



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 Wednesday 1st October at 7.30pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Parker (Chairman), Owen (arrived 7.40pm), Milner and Mrs Jeffreys

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 Pendleton (family commitment)
3. **Disclosure of Pecuniary or Other Significant Interests:** There were none
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** None received
5. It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on **14th August 2014** 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 and were found to be in order.
 - b) Internal Auditor – The Clerk advised that the date for the bi-annual visit had been changed from Thursday 6th November to Friday 7th November due to his attendance of a Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) course. The Clerk said that he had learned that it is good practise to re-appoint the Internal Auditor at the Annual Meeting in May and that a fixed term for the Internal Auditor should be considered. It was **RESOLVED** that this would be an agenda item for the May meeting and the term would be considered then. **Clerk to action.**
 - c) Annual audit (Littlejohn LLP) – The term notifying of the completed audit was complete and there were no requests from members of the public to check the records. The documents and financial records are all available on the website.
9. **Risk Management – insurable risk:**
 - a) Policy check – The insurance policy was up to date
 - b) Photographic record of assets – new records had been added including the notice board at Speldhurst and the new dog bin.

10. Risk Management – working with others

- a) Staff members training requirements – The Clerk submitted his training requirements to the committee and members were asked to note that he is attending the KALC Finance Conference and the KALC Openness of Local Government Bodies 2014 workshop. He is still working on the CiLCA coursework which he hopes to submit later this year. The Assistant Clerk did not require any further training at the moment but would review the situation again next year.
- b) Security
 - i. Fireproof cabinet – The Clerk suggested that the cabinet that holds the Council’s minutes going back to 1894 was not in fact very fireproof. He suggested that the Council should invest in a proper fireproof cabinet and/or archive the minutes with Kent County Council (KCC). He was requested to look in to cost of a new cabinet and the procedure for archiving and a decision would be made when the information was available.
 - ii. Key list – this will be amended annually in May
 - iii. Data back-up – this item was deferred
- iv. Sharing of alarm call out monitoring service with Langton Green Charitable Trust – the Clerk had again been alerted during the night to the Village Hall’s alarm being set off. The Trustees were investigating the cost of having a company monitor the alarms and asked if the Parish Council would consider sharing this cost if it included the office. The Parish Council’s insurance does not require call outs and notifications therefore the committee was reluctant to be involved but would review the proposal if the cost was reasonable.

11. Risk Management – self-management

- a) Financial Standing Orders review – it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the addition of paragraph 9.9 to Full Council.
- b) Open and Accountable Local Government – it was noted by the Committee that the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 requires the Clerk to produce a written record of any decision which would otherwise have been taken by the Council or a Committee. He will report back from the workshop he is attending with recommendations on how KALC recommends this should be implemented.
- c) Investment policy – there were some amendments suggested and with those changes it was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that the policy be adopted.
- d) Land Registry – the Clerk had managed to change the Land Registry records so that the ownership of the Langton Green Recreation Ground was now registered to the office address. It was recommended that a file be kept of all such documents.
- e) Health and safety local council risk system – this was work in progress.

12. Items for Information – The Clerk suggested that when the Standing Orders were next reviewed that they include the decision that a Chairman cannot serve for more than five consecutive years. The Clerk added that there had been a number of queries regarding some sections of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) standing orders that had not been adopted by the Council, specifically section 9f. **Cllr Mrs Jeffreys will investigate and report back.**

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Chairman