



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 Monday 23rd March 2015 at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Parker (Chairman), Owen and Milner

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk

1. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** There were none
2. **To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** Cllr Mrs Jeffreys (prior engagement), Cllr Pendleton (business)
3. **Disclosure of Pecuniary or Other Significant Interests:** There were none
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none
5. It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on **5th January 2015** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
6. **Public Open Session:** There were no members of the public present
7. **Matters arising from the minutes:** There were none
8. **Review of Internal Audit:**
 - a) Checks on Financial Records – all checks were up-to-date.
 - b) Internal Auditor – an appointment has been arranged to meet on April 29th so that the auditor can review and approve the annual audit report.
 - c) Annual Audit (Littlejohn LLP) – the annual audit forms have been received. It was noted that the council was not part of the 5% required to do an intermediate audit. The clerk also noted that an upgrade to the book-keeping system was required before year-end.
9. **Risk Management – insurable risk:**
 - a) Policy check – The insurance policy was up to date and the defibrillators have been added to the policy at a cost of £20.88 which will be added at the renewal date.
 - b) Photographic record of assets – pictures of the Langton Green defibrillator have been added.
10. **Risk Management – working with others**
 - a) Staff members – there was nothing to report
 - b) Contractors – the contractor has agreed to move the mobile SIDs if they are installed.
 - c) Security –

1. Fireproof cabinet – after discussion it was agreed that a fire-proof cabinet/safe with a two hour protection be purchased. The clerk recommended the Phoenix Fire Commander 1901 but was still investigating different types. It was agreed to recommend to the Finance Committee that up to £1,000 be spent on a suitable cabinet. Archiving of records would still be investigated.
2. Data back-up – the clerk had not managed to make progress and the item was deferred.

11. Risk Management – self-management

- a) Office passwords – the clerk confirmed that in line with the new standing orders – financial regulations that an envelope with office passwords had been given to the Chairman. It was noted that if the Chairman was away for reasonably long period that this envelope should be passed to the Vice-Chairman.
- b) Internal Financial Control – annual review – there were some minor amendments to the policy mainly updating it in line with the new standing orders – financial regulations and updating the amount that the finance committee can approve to the new amount of £3,000.
- c) Winter Weather Policy – annual review - there was no recommended change except that the review of this policy would now take place in October or November.
- d) Co-option policy – annual review - minor change recommended
- e) Grants policy and template - annual review – no change recommended. It was noted that not all recipients are reporting on the completed project where a grant has been made. The clerk was asked to submit a report for the next meeting on which recipients have (or not) made reports. It was suggested that retention of a small percentage of the grant could be withheld until such a report was received.
- f) Complaints policy - annual review – no change recommended
- g) Governance Terms of Reference (TOR) - annual review – no change recommended
- h) Internal Audit TOR - annual review – no change recommended
- i) Open and Accountable Local Government – the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 says that a decision taken by an officer under delegated authority must be recorded and available to the public. This was considered to be unnecessary at this stage and too cumbersome for clerks to manage. It was however agreed that any payment made under delegated authority would be noted as such in the Full Council minutes. The clerk would continue to seek further guidance on this issue.
- j) Health and safety – the clerk said that he has been reviewing various policies and has not yet found a suitable guide on which to base a policy for this council. He said he wanted to avoid a policy that stated the obvious and wanted to produce something that would actually be beneficial and useful.

12. Date of next meeting: the next meeting was planned for Wednesday 6th May to review and recommend approval to the annual audit ahead of the Annual Parish Meeting in May.

13. Items for information: There were none

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Chairman