



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

Minutes of a Governance Committee Meeting held in the Council Office, Langton Green Recreation Ground on Tuesday 15th September 2015 at 10.00am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys, Mrs Soyke, Barrington-Johnson, Milner and Parker

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk

1. **Election of Chairman:** **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Parker to continue as Chairman
2. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** There were none.
3. **To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** There were none.
4. **Disclosure of Pecuniary or Other Significant Interests:** There were none
5. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none
6. It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Governance Committee meeting held on **6th May 2015** 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 from the minutes:** There were none
9. **Review of Internal Audit:**
 - a) Checks on Financial Records – due to holidays August had been missed. Cllr Parker will continue in September.
 - b) Internal Auditor – there was nothing to report
 - c) Annual Audit (Littlejohn LLP) – The Clerk had been in discussions with the external auditor (PKFL) regarding the account that the Council with CCLA. PKFL has decided that this account should be classed as an investment and not cash account as the Council records it. Changes will need to be made to the Annual Return and these have been agreed with auditor. The auditor has since returned the Annual Return stating that it concurs with proper practices and no matters give cause for concern. It was therefore **RESOLVED** that the Annual Return be amended by the Clerk to agree with the auditor's figures and this would be signed by the Chairman at the October Full Council meeting before the "Notice of Conclusion" of the audit and right to inspect is published on the website and notice boards. The Clerk will contact the bookkeeping system company to adjust the records so they are correct in the future.

10. Risk Management – insurable risk:

- a) Policy check – The insurance policy is up to date
- b) Review of Fixed Asset Register – this will need to be reviewed next year when the new pavilion is built and will increase our assets by about £250,000
- c) Photographic record of assets – these were up to date but the new footpaths would need to be logged when they are finished.

11. Risk Management – working with others

- a) Staff members
 1. Assistant Clerk vacancy – The advertisement and starting salary were agreed and the advertisement would be in all local magazines, notice boards, Groombridge and Speldhurst Post Offices and in village halls. It would be sent around the school network as well. Closing date for applicants is 16th October and interviews would start as soon afterwards to enable Cllr Mrs Jeffreys to be on the panel which will include Cllrs Barrington-Johnson and Milner.
 2. Pensions – It was agreed that the investigation of pension provision should be done by Councillors. The Clerk was attending a KALC Finance Conference on Thursday 22nd October which would have a presentation on pensions and he said it was open to Councillors.
 3. Out-sourcing salary payments – it was agreed to outsource salary payments at a cost of about £200pa and this would be recommended to Finance Committee for approval.
 4. Staffing issues sub-committee – it was agreed to establish an informal working group comprising of three members who would be responsible for complaints, appraisals and interviews.
- b) Contractors – the clerk reported that the Groundsman appeared to be working more than his allotted hours. The Clerk was asked to have a proposal ready for the Finance Committee when it considered the budget.
- c) Security –
 1. Fireproof cabinet – this was now installed
 2. Data back-up – the Clerk expressed his serious concerns that the present system of backing-up data was not up to the standard required and did not give the Council adequate protection. The only system he knew that would give the Council the protection and flexibility for accessing files from home was Microshade which was used by Hawkhurst PC. The cost of this was about £100pm. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys will investigate and a decision will be made at the next meeting. The Clerk was asked to make this a budget consideration.

12. Risk Management – self-management

- a) Office passwords – work in progress
- b) Standing Orders – amended re Chairman's tenure in office
- c) Winter Weather Policy – no amendment
- d) Media Policy – no amendment
- e) Investment Policy – no amendment but comments made for approval
- f) Health and safety – work in progress

13. Items for information: There were none

The meeting closed at 11.20am

Chairman