

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

**WEDNESDAY, 21 JULY 2010
(9.30 - 10.10 AM)**

Present: D Macnab (Deputy Chief Executive), C O'Boyle (Director of Corporate Support Services), R Palmer (Director of Finance and ICT), B Bassington (Chief Internal Auditor) and I Willett (Assistant to the Chief Executive)

**Apologies for
Absence:**

Place: Room 1.29, First Floor, Civic Offices, High Street, Epping, Essex

9. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 23.6.10

Agreed.

10. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Annual Governance Statement 2009/10 (Minute 7(a))

C O'Boyle reported that work on the Annual Governance Statement was still in progress, that the previous version of the draft had been amended and forwarded to the independent members on the Audit and Governance Committee for comments and that these were now being reviewed.

Agreed that as part of this process C O'Boyle should consult the Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee on the drafting of this section of the document.

11. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

R Palmer declared an interest in Item 7(a) (Standards Committee – Complaint Assessments, Reviews, Investigations and Adjudications) as he was a complainant in one case.

12. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Noted.

13. FOOD SAFETY INSPECTION - REPORT

(J Gilbert in attendance)

Final version of the Food Safety Inspection Report was noted.

Noted that the relevant action plan required by the Food Standards Agency had now been completed and many of the action points had now been carried out although some remained to be dealt with.

Agreed that a report should be submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee in February 2011 as the FSA were due to carry out a further review of progress on a date to be confirmed in December 2010.

Action:

J Gilbert to pursue.

14. STANDARDS COMMITTEE

(a) Assessments, Reviews, Investigations and Hearings

Schedule noted.

(b) Nazeing Parish Council – Direction from Standards for England

Notes of a recent meeting between two external agencies which were to undertake reviews and training with Nazeing Parish Council members was noted.

Noted that the overall cost of this programme which resulted from a Standards for England Direction to the Monitoring Officer was somewhere between £4,000 and £6,000 for the current year, the final figure depending on the extent of the programme, some of which may no longer be necessary.

(c) Chairmanship

Noted that informal discussions had been held among the three independent members of the Standards Committee concerning the chairmanship during the current year.

Noted that one of the independent members had stated that he felt it inappropriate for him to be Chairman as he could not guarantee that he would always be available at every Standards Committee.

Noted that the two remaining members had agreed that they would share the chairmanship and vice chairmanship over the next two years, reversing roles from 2011/12.

(c) Standards for England – Performance Data

Noted that the Council had been advised that the performance data previously collected by Standards for England on the Ethical Framework had now been discontinued as a result of the intention of the Government to disband Standards for England.

(d) Standards for England – Request for Views

Noted that the Chairman of Standards for England had written to all Standards Committees to advise them of current Government thinking regarding the future of Standards for England and had invited Monitoring Officers and Standards Committees to make comments on any points to be raised for the future.

Noted that the Standards Committee had agreed a number of points for inclusion in a letter to the Chairman of SFE and that this would be dispatched shortly.

Noted that the principal concern related to the importance of retaining an advice and support network in one form or another so as to ensure that common standards applied right across the country.

15. ELECTORAL COMMISSION - INSPECTION

Noted that recently the Electoral Commission had carried out an inspection of the Council's electoral arrangements following the submission of a self assessment to the Commission on various aspects of operations.

Noted that the outcome was expected some time in the Autumn.

Agreed that the Returning Officer share the final report with the Corporate Governance Group once the outcome was published.

Action:

I Willett to report back.

16. DATE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

18 August 2010 at 9 am in the Acting Chief Executive's Office.

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