



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
Wednesday 13th February 2019 at 10.00am**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Mrs Podbury (Chair), Mrs Soyke, Mrs Jeffreys and Rowe

OFFICER PRESENT: Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk

1. **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.
2. **To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Woodliffe (work commitments).
3. **Disclosure of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests:** There were none.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
5. **Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on **29th October 2018** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
6. **Public Open Session:** No members of the public were present.
7. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:** The Assistant Clerk advised that the first tree had been felled in The Boundary and that the Groundsman had applied topsoil to level the ground around the protruding drains.
8. **Financial Review** – The finance sheets had been circulated and were discussed.
9. **To Consider Extending the Chairmanship of Cllr Mrs Podbury from February 2019 Until After the Council Election in May 2019** – It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Mrs Podbury remain as Chairman of the Amenities Committee until after the election in May 2019.
10. **Parish Council Land**
 - a. **Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)**
 - i. Langton Green Village Hall – the fence around the nursery school courtyard had rotted and was dangerous in places. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Finance Committee that Tate Fencing carry out repairs as detailed in their quotation at a cost of £1,184.00.
 - ii. Pavilion – Councillors had been asked to consider a request from the Groombridge Farm Shop to have a temporary stall and chiller in the Pavilion whilst their building works were taking place.

Additionally, they would like the fish van to visit weekly. It was **RESOLVED** that the stall and chiller could be located within the Pavilion. It was **RESOLVED** that the fish van could be located within the hatched area of the LG carpark closest to the Pavilion and operate between the hours of 10am and 1pm. This was under the conditions that the van arrives no earlier than 9.45am to set up; that all rubbish is taken away and that they must make good any damage caused to the area.

iii. Play Area –

- Cllr Mrs Podbury suggested SPC's playground consultant, Maria Cook, be asked to visit the LG playgrounds with Councillors to discuss the longevity and likely future maintenance of the equipment, considering both playgrounds rather than each piece of equipment as a stand-alone. Councillors would then investigate further. It was noted that once any replacement costs were known, a request would be put before the Finance Committee for funding.
- Pedal roundabout: It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Finance Committee that this item to be repaired. Barge Group had previously quoted £240 to dismantle and attempt a repair to this item.
- Gyrospiral: It was **RESOLVED** that this item remain out of action whilst the playground review is undertaken.
- Path along the rear of the playground: A quotation had been received from Landscape Services for a path made of limestone dust at a cost of £3,001.98. It was **RESOLVED** to put these works on hold until after the drainage project had been completed. Councillors also noted that access to the recreation ground would need to be considered when the drainage project is undertaken, bearing in mind members of public will be using the Pavilion.
- Inspections: Councillors considered whether it was necessary to increase the frequency of inspections by a specialist. It was **RESOLVED** that this decision would be made after the advice had been received from the playground consultant. Councillors considered that the Groundsman does a thorough job with his monthly inspections.

- b. **The Green at Langton Green** – Following reports of the path alongside the Green being dangerous, SPC had erected two signs at either end of the path warning members of public to take care. The Assistant Clerk had obtained quotes from Landscape Services. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Finance Committee that repairs to the pathway be carried out at a cost of £665.10.

c. **The Green at Groombridge** -

- The picket fence has become rotten and in places had been tied up with rope. A quote of £4,887.26 had been received from Tate Fencing for a replacement in oak or £2,836.58 in softwood. Cllr Mrs Soyke suggested using metal post spikes and Councillors considered if the horizontal batons could be reused. Cllr Rowe queried why the warranty on both the oak and softwood options was ten years. It was agreed that the Assistant Clerk would go back to Tate Fencing for further information before a decision was made.
- The Village Green had become eroded around the edges where motorists had driven on it. A request had been received from a resident to extend the granite stones however other residents were against this idea as the stones damage their cars. Councillors were in favour of protecting the green and the Assistant Clerk was asked to obtain advice from KCC Highways on alternative solutions.

- d. **Pocket Parks at Speldhurst** – Following removal of the overgrown firs, a resident had contacted SPC asking if the area could be tidied and levelled. It was **RESOLVED** that the Groundsman would be asked to carry out a tidy up of the area in the spring.

- e. **The Boundary** – An email had been received from a member of public requesting that the trees at the rear of her property be cut back. Councillors considered her request however it was **RESOLVED** that bearing in mind the amount of current expenditure on trees in the parish, only works that were considered necessary from a safety perspective according to the recent inspections would be carried out in the near future.

f. **The Groundsman** –

- Waste removal at the Boundary: The Groundsman had carried out tidying up works in the Boundary and needed the waste removed. It was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk instruct Direct Waste Services to remove the waste.

- Weed killer: Councillors considered the use of weed killer by the Groundsman and the importance of using a licenced operative. It was **RESOLVED** that the Assistant Clerk obtain a quotation from a licenced operative and that all information is in future recorded in spray logs.
- g. **The Purchase of Land at Entry to LGRG** – SPC had been approached by Town and Country enquiring if they would be interested in purchasing any additional land near to the Recreation Ground. It was **RESOLVED** to investigate purchasing the two small areas located by the entrance gates into the carpark and that the Assistant Clerk check with Land Registry regarding ownership of the entrance to LGCP.
- h. **Gritting, the Retention of Salt and the Purchase of a Salt Bin** – It was **RESOLVED** that SPC should no longer grit its land to prevent insurance liability and that the Governance Committee be asked to update its Winter Weather Policy accordingly.

11. Trees

- a. **Maintenance** - It was **RESOLVED** to instruct The Living Forest to carry out all the tree maintenance identified in the recent tree survey that needed completion within a twelve-month period.
- b. **Dornden Drive trees** – Councillors considered a resident's request to pay for a felled tree to be replaced in Dornden Drive. Councillors were keen not to set a precedent and referred to the recent case in Furzefield Avenue, Speldhurst, when residents organised and paid for a tree replacement amongst themselves. It was noted that the trees in Dornden Drive are of a similar age and if the Parish Council pays for this one tree, it may then be expected to replace the rest over the coming years. It was suggested that the resident could approach the Village Society.

12. Items for Information –

- Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that the Groundsman had done an excellent job tidying up around the pond. She advised that there is a large plant in one corner of the pond that is very overgrown and requiring maintenance. She would investigate ownership of the plant and report back.
- War memorial All Saints Church, LG – Advice had been received regarding maintenance works. Cllr Barrington-Johnson was to investigate this matter.
- It was noted that an email had been received from a resident regarding cars loitering in the LG carpark and it was agreed that this matter would be monitored as far as possible.

There being nothing further to discuss, the meeting closed at 11.25am.

Chairman