



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 4th FEBRUARY 2019 AT 7.30PM
IN THE GALLERY ROOM, LANGTON GREEN VILLAGE HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Milner (Chairman), Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Podbury, Mrs Lyle, Mrs Price, Mrs Woodliffe, Rowe, Pate and Round

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Borough Cllr David Jukes and County Cllr James McInroy were in attendance.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were three members of the public present.

19/025 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.

19/026 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Apologies were received from Cllr Barrington-Johnson (holiday) and Cllr Ellery (illness).

19/027 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS: There were none.

19/028 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING: There were none.

19/029 MINUTES: It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on **7th January 2019** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. It was also **RESOLVED** that the notes of the Open Meeting on **8th October 2018** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman with a change to item 2 - that the words 'plastic' and 'cardboard' be removed and the item to refer only to 'recycling' in general terms.

19/030 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:

County Cllr McInroy spoke first advising that the Full Council budget meeting would be held the following week and that they were anticipating a balanced budget with a 5% increase.

Borough Cllr Jukes said he was hopeful that building on the old cinema site in Tunbridge Wells would start this summer. He also advised that the planning application for 21 Newlands, Langton Green had been rejected. He referred to the upcoming public enquiry and said he hoped that the current CPOs would be resolved amicably. Works to the paved areas in Mount Pleasant were to start soon and TWBC had appointed someone to supervise the work. TWBC had a balanced budget with no negative grants and this should be approved at the Full Council meeting on 27th February 2019.

Cllr Mrs Podbury said that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had recommended TWBC stop using plastic drinking cups, stirrers etc which would have considerable environmental and financial impacts. Cllr Mrs Soyke thanked Cllr Mrs Podbury for all her hard work regarding this campaign.

19/031 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION: No members of public spoke at this point in the meeting.

19/032 FINANCE COMMITTEE: Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following: -

- a) The date of the next Finance Committee meeting was Monday 25th February 2019.
- b) Budget virements – there were none.
- c) Interim payments since the Finance Committee Meeting: Unity bank current account: £673.46 transfer to clear and £91.08 Waste disposal
Mastercard: £9.00 bank charge; £42.22* stationery; £70.00 wreath; £72.64* toilet seat (Pavilion) and £7.00* keys cut.
- d) Decisions made under delegated authority are starred above*.
- e) The revised Terms of Reference had been approved.
- f) Speldhurst Post Office and Community Shop: The Chairman of the Steering group was invited to address the Council by the Chairman.

He said that the offer made by the steering group to purchase the business had been accepted and, on that basis, had applied for a grant of a further £11,000 that the Finance Committee had previously suggested was available once the offer was accepted. He announced that the Community Benefit Society (CBS) had successfully registered with the FCA and was in the process of opening a bank account. There would be public meetings held in February to raise the balance needed for the project. He did say that there was a small risk of the project not going ahead but assured Councillors that all grant money would be returned (less unrecoverable costs).

There were several questions from Councillors. The meeting resumed.

The Finance Committee had recommended a grant of £15,000 but only awarded a start-up amount of £4,000 which was within their delegated powers. After further discussion it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to award the additional grant of £11,000 towards the Community Post Office and Shop fund on receipt of bank account details.

19/033 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT: Invoices verified by Cllr Round.

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

| Payee Name | Reference | Amount £ | Detail |
|--------------------------------|-----------|----------|------------------------|
| Gordon Jaaback | MT1484 | 720.00 | Tender documents |
| Paul Cheater | MT1485 | 140.00 | Pavilion cleaning |
| BeSure | MT1486 | 210.00 | PIR replacement |
| CWCS | MT1487 | 11.99 | Website hosting |
| Speldhurst Village Hall | MT1488 | 3,000.00 | Speldhurst VH decking |
| Sac-O-Mat UK Ltd | MT1489 | 488.83 | Dog waste bags |
| Langton Green Charitable Trust | MT1490 | 156.91 | Electricity |
| Langton Green Charitable Trust | MT1491 | 49.25 | Palmer room booking |
| PPL PRS Ltd | MT1492 | 392.84 | Pavilion music licence |
| Mr L Cooper | MT1493 | 51.40 | Expenses |
| C May | MT1494 | 22.05 | Expenses |
| Kate Harman | MT1495 | 18.90 | Expenses |
| C May | MT1496 | 1,843.71 | Salary |
| Kate Harman | MT1497 | 1,024.31 | Salary |
| Mr L Cooper | MT1498 | 675.58 | Salary |
| NEST Pension Scheme | MT1499 | 88.00 | Pension contributions |
| Tate Fencing Ltd | MT1500 | 6.44 | Materials |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Langton Green Charitable Trust | MT1501 | 17.00 | Meeting Room |
| Chiddingstone Parish Council | MT1502 | 228.53 | HWCAAG leaflets/Clerk |
| Total: | | £9,145.74 | |

Cllr Pate queried the amount paid for dog waste bags and suggested discounts could be obtained.
Cllr Rowe asked how the £5,000 Finance Committee limit worked. Cllr Mrs Woodliffe queried the music licence.

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

19/034 HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE: Cllr Mrs Podbury referred to the minutes of the Highways Committee that had been previously circulated. She said that the Highways Committee had recommended that there were no changes to the Highways Committee Terms of Reference (TOR). **RESOLVED** to approve the TOR.

19/035 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):

- a) **Pavilion:** Cllr Mrs Lyle said that the café proprietor was looking into new kitchen cabinets/worktops which had previously been agreed by SPC. She said that the Groombridge Farm Shop was to close for six weeks whilst an extension was built. A proposal had been made for a chiller and small counter to be set up in the Pavilion during that time to sell Farm Shop products and enable continuity for customers and the business. Additionally, the Farm shop proprietor had asked if the fish stall could set up every week in the area between the LG carpark and the Pavilion. Enquiries had been made or were in process to check any relevant licensing requirements and Cllr Mrs Podbury was to find out from TWBC if planning permission was required. Cllr Pate voiced concern about the parking arrangements. It was agreed that Cllr Mrs Lyle would provide the Amenities Committee with full information for them to decide.
- b) **Formal agreement between SPC and SPC Pavilion Ltd:** two options had been presented to LGCSA which were the assignment of the whole or the splitting of the sub-lease. Cllr Mrs Lyle was waiting for a response from LGCSA regarding how they would like to take the matter forward.
- c) **Drainage proposal:** this matter had gone to TWBC Planning and the decision date was 12th April. Unfortunately, the Football Fund would not consider a grant until planning permission was in place which may mean the funding application window is missed. Cllr Mrs Lyle confirmed that LGCSA had agreed to fund the cricket wicket. Four tenders had been received for the drainage project which ranged from £198K to £107K (or £120K with contingency). Cllr Mrs Podbury was to contact TWBC planning department, to see if it was possible to bring forward the determination date, to enable the grant application to be submitted in good time.

19/036 PARISH PLAN: there was nothing to report.

19/037 NEWSLETTER: It was agreed to delay the newsletter for a short while to enable such news as the new website and the Admin Assistant to be featured as well as an article on air traffic. The Clerk would prepare a first draft and circulate it to Councillors. Cllr Mrs Soyke said that it is important to remind residents in the newsletter that there is going to be an election in May.

19/038 GDPR: Councillors considered how to minute public participation and it was agreed not to include names. In the case of the Planning Committee, the Chairman could advise members of the public that their name would not be included on the minutes unless they specifically asked to be identified.

19/039 LANGTON GREEN CHARITABLE TRUST (LGCT) CHANGE OF STATUS FROM A CHARITABLE TRUST TO A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION (CIO):

- a) Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that the transfer to CIO was not an issue and should be supported. She said that for SPC as freeholder, the transfer of the assets without the transfer of any unforeseen liabilities was considered problematic and Councillors then discussed the Trust obtaining an indemnity. Councillors agreed that legal advice should be obtained for the protection of SPC.

b) It was **RESOLVED** that the waiving of clause 18.3 be approved subject to legal advice.

19/040 DEFRA CONSULTATION “NET GAIN”: Councillors agreed to delegate a response to the consultation on behalf of SPC to Cllrs Mrs Price, Ellery and Milner, who would stress that any benefits should remain local.

19/041 MEETING WITH TWBC PLANNING DEPARTMENT: There were no updates.

19/042 CHAIRMAN’S REPORT: There was nothing to report.

19/043 COMMITTEE REPORTS:

- a) **Governance** – Cllr Milner said that a meeting would be scheduled in March to review a number of policies and Standing Orders.
- b) **Planning** – Cllr Mrs Price said that there had been a short meeting with only four applications to discuss. A decision had still not been received on the Scriventon Farm application.
- c) **Amenities** – Cllr Mrs Podbury said that a meeting of the Amenities Committee is scheduled for Wednesday 13th February.
- d) **Air Traffic** – In the absence of Cllr Barrington-Johnson there was nothing to report.
- e) **Environment Working Group (EWG)** – Cllr Mrs Price said the next parish walk would be in the spring. The Clerk would circulate a map to members of land owned by SPC
- f) **Footpaths** – Cllr Milner said that he, Cllr Mrs Podbury and the Clerk had attended a meeting with members of the Ramblers’ Association and the Open Spaces Society at the Withyham Parish Council office. The WPC Clerk was also present. They said that the owner of Groombridge Place had been advised in 2015 that a bridge over the River Grom was not a Public Right of Way, and that since then walkers had been told that they were not allowed to use the bridge. The two gentlemen are applying for a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) based upon decades of previously unchallenged use. After 2026 retrospective changes to footpaths would not be allowed and some could then be closed.
- g) **KALC** – there was nothing to report
- h) **Website Working Group (WWG)** – The new website, containing basic information, had been circulated to Councillors. It was agreed to go live and continue updates. The Clerk explained that the delay in getting the website up and running had been because SPC has requested a more bespoke site than other parish councils.

19/043 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 7TH JANUARY 2019: There were none.

19/044 CLERK’S REPORT: The Clerk said that five candidates had attended an informal chat with the Clerk and Assistant Clerk and a shortlist of two would be presented to Cllrs Mrs Lyle, Mrs Jeffreys and Milner to interview for a decision to be made.

19/045 DIARY DATES:

- Monday 4th** – Full Council Meeting in Gallery Room, Langton Green Village Hall 7.30pm
- Thursday 7th** – Planning Training in the Pavilion 6pm
- Wednesday 13th** – Amenities meeting 10am
HWCAAG meeting Chiddingstone VH 7.30pm
- Monday 25th** – Finance Meeting

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

19/046 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION: there were none.

The meeting closed at 9.04 pm

Chairman