road Safety Team are expected to report in February 2010.
- v) The Spire Hospital bus stop – Nothing further to report
- vi) Ashurst footpath – ***Cllr Mrs Podbury will contact Jonathan Bibby to reignite interest in this project.***
- vii) Salt bins – The Clerk had written to KHS by email on 17th December expressing disappointment that our requests for more bins had been rejected. The spell of snow had emphasised that need and, if anything, more bins were required. Cllr Mrs Hull was asked by a number of residents for more bins in Speldhurst and if that could not be done then could salt be heaped at the end of certain roads particularly Furze field Avenue. ***He was asked to chase up the letter and advise them that more needs to be done to alleviate the state of the roads in such conditions and to request when the bins were to be refilled.***

10/008 PARISH WEBSITE AND LOGO – Cllr Langridge had managed to have some work done producing a logo for the Parish Council. He asked for more time to see how they looked on letters and other documents and should be able to have samples ready for the February meeting. ***Cllr Pendleton and the Clerk agreed to meet for a consultation with Cllr Langridge and the matter of any future cost implication would be addressed and reported back to the Committee.*** Cllr Mrs Soyke would use her contact at Bidford Parish Council to find out comparative costs.

1825-3 ASHURST VILLAGE PLAY AREA – Registering of Common Ground – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys asked members to consider whether the Parish Council should go ahead with the project of using the land for the play area knowing that there is a small risk that the land might be “owned” by somebody. Cllr Mrs Waters asked if we would need to be insured for liability because the land would be acquired and maintained by the Parish Council. This would have to be confirmed by the insurance company. There were other questions regarding future costs of inspections of play equipment and for the fencing of the land. At Cllr Mrs Soyke's suggestion it was agreed to move ahead in principle, but with caution, towards acquiring the land and when more costs were known a decision would be made on the project by Council. ***The Clerk would contact Tate fencing to arrange a quote for fencing the land. He would also consult Maria Cook and KCC regarding inspection costs.***

10/009 ASHURST NOTICE BOARD – ***The Clerk advised that the board had been delivered and that he would meet with Cllr Mrs Soyke to confirm the exact spot and organise the installation.***

2249 PARISH OFFICE – ***Cllr Mrs Jeffreys would liaise with Trevor Palmer to ensure that the Council understood what is required regarding the transfer of land.***

10/010 INSTALLATION OF WIFI IN PARISH VILLAGE HALLS – Cllr Mrs Podbury said that the experience of using the “dongle” to get internet access had proven extremely slow if effective at all. She wondered if it was

possible to have WIFI installed in the Parish Village halls to enable users, such as the Planning Committee to access the internet.

There followed a discussion and a number of points were raised regarding security of use, who would be able to use it and should there be a computer available in the Hall.

The Clerk said he would use his contacts to find out how other Parishes maintained this issue and report back at the February meeting.

10/011 TWBC MOVE TO CRANBROOK – There was no further discussion on the item after Cllr Juke's clarification in 10/004.

10/012 MEETINGS OF FULL COUNCIL IN 2010 – Cllr Wheeler said he believed that the workload of the Council had escalated since he became a Councillor and to go two months in the summer was now impractical. This was unanimously agreed by Council and there would be a meeting on August 2nd. ***The Clerk would arrange a venue and confirm.***

10/013 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that she had received a thank you from Derek Robinson for the Christmas drinks at The Crown.

She reminded Councillors that she had forwarded a survey to them from KALC about Learning and Development and thanked those that had replied and urged others to complete it and return the answers to her.

Cllr John Davies had informed her that he had granted £4,000 from his annual allocation of funds towards to renovation of the wall outside the St Mary's Church, Speldhurst and that he had a small amount still available for worthy causes.

She reminded Councillors that the AGM was looming fast and that we should consider a speaker for the Annual Parish Meeting in April. She also advised Councillors that their photos were needed for the website and that these would be taken when the meeting had closed.

