



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

**Minutes of a Highways Committee Meeting held in the Council Office, Langton Green Village Hall on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 7.30pm**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Milner (Chairman), Mrs Horne, Mrs Lyle, Kerby, Allen, Mercieca, Turner, Barrington-Johnson with Mrs Norton and Mr Wheeler

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

1. **Election of Chairman** – Cllr Milner was elected as Chairman for the meeting. He asked the other committee members to consider if they would be willing to take over the chairmanship.
2. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** No-one present intended to film, photograph or record the meeting.
3. **To receive and approve apologies and reason for absence:** Mrs Watson (prior engagement)
4. **Disclosure of Interests:** There were none
5. **Declarations of Lobbying:** Cllr Mrs Lyle advised that she had been contacted regarding the building works on Stonewall Park Road, Langton Green (see items for information). Cllr Kerby said residents have expressed concern to him about the speed limit in Bird in Hand Street, Groombridge.
6. **Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Highways Committee meeting dated **27<sup>th</sup> March 2017** which have previously been distributed to all members, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
7. **Public Open Session:** There were no members of the public present
8. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:** Cllr Milner said that Paul Bartlett had volunteered to head up the cycling plan and it was agreed he would need to be contacted to start his investigations.
9. **Review of Highways Committee's Budget:** The Clerk had circulated the budget which confirmed the figures from the March minutes and now show the allocations agreed under the following sections from 'Highways' to the '20 mph Project', 'Gateways' and 'SID'. There were no questions.
10. **KCC Highways – changes in personnel** – The Clerk circulated an email from Earl Bournier advising that he would be leaving the post of District Manager for at least a year and that Lisa Gilham will be covering the role whilst he is away. Additionally, John Reynolds, the Tunbridge Wells Engineer, will be leaving his role. His replacement is currently being recruited.

**11. Monitoring of recent accidents in the Parish:** The Clerk advised that only 3 accidents had been reported in the July Police report. He said that despite regularly including an article in newsletters and magazines asking member of public to report accidents, he couldn't remember the last time anyone did. He therefore asked the committee to consider whether or not it was worth continuing with this agenda item. The original plan had been to build up a database of all the accidents in the parish as the police reports only include the accidents they attend. Cllr Mrs Horne suggested putting an article into the village magazines reminding members of the public why the data is requested and how it will be used in the hope that this will encourage members of the public to come forward.

**12. Parish Plan**

- As noted under Matters Arising, Paul Bartlett has volunteered to undertake investigations into the new cycling strategy.
- 20mph speed restrictions – this matter is currently in hand and progressing.
- Cllr Barrington – Johnson confirmed that we now have a proactive contact within Kent Police (Christian Mayers).
- Speedwatch – see item 17
- Cllr Mrs Lyle asked for a Parish Plan spreadsheet with an additional column showing the current status of each item.

**13. Campaign to support 20 mph outside schools.**

Speldhurst - The Clerk advised that the consultation went ahead in Speldhurst with a letter-drop to 300 homes, finishing on 3<sup>rd</sup> July. He is currently trying to obtain the outcome of residents' responses from Stuart Taylor and will report back once he has further information.

Langton Green – The Clerk confirmed that it had been agreed at Full Council that SPC would take responsibility for the maintenance of the new electronic signs in Langton and that KCC are currently putting together a quotation for the electric connection needed.

**14. Entry Statements to villages (gateways) –** The original four gateways are now installed however the one in Groombridge still needs to be changed as it is not as ordered. Cllr Milner said that there are some problems with visibility of the signs due to overgrown vegetation which is being dealt with. It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the installation of the remaining three gateways. Action – the Clerk is to chase up KCC for the replacement of the Groombridge gateway.

**15. SID –** the new SID is now in place on Groombridge Hill however the visibility and brightness of the readings are not satisfactory therefore it will be investigated and reported back to the Committee.

**16. To consider reports on the following issues by Village**

a) **Groombridge**

- New SID – As discussed in item 15, this has now been purchased and is in use. Its positioning needs further investigation.
- The Clerk said that the issue of reducing the speed limit on Groombridge Hill from 50 to 40mph is in the long-term plan. This will be investigated once the current plan of new speed restriction in Speldhurst and Langton Green has been completed.

b) **Ashurst**

- ISS – The Clerk advised that the solar panel for the old ISS will be removed however the pole will stay in place because there is another sign attached to it. This position is considered too dangerous for the Groundsman to attach the new SID so KCC Highways have suggested a site on the other side, 15 yards east which has good sight line and does not interfere with exiting the Village Hall however this will mean a new pole will need to be purchased and installed. It was **RESOLVED** to put the proposal of purchasing a new pole

and having it installed by KCC to the Finance Committee. The Clerk confirmed that this expenditure is within budget.

