



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 20th May at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Soyke and Pendleton

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk; Mrs Meirion Flemington – Asst Clerk

- 1. Election of Chairman:** Cllr Pendleton proposed Cllr Mrs Jeffreys be re-elected Chairman, this was seconded by Cllr Mrs Soyke. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys duly accepted this position but intimated that this would be her last year as Chairman of this committee.
- 2. Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interest:** None received
- 3. Declarations of Lobbying:** None received
- 4. Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Parker (holiday)
- 5. The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th February 2010,** having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.
- 6. Matters arising from the minutes:** The clerk had established from TWBC that the latest population count for the Parish was 4,880.
- 7. Review of Internal Audit**
 - a. Check on Financial Records - On the evening of the meeting the Clerk was requested to bring the Council's records containing Financial records including the minutes, monthly positions and budgets; the file containing Audits, Annual Returns, VAT, Assets and the Precept; the file containing Insurance and the file for Councillor's Declarations of Interest and the file with Standing Orders. Councillors examined all the files and made the following comments: It was noted that the last six month's VAT claim had not yet been completed and that the Register of Councillor's Interests required updating. The clerk was asked to contact Councillors and ask for any updates. It was also noted that the copy on file of new Terms of Reference or Standing Orders should be signed by the Chairman and dated. Apart from the above the Councillors found them to be in order.
 - b. Internal Auditor's Report - The Internal Auditor was due to meet the clerk on Friday 28th May. He had approved the Terms of Reference for Internal Audit suggested by the Governance Committee and these would be sent to Councillors for their approval at the next meeting of the Full Council.

8. **Completion of Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2010** – The clerk had made a start on the figures for the year end. The committee reviewed the Annual governance statement and, subject to a satisfactory audit by the Internal Auditor, it was satisfied that it can sign off and answer in the affirmative to all applicable questions.

9. Areas for Review – Risk Management

- a. **Insurable Risk** – The clerk had obtained a less expensive quote for insurance and this had been accepted by Full Council (see Full Council Minutes dated 1st March 2010 10/041iii). It was established that Councillors were insured on Council business and that the Groombridge lights had been added to the policy. It was also requested that photographs of the assets be taken and kept with the register.
- b. **Working with others** – There was nothing new to add – copies of public liability insurance would be requested from companies contracted by the Council for new business.
- c. **Self-management** – The standing orders had been reviewed (see 7a).

10. Areas for Review

It was decided to recommend to all committees that they consider that Chairmen serve a limited term so that Councillors benefit from the experience and that the Council does not depend too much on one or two individual members.

11. Items for Information – There were none.

The meeting closed at 8.42pm.

Chairman