



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

## **Minutes of a Governance Committee Meeting held in the Committee Room, Ashurst Village Hall on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010 at 7.30pm**

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**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Soyke, Parker and Pendleton

**OFFICER PRESENT:** Chris May – Clerk

1. **Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interest:** None received
2. **Declarations of Lobbying:** None received
3. **Apologies for Absence:** All members present
4. The Minutes of the Meeting held on **20<sup>th</sup> May 2010**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.
5. **Matters arising from the minutes:** Cllr Mrs Jeffreys referred to insurable risk and requested if any progress had been made recording photographs of the assets. The clerk reported that a number of photographs had been taken and held on the Council's computer; however it was not yet a complete record. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys asked that the following items be added to the fixed asset register; Groombridge Christmas lights, the land outside the old Watson Hall, The Green at Groombridge, the speed watch equipment, the Council's laptop, blackberry and the container (when it is purchased).
6. **Review of Internal Audit:** Check on Financial Records - On the evening of the meeting the Clerk was requested to bring the Council's file containing Bank statements for current account and HID account and the file containing Employer's Returns and Pay Details. Councillors found them to be in order. It was agreed that in future records would be cross checked to ensure a more comprehensive check.
7. **Review of clerk's job description** – The clerk's job description was reviewed (as part of an annual review) and an amendment was inserted to cover his role as a line manager. This will be presented to Full Council for adoption at the next meeting of Full Council.
8. **Risk assessment covering financial and non-financial risks** – The Audit Commission had highlighted in the conclusion of audit that "A formal risk assessment had not been carried out in the year. The Council must carry out an assessment covering financial and non-financial risks." The committee is writing an Internal Financial Control System and this will be presented for adoption by the Council when it is completed.

**9. Template for external surveys** – it was requested that the committee review the procedure for external surveys in view of the failure of past surveys to meet certain standards. This was discussed by the committee. Past surveys were not of a similar nature except that they had involved outside bodies, which made a template difficult to write. On two occasions difficulties had arisen after the survey which could not have been foreseen. It was agreed that should the Council itself commission work in the future it will ensure that it obtains a full written specification including cost and timescale.

**10. Items for Information** – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said that the Health & Safety review had not been actioned and this would be dealt with at the next meeting.

She noted that the Internal Auditor was due to meet the clerk in November for a six monthly review.

Cllr Mrs Jeffreys also highlighted the health and safety problem regarding the land outside the old Watson Hall. She was aware that the costs of having a professional drawing were escalating but the Council had a duty of care to ensure that something is done to prevent an accident to residents using the footpath owned by the Council. She said that to do nothing because of the cost would be wrong and that this has to be moved on urgently. The clerk is to contact Monson Engineering of Crowborough for a quotation.

The clerk added that the blackberry and the laptop had both been added to the insurance contents.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Chairman