



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

Minutes of an Amenities Committee Meeting held in the Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground on Monday 12th December 2016 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Mrs Podbury (Chair), Mrs Soyke, Allen, Kerby, Parker

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

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: There were no members of the public present.

1. **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.
2. **To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** Cllr Turner (prior engagement) and Cllr Mrs Jeffreys (prior engagement).
3. **Disclosure of Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests:** There were none.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
5. **Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on **24th October 2016**, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
6. **Public Open Session** There were no members of the public present.
7. **Matters Arising and Correspondence:**

The Clerk referred to an email received from a resident living by the Green in Langton, saying that the large tree which is on Parish Council land is proving dangerous – falling dead wood has damaged her car and could injure someone. The Clerk had a meeting arranged with Treework for other works and asked them to quote for the remedial work. This would be discussed under 11a)6).

The Clerk said that a request had been received by residents of Speldhurst to plant bulbs on grass verges in Ferbies. It was agreed that as bulbs are low-maintenance, this would be acceptable.
8. **Boundary Change:** The meeting had been rescheduled to 13th December at 9.30am and would be reported at Full council in January.
9. **Financial Review:** Cllr Mrs Podbury noted that outgoings were nearly £42K against £2K received. The Clerk said that the additional spending this year was mainly on the Pavilion which included CCTV, LED lighting and the containers.

10. Parish Plan

- Cllr Mrs Podbury said that there are several cross-overs of responsibility within the Plan which need to be clarified.
- Cllr Mrs Podbury advised that she had lobbied Arriva regarding reinstating the hourly bus from Speldhurst to Tunbridge Wells – possibly one of the Rusthall buses could be extended into Speldhurst, via Langton. Currently some Speldhurst and Langton residents are using the Rusthall buses as a ‘park and ride’ service.
- Tennis courts are still wanted and Ashurst & Blackham Sports Association are considering installing one at their sports ground. They may at some point be requesting grants, however it was acknowledged that both maintenance and insurance costs could stop it being feasible. Cllr Mrs Podbury will ask Mr Langridge why the court in Langton was never opened to the public.
- It was agreed that litter picking comes under the ‘Environment’.
- At present there is a voluntary taxi service, currently run by the church in Speldhurst to take people to hospital appointments etc. Cllrs considered this could be extended to other villages. Cllr Mrs Podbury to discuss with Mr Langridge.
- It was considered how SPC can help village shops. The Clerk is to place an advert in the next village magazines (Feb 2017) reminding residents to support their local village shops.

11. Parish Council Land

a) Langton Green Recreation Ground (LGRG)

- 1) Langton Green Village Hall – no issues to discuss.
- 2) Sports Clubs – the Clerk advised that a dishwasher had been installed and a cooker is being purchased for approximately £650. The issue of disabled access is being considered. The Clerk is to look into the possibility of a grant from TWBC. A quote is being provided by Landscape Services to make the rear of the Pavilion accessible as a short term measure. The Clerk has also asked for a quote for a longer-term solution to enable access. A portable ramp is being borrowed from Cllr Mrs Soyke as a temporary measure.
- 3) Play area - The Clerk said that The Barge Group are being consulted regarding the repairs needed to the play areas. A meeting is being held on Wednesday 14th December.
- 4) Car park
 - The Clerk gave an update on parking issues and cars that are parked permanently. It was agreed that the situation would be monitored and action taken next year if necessary.
 - Signs are to be purchased and erected to advise parents that the two parking spaces near the gate to the Recreation Ground will be for dropping-off only.
 - The Clerk said that the white lines in the car park need renewing and a quote had been obtained for £2,589.47. This was to include extra yellow markings to restrict some parking and two dropping off spaces for walking bus which are to be time limited. The Clerk is to enquire about a guarantee for the work. It was **AGREED** that this would be put to Finance Committee.
- 5) Groundsman – The Clerk said it was expected that from January this would be a permanent post for 2 days a week.
- 6) Trees – It was **AGREED** that all work is to be carried out in accordance with the quotation from Treework be recommended to the Finance Committee. This work included recommendations from the Play Area Annual Report to lift canopies of the trees in the teenage area; to manage the deadwood and reduce lateral branches and reduce canopy of the lime tree at The Green; to remove the silver birch near 36 The Boundary and to manage the footpath in Pocket Park totalling £1,960.

b) The Green at Langton Green

- The Headmaster at Langton Primary School has approved the suggested design and safety measures for the footpath by the side of the Vicarage and it was **AGREED** this would be recommended to the Finance Committee at a cost of £728.31.
- The tree was discussed under matters arising and work recommended under 11a)6)

- The Clerk produced photographs of a car parked on the land owned by the Parish Council opposite The Hare. He said that he had seen this happen twice in about 3 years. The situation would be monitored and extra posts installed if necessary (see e).
- c) **The Green at Groombridge** – Cllr Kerby said that the sets have been installed and are effective despite some grumbling from some people. The Clerk reiterated that the sets were there to protect the Green.
- e) **Pocket Park at Speldhurst** – The Clerk reported that the Park is being cleared by the Groundsman.
- f) **Signs on Council land** – Cllr Kerby advised that Burrswood Hospital is no longer functioning as a Hospital and he has asked if the two hospital signs near the Green can be removed. He has asked them to liaise with the Clerk when they are removing the signage. Cllr Kerby to monitor.
The Clerk had brought up with the Headmistress of Speldhurst Primary School the bonfire sign by the Speldhurst PTA which they put up on Council land. He had since received a very apologetic email and they will ask permission in future.
The Clerk suggested that signs be put up on certain areas of land advising that it owned and maintained by SPC. This was **AGREED** and the Clerk will obtain some quotes.
- g) **The Boundary**
 - Works over the pond – this work has now been completed satisfactorily.
 - 36 The Boundary – tree root problem. The silver birch is to be felled and the stump ground out as per the quotation from Treework.

12. Public Rights of Way

- a) The Alan Passmore memorial plaque – The tree has been planted and the plaque is in place. This item will now be removed from the agenda.
- b) Footpath from Penshurst Rd, Speldhurst to rear of school – The Clerk said that this had been discussed with the Headmistress of the Primary School and it was agreed that it was not a priority of the School and therefore will not be taken further.
- c) The Clerk has been advised that cars are once again using the road in front of the cottages by The Green as a cut through. This could prove dangerous for pedestrians, especially school children. The Clerk asked Highways to make suggestions to resolve this which could include the Parish Council taking ownership. This will be discussed further when recommendations have been received.

13. Volunteer Support Warden Scheme - The Clerk explained the scheme being promoted by KCC and KALC. It was agreed that this was probably not suitable for this parish but that it would go on the January agenda for Full Council for Cllrs to decide.

14. Items for Information

Cllr Kerby advised of the problems with leaks and water supplies in Groombridge and surrounding areas after the recent bad frosts.

Cllr Mrs Soyke said she was impressed with the work of the PCSO recently with regards to an escaped dog.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Chairman