

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL  
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE GROUP MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, 13 MAY 2009  
(9.10 - 9.45 AM)**

**Present:** D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive), J Akerman (Chief Internal Auditor), C O'Boyle (Director of Corporate Support Services), R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT) and G J Woodhall (Democratic Services Officer)

**Apologies for Absence:** P Haywood (Chief Executive) and I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive)

**Place:** Deputy Chief Executive's Office (Room 1.05)

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**1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 15.4.09**

Agreed.

Noted that minute 150 should have been entitled "ISA260...", not "ISO260...".

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

As above, noted that D Macnab would chair the meeting and G J Woodhall would deputise for I Willett.

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

(a) Minute 146 – Audit Commission Inspection Fee for 2009/10:

Noted that B Palmer had circulated a revised letter from the Audit Commission regarding the Council's annual inspection fee for 2009/10, which would be submitted to the next meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee.

Noted that although the overall fee had remained the same, the Council was expected to pay a greater proportion of it, hence the increase from £6,569 to £9,152.

(b) Minute 154 – Census:

Noted that the preliminary meeting at Newmarket Racecourse had not coincided with a race day, but I Willett had not attended due to other work commitments.

**4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None for this meeting.

**5. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Noted.

**6. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER**

Noted that no changes had been forthcoming from either Management Board or the

Risk Management Group.

Noted that the Register required updating for the new Executive Priorities for 2009/10 prior to being considered by the Finance & Performance Management Cabinet Committee on 15 June 2009.

**ACTION:**

**B Palmer to pursue.**

**7. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2008/09**

Noted that a full set of contributions had now been received from Directors.

Noted the Action Plan tabled at the meeting to address the Internal Control Issues in section 7.7.

Agreed that the following changes be made to the current draft of the Governance statement:

- (i) Section 3 – amend references to ‘EFDC’ to either ‘The Council’ or ‘The Authority’;
- (ii) Paragraph 3.2 – amend second sentence to read “There are Standing Scrutiny Panels to cover key policy areas with Task & Finish Panels to undertake specific reviews, as well as a coordinating Overview Scrutiny Committee.”;
- (iii) Paragraph 3.2 – delete final sentence;
- (iv) Paragraph 4.1 – amend “Section 151 Officer” to “Chief Finance Officer”;
- (v) Paragraph 4.3 – delete paragraph as this was an action for last year;
- (vi) Paragraph 5.1 – amend “2008/9” to “2008/09”;
- (vii) Paragraph 6.2 – amend “the Plan” to “the Council Plan”;
- (viii) Paragraph 6.2 – amend the last sentence to “The Council Plan is monitored by the Finance & Performance Management Scrutiny Panel and is due to be updated in 2009/10.”;
- (ix) Paragraph 6.4 – add the annual reviews referenced in paragraph 7.6.11;
- (x) Paragraph 7.5 – First bullet point, Waste Management Action Plan also monitored by the Safer Cleaner Greener Scrutiny Panel;
- (xi) Paragraph 7.6.2 – refer to the Disability Involvement Forum;
- (xii) Paragraph 7.6.2 – last sentence, “...the formal decision-making...”;
- (xiii) Paragraph 7.6.4 – remove the rest of the second paragraph after “...in the summer of 2008.”;
- (xiv) Paragraph 7.6.6 – add a sentence concerning the consultation undertaken with the Gypsy & Traveller community;

- (xv) Paragraph 7.6.8 – delete paragraph;
- (xvi) Paragraph 7.6.11 – delete paragraph as already covered in paragraphs 6.3 & 6.4;
- (xvii) Paragraph 7.6.12 – add a comment to reflect the amount of Housing & Planning Delivery Grant obtained by the Council for 2009/10;
- (xviii) Paragraph 7.6.17 – delete paragraph;
- (xix) Paragraph 7.6.18 – delete paragraph as also covered in paragraph 7.7.9;
- (xx) Paragraph 7.6.19 – delete paragraph;
- (xxi) Paragraph 7.6.26 – delete the quote from the NHF; and
- (xxii) Paragraph 7.6.27 – delete paragraph.

Agreed that the final draft of the Governance Statement be submitted to the Audit & Governance Committee on 22 June 2009.

**ACTION:**

**J Akerman to pursue.**

**8. STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

Noted the Cases Listing & Progress Report for the Assessments Sub-Committee in 2008/09.

Noted the concerns of the Monitoring Officer regarding the expense involved in launching investigations using external investigators; fees of £800 per day were common, and the budget for the whole year was only £5,400.

Amending paragraph 5.13 (d), "...insulted..." should read "...resulted...".

Agreed that a report should be submitted to the next meeting of the Local Council's Liaison Committee on 15 July 2009 highlighting the number of complaints currently being generated by Parish Councils, as stated in paragraphs 5.13 (g) and (h) of the Annual Report.

Highlight both in paragraph 6.2 and at the next meeting of the Local Council's Liaison Committee that the scheduled training course on the complaints process could also be attended by Town and Parish Councillors as well.

Agreed the Annual Report for submission to the next meeting of the Standards Committee prior to its consideration by the Council.

**ACTION:**

**C O'Boyle & I Willett to pursue.**

**9. ISA260 ACTION PLAN**

Noted the ISA260 Action Plan and the additional actions that had been added as a result of the discussion at the previous meeting.

Agreed that the Council should be pro-active and forward the Action Plan to the External Auditors prior to the commencement of their Audit.

**ACTION:**

**B Palmer to pursue.**

**10. DATE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

Noted the schedule of meetings for 2009/10.

Welcomed the change to the programme whereby CGG meetings would not take place on the same day as Management Board meetings.