



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2019 AT 7.30PM  
IN THE GALLERY ROOM, LANGTON GREEN VILLAGE HALL**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Lyle, Mrs Price, Mrs Woodliffe, Ellery, Pate, Rowe and Round

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr C May – Clerk and Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Borough Cllr David Jukes (left at 8.07pm) and County Councillor James McInroy were in attendance.

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** There was one member of the public present.

**19/066 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.

**19/067 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies had been received from Cllr Milner (holiday).

**19/068 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:** There were none.

**19/069 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING:** There were none.

**19/070 MINUTES:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on **4 March 2019** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**19/071 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:**

County Cllr McInroy said that KCC would be increasing its spending in the coming months to try and tackle the ongoing problem of poor road surfaces and in particular potholes. He asked that people continue to report any issues via the online portal. He then said that he would be attending urgent meetings regarding the recent 150% increase in knife crime reported in Kent. Cllr Pate asked if there is a plan in place for prioritising road closures whilst repairs are carried out, to prevent diversions at short notice. Cllr McInroy said Highways engineers are carrying out bi-annual reports on the condition of roads to prioritise which roads need attention. Tunbridge Wells is catching up with East Sussex and Sevenoaks in terms of the quality of their carriageways.

Cllr Mrs Podbury said that she had reported approximately 50 potholes recently and had noticed that they were receiving attention.

Borough Cllr Jukes said that the KCC Highways Department had recently been restructured and the new Chief Engineer, Simon Jones, was resurfacing whole roads rather than just filling potholes which it was hoped would provide a longer lasting, higher standard of repairs.

Cllr Mrs Soyke had removed diversion signs from the road in Stone Cross when they were no longer needed. It was noted that KCC were generally slow at removing redundant road signs. County Cllr McInroy advised Cllr Mrs Soyke to report them on the KCC portal.

Cllr Rowe enquired about the involvement of parish councils in the consultation for the Aviation 2050 green paper. Borough Cllr Jukes advised that a committee had been formed to respond to the consultation for TWBC and has recommended that parish councillors are included.

**19/072 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:** There was one member of the public present who updated the Council about the latest developments of 3 Knowle Close, Langton Green. He advised that the owner has refurbished the property for rental whilst still going ahead with the appeal to demolish the property and build three new houses as well as putting in an additional application for demolition and two new houses. He was concerned that the residents who had complained about the original application (3 homes) were not advised of the new application however Councillors advised him that this would not automatically happen as it is a new application, unless they had signed up to email alerts.

**19/073 FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following: -

- a) There had not been a meeting of the Finance Committee since the last Full Council meeting.
- b) Budget virements – there were none.
- c) Interim payments since the Finance Committee Meeting: Unity bank current account: BT £426.24 (Broadband and Telephone); Transfer to Mastercard £194.35; EDF Energy Pavilion electricity £324.00; Dyno Rod £156 (to clear pavilion drains); Grant to Community Shop £15,000; LGCT £104.00 LGRG Drainage project water; Tablets x 9 £1,529.91; Speldhurst Pram Race grant £344; Barge Group £288.00 playground maintenance; Samaritans £250 grant; Victim Support £250 grant; CPRE £36 membership; Dave Jesse re tablets £742.50; Veolia £79.20; Unity Bank £31.20 charges. Mastercard: Microsoft £214.56 365; \*Land Registry enquiry £6; Office mats and projector £125.97; Screen £43.99; Groundsman mobile £150; \*Stationery £19.98; \*Pavilion supplies £38.59 and £35.80; \*Pavilion maintenance £15.84
- d) Payments made under delegated authority are starred above
- e) The Clerk said that the accounts for 2018/19 had now been closed. He asked Councillors to advise him of any queries or questions they had.
- f) The Clerk said that the Speldhurst Shop steering group had done an excellent job raising 180% of the sum needed to get the project underway.

