



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

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL STATUTORY MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 14TH MAY 2018 AT 7.30PM
IN PALMER ROOM, LANGTON GREEN VILLAGE HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Milner, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Lyle, Mrs Price, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Woodliffe and Allen

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr C May - Clerk, Mrs K Harman - Assistant Clerk.

IN ATTENDANCE: County Councillor James McInroy and Borough Councillors David Jukes and Julian Stanyer

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were two members of the public present both representing Langton Green Cricket Club.

18/095 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN: RESOLVED to elect Cllr Barrington-Johnson as Chairman of the Parish Council. He duly signed the declaration of office which was counter-signed by the proper officer.

18/096 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN: RESOLVED to elect Cllr Milner as Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council. He duly signed the declaration of office which was counter-signed by the proper officer.

18/097 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.

18/098 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies were received from Cllrs Ellery (prior work engagement) and Mercieca (holiday)

The Chairman advised Councillors of the resignation of Trevor Parker who had decided to step down at the age of 85 after serving 15 years on the Council. He noted the valuable contribution Mr Parker had made to the Parish Council during this time and said that he would write to him on behalf of SPC to thank him for his service. A short article will appear in Langton Life.

18/099 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS: Both the Clerk and Assistant Clerk declared an interest in item 18/107k – NALC recommended 2% pay rise to clerical staff.

18/100 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING: there were none.

18/101 MINUTES: It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on **9th April 2018** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, with two minor amendments suggested by Cllr Mrs Lyle.

18/102 CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR: Mr Rowe was co-opted onto the Council. Cllr Rowe then took his seat with Councillors, signed the declaration of acceptance of office and it was **RESOLVED** that he be assigned to the Air Traffic and Planning Committees.

18/103 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS: County Cllr McInroy said that he had made a grant towards the 'There But Not There' campaign which he had passed on to Derek Robinson who is coordinating the project on behalf of St Mary's Church, Speldhurst.

Borough Cllr Stanyer said that he had also given his grant to Mr Robinson for this purpose. He wanted to thank Cllr Mrs Soyke, as she comes to the end of her Mayoral year for the huge contribution she has made as Mayor. Borough Councillor Jukes endorsed Borough Cllr Stanyer's thanks to Cllr Mrs Soyke. He then went on to say that planning permission had been granted for the new Civic Centre in Tunbridge Wells. He confirmed that Hoopers Department Store's carpark will not be subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order. He also confirmed that a grant for £4.3m had been received for the Cultural and Heritage Centre. He then went on to thank SPC for inviting William Benson (TWBC CEO) to speak at the recent APM in April and considered him well received.

18/104 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION: The Chairman of Langton Green Cricket Club, Ben Allatt spoke about the drainage report that had been sent to them by Langton Green Community Sports Association (LGCSA) and wanted to make sure the Cricket Club's needs are considered. An artificial strip, as suggested in the report, would not be suitable and they would lose players, and other clubs would not play on it. Any cricket square would need to be maintained to a similar standard to what they have now to attract other clubs to play them. He was concerned that if levelling does take place, it would take a long time to get the strip up to an acceptable standard again. The club is also concerned that if the suggested time is followed, they would lose two seasons of cricket. He noted that there are other options which would be less disruptive through the main cricket seasons.

The Captain of Langton Green Cricket Club, Martin Russell noted the major benefits of the new pavilion to the cricket club and visitors, however he advised that the football club's 'clutter' seems to be taking over changing rooms and that the facilities, in particular the changing rooms and toilets are being left in a filthy condition.

The Chairman thanked them for their comments and advised that agenda item 16c) would be brought forward. He then asked Councillors if they have any initial thoughts or comments with regards to the suggestions in the report and reminded them that they were not required to make a decision at the meeting but merely consider all the implications.

Cllr Mrs Woodliffe queried some of the information and Cllr Mrs Lyle said that she had worked out the pitches' reference as follows: - A= is the far pitch owned by Ashurst Place and B&C = pitches on the Recreation Ground. Cllr Milner queried the measurements and it was confirmed it is square metres, not cubic metres.

Cllr Mrs Lyle said that her initial thoughts are that it can only be done if the Sports Association are prepared to pay for the works and finance the maintenance. Alternative types of drainage have been looked at, but they may only bring the club a few extra games per year due to the compacted soil.

Cllr Mrs Podbury suggested speaking to Rusthall Football Club who had recently completed a similar project. Rotherfield Football Club was another mentioned.

Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that even if the project was funded by LGCSA he felt that the maintenance costs involved are too great in relation to the precept for the Council to consider.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that we need to consider the degree of change and look at the longer-term consequences. It was agreed the Recreation Ground would be out of action to everyone for a long time whilst any work is being carried out which equally needed to be considered.

18/105 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES INCLUDING KALC REPRESENTATIVE:

- Committee Members: It was **RESOLVED** that the committees be approved as per the list on page 7 of the minutes and are reviewed in July when the new Councillor has been appointed.
- KALC Representative: Cllr Allen volunteered to attend the next KALC meeting on behalf of the Chairman. The KALC representative will be confirmed in July.

18/106 APPROVAL OF ANNUAL RETURN: The Clerk explained that the figures for the Annual Return had been reviewed and approved by both the Internal Auditor (David Buckett) and the Governance Committee. He reminded them of the importance of the approval of the return.

- a) It was **RESOLVED** to approve section 1 - the Annual Governance Statement which was signed by the Chairman and the RFO and Proper Officer.
- b) It was **RESOLVED** to approve section 2 – Accounting Statements which was signed by the Chairman and the RFO and Proper Officer.

18/107 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) Virements – there were none.
- c) Interim payments since the Finance meeting. From the current account: £764.17 transfer to clear MasterCard account; £36.92 DD EoN for street light; £91.08 Veolia waste collection
From MasterCard: £6.00 Bank charges; £71.82* toilet paper for pavilion; £37.10* refreshments for APM; £18.00* Land Registry enquiries (Adamswell land ownership) and £5.34* maintenance
- d) Payments made under delegated authority are starred above.
- e) It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Mrs Lyle, as Chairman of the Finance Committee, replace Trevor Parker as a signatory on all accounts.
- f) It was **RESOLVED** to grant £5,000 to Speldhurst Primary School towards the expansion, dependent on planning permission being received from KCC. Strong support had been noted by the Planning Committee and this was endorsed by Cllrs Barrington-Johnson, Mrs Soyke and Mrs Lyle. It was agreed that a travel plan should be produced to manage the increased traffic. Cllr Mrs Price said that she would prefer to see children living in the village given priority over siblings.
- g) It was **RESOLVED** to grant £250 to West Kent Mediation.
- h) It was **RESOLVED** to grant £1,000 to St Martin's DCC towards churchyard maintenance.
- i) It was **RESOLVED** to grant £500 to St Martin's DCC towards their Broadsheet publication.
- j) It was **RESOLVED** to grant £331.43 to Speldhurst Fete Committee towards the insurance costs.
- k) It was **RESOLVED** to award 2% salary increase to clerical staff following recommendation by NALC.
Cllr Mrs Soyke asked Cllr Lyle for an update on the fundraising for the toilet facilities at Langton Green Primary School. She replied that some work should start this summer.

18/108 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT: Invoices verified by Cllr Lyle.

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

Payee Name	Reference	Amount	Detail
HSBC Current A/c	Transfer	10,000.00	Transfer
South East Water	DD	204.51	Pavilion Water Bill
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT1286	65.49	Pension payment
BT PLC	DD	30.00	Mobile
Streetlights	MT1287	25.96	Street Light maintenance
Paul Cheater	MT1288	140.00	Pavilion cleaner
Ashurst McDermott Hall Trust	MT1289	24.00	Meeting room hire
Direct Waste Services	MT1290	350.00	Roopers: removal of waste
Gordon Jaaback	MT1291	5,760.00	Drainage Feasibility Study
Mrs Price	300243	55.00	Reimbursement Refreshments
KALC	MT1293	60.00	Training: Encryption
KALC	MT1294	1,530.00	Annual Subscription
Hadene	MT1295	835.20	Pavilion: Boiler Service
Dyno-Rod	MT1296	156.00	Pavilion: Drain clearance
RIP Cleaning Services	MT1297	172.80	Canine refuse collection
Performance Fore Protection Ltd	MT1298	199.38	Pavilion: Annual Fire Extingui

Ranger Electrical	MT1299	654.00	Pavilion: Electric sockets
CWCS	MT1300	11.99	Web hosting
Langton Life	MT1301	250.00	Advertisement
Langton Green Village Society	MT1302	600.00	Grant: towards Fete insurance
C May	MT1303	52.23	Expenses
Mr L Cooper	MT1304	21.60	Expenses
Kate Harman	MT1305	26.55	Expenses
Sunstone	MT1310	1,179.00	Balance CCTV
C May	MT1306	1,879.75	Salary
Kate Harman	MT1307	655.82	Salary
Mr L Cooper	MT1308	630.03	Salary
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT1309	66.64	Pension contributions
Veolia	DD	72.86	Waste Disposal
UK Debt Management Office	DD	2,899.65	PWLB Repayment

Total: £28,608.46

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

18/109 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE: In the absence of a Chairman, the Clerk confirmed that there had not been a meeting of the Highways Committee since the last Full Council meeting.