- Bus stops – The Clerk advised that he is awaiting Mrs Watson’s suggestions of where she considers new bus shelters could be located.

c) **Speldhurst**

- Parking – The Clerk confirmed that no recent communication regarding this on-going problem had been received from residents.
- Lower Green Road – Cllr Milner had investigated the matter of a resident experiencing problems exiting her property due to the volume and speed of traffic and unfortunately whilst he and other Councillors were very sympathetic, they feel there is little SPC can do to ease the problem.
- Stockland Green Road – an overgrown hedge had been reported. The owner of the hedge had been identified and the Clerk had written to the owner however as yet the hedge has not been cut back.
- Cllr Milner noted the bad condition Burnt House Lane is currently in with pot holes and recent fly-tipping. These had been reported to TWBC.

d) **Langton Green**

- Speldhurst – Langton speed limit reduction from 60-40mph on Langton Road – The Clerk is currently completing TRO’s for the speed limit reduction. He needs to consult statutory consultees which includes the Police, Ambulance Service, Fire Brigade, FTA, haulage firms, Borough and County Councillors, bus companies as well as residents along nearby roads including Burnt House Lane and Courtenwell. Cllr Turner suggested that once the TRO has been completed it could be saved as a template for future use by other parishes.
- School crossing points – The Clerk confirmed that the new wooden barrier along the footpath by the Vicarage is wide enough for wheelchair users to access. The Clerk advised that he had received a quotation for the area to be tarmacked of £1,465.55 which Councillors considered too expensive. It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Milner and the Groundsman will purchase bags of tarmac and complete the job.
- Parking outside the shops and at The Grange – the problems residents’ are experiencing was discussed by the Committee. Cllr Barrington-Johnson said that he would raise the issues with Julian Stanyer and the Traffic Enforcement Officer at their meeting to see what can be done to resolve the problems.
- Broom Lane – The Clerk said that horse boxes consistently get stuck under the bridge. He noted that temporary signs had been put up at the both ends of Broom Lane on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July for the Eridge Horse Trials. It was **RESOLVED** the Clerk is to request KCC Highways install new signs and to ask James McInroy if he had funds available towards the signage.
- Fingerpost opposite The Hare. The existing post is discoloured and it was **RESOLVED** to ask the Groundsman to paint it white with black lettering.

**17. Speed watch** – The existing trained volunteers now need to train up other volunteers and it was agreed Cllrs Milner and Allen would liaise regarding dates for training. They will work their way around the sites and encourage untrained volunteers to come forward to all be instructed at the same time.

**18. Items for information**

- Cllr Mrs Lyle said that despite the new signs, the slip road opposite the Hare is still being used as a rat run. Cllr Kerby said customers of The Hare use it to turn around when leaving.
- Cllr Mrs Lyle advised that she had been contacted by several residents regarding the building work taking place on Stonewall Park Road. The builders are regularly blocking the road without putting up signs advising motorists; leaving cement waste in the road which is causing problems with the storm drains and generally leaving the site and surrounding area in an unreasonable condition. Cllr Mrs Horne said that Highways need to be contacted regarding

the blocked drain. Additionally, Cllr Mrs Lyle is to suggest to the residents that they complain to TWBC directly.

- Cllr Turner noted the large amount of fly-tipping on Burnt House Lane. Cllr Milner said that it had all now been removed. Cllr Milner advised that he has a new contact for fly-tipping and that he will contact them to find out the current policy. Cllr Mrs Horne requested that he sends the contact details to Cllr Mrs Price for the Environmental website.
- Cllr Kerby said that residents of Groombridge had spoken to him regarding reducing the speed limit on Bird in Hand Street to 20mph. It was agreed it is a very short stretch of road and it would be monitored.
- The Clerk advised that he had received a letter from a solicitor asking SPC pay £900 for repairs to their client's car due to him hitting a pot hole on the Edenbridge Road. The Clerk has sent a suitable response.
- Cllr Milner said that residents of Furzefield Avenue in Speldhurst are expressing concern about the junction with Barden Road. He suggested a circular mirror on the corner to help with the blind spot.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.35pm

Chairman