



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 Thursday 15th March 2012 at 10am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Pendleton (Chair) Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys and Mrs Soyke

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk

1. **Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interest:** The Clerk declared a Personal and Prejudicial interest in Agenda item 12b)
2. **Declarations of Lobbying:** None received
3. **Apologies for Absence:** Cllr Parker – previous engagement
4. The Minutes of the Meeting held on **27th January 2012**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.
5. **Public Open Session:** There were no members of the public.
6. **Matters arising from the minutes:** The accident report book would be the responsibility of the Amenities Committee and would be checked by the Governance Committee. The first aid box required further investigation
7. **Terms of Reference:** The Clerk proposed some amendments and it was AGREED that they would be put to Full Council for adoption in April.
8. **Internal Audit Terms of Reference:** New Terms of Reference would be put to Full Council for adoption in April. The only amendment was to add an extra item that stated the need for an annual review.
9. **Internal Financial Control System:** It was decided, in view of the impending change of Banks, to delay reviewing the risk assessment.
10. **Review of Internal Audit:**
 - a) Check on Financial Records – Cllr Parker and Cllr Mrs Jeffreys had made checks on the records in February and March and found them to be in order.
 - b) Internal Auditor – The Clerk was requested to arrange a meeting for the Auditor to conduct the Internal Annual Audit.
 - c) Review of Annual Audit (Audit Commission) – The Annual Audit would be started in April for checking by the Governance Committee and adoption by Full Council in May.

11. Risk Management – insurable risk:

- a) Policy check – The insurance policy has been renewed from April 1st 2012 for 12 months. A certificate of employers' liability insurance will be displayed in the office.
- b) The photographic check has been updated.
- c) Storing of computer records off site – the Clerk had received a quote for storing files off site and the quote was considered too expensive. Other quotes would be considered in due course.
- d) Policy for snow conditions – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys said she would give consideration to a policy and would propose it in due course.

12. Risk Management – working with others

- a) Parish Office – the Clerk reported that the present opening hours of Mon, Tues and Fri 9.30am – 1pm; Wed 2pm – 5pm and closed Thurs were working well. It was AGREED that the opening hours would be recommended to Full Council for adoption in April and a sign would be made to be displayed on the wall outside the office.
- b) Staff members – staff contracts. The Clerk left the room. A recommendation to Full Council would be made that a Notice of Change be added to each contract. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys would provide a draft which would include changes to place of work, expenses and hours of work.
- c) Complaints Procedure – the Clerk had made the changes requested at the March Full Council meeting and the new draft would be submitted for adoption at the April meeting.
- d) Security – Now that the office has been working for three months it was considered that a review of security was appropriate.
 - There are six keys to the office – the current holders are the Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Chairman and Vice- Chairman with two spare.
 - The alarm code is known by the key holders. At present the Clerk is the only contact for the alarm company. This will be expanded to include the Assistant Clerk. Two local Cllrs would be asked if they could help if the alarm went off.
 - Keys to all other offices, pavilions, notice boards, gates and halls are kept in boxes in the store room which is locked at night. Keys to the store room will be issued to all key-holders.
 - The fire alarm is at present under control of the Trustees who will need a key to the office

13. Risk Management – self-management

- a) Press and Media policy – it will be completed in due course.
- b) Members' conduct and the registration and disclosure of their interests – Cllr Mrs Jeffreys would look at the NALC Legal Topic Note to see if the Parish Council needs to take action. **All Cllrs would be asked to consider whether their interests have changed and sign the relevant documentation at the May meeting.**
- c) Health and Safety – The Clerk would make further investigations of a risk assessment programme. A H&S poster would be displayed.

14. Items for Information – there were no matters for information

The next meeting would be held in late April to review the Annual Audit for recommendation to the May Full Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.00am

Chairman