**19/074 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:** Invoices verified by Cllr Rowe.

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

Payee Name	Reference	Amount £	Detail
ACRK	SO	50.00	Annual Membership
ACRK	MT1535	25.00	New membership price
BT PLC	DD	9.60	Mobile
Simon P Goacher (Payroll Services)	MT1523	344.18	Payroll Services 2018-19
KCS	MT1524	137.56	Photocopier rental
RIP Cleaning Services	MT1534	172.80	Canine refuse
KALC	MT1527	1,560.00	Annual Subscription
Paul Cheater	MT1534	112.00	Pavilion cleaning
Neil Baker	MT1524	110.00	PAT Testing pavilion
Catherine Barrett	MT1525	16.20	Expenses
Kate Harman	MT1526	64.10	Expenses
Len Cooper	MT1528	34.20	Expenses
Mr C May	MT1529	1,567.07	Salary
Mrs K Harman	MT1530	762.30	Salary
Mr L Cooper	MT1531	641.08	Salary

Mrs C J Barrett	MT1532	406.90	Salary
N.E.S.T.	MT1533	95.44	Pension contributions
<b>Total:</b>		<b><u>£6,108.43</u></b>	

It was **RESOLVED** to pay the invoices listed above, authorise the electronic payments and sign the cheques drawn on Unity Trust Bank.

**19/075 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE:** Cllr Mrs Podbury said that there is a new speed camera in the parish on Langton Road, but the white lines had not been reinstated since the resurfacing back in October 2018. During a recent walk around Speldhurst, she had seen a lot of blocked drains. The Clerk advised that only one end of the advisory 20 mph sign in Langton Green was working, and that he was chasing KCC to get it repaired. Cllr Barrington-Johnson thought the position of the sign on the Green could be more effective however the Clerk said that if it was moved, it may not receive enough light for the solar panel to work.

**19/076 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):** Cllr Mrs Lyle had prepared a report which had been circulated prior to the meeting explaining the current situation regarding the pavilion. Cllr Rowe asked if the drainage project would be able to go ahead without the grant: he was advised that the amount of funding from the FA was critical and she did not know if LGCSA could proceed without it. She advised that the cricket club was merging with LGCSA so any grant towards maintenance from the Parish Council would be for the overall benefit of the sports association and not for one sport. She added that the sports association has committed to provide a cricket wicket, assuming the project goes ahead. Cllr Mrs Woodliffe said that if the drainage project goes ahead, the issue of maintenance must be resolved because without it, the project would be a waste of time and money. Cllr Mrs Lyle had told LGSCA that they will be responsible for the extra costs over and above the amount SPC would be prepared to pay which was around £6K. It was noted that the drainage would only benefit the footballers and not the other users of the recreation ground. Councillors agreed a meeting should be held of all the parties involved to come to an agreement. Cllr Mrs Podbury would ask Rusthall for details of their maintenance costs. Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that another Councillor was urgently needed to help Cllr Mrs Lyle with the pavilion, it was too much work for one Councillor alone and said a paid pavilion manager would put the accounts into a deficit. He asked Councillors to consider volunteering or if they knew anyone who would be willing to volunteer for the role. It was agreed that it should be advertised on social media and in the magazines.

**19/077 PARISH PLAN:** Cllr Barrington-Johnson had prepared and circulated notes. A meeting of the Parish Plan Working Group had been held and he said that many concerns had been addressed and/or achieved from the original Parish Plan. He suggested the item remains on the relevant Committee's agendas if there was an outstanding issue, however it would be removed from the Full Council agenda. If any significant matters arise, they will be considered as an ad hoc item.

**19/078 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING:** The Clerk said that the opening address would be done by the Chairman and two KALC awards were to be presented. Gary Stevens from TWBC was to explain the new recycling and general refuse contract. Edward Pinnell was to provide an update on the Speldhurst Shop and Post Office. Cllr Milner was to explain that footpaths will not be maintained unless volunteers come forward as KCC no longer have the resources to carry out repairs.

**19/079 TWBC PLANNING DEPARTMENT PLANS:** It was agreed this item would be in a confidential session at the end of the Full Council meeting.

**19/080 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** The Chairman said that it would be useful to have a different Councillor attend the NALC conference every year. He will ask Cllr Milner to attend this year however if he is unavailable, he would like another Councillor to attend instead.

The Chairman paid tribute to Cllr Mrs Jeffreys, who will stand down after the election in May, for her service to the Parish and presented her with a card and gift.