- a) 20mph in Speldhurst Village: This is on schedule. The map circulated at the last meeting was incorrect, the Clerk said he had the new map that will be going to the contractors.
- b) TRO application for 60mph to 40mph on Speldhurst Road – this was progressing.

18/110 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG): Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following: -

- a) The problem with storage in the pavilion is ongoing. Instructions under delegated authority have been issued to Direct Waste to remove the waste from the Pavilion on Monday (as the café is closed then). Cllr Mrs Woodliffe advised Councillors that she had recently trained as an FA coach and would be getting involved in the Langton Green football club's activities. Electric works have been carried out to improve the kitchen. Fire and safety extinguishers have been checked. Cllr Mrs Lyle is liaising with Emma in the café regarding equipment there and any reconfiguration/new surfaces that may be needed. Cleaning – Cllr Mrs Lyle had asked the cleaners to do a thorough job in the showers and toilets.
- b) Agreement between SPC and SPC Pavilion Ltd- NALC have sent a response which is unclear and further clarification is needed. She is exploring the sub lease variation.
- c) Drainage of the football pitch – refer 18/104.

18/111 WEBSITE: The Clerk reported that The Website Working Group had looked at five companies, varying from an extreme of £10,000 to the average price of £2,500-£3,000 but recommended that the Council engage Hugo Fox who had quoted around £900. The Clerk explained that they are cheaper than the others because they have a network of companies to whom they charge more and have pages where people register for events at a charge. They charge less for Parish Councils. He confirmed that work can start almost immediately. One of the features they offer is a live link to TWBC planning which allows the website to be automatically updated as well as a booking page. They hope to make the website more useful and interactive. It was **RESOLVED** to go ahead with the website up to a value of £1,500 (making an allowance for additional charges for extra features which may be decided during set up). The Clerk will report back to Councillors on progress.

18/112 ENVIRONMENT WORKING GROUP (EWG): The Chairman thanked Cllr Mrs Price for a very comprehensive report and map about the recent Speldhurst Parish Walk. Cllr Mrs Price explained that It was a guided walk with information on flora, fauna and local history as well as a fun worksheet for children to complete.

She had received very positive feedback and the EWG had therefore agreed the date of the next one for 29th July which will be around Old Groombridge. She said they hope to do one in each parish, possibly one in each season. The Chairman said he is happy to support the costs of refreshments after future walks. Cllr Mrs Price went on to say that the EWG are continuing to work on the Environmental Audit and will hold a meeting in June.

18/113 PARISH PLAN: The Chairman said that the suggested amendments to the Neighbourhood Watch Household Security sheet have been accepted. Cllr Milner suggested further amendments and Councillors suggested it is too long in its current form. Cllr Mrs Lyle suggested it should be more explanatory. It was agreed to reduce it to a two-sided sheet by removing the section on cars as this doesn't come under 'household'. It was suggested it goes out with the Newsletter. The Clerk said he would make the changes and bring back the edited version for approval.

18/114 LANGTON GREEN ALLOTMENTS: The Chairman said that all his messages to Justin Bodle over the last six months had not been responded to. The last email he sent said that as we have had no response, we will advise the Allotment Association that there is no update and they should carry on as normal. He has gone back to the Allotment managers suggesting they carry on as they are as if they have had no notice served. Groombridge Place – they have cut staff and applied for a new Planning application.

18/115 BATTLE'S OVER – A NATION'S TRIBUTE: There was nothing to report and it was agreed that it would go on the next month's agenda.

18/116 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: The Chairman thanked Cllr Milner for chairing the APM on his behalf. Cllr Milner said that William Benson gave a very comprehensive and enthusiastic overview of the current issues facing the Borough Council and that it was a successful evening, despite prior concerns that the evening may be affected by political demonstrations prior to the local borough elections.

