



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

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 2<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER 2019 AT 7.00 PM IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, SPELDHURST VILLAGE HALL**

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

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

**IN ATTENDANCE:** County Cllr McInroy

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

**19/221 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.

**19/222 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Apologies were received from Cllr Scarbrough (work commitment) Apologies were also received from Borough Councillors Mrs Willis and Stanyer.

**19/223 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS:** There were none

**19/224 DECLARATIONS OF LOBBYING:** There were none.

**19/225 MINUTES:** It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on **4<sup>th</sup> November 2019** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**19/226 BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS' REPORTS:** Cllr McInroy advised that there is now a new leader of KCC, Roger Gough, who was voted in on the first vote winning over 50% of the vote. Cllr McInroy will take up a new position in January working on Economic Development. He said that two new select committees have been established to tackle Affordable Housing and Climate Change.

Cllr Soyke advised that she will be resigning from the Conservatives after the election and will stand as an Independent. Cllr Mrs Podbury said that all future Council meetings will be recorded via a webcam system.

**19/227 PUBLIC OPEN SESSION:** The Chairman closed the meeting and opened the public session. There were no questions so the Chairman closed the session and resumed the meeting.

**19/228 FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following: -

- a) A meeting of the Finance Committee had been held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2019, the minutes of which had been circulated.

- b) **Budget virements:** She reported that the Committee had approved the additional spending for the repairs to the playground flooring for £1,500. This additional money will need to come from EMR and asked that the virement for this additional payment be approved. **RESOLVED** that the virement be approved.
- c) **Interim payments made since the last Finance meeting: Unity bank current account:** £613.11 transfer to MasterCard; £262.87 Pavilion water; £357.00 Pavilion electricity **Mastercard:** Petrol £12.61\*; Equipment £13.19\*; Tools £13.28\*; light bulbs for office £7.13\*; Lawful Dev Cert £115.50; Petrol £12.49\*; Laptop £399.95 and new Hi-viz jacket for Groundman £71.15\*
- d) **Payments made under delegated authority** are starred above.
- e) **Grant to upgrade Speldhurst News to full colour:** This request had previously been presented to the Finance Committee who had asked for further quotes which were now available, however there was still some confusion and the Clerk was asked to clarify. He was given delegated authority to authorise a grant up to £750pa; above that would need further consideration by either the Finance Committee or Full Council. Cllr Rowe suggested that should the grant go ahead that some recognition be made in the magazine of the Council's contribution.
- f) **Speldhurst Village Hall** request for a contribution towards removing of pavement slabs outside the hall and replacement with tarmac. The email was discussed but it was agreed that a formal grant request form be requested with some more details before consideration be given. The Clerk was asked to request this.
- g) **Precept 2020-21** – The Finance Committee had presented the budget calculations for the next financial year and the figures had been circulated prior to the meeting for Councillors to consider. Cllr Mrs Lyle explained that the increase of 4.9% from £148,000 to £155,250 did not include any funds to increase earmarked reserves to replace the expenditure of new play equipment and that any underspend in the contingency account in this financial year could be transferred to this account. Cllr Rowe said that compared to other Parish Councils in the Borough, Speldhurst appears to be good value.  
**RESOLVED** to increase the precept to £155,250 for the next financial year.

**19/229 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT:** Invoices verified by Cllr Mrs Podbury.

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed

Payee Name	Reference	Amount £	Detail
J Soyke	MT1697	22.40	Footpath expenses
Prestige Plumbing Services	MT1698	405.00	Pavilion – cistern
St John's Church, Groombridge	MT1699	1,000.00	Churchyard maintenance
TWBC	MT1700	100.00	Mayor's Toy Appeal
TW & District CAB	MT1701	1,000.00	Grant
Viking Direct	MT1702	147.56	Pavilion – equipment
Paul Cheater	MT1703	140.00	Pavilion – cleaning
Mr L Cooper	MT4008	38.34	Expenses
J S Taylor	MT1710	90.00	Car Park – Light repair
Castle Water	DD	262.87	Pavilion – water
EDF Energy	DD	357.00	Pavilion – electricity
C Barrett	MT1704	555.13	Salary
L Cooper	MT1705	640.88	Salary
K Harman	MT1706	749.67	Salary
C May	MT1707	1,566.87	Salary
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT1708	115.97	Pension contributions
HMRC	MT1709	2,377.46	Tax NI 3 months
KCC (KCS)	DD	164.84	Office photocopier
		<b>£9,733.99</b>	

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

**19/230 LANGTON GREEN RECREATION GROUND (LGRG):** Cllr Mrs Lyle reported the following:

- a) Report from the Management Committee of the pavilion including an update on the progress of traffic management and parking: Cllr Mrs Lyle had produced a report on the meeting with LGCSA and this had been circulated to all Councillors. She reported that there had been a further meeting with LGCSA and the café proprietor, Emma Howden, regarding the transfer of bookings for the pavilion. It was proposed that she pay a monthly fee of £1,000 for the café and that she receives 10% of all bookings. This was agreed.
- b) Drainage project: LGCSA have written to the Agronomist to understand more about the surface water that has been lying on the land.
- c) Recycling: The Clerk confirmed the bin sizes for cardboard (1100ltr) and bottle (240ltr) provided by Veolia. The clothes recycling bank had been removed by the company and the next task was to have the wooden gated area extended so that the new bins can be enclosed. Quotes will be sought and put to either Full Council or the Finance Committee.