10/014 COMMITTEE REPORTS

- i) Planning – Cllr Mrs Podbury had nothing further to report other than was covered by the minutes of the December meeting that had been circulated to members.
- ii) Parish Vision – Cllr Mrs Podbury gave a summary of the project and then she spoke about the questionnaire. There had been a lot of work in compiling the questions and she apologised to members for the short notice but they are working to a very tight schedule. It was originally thought that they would be able to copy the questions from other examples that they had but this had not turned out to be possible. It had already been referred to youth leaders; the Police; Neighbourhood watch; the volunteers and the LNH Committee. They had decided to have a separate youth questionnaire. There followed a long and detailed discussion on certain issues, some grammatical, some concerning the Green Belt but most of the discussion was on the Local Needs Housing section. It was agreed that the Green Belt should be mentioned in the questionnaire. After a long debate it was decided by a majority of 10-1 to delete the section on LNH. There were other areas that were discussed from bus services to traffic in general and it was decided that everyone should email Cllr Mrs Podbury next day with their comments and that she would circulate the brochure again for final agreement. This was agreed. The draft brochure would be ready next week. She also advised that if we were to publish a more detailed version of the results printing costs could be more than £700 over budget.
- iii) Recreation Ground – Cllr Ellis said there was nothing to report.
- iv) Footpaths – Cllr Mrs Podbury had circulated an update. She said that Cllr Milner had agreed to take over as Chair for the Committee. She advised that the Council would be notified this week by TWBC Planning Department if we would need planning permission to site the container on the LGRG.
- v) KALC - Cllr Brown had nothing to report.
- vi) Environment – Cllr Mrs Podbury advised that she had been sent a list of environment websites which she would circulate.
- vii) Local Needs Housing – Cllr Wheeler asked that the Terms of Reference agreed at their meeting be adopted by Full Council. Cllr Brown asked that they continue to be reviewed and that changes be made as their role becomes more understood. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys assured him that this would be perfectly reasonable and that changes could be made. The terms of Reference were adopted unanimously. Cllr Wheeler said that there was a meeting scheduled on January 15th for the LNH Committee to meet with Cllr Stanyer and Sarah Lewis of TWBC. Time and venue would be advised.

10/015 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 14th DECEMBER 2009 – The Clerk advised that Tate fencing would be commencing the work on the LGRG and on the new footpath at Lampington Row on 10th

January, weather permitting. He also advised that KCC Landscapes would complete the two outstanding jobs – the ditch for the car park and bollards at the car park by 22nd January, again weather permitting. Cllr Mrs Soyke said that she had tried to respond online to the KCC letter dated 9th Dec regarding the Consultation Draft: Community Infrastructure Provision Service Strategies in Kent 2009 but found that the link on the letter did not work. She would follow up and circulate it to members because she felt there were some important issues in the document.

10/016 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

- i) Email from KHS dated 22nd December – New policy for the Management of vehicle obstructions to private access – (Dog bones/hockey stick markings)
- ii) Letter and newsletter from Kenward Trust dated November 2009
- iii) Letter from ah partnership offering accountancy services.
- iv) Letter from Kent Top Travel dated December 2009. They run bus services around Kent and offer a wide range of vehicles for private hire.
- v) KALC email – Power of Well Being training at Folkestone on Thursday 28th January.
- vi) English Rural Housing Association Annual Report – ***passed to Cllr Wheeler***
- vii) Email from Lene Beynon confirming that she and Di Talbot of TWBC will attend our February meeting and give a brief talk about “Love Where We Live” initiative and the new Borough Entry Signs.
- viii) Letter from Brighton & Hove City Council dated December 2009 regarding Joint Waste & Minerals Planning strategy paper – they have extended the period of consultation to 15th January
- ix) Parish News
- x) Reply from Robert Atwood regarding the barrier at Breakstones – copy enclosed. The Council considered his email but decided not to change their mind on the issue.
- xi) KCC Community Safety Unit Newsletter dated October 2009
- xii) Letter from eonic.co.uk offering web services
- xiii) Letter from RCS Commercial Cleaning offering a commercial cleaning service
- xiv) Email from Paul Cummings dated 29th December regarding a DVD made by Standards for England entitled “Assessment Made Clear”. TWBC have one copy but will buy more if we (and other Parishes) show an interest to see them
- xv) Letter dated 23rd December from KHS advising of the commencement of Permit Scheme
- xvi) “Oast to Coast” Magazine from ARCK plus a newsletter
- xvii) A copy of the updated Register of Electors from 1st December 2009
- xviii) Groombridge Place Gardens – 2010 Season of events

10/017 DIARY DATES

Thursday 7th January – Clerk to meet with Internal Auditor, 10am (postponed until Tuesday 12th due to weather)

Monday 11th January – Planning meeting 7.30pm Committee Room, LGVH

Wednesday 13th January – KALC Chairmanship Day at Lenham to be attended by Cllr Mrs Jeffreys and Podbury (postponed until March 4th)

Friday 15th January – LNH meeting with TWBC and Cllr Stanyer at 9am Ashurst Committee Room

Wednesday 20th January – Governance Committee meeting 10am LGVH Snooker Room

Wednesday 20th /21st Jan – Road works at The Hare junction (evenings)

Friday 22nd Jan – Road works start at the Spa (evenings)

Monday 1st February – Full Council Meeting 7.30pm Committee Room LGVH

10/018 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION – Cllr Parker advised that there were three street lights not working on the A264 and he would advise the Clerk of the details in due course so that he could report them.

Cllr Mrs Waters said that the road surfaces had been left in a terrible state after the recent snow and that the drainage on Speldhurst Hill was still a problem.

Cllr Mrs Soyke said that a chevron sign had been hit by a car and demolished at Stone Cross. She would advise the Clerk of details.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.45pm

CHAIRMAN