



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

Minutes of a Finance Committee Meeting held in The Upper Room, Ashurst Village Hall on Wednesday 25th May 2011 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Parker (Chairman), Mrs Podbury, Mrs Soyke, Hemming, Owen, Pendleton and Cllr. Mrs Jeffreys (ex officio)

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk, Mrs Meirion Flemington – Assistant Clerk

- 1. Election of Chairman:** Cllr Pendleton proposed that Cllr Parker be re-elected as Chairman. This was unanimously **AGREED**. In accordance with the Terms of Reference this would be Cllr Parker's third year as Chairman and next year a different Chairman should be elected.
- 2. Declarations of Interests:** There were none
- 3. Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
- 4. Apologies for Absence:** There were none.
- 5. Minutes** of the meeting dated **21st February 2011**, copies having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed as a correct record.
- 6. Public Open Session:** There were no members of the public present
- 7. Matters Arising and Correspondence:** There were no matters arising
- 8. Financial Position as at 24th May 2011** - The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Position and this was duly noted by the Committee. The clerk went through the figures and explained queries; the main difference was that the summary sheet showed the £50,000 as a temporary loan rather than Ear Marked Reserves (EMR).
- 9. 2011-12 review of budget vs expenditure** – Councillors reviewed the figures that had been previously circulated and again the figures were explained and the Parish Office was now shown as a sub-heading within General Administration. **The clerk was asked to forward the papers on the reasons for the office to Cllrs Hemming and Owen.** It was agreed to change the Highways figures to one heading rather than individual villages. **Clerk to amend.** It was also agreed to include footnotes where possible.
- 10. Parish Office** – Following on from the decision by Full Council to lend £50,000 to the Langton Green Charitable Trust (LGCT) Cllrs were provided copies of the legal agreement and informed that the loan had been made. The clerk said that the PWLB of £65,000 (less £25 admin fee) had been agreed at a rate of 3.98% fixed over 15 years with 30 capital repayments of £2,166.67 made on 27th November and 27th May each year until 2026. Interest would be added to each payment and would gradually reduce as the loan amount was paid off.

11. **Policy Statements** – The Freedom of Information (FOI) policy statement had been completed by the Governance committee along with some amendments to both sets of Standing Orders and were pending approval at the next Full Council meeting in June. It was **AGREED** that guidance was necessary for applicants of grants and this would be prepared by the clerk and Chairman for the next Finance meeting in July.
12. **Additional signatory for cheques** – it was **AGREED** to add Cllr Pendleton as an additional signatory so that there would be four Councillors who could sign cheques (but two signatures per cheque would remain). **Clerk to contact the Barclays Bank.**
13. **Further donations to Societies** – it was **AGREED** that all requests for donations should be forwarded to the Finance committee for review on an individual basis, either on the Agenda of a meeting or by email. **Clerk to action.**
14. **Schools** – The schools were quite well established in teaching children about the environment and it was suggested that they should apply to their electrical company for meters rather than the Parish Council supplying them. It was noted by the committee that next year the Marchiennes trip would be made by both schools in the Parish and the grant towards the trip might need increasing.
15. **Lockable posts** – The first attempt to install the posts had failed (they were too high for some cars). Tate had suggested another type but they were expensive. **Clerk to contact residents and Tate** to try and find a solution.
16. **Notice Boards** – The clerk was requested to order a new notice board for Speldhurst to replace the existing one that was old and leaked. It was to be the same as the ones used at Groombridge and Ashurst and made by Greenbarnes. **Clerk to action.** The committee would consider the new board for Langton Green at the next meeting.
17. **Consideration of a request from Speldhurst Netball Club** – A request by the club to pay their affiliation fees had been previously circulated and the grant of £357 was **AGREED.**
18. **Banking Arrangements** – The Clerk reported Barclays Bank did not really offer the Council anything apart from free banking and internet banking. It was considered that other Banks should be contacted to see what they could offer the Council.
19. **Items for Information** – Cllr Jeffreys advised that there might be a discrepancy at the end of the Office build regarding the cost of some power points and lighting but that it should be easily contained within the contingency set aside within the building costs.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

CHAIRMAN