**19/081 COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a) **Governance** – The Clerk said that there had been a meeting of the Governance Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019, the minutes of which had been circulated.
- i. The Financial Standing Orders had been reviewed and there was no recommended change.
  - ii. SPC’s policies and Terms of Reference had been reviewed and the amended documents had been distributed to Councillors ahead of the meeting for approval.  
It was **RESOLVED** to approve the policies, Standing Orders and Terms of Reference.
  - iii. It was **RESOLVED** to approve that direct debits, standing orders and bank payments be used for a further two years.
- b) **Planning** – Cllr Mrs Price said that it had been a quiet month for planning. A decision had still not been received regarding Scriventon. The latest Knowle Close application would be discussed at the Planning meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> April. SPC supported the recent application at Bradleys Mill and so far listed building consent had been given. The MUGA in Speldhurst was nearly completed. Cllr Pate said a number of houses that have been built remain empty which would be noted. Cllr Mrs Podbury noted a lot of houses in Hawkhurst are not selling.
- c) **Amenities** – Cllr Mrs Podbury said that a meeting of the Amenities Committee would be held on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April. The use of weed-killer would be discussed. She said Maria Cook would be carrying out an inspection at the end of April on the equipment as it is now ten years old
- d) **Air Traffic** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson said there had not been a meeting of the Committee. He said that a response to the Airspace 2050 consultation had been delegated to the Air traffic Committee. He was expecting a decision on whether to remain on the noise management board would need to be taken by HWCAAG. Cllr Mrs Soyke acknowledged the amount of hard work both Cllr Barrington-Johnson and Cllr Rowe had put into this matter.
- e) **Environment Working Group (EWG)** – Cllr Mrs Price said the Clerk was preparing some maps of the land SPC owns so that the EWG can investigate how SPC can be more environmentally friendly. It would be helpful to look into what other councils use/practise. The winter walk in Langton Green needed to be rescheduled. She asked if anyone was willing to chair the Environment Working Group.
- f) **Footpaths** – Cllr Mrs Podbury reported a rotten boardwalk in Stockland Green. Cllr Mrs Price said that there is an issue of established right of way in Avery’s Wood, Speldhurst.
- g) **KALC** – there was nothing to report.
- h) **Website Working Group (WWG)** – This item would be removed from future agendas. The Clerk asked all the Councillors to sign up for alerts for news in the parish including the planning alerts and report back their views on how the information is being sent out. The Admin Assistant is updating the website and social media.

**19/082 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 4<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2019:** There were none.

**19/083 CLERK’S REPORT:** The Clerk referred Councillors to his report. The Clerk explained the election procedure: Councillors remain until May 6<sup>th</sup> and the new Council takes over on 7<sup>th</sup>. All Councillors will have to sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the May meeting on 13<sup>th</sup>. The news of whether there will be an election should be known by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April.

**19/084 DIARY DATES: April 2019**

**Monday 1st** – Full Council Meeting in Gallery Room, Langton Green Village Hall 7.30pm

**Wednesday 3rd** – Nomination papers for election deadline 4pm

**Wednesday 3rd** – Amenities meeting

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup>** – Planning Meeting

**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>** – Internal Auditor 9.30am

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup>** – APM 7.30 LGVH

**Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May** – Governance Meeting

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May** - ELECTIONS

**Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May** – present Council steps down

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May** – new Council formed

**Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May** – Full Council meeting – Statutory Meeting – new council sworn in

All meetings are in the office and start at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated

**19/085 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:**

Cllr Mrs Podbury was struggling to link/set up her android mobile phone with the SPC.

Cllr Ellery had attended the Speldhurst Village Recreation Ground Trustees meeting and noted that the MUGA is nearly complete. There will be a grand opening to recognise the donors.

They will be looking at grants for playground equipment and in the longer term, the cladding on the pavilion will need attention.

It was noted that SPC empty the bins on the Speldhurst recreation ground however they do not pay for the dog bags. The Clerk explained that they are provided for Langton Green recreation ground because that is SPC's land.

The meeting closed at 9.12 pm.

Chairman