



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

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Monday 5th October 2020 at 7.30pm
Conducted online via Zoom electronic communication

MEMBERS PRESENT

Cllrs Barrington-Johnson (Chairman), Milner, Mrs Soyke (7.40pm), Mrs Lyle, Rowe, Ellery, Turner, Pate, Scarbrough, Rajah and Langridge

OFFICERS PRESENT

Mr C May – Clerk, Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk and Mrs C Barrett – Admin Assistant

IN ATTENDANCE

Borough Cllrs Ms Willis and Stanyer

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There was one member of the public present at the beginning of the meeting and a further member of public joined the meeting at 7.53pm.

20/174 Welcome by the Chairman

Cllr Barrington-Johnson welcomed everyone to the meeting.

20/175 To enquire if anyone intends to record the meeting

No-one present intended to record the meeting.

20/176 To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs Podbury and Mrs Woodliffe – both prior engagements. County Cllr McInroy had sent his apologies.

20/177 Disclosure of Interests

There were none.

20/178 Declarations of Lobbying

There were none.

20/179 Minutes of the Full Council meeting and confidential meeting held on 7th September 2020

RESOLVED that the minutes, previously forwarded to Members, be confirmed as a correct record, with the following amendments: 20/162a) The Café inserted; 20/162c) unreliable replaces inaccurate and 20/171b) Homewood Road replaces Holmewood Road and then signed by the Chairman.

20/180 Borough and County Councillors' Reports

Borough Cllr Ms Willis said that she had been on a site tour of the Amelia Scott building to see the construction taking place which was on schedule and hoped to be finished in May 2021. The interior work would then begin and take approximately a year to complete. TWBC were seeking local artists to get in touch regarding various projects within the new building and it was noted Willmott Dixon were funding social projects for the community. TWBC had made a successful bid for funding of £153K for emergency housing.

Positive feedback had been received from the Active Travel Scheme.

Positive feedback had been received regarding the TWBC website which was expected to be in the top 10% in the country under the new accessibility guidelines.

Many varied events had been booked and planned to promote the town to encourage members of public to come and support the local economy.

Borough Cllr Stanyer said that he had recently been in communication with a resident complaining that her food caddy was being emptied over the pavement on kerbside collection day which she had assumed was due to the carelessness of the Urbaser operatives however after many telephone calls, it was discovered the culprits were badgers.

Cllr Mrs Soyke was dealing with a resident regarding fly-tipping.

20/181 Public Open Session

Mrs Ruth Ritson was attending to hear the update regarding the drainage project.

20/182 Clerk's Report

The heating pump in the village hall had broken which meant the office was cold therefore staff were working from home at the present time.

The website was up to date in time for the accessibility guidelines to come into force in September.

20/183 Finance Committee – Report by Cllr Mrs Lyle

- a) A meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Monday 19th October. The second half of the precept had been received.
- b) Report on budget virements: **RESOLVED**: £2K from contingency into LGRG maintenance to cover the Herrington Report and other costs plus £1,750 from contingency to cover the lease of the council vehicle.
- c) Report on interim payments made since the last meeting: Unity Bank current account: £206.96 BT Broadband and telephone; £182.54 NEST (pension payment needed to be paid again after minor error); £25.57 BT mobile and £130.62 KCC photocopier. The following payments were made by Mastercard: £6.00* Land registry enquiry; £19.40* varnish; £45.00* computer equipment
- d) Report on decisions made under delegated authority are starred* above.
- e) It was **RESOLVED** to authorise the Clerk to be the primary user for internet and telephone banking with HSBC and that a daily limit of £5,000 be made for transfers – larger amounts would be paid by cheque which require two signatories. It was agreed that £50K of the precept would be transferred to HSBC to prevent the FSCS limit of £85K being exceeded.
- f) **RESOLVED** to renew the four defibrillator batteries at a cost of £118 each plus VAT.
- g) It was agreed that councillors use Microsoft 365 for the purpose of writing reports. This would be reviewed in six months' time.

20/184 Accounts for Payment

To authorise the payment of invoices as listed:

Payee Name	Ref.	Amount £	Detail
M R Lawrence	MT1184	320.00	Mowing and strimming
SLCC	MT1885	50.00	CiLCA extension
Performance Fore Protection Ltd	MT1886	46.50	Annual extinguisher service
Viking Direct	MT1887	107.94	Stationery
Kate Harman	MT1888	19.80	Expenses
EDF Energy	DD	357.00	Pavilion – electricity
N.E.S.T. Pension Scheme	MT1889	167.98	Pension contributions
Employees	MT1890	3,736.30	Salaries
Veolia	DD	187.96	Recycling
		<u>£4,993.48</u>	

20/185 Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)

- a) Cllr Mrs Lyle reported on behalf of the Pavilion Management Committee. The pavilion was open and operating however it is not as busy as pre-Covid times which has resulted in reduced income for both the café and SPC. This has been supplemented to some extent by the grant and some of the bills were lower. The clerk had spoken to the café proprietor who would be paying full rent from October. Due to the current health and safety guidelines, she was having to restrict the number of customers.
- b) Traffic management and parking: A quotation had been received from Landscape Services which was much higher than expected. The clerk was to obtain at least one further quote and look at other options.
- c) Drainage project update: The grass was growing well due to the recent heavy rainfall. Following the heavy rainfall, it was noted that the swales were filling in the north east corner where there was better access to the drain and the water level had receded which was encouraging. It was also noted that the land was very dry and conditions were not comparable to last winter when the land was saturated. Cllr Pate said that it was important not to draw any early conclusions regarding the effectiveness of the drainage at this early stage which was agreed.
- d) Update on the Herrington report: Cllr Mrs Lyle reported that there were areas of the report which needed clarification. This would be done via a zoom meeting in the near future.

