



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 14th November 2018 at 2pm

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Milner (Chairman), Mrs Lyle, Barrington-Johnson and Mercieca

OFFICER PRESENT: Chris May – Clerk

1. **Election of Chairman:** **RESOLVED** to re-elect Cllr Milner as Chairman
2. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** There were none
3. **To accept and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** Cllr Mrs Jeffreys - holiday
4. **Disclosure of Interests:** There were none
5. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none
6. It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Governance Committee meeting held on **30th April 2018** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman
7. **Public Open Session:** There were no members of the public present
8. **Matters Arising from the minutes:** All issues were covered by the agenda
9. **Review of Internal Audit**
 - a) Check on financial records: the monthly checks have slipped and have not been carried out regularly. The Clerk said that the insurance recommendation was for regular checks by Councillors on bank reconciliation and payments to avoid fraud. It was therefore decided that the responsibility for ensuring that checks are carried out was passed to the Chairman to monitor.
 - b) Internal auditor – Mr Buckett came to the office on Thursday 8th November and completed his audit. A report will be sent in due course but there were no urgent issues.
 - c) Annual Audit (Littlejohn LLP) – SPC had received a clear audit again and the return was sent back quite early. He noted that some councils had not received their report before the deadline of 30th September, in part caused by smaller councils sending in returns when none was needed.
10. **Risk Management – insurable risk**

- a) Policy check – SPC has switched insurers from Came & Co to Zurich on a 3-year deal. Two issues were highlighted at the recent Finance Conference: cyber-fraud and trees being visually checked regularly.
- b) Fixed Asset Register – some amendments were suggested: increase amount containers were insured from £6,000 to £10,000; increase amount gateways are insured for from £6,000 to £8,000; the photocopier should be included under office equipment and the laptop.
- c) Photographic record of assets – pavilion contents; new SID and gateways to be added in due course

11. Risk Management – working with others

- a) Staff members
 - The Clerk said that Withyham PC has recently employed a consultant to review the office working hours and it was recommended that they needed 50 hours a week to manage the workload. They now have three staff; Clerk, Assistant Clerk and an Administrative Assistant. The Clerk advised the committee that from April next year he would like to reduce his hours from 30 hours to 25 hours so that he only works a four-day-week. He suggested that SPC follows the lead of WPC and employs an Administrative Assistant to manage the workload. Councillors discussed the arrangement and agreed that the extra member of staff be recommended to Full Council at the December meeting and, if agreed, advertise in the New Year.
 - IT training: no course has yet been identified.
 - Groundsman's role: this item was deferred
- b) Security – this item was discussed in conjunction with item 12c): The Clerk recommended that all Councillors should have email addresses @speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk. This would require them to have Microsoft Office 365 Business on a computer which is subscription based and it would enable Councillors to access shared folders via OneDrive. He said there is an annual cost involved but a reduced licence was affordable and meant that SPC would start to become GDPR compliant. Furthermore, he said that he is looking in to the cost of each Councillor having an SPC owned tablet which would be a one-off cost, and future budgets would include a sum set-aside for renewing the tablets. The financing would be considered by the Finance Committee in December. All Councillors should delete all Parish Council e-mails or documents from their personal computers once read or actioned. This should happen irrespective of whether Councillors subsequently have a SPC-owned tablet. Savings would be made by migrating from Drop Box to OneDrive; reduction of photocopying and reduced mileage as monthly packs would be stopped.

12. Risk Management – self-management

- a) The following policies were reviewed:
 - Winter Weather – minor changes
 - CCTV – minor changes but this policy will be further reviewed at the next meeting in the light of GDPR
 - Media – minor changes but this policy will be further reviewed at the next meeting because of GDPR. The Clerk also said that he intended to go live on FaceBook as soon as possible.
- b) GDPR - The committee considered the changes suggested in 11b) to be a substantial adjustment to the Council's compliance with GDPR
- c) Councillor's processing data on home computers - See 11b)

13. Items for information – there were no items

The meeting closed at 3.25pm

Chairman