



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 6<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 7.30pm  
CONDUCTED ONLINE VIA ZOOM ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Milner, Mrs Soyke, Mrs Lyle, Mrs Woodliffe, Ellery, Rowe, Turner, Pate, Scarbrough and Rajah

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** County Cllr McInroy and Borough Ms Willis

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** There were two members of the public present

**20/106 Welcome by the Chairman:** Cllr Barrington-Johnson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**20/107 To enquire if anyone intends to record the meeting:** No-one present intended to record the meeting.

**20/108 To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** Cllr Mrs Podbury (prior engagement) Borough Cllr Stanyer also sent his apologies

**20/109 Disclosure of Interests:** There were none.

**20/110 Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.

**20/111 Minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020: RESOLVED** that the minutes, previously forwarded to Members, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**20/112 Co-option of new Councillor: RESOLVED** that Mr Ed Langridge was co-opted onto the Council. Cllr Langridge then joined the meeting as a Councillor. Due to the nature of the meeting he was unable to sign the declaration of acceptance of office. The Clerk will arrange this as soon as possible. The Chairman welcomed him to the council and said he looked forward to working together.

**20/113 Borough and County Councillors' Reports:**

County Cllr McInroy updated the Council on the easing of restrictions from lockdown and said it was good news that this was now the case.

Borough Cllr Ms Willis confirmed that she had "called in" the planning application for Lower Church Farm and stated her reasons. She spoke of the numbers in the Borough on furlough and that unemployment was up 5% and

that there was a possibility that Council Tax may have to rise. She said that libraries would be re-opening on July 13<sup>th</sup> and further measures were in place to encourage shoppers by making the High Street and Camden Road one-way. 20mph was being considered for the centre of the town.

Cllr Mrs Soyke updated the Council on the Town hall and that stage 2 has been implemented with more officers working in the offices. She said there was to be a Full Council meeting on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July when Cllr Mrs Podbury would become Mayor with Cllr Woodward Deputy Mayor.

**20/114 Public Open Session:** Mrs Ritson was attending to monitor progress on an independent assessment of the recreation ground. She had nothing to add at this stage.

**20/115 Clerk's Report:** the clerk had produced a report for councillors which had been circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors were asked to check their Register of Interests and make amendments as necessary.

**20/116 Committees:** A list of committees was circulated which included Cllr Langridge's appointment to Planning, Highways and Amenities committees. Cllr Mrs Podbury stepped down from Finance and is replaced by Cllr Rajah. New working parties have been formed to monitor the Local Plan and to assess the vehicle best suited to SPC for next year.

**20/117 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2019-20:** the clerk said that the AGAR had been reviewed by the Internal Auditor and he had signed it to confirm approval. The Governance Committee had also reviewed the figures and agreed it was correct and they had recommended approval. **RESOLVED** that the Chairman sign the AGAR for forwarding to the external Auditors PKF Littlejohn.

**20/118 General Power of Competence:** **RESOLVED** to re-adopt the power of the General Power of Competence (LA2011 S1(1)) for the next term of office

**20/119 Finance Committee – Report by Cllr Mrs Lyle**

- a) Cllr Lyle reported that there had been a meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> June and the draft minutes had been circulated
- b) There were no budget virements
- c) The interim payments made since the Finance meeting were as follows: UTB £3,810 The Living Forest for stage two of the tree maintenance; £133.44 to pay off the MasterCard balance; £4.00 to Veolia and £32.40 bank charges to UTB.  
MasterCard was one payment of £4.50\* for ant powder
- d) Payments made under delegated authority are marked with an asterisk.
- e) **RESOLVED** to fell two trees in The Boundary as recommended by the Amenities Committee

**20/120 Accounts for Payment:**

**To authorise the payment of invoices as listed**

| Payee Name                  | Ref.   | Amount £ | Detail                   |
|-----------------------------|--------|----------|--------------------------|
| Langton Life                | MT1829 | 300.00   | Bi-monthly advertisement |
| St Martin's Church, Ashurst | MT1830 | 1,600.00 | Grants                   |
| Zurich Municipal            | MT1831 | 2,163.06 | Annual Insurance         |
| GeoXphere Ltd               | MT1832 | 240.00   | Annual Mapping contract  |
| Sodexo                      | MT1833 | 151.20   | March bin collection     |
| Treework                    | MT1834 | 336.00   | Stumo Grinding           |
| David Buckett               | MT1835 | 375.00   | Internal Audit           |
| KALC                        | MT1836 | 60.00    | Training                 |
| Sunstone                    | MT1837 | 690.00   | Pavilion - CCTV Upgrade  |
| Groombridge Magazine        | MT1838 | 10.00    | postage                  |
| M R Lawrence                | MT1839 | 920.00   | Mowing and hedges        |
| Mr L Cooper                 | MT1846 | 13.14    | Expenses                 |

|                         |        |          |                  |
|-------------------------|--------|----------|------------------|
| Viking Direct           | MT1845 | 96.03    | PPE Equipment    |
| KCC (KCS)               | DD     | 105.02   | Photocopier      |
| Catherine Barrett       | MT1840 | 652.08   | Salary           |
| Mr L Cooper             | MT1841 | 671.75   | Salary           |
| Kate Harman             | MT1842 | 783.00   | Salary           |
| C May                   | MT1843 | 1,629.47 | Salary           |
| N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme | MT1844 | 167.98   | Pension payments |
| Veolia                  | DD     | 165.88   | Waste disposal   |