20/186 TW Agreement and how the amendments are implemented:

The clerk reported that the amendment was to give parish councils three working days in which to respond when the Borough Council makes a planning decision contrary to the advice of the parish council. Three days did not give parish councils sufficient time to respond effectively because of the legal restrictions regarding notice of meetings. The Chairman said he would discuss the matter with other parish councils first to obtain a consensus before deciding on how this council should react. It could be to amend standing orders, possible delegation or whether to “call the application in”. Cllr Pate suggested that the newsletter article needed to be rephrased.

20/187 TWBC Consultation: Draft Licensing Policy:

Cllrs Mrs Lyle and Barrington-Johnson would review the policy document and respond on behalf of SPC.

20/188 Community Right to Bid (CRB):

The meeting to discuss the matter with Anu Aaron was delayed and would be held on 7th October.

20/189 Parish Council Vehicle:

Cllr Pate had circulated the working group’s findings prior to the meeting. There was much discussion regarding the best option for the council. A poll was held which resulted in more councillors favouring the purchase of a

nearly new petrol vehicle (five votes) than any other option with the second highest vote (four votes) favouring leasing an electric vehicle. Cllr Pate and the working party would investigate the second-hand car market and lease details further and the clerk would investigate extending the lease on the existing vehicle with a view to changing it to a smaller model in the meantime.

20/190 Langton Green Village Hall

Mrs Angela Moss was retiring as a Trustee and therefore as SPC's representative. Her considerable contribution towards the community was noted and the clerk was asked to thank her. It was **RESOLVED** that Mark Taylor was to succeed Mrs Moss in the position SPC representative.

20/191 Litter Pick

Cllr Pate said that he considered it irresponsible to encourage gatherings of people at the current time. The Chairman said that a successful litter pick had been carried out in Langton Green recently, in small groups however it was agreed the pick in Speldhurst would be deferred until a more suitable time.

20/192 Remembrance Sunday

A limited service would be held in Langton Green and the importance of laying a wreath was agreed – the visual act of remembrance was considered important in each of the villages in the parish, whether or not a remembrance service was being held. The clerk would order wreaths for every village in the parish to be laid.

20/193 Newsletter

All councillors were to review the document and feedback to the clerk as a matter of urgency to enable the printing deadlines to be met.

20/194 Chairman's Report

The chairman advised the council that Cllr Milner will resign as a councillor from SPC at the close of business, a position he had held for eleven years – nine as vice-Chairman. The Chairman thanked Cllr Milner for the enormous amount he had done for the council and the parish and for the considerable help he had given the chairman when he first took over the chair and subsequently.

Cllr Milner thanked the council and said that he had enjoyed getting to know everyone and working for the parish council. He was reluctantly leaving due to increasing family commitments. He thanked the clerk and chairman for all their help and noted the good teamwork displayed by the parish council. The clerk said that Cllr Milner had always been the epitome of what a parish councillor should be - reliable and able to step in at short notice which was a tremendous help. The resignation would create various administrative work including voting in a replacement vice-chair at the November Full Council meeting and banking mandates.

20/195 Committee Reports

To include any Committee Meetings held since the last Full Council meeting, the Draft Minutes having previously been forwarded to all Members

- a) **Governance:** Cllr Milner would need to be replaced as chairman of the committee. The clerk said that an error had been made in the submission of the annual audit and the external auditor would make a note on the return.
- b) **Planning:** Cllr Ellery said that September was a busy month for the planning committee with meetings held on 9th, 16th and 30th September. He thanked Cllr Rajah for chairing the committee during his paternity leave. It was both disappointing and frustrating that the application for 5 Homewood Road in Langton Green had been granted despite the parish council's opposition.
- c) **Highways:** A meeting was planned for the beginning of November. Section 106 information had gone forward to the borough council for potential spend in the village of Speldhurst. Cllr Rowe queried Section 106 payments from Burrswood which would be discussed during the following confidential meeting.
- d) **Amenities:** A meeting was being held on Tuesday 13th October.
- e) **Air Traffic:** There was nothing to report.

- f) **Footpaths:** Cllr Milner had spent the day working with the Groundsman carrying out various repairs including replacing a dilapidated wooden stile with a metal gate behind Ashurst village hall. He had written to KCC Highways asking for confirmation of what they are able to offer towards the ongoing job of carrying out the repairs which were a combined effort.
- g) **Environment Working Group:** There was nothing to report.
- h) **KALC:** The Chairman hoped that the regular KALC meetings would resume.

20/196 Diary Dates

Amenities committee meeting: Tuesday 13th October at 7.30pm

Finance committee meeting: Monday 19th October at 7.30pm.

Planning committee meeting: Wednesday 21st October at 7.30pm

20/197 Items for Information

- Cllr Langridge noted that the roadworks on the Langton Road were creating chaos for residents.
- Cllr Rajah asked for delegated authority from SPC for the planning white paper working group to respond on behalf of the parish council.
- Cllr Mrs Lyle requested that the PCSO visit the LGRG at the far end during weekend evenings when there appeared to be suspicious activity between parked cars.
- Cllr Mrs Soyke said a response to the planning white paper had been due on the 1st October.

There being no further items the meeting closed at 9.23pm.