**19/231 TWBC PLANNING DEPARTMENT'S DRAFT LOCAL PLAN:** Cllr Mrs Podbury referred Councillors to KCC's response to the plan, which was on the "Save Capel" website. It has been reported that members of the campaign have been visiting other parishes within the Borough looking at Brownfield sites.

**19/232 LANGTON GREEN CHARITABLE TRUST:** The Clerk confirmed the change of status of LGCT to a CIO and that Roger Mallett had stepped down as Chairman. The new Chairman was Stuart Smith.

**19/233 KALC COMMUNITY AWARDS SCHEME 2020: RESOLVED** to adopt the scheme. Councillors were asked to consider names for the award which will be on the January agenda.

**19/234 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** There was no report

**19/235 COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

- a) **Governance** – Cllr Milner reported that a meeting had been held on 18<sup>th</sup> November and the minutes had previously been circulated. He said that it had been agreed to delete the Winter Weather policy since it had been decided not to put salt out during icy weather. Cllr Mrs Woodliffe asked for clarification on why this had been decided and it was confirmed that it was due to insurance risk. Cllr Milner asked that two policies, which had had minor amendments be approved. **RESOLVED** that the following policies be approved
  - Media Policy
  - CCTV Policy
- b) **Planning** – Cllr Rowe referred to the minutes and asked that an amendment to the Terms of Reference (TOR) be approved. **RESOLVED** that the TOR be approved.
- c) **Highways** – Cllr Pate referred to his report from the seminar, which had been useful. He said that Tim Read, a Senior Director of Highways, gave a presentation which said that they could only object to development if it would cause SEVERE impact. He had approached the Design team to advise them that we were about to engage a consultant and the Clerk had questioned a presentation by their Manager. The result was that they will revisit on January 7<sup>th</sup> to reconsider our Highways Improvement Plan. He said that, if successful, it could eliminate the consultancy fees and he felt it was worth the delay. Councillors said that if Highways decided to become involved then a time scale was essential. A meeting of the committee has been set up for Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January to follow up on this.  
He also mentioned that three residents from Groombridge had attended the meeting regarding speed on Bird-in-Hand Street and he said this will be incorporated in the review.
- d) **Amenities** – Cllr Rowe said a meeting had been held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November and he commented on the difficulty of finding a suitable solution to combat the erosion of The Green at Groombridge.

- e) **Air Traffic** – Cllr Barrington-Johnson reported there had not been a meeting, but he was going to organise one in December.
- f) **Footpaths** – Cllr Milner said that Catherine Barrett had been a great help in securing volunteers for the footpaths. He had started to recruit some help for repairs and new volunteers were being found that keep a watch over them. He also mentioned the footpath by Bradley’s Mill which had been closed by KCC because of the works by the developer and that he had received a complaint because no work was going on. KCC are to review the decision.
- g) **Environment Working Group** – there was nothing to report
- h) **KALC** – there was nothing to report but there is a KALC meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> December and the Chairman will circulate a report ahead of the January meeting.

**19/235 OTHER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 4<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2019:** There were no comments.

**19/236 CLERK’S REPORT:** The Clerk advised the following:

- He mentioned the latest SPC article in Langton Life which had colour photographs and the explanation of the Local Plan decision and Speed Watch and said he thought it was looking more interesting.
- He reported on vandalism at the toilets in the Langton Green Village Hall and that Trustees were considering locking them if it did not stop.
- He reminded Councillors of the office closure (see below)
- Mayor’s Charity Quiz Night was on February 7<sup>th</sup> 2020

**19/237 DIARY DATES:**

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup>** – Planning Meeting

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

**Office Closure**

The office will close from Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> Dec for redecoration – reopening Friday 13<sup>th</sup> Dec. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk will work from home during this time.

The office will close on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> Dec for Christmas, re-opening Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan (preparation for the Full Council Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> January will still be completed)

**19/238 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION:**

Cllr Milner mentioned an article in The Courier which featured Richard Steatfeild, Chairman of Chiddingstone Parish Council, and the recent spate of crime stealing valuable farm equipment.

There being no further matters for discussion the meeting closed at 8.10pm

Chairman