



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 17th July 2012 at 9.15am

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllr Pendleton (Chair) Cllrs Mrs Jeffreys, Milner and Parker

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk

1. **Election of Chairman:** Cllr Pendleton was unanimously re-elected as Chairman
2. **Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interest:** The Clerk declared an interest in agenda item 12a (staff contracts)
3. **Declarations of Lobbying:** None received
4. **Apologies for Absence:** There were none
5. The Minutes of the Meeting held on **3rd May 2012**, having previously been forwarded to Members, were approved and signed.
6. **Public Open Session:** There were no members of the public present
7. **Matters arising from the minutes:** The matter of acquiring a first aid box was dependant on the Clerks attending a first aid course and this was still under investigation (see Full Council minutes 2nd July 12/254). The Assistant Clerk's name had not yet been added to the alarm company's register.
8. **Internal Financial Control System:** The change of banking arrangements had not been completed and therefore the review was deferred. The Clerk informed Cllrs that it was intended that payments in August would be made from the new Bank Account using internet payments where possible. The Internal Financial Control System would then be amended for approval.
9. **Use of Powers when making payments:** The Clerk advised the committee that when doing the monthly checks on financial records that they should incorporate a random check on the use of spending powers to ensure that the Council is using the correct power.
10. **Review of Internal Audit:**
 - a) Check on Financial Records –Cllr Mrs Jeffreys had made a check on the records in June and circulated her findings to the members.
 - b) Internal Auditor – There was nothing to report.

- c) Review of annual audit (Audit Commission) – The hard copy of the annual audit received after the email version had been signed off at Full Council. The clerk had sent this off to the Audit Commission after the exercise of electors' rights had expired on June 15th. There had been no response to date.

11. Risk Management – insurable risk:

- a) Policy check – the insurance policy is up to date.
- b) The photographic check has been updated. All new bollards at Furzefield Avenue and at The Green had been added to records along with the flagpole at Ashurst.
- c) 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) Staff members – staff contracts. The Clerk left the meeting. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys provided a draft of a letter which included changes to place of work, expenses and hours of work. The committee **AGREED** that this should be sent to both Clerks and that the spinal column points as denoted by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services be written in as well. It was **AGREED** that notification would be sent to both Clerks advising them of their annual remuneration and the Clerk was requested to diarise this for the spring meeting. The Clerk re-joined the meeting
The Clerk advised that staff appraisals used to be conducted by the Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Finance Committee. These positions were now occupied by the same person and he suggested that the appraisals be conducted by the Governance Committee and that this be incorporated in to the Terms of Reference (TOR). This was **AGREED**
- b) Security – there was nothing further to report

13. Risk Management – self-management

- a) New Code of Conduct – It was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council that the Kent version of the Code of Conduct be adopted.
- b) Registration and disclosure of interests – It was **AGREED** to recommend to Full Council that the form suggested by TWBC be adopted by Full Council. It should be noted that an adapted version will be put on the website to conform with the Localism Act 2011.
- c) Standing Orders – The Clerk would amend the Standing Orders to incorporate the changes suggested by TWBC and circulate to the committee. It was hoped that this could be completed in time for adoption at the August Full Council meeting
- d) Health and Safety – The Clerk would make further investigations of a risk assessment programme.
- e) Press and Media policy – it will be completed in due course.

- 14. Items for Information** – the Clerk said that Cllr Mrs Hull had requested that the term transparency be integrated in to all committee TOR. This was discussed and Cllrs considered that this was now covered in the seven principles of public life under “Openness”.

The meeting closed at 9.46am

Chairman