18/117 COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a) **Governance** – Cllr Milner said that there was a meeting of the Governance Committee on 30th April 2018, the minutes of which had been circulated.
- It was **RESOLVED** to reappoint the Internal Auditor.
 - It was **RESOLVED** to approve the Documents, Records and Correspondence Policy (which had had minor amendments suggested by the Governance Committee).
 - Data Protection Officer (DPO) - the Clerk advised that there has been a recent amendment that Parish Councils are exempt from appointing a DPO however it is considered best practise because failure to do so will mean the responsibility falls to the Clerk. The Clerk said that the Governance Committee had recommended the Council employ The Local Council Public Advisory Service (LCPAS) at the cost of £150 per year. It was **RESOLVED** to appoint LCPAS.
- b) **Planning** – Cllr Mrs Price said that they are still waiting to hear about the Scriventon Farm Buildings application, the appeal on the Wallers application and the new Local Plan. They are monitoring the quad biking at Adam's Well and supporting Speldhurst school's expansion.
- c) **Amenities** – Cllr Mrs Podbury said a meeting was scheduled for 24th June.
- d) **Air Traffic** – A meeting was called for the morning of 14th May but not held because it was inquorate. The Chairman said a further meeting will be held before the HWCAAG AGM on Wednesday 30th May to discuss the Council's position regarding HWCAAG's continued participation on the Noise Management Board, because he believes nothing has been achieved by the NMB in the last two years. The Clerk said that the Air Traffic Committee's Terms of Reference had been circulated and it was agreed that they could delete the item restricting a Chairman to three years' service should they decide to.
- e) **Footpaths** – Cllr Milner suggested the Footpaths committee be merged with the Environment Working Group. Cllr Milner noted a replacement gate had been installed by KCC for the one that had been stolen in Langton Green. He had carried out a repair to a stile in Shadwell. He said that the 'clink' stile in Shadwell had been replaced with a quieter stile and he was inquiring whether the "clink" stile could be acquired for installation somewhere away from residences. The Clerk had received a call from a resident about two further stiles that

needed mending near Broad Lane to Fordcombe. Cllr Mrs Podbury reported the section of footpath between Stockland Green Road and The Mill. She said the steps had become slippery and dangerous. She suggested that KCC be contacted.

- f) **KALC** – The Chairman said that there is a meeting this week.
- g) **Environment Workshop** – refer 18/112
- h) **Website Working Group** – refer 18/111

18/118 – CLERK’S REPORT:

- The current vacancy has been advertised and it will be known on Wednesday 16th May if an election has been called. If not, the process of Co-option will start again which will end on the 6th June. It was agreed that in the absence of Cllr Mrs Jeffreys, Cllr Mrs Lyle would join the interview panel.
- There is a new PCSO, Matthew Hill responsible for Culverden, Rusthall, Bidborough and Speldhurst.

18/119 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 9th APRIL 2018 – there were none.

18/120 DIARY DATES:

Monday 14th – Annual Statutory Meeting of Full Council in Palmer Room, LGVH
Wednesday 16th - Call for election notices to come down and co-option notices up
Tuesday 22nd – Planning Meeting
Thursday 24th – Amenities Meeting
Monday 28th – **Bank holiday**
Monday 4th June – Full Council meeting at Ashurst Village Hall

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

18/121 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION: there were none.

There being nothing further to discuss the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Chairman

COMMITTEES 2017-18¹**Chairmen in bold**

Committee		Committee	
Finance		Planning	
Katrina Lyle		Judy Price	
Rupert Milner		George Mercieca	
Joy Podbury		Lynn Jeffreys	
Lynn Jeffreys		Harry Allen	
Julia Soyke		Julia Soyke	
Richard Ellery		Richard Ellery	
		Alan Rowe	
Amenities		Highways	
Joy Podbury		tbc	
Julia Soyke		Katrina Lyle	
Harry Allen		Harry Allen	
Lynn Jeffreys		Rupert Milner	
Millie Woodliffe		George Mercieca	
		Millie Woodliffe	
		4 MoP	
Governance		Air Traffic	
Rupert Milner		Neil Barrington-Johnson	
Lynn Jeffreys		Julia Soyke	
tbc		Joy Podbury	
Neil Barrington-Johnson		Alan Rowe	
Katrina Lyle		Plus 3 MoP	
Working Group		Working Group	
Environment		Parish Plan Implementation	
Judy Price		Neil Barrington-Johnson	
Harry Allen		Rupert Milner	
Plus 6 MoP		Judy Price	
APM		Staff	
Tbc		Neil Barrington-Johnson	
tbc		Lynn Jeffreys	
tbc			
Pavilion Management		Website	
Katrina Lyle		Katrina Lyle	
George Mercieca		Judy Price	

¹ The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are ex-officio members of **all** committees and can attend any meeting in a voting capacity