**11,129.61**

### **20/121 Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)**

- a) Cllr Mrs Lyle reported on behalf of the Pavilion Management Committee. She said that the Café was re-opening on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July for three days a week (Wednesday, Thursday and Friday) with reduced hours and take-aways only.
- b) The clerk has requested Landscape Services to quote for the laying of the reinforced matting in the area beyond the gate.
- c) Cllr Mrs Lyle said that after the wettest winter we were now experiencing the driest summer and consequently the grass was not maturing. This may mean that LGCSA will not be able to play on the grass in September and was the reason why the barriers were still in place.  
Cllr Pate advised that the consultants had been engaged after amendments were made to the contract which meant the effective start date was 22<sup>nd</sup> June. He had sent further photos to Herrington Consulting Ltd who specialise in flood risk. When the report is received it will be reviewed by the Working group and then Full Council.
- d) The clerk reported that the bins were now being emptied once a week again. He had received reports of a member of the public using the facilities and signage will be put in place to ensure that people are aware that the bins are private. Failing that a combination lock will be installed.
- e) Playground –Cllr Rowe said that an annual inspection had been completed for both areas and a risk assessment had been carried out for the junior play area; signage was being prepared and this complied with the insurance company's requirements. He said that the onus would be placed on the users to be careful and take the proper precautions. He said the signage would make this clear, and that different signage was needed for the teen area. He said that both areas can re-open as soon as the actions identified in the risk assessment are complied with.  
The clerk said that only two councils in the Borough had managed to open their playgrounds by 4<sup>th</sup> July (TWBC and Hawkhurst) and considering that SPC had no inspection company on its books it had done well to identify one, get an inspection done at short notice and address all the issues to enable the playgrounds to be opened in a timely manner.  
Cllr Milner was concerned that placing the responsibility on the individuals to respect social distancing and the notices was an issue but it was agreed that it was the only way to re-open the playgrounds.  
The risk assessments would be shared to all Councillors and go up on the website we they were opened.

**20/122 TWBC Draft Local Plan: RESOLVED** that the three councillors would attend a meeting with TWBC. The Chairman asked if any other councillor would like to join the meeting to email the clerk. Cllr Milner asked to join the meeting.

**20/123 Parish Council Website:** This item was on the agenda to bring to councillors' attention the work that is involved in making a website compliant with the new laws that are effective from 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020. Catherine Barrett spoke of the requirements, and although the web provider has done work, more was needed by the user to ensure compliance. She explained the requirements and that SPC only has to be partially compliant (AA as opposed to AAA) because of the size of the organisation. She asked for a councillor to help her verify the results. Cllr Mrs Woodliffe will help.

**20/124 Parish Council transport:** The clerk said that he had received a quote for renting a van for four months and with insurance was below the amount agreed by the Finance Committee. It was hoped to be available in the next week. A volunteer was requested to work with Cllr Pate on the future vehicle investigation. Cllr Langridge volunteered.

**20/125 Chairman's Report:** The chairman had nothing new to report on the coronavirus issue. He brought to councillors' attention the Love Where We Live awards and asked that any recommendations be forwarded to the clerk within the next week.

**20/126 Committee Reports: to include any Committee Meetings held since the last Full Council meeting, the Draft Minutes having been previously been forwarded to all Members**

- a) **Governance:** Cllr Milner reported that a meeting had been held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June and the draft minutes had been circulated. He said that the two standing orders had been reviewed and required approval and a new policy had been written.
  - i. **RESOLVED** to approve the changes to the Financial Standing Orders
  - ii. **RESOLVED** to approve the changes to the Standing Orders
  - iii. **RESOLVED** to approve the new policy on Video meetings
- b) **Planning:** Cllr Ellery reported on the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> June. There were six applications and they had objected to two (one of which was called in by Cllr Ms Willis). He mentioned the working group that had been formed to monitor the developments in the Local Plan.
- c) **Highways:** Cllr Pate said a meeting was to be held on July 27<sup>th</sup> to progress the Groombridge Hill issue.
- d) **Amenities:** Cllr Rowe referred to the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June. He mentioned that footpath maintenance could become a more important issue in the future and that the Coronavirus had seen increased usage. He said the reintroduction of a committee to oversee the matter should be considered. There was much discussion and it was **RESOLVED** to introduce a Public Rights of Way committee (PROW). Cllr Milner, who has done some sterling work maintaining the footpaths, said that it was essential that KCC still supplied materials and did the larger work. Cllr Pate said that the committee should work in partnership with landowners and KCC. Cllr Mrs Soyke noted her interest in joining the new committee.
- e) **Air Traffic:** There was nothing to report
- f) **Footpaths:** Cllr Milner said that it would be helpful if the new vehicle could transport larger materials for work on the footpaths. He had worked with Cllr Langridge on footpaths during the last two weeks.
- g) **Environment Working Group:** There was nothing to report
- h) **KALC:** There was nothing to report

**20/127 Other matters arising from the minutes of 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020:** There were no matters arising.

**20/128 Diary Dates:** Planning Committee meeting 13<sup>th</sup> July and Highways meeting 27<sup>th</sup> July (both at 7.30pm)

**20/129 Items for Information:**

The clerk mentioned that the defibrillator was taken from its box outside the office but not used. A resident of Langton Green had taken it but paramedics had arrived on the scene before it could be used.

The assistant clerk said that there were 21 applications for review at the Planning meeting next week so far. Cllr Milner mentioned that the LibDem party had emailed him suggesting that the Conservatives were going to overhaul local government and create one layer, rather than the three levels there are now. He would forward the email to the clerk.

Cllr Mrs Woodliffe said that the amendments to the committed figures discussed at the Finance meeting had not been completed. The clerk will action.

She also said there was a mistake on the Local Plan listing for Langton Green because the butchers had closed. Cllr Lyle said the school lights coming from Speldhurst, which should flash to indicate slowing to 20mph during school drop off and pick up times, were working all the time. The clerk had reported this.

Cllr Barrington-Johnson said he had identified a volunteer for the job of crossing person for Langton school and hoped this would progress.

There being no further items the meeting closed at 8.57pm

**Chairman**

**COMMITTEES 2020-21<sup>1</sup>**  
**Chairmen in bold**

| <b>Committee</b>               |  | <b>Committee</b>               |  |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Finance</b>                 |  | <b>Planning</b>                |  |
| <b>Katrina Lyle</b>            |  | <b>Richard Ellery</b>          |  |
| Richard Ellery                 |  | Ed Langridge                   |  |
| Kim Rajah                      |  | Alan Rowe                      |  |
| Rupert Milner                  |  | Neil Barrington-Johnson        |  |
| Julia Soyke                    |  | John Turner                    |  |
| Millie Woodliffe               |  | Ben Scarbrough                 |  |
| Alan Rowe                      |  | Kim Rajah                      |  |
|                                |  |                                |  |
| <b>Amenities</b>               |  | <b>Highways</b>                |  |
| <b>Alan Rowe</b>               |  | <b>Dave Pate</b>               |  |
| John Turner                    |  | Ed Langridge                   |  |
| Julia Soyke                    |  | Millie Woodliffe               |  |
| Joy Podbury                    |  | Richard Ellery                 |  |
| Katrina Lyle                   |  | John Turner                    |  |
| Millie Woodliffe               |  | Ben Scarbrough                 |  |
| Ed Langridge                   |  | Kim Rajah                      |  |
|                                |  | 2 MoP                          |  |
|                                |  |                                |  |
| <b>Governance</b>              |  | <b>Air Traffic</b>             |  |
| <b>Rupert Milner</b>           |  | <b>Neil Barrington-Johnson</b> |  |
| Neil Barrington-Johnson        |  | Julia Soyke                    |  |
| Katrina Lyle                   |  | Joy Podbury                    |  |
| Alan Rowe                      |  | Alan Rowe                      |  |
| Dave Pate                      |  | Plus 2 MoP                     |  |
|                                |  |                                |  |
| <b>Working Group</b>           |  | <b>Working Group</b>           |  |
| <b>Environment</b>             |  | <b>Pavilion Management</b>     |  |
|                                |  | Katrina Lyle                   |  |
| Dave Pate                      |  | Millie Woodliffe               |  |
| Ben Scarbrough                 |  | John Turner                    |  |
| John Turner                    |  | Kim Rajah                      |  |
| Plus 6 MoP                     |  |                                |  |
|                                |  |                                |  |
| <b>Speldhurst VH &amp; Rec</b> |  | <b>Staff</b>                   |  |
| Richard Ellery                 |  | Neil Barrington-Johnson        |  |
|                                |  | Rupert Milner                  |  |
|                                |  |                                |  |
| <b>TWBC Local Plan</b>         |  | <b>Police Liaison</b>          |  |
| Alan Rowe                      |  | Dave Pate                      |  |
| Kim Rajah                      |  |                                |  |
| John Turner                    |  | <b>SPC Vehicle</b>             |  |
|                                |  | Dave Pate                      |  |
|                                |  | Ed Langridge                   |  |
|                                |  |                                